
Civilization of new citizen in the process of urbanization in China

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Abstract: Nowadays, China has entered into a high-speed urbanization stage, and a great deal of population especially rural population has immigrated to cities and become new citizens in cities. Meanwhile, the urbanization has got a high-speed development in hardware such as city scale, population and infrastructure, but software constructions with the core of civilization are seriously lagged behind. As a result, this has restricted the inner quality of urban development seriously. The author found that two important aspects should be considered in the process of urbanization. Firstly, new citizens should have citizen identity and right in law and reality. Secondly, kinds of education methods should be adopted to establish civil personality in new citizens.

Key words: Urbanization, New Citizen, Civilization

1. Introduction

Nowadays, China has entered into a stage of rapid urbanization, which means city scale, population; infrastructure and other hardware are developed quite quickly. However, the software construction around “civilization” still lags behind seriously. This phenomenon has restricted the inner quality of urban development. From the development experience of western developed countries, an important manifestation of urbanization is human’s civilization, which means getting citizen identity with urbanization. The process of urbanization is a process of human’s civilization. “Citizen” is the most basic and common role identity, and closely related with social harmony, fairness and justice, democracy and legislation order. Without the spirit of citizenship and civil character reflecting requirement of the times, perfect system design will only exist in name. All of countries including western developed countries or some developing countries in transformation concern about and emphasize the civilization of social members, and they believe that the revitalization of citizen spirit is the key to the success of national development and social development. Therefore, promoting the civilization of new citizen has very important practical significance for enhancing urban social management, transforming government functions, establishing new urban social relationship and promoting social harmony and stability.

2. New Citizens’ Civilization

The so-called civilization is the process for social members to acquire citizenship, develop civil consciousness, play the role of citizens, and finally improve civil quality and citizenship behavior. For china, new citizens’ civilization should contain two basic aspects in the process of urbanization. First, new citizens own citizenship and civil rights both in legal and practical aspects. Second, new citizens develop real civil personalities.

According to the *Constitution of People’s Republic of China*, people whoever come from urban or rural areas are the citizens of PRC and can enjoy the same citizenship and civil treatments (or national treatments) in law. Citizenship is a kind of legal identity, and it comes out under the verification of law. That is to say, this identity is based on the “contract”, which means that it cannot be deprived arbitrarily. However, this legal citizenship cannot be put into the practice on account of rural-urban dual system formed after the foundation of PRC, and for the same reason, injustice in rights and benefits is also existed. In other words, urban and rural residents do not own the same rights on labor, social security, education and health care. These unequal phenomena, which are still prevalent among famers, landless peasants, migrant workers and new urban citizens, have shown an exacerbated trend in parts. These inequalities

are not only concerned with social justice and conscience, but also with the stability and harmony of the whole society. Social harmony and stability cannot be truly realized without united, equal citizenship and civil rights. In addition, the process of urbanization in China has been severely restricted due to the lack of civil rights among migrant workers including new citizens, landless peasants and farmers. Take farmers as an example. They could hardly express freely and defend their rights due to the lack of political rights; the formation of labor capital and social movements are constrained because of the inequality and lack of education rights; some of them dare not and are not willing to leave villages due to the missing land property and social security rights; their choices have also been restricted because of lacking migration freedoms. The entire above have directly affects the process of urbanization [1].

Actually, citizenship is more of a legal setting than an objective fact or a self-conscious action in real life as a result of its absence in Chinese history. Therefore, it is hard to form civil consciousness, civil thinking, and civil behavior and so on [2]. Especially for those new citizens from villages, consciously or unconsciously, their personalities and awareness still stay in the traditional stage and they have not formed modern personalities yet, including independent or subjective personality, legal concept, right awareness and social responsibility consciousness. Meanwhile, they still follow the logic of acquaintance society in social activities, lacking experience of dealing with strangers and new ways to get along with others. These are characterized by the tendency of the special principle and situationism in behaviors, attaching greater importance to private morality than public morality and lacking rational spirits, contract spirits, rule awareness and public spirits. Urbanization breaks traditional acquaintance society structure which is replaced by a complex stranger one. The latter really needs new social action rules and logic whose cores are contract spirits and public spirits. Urbanization has provided opportunities not only for huge number of new citizens to shape modern or civil personalities, but also to improve qualities of the whole nation. To fully achieve modernization and Chinese Dream, man is the decisive factor. In this case, it objectively requires us to develop plenty of qualified citizens who have modern personalities, and foster rational and mature civil culture and spirit to the whole society. A modern citizen is a man who has subjective personality and knows how to defend his rights in legal ways. Meanwhile, he is also the man who has rational and public spirit, law and moral awareness and knows his own social responsibility. In modern society, the mature and rational citizen group is the cornerstone of social stability and harmony. Currently, some social group events are occurring frequently. Participants of those events tend to express more out of emotion but less in a rational way, which is related to the weak "civilization" of Chinese society. A mature and rational society where demands are expressed rationally is hard to form without the birth of individual citizens. Therefore, under the process of social transformation and roaring development of urbanization, we have to strengthen the civilization of new citizens.

3. Unity of Citizenship of New Citizens Both in Legal and Practical Aspects

Over the years, under the urban-rural dual structure, a dual policy in employment, education and social security has been implementing in China. For those basic civil rights, we take a double standard as well. Thus, although all of the citizens are equal in law, the difference between urban and rural identity and unequal treatments of their benefits or rights still exist. This phenomenon has not only undermined fairness and justice, but become the constitutional root that affects social stability and harmony. With the development of urban-rural integration, it objectively requires us to relieve and protect the rights of new citizens, and speed up realizing the unity of the citizenship of new citizens both in legal and practical aspects, which is based on the basic principle of fairness and justice concept, the balance between urban and rural areas, and the equality of national treatment. Among them, the most critical is "empowerment", which means that we should give new citizens varieties of justified and legal rights, including political right, economic right, social right, culture right and etc. On the basis of Constitution empowerment, we should promote government empowerment, social empowerment and self-empowerment of new citizens in order to make them acquire equal civil rights.

First, right protection system of new citizens should be improved, implemented and led by the government. In China, civil rights are not completely equal. It mainly manifests in the inequalities of constitutions and rules, unequal settings of different stakeholders' appeals, practical inequalities represented by vulnerable groups and some other artificial inequalities [3]. Relieving the violation to civil rights caused by these four types of inequalities is the area that should be improved most urgently. New citizens are in a weak position in urban society, especially in the initial period when they come to city. Not only do they lack resources, relevant knowledge and experience, but they also lack effective organization, all of which have rendered the hardness in the progress of defending their rights. This objectively requires the government to act as a more active role, to give and protect fundamental rights of new citizens initiatively. For example, the government could strengthen policy setting and implementation towards new citizen's employment, career training, child education, social security, opinion expression and some other aspects. In this case, they may enjoy equal rights and treatments, or reduce those inequalities to a minimum.

Second, the biased national policy towards city should be changed to realize the balance between urban and rural areas in terms of citizenship and civil rights. At present, some suspected case of land grabbing still exist in China's urbanization, which has caused that the *Three Rural Issues* which cannot be solved in a long term. "Some local governments grab and abuse the land unscrupulously in that farmers do not own ownership, decision right and voice towards their lands. The inequality of urban and rural

economic rights has resulted in further expanded gap between them [4]. Therefore, according to the idea of balancing the urban and rural areas, we should establish civil right constitution for all citizens, the core of which is to make both rural and urban residents equally enjoy political right, economic right, culture right and social right. In recent years, China has carried out Free Compulsory Education Policy, Subsistence Security System in urban and rural areas, New Rural Cooperative Medical System and etc, which are really beneficial to promote the implementation of civil right constitution. However, there is still a long distance from popularizing the civil right [5]. As a consequence, we should accelerate the process of rural and urban integration, especially implementing household registration system reform and balancing the supply of public goods between rural and urban areas. At present, preferential policies towards rural areas should be carried out.

Thirdly, the political and public participation of new citizens should be expanded and increased. It is suggested in the report of the Seventeenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China that social fairness and justice should be protected; social harmony should be promoted; socialist democracy should be expanded; civil rights should be defended and civil participation in political affairs should be orderly expanded. Under the current environment of marketing economy, conflicts and demands of diverse interest groups have become more frequently, which objectively requires that different citizens should defend and realize their legitimate rights through participating dialogues and consultations, social management and public affairs[6]. Making new citizens fully participate into political affairs and protect their political rights are the basis to defend civil right. New citizen's political and public participation should be guaranteed in the process of urban public decision making. The government should create conditions and platforms, and smooth channels, making vast new citizens widely participate into politics and actively offer suggestions to the government through citizen hearing, public policy consultation, public dialogue, citizen hotline and etc. Only if new citizens get involved into public participation can they acquire practical civil right, defend their legitimate right and develop their civil consciousness and public spirit further. Of course, it must be stressed that public participation of new citizens' should be based on "legal guarantees". In public decision-making, right is not the biggest but the rule. Public participation could be out-of-order without regulations. Simply emphasizing public participation, government may easily give in and lose its bottom line in public decision-making, which is what it cannot afford to pay. For new citizens, they should defend their rights with the permission of law and change their disorder behaviors into ordered ones.

Fourth, integration and communication between new and old citizens should be promoted. In real life, new and old citizens have different culture backgrounds, lifestyles and long period of rural and urban segregation, which have inevitably caused conflicts and contradictions with each

other. Among them, new citizens always lie in the weak and excluded side. Their right of living in city is explicitly or implicitly deprived. But for those urban original inhabitants, it seems that the right of living in city naturally belongs to them rather than to those "outsiders". Meanwhile, city managers may sometimes consciously or unconsciously incline to those original "city people". Therefore, government and society should actively promote interaction and integration between new and old citizens, and create a healthy communication platform or channel for both of them. In this integration, not only can new citizens strengthen their right consciousness and defend their legitimate right, but civil rational spirit of mutual tolerance and compromise could be developed. Besides, facing the rapid expansion of cities and population, government should adjust its functions and change traditional urban management ideas and methods. City managers should improve their abilities in coordinating contradictions and conflicts among diverse interest groups in this plural society.

Fifth, social forces should be actively motivated and new citizens' self organization or empowerment should be strengthened by community. The initiative of new citizens' self organization should be actively guided and protected; their action of defending legitimate rights through self organization should be supported. The organization of new citizen's is not for opposing to the government but for protecting their rights [5]. The key issue is to actively improve their self management, self service and self development with focus on establishing autonomous new citizen community. After the community setting, the government should further encourage and guide new citizens to establish various self organizations, such as fitness groups, art group, and community right group and so on, making them develop right consciousness and realize self empowerment. For those new citizens who come from countryside, self organization is beneficial to make up drawbacks like "noncooperation" and "lack of team training and organizational life" which have chronically existed among Chinese farmers. It is also good for them to develop cooperative spirit, realize their right and obligation, and clarify the border of public and private area. Meanwhile, new citizens' self organization should be based on legal guarantees and implement in the range of law. Besides, social forces should be actively motivated and comprehensively joined to make sure that new citizens can enjoy equal rights as other citizens [7].

4. Civil Education and Cultivation of New Citizens' Civil Personality

Using various forms and means to strengthen the education and shape of new citizens' civil personalities is the fundamental requirement of realizing the improvement of new citizens' modern personalities and the sustainability of urbanization. The civil personality refers to the internal progress and stable behavior, which give information about

their recognition, attitude, and behavior tendency towards their citizenship, civil qualifications, civil rights and responsibilities. This definition suggests two things. First is that civil personality is relatively stable, namely, a genuine citizen behaves in a stable manner in different time and situations. Second is that it is the internal consciousness, motive, emotion and value of an individual citizen that affects his particular behavior. Civil personality is an interaction product of individual's internal psychological progress and external environment factors (especially culture). Civil personality contains civil consciousness (recognition), civil values and civil behavior. Civil consciousness refers to individuals' recognition about their citizenship, which contains right consciousness, equality consciousness, law consciousness, responsibility consciousness, public morality consciousness and etc. Civil values refers to the universal modern concepts that citizen owns, including equality, freedom, justice, fairness, patriotism, law abiding and etc. Civil behavior means that citizens could consciously defend their rights in legal ways; deal with complex relations with others or society by rational means and universally ethical principle; participate in various social undertakings which are beneficial to social development with public spirit. Briefly, the essence of "shaping" and "cultivating" civil personality is to realize the comprehensive improvement of civil qualities which mainly include modern values, ethics and concepts. Social members' development condition of civil personalities directly affects the realization of social modernization [8]. In the education and development of new citizens' civil personalities, civil personalities should be united in the following three aspects.

First is that the unity of personality in subjective right and social responsibility. Modern civil personality is different from the traditional one in emphasizing "subjectivity" and "right awareness". In traditional society, social community's status is superior to individuals. Individuals could only treat community as their starting point and dependence, but they did not own or could not form independent personality. In modern society of marketing economy, subjectivity, independence and right awareness have become the most fundamental and essential value requirements [9]. Nevertheless, modern citizen should not only enjoy rights, but also should perform the responsibility and obligation. Therefore, in the cultivation and education of new citizens' civil personalities, the principle that civil right and civil responsibility are equally important should be insisted. Over the years, western countries widely stress the meaning of civil right in civil personality, but ignore its responsibility meaning. The responsibility of civil personality implicates that citizen, as a master, should admit and perform basic obligations to our country, society and social members, which include paying tax, obeying the law, brave and moral behavior and valuing morality. With the contemporary development of national governance and global governance, the majority countries in the world pay more and more attention to the transformation from civil right education to

civil responsibility education [10]. For China, the thought of attaching great importance to collective value and responsibility should be reasonably inherited; the "subject" concept should be abandoned so as to shape new citizens to modern citizens with both subjectivity and responsibility personalities.

Second is the unity of contract personality and morality personality. Modern society is a contract and legal society. Legal consciousness and spirit are the aspects which must be contained in civil personality. What contract personality pursues is the public rationality which stresses regulating the relationship among people with law and contract and emphasizes that everyone is equal in law and contract. Contract personality and public rationality are deep-rooted in modern stranger society, revealing people's new unity consciousness and united way after the disintegration of blood relationship and acquaintance relationship. For a large number of new Chinese citizens who move to city from countryside, cultivating modern contract personality and legal spirits is extremely important to break the traditional ill of "morality is superior to legality". Emphasizing rational contract personality does not mean that people should abandon the emotional morality personality. Morality personality is an indispensable part of civil personality. Underlining the moral connotation of civil personality could help avoid excessive reliance on contracts and regulations of civil society. There is an important fact that ignorance of shaping civil morality will eventually lead to virtue inhibition and cold relationship among people and the fragment of our living world [9]. Therefore, in the cultivation of new civic personality, contract personality and morality personality should be treated equally so that not only new factors can be added into the training of civil personality, but the reasonable elements of Chinese traditional culture can be inherited.

Third is the unity of liberty personality and unitary personality. Modern society has shown the trend of diverse benefits, values and lifestyles. This objectively provides individuals with conditions to pursue freedom. Liberty spirit is the fundamental connotation of modern civil personality. Realizing people's comprehensive free development is also the fundamental goal of the development of human society. Cultivating citizen's liberty personality means to respect social subjects' character, value and lifestyle and establish their independent rational consciousness. However, we cannot treat liberty spirit as a kind of arbitrarily extensive freedom. Liberty has its restrictions and specific conditions to realize, which means that some basic principles should also be obeyed. Unitary personality refers to the basic values in citizens' public life field; it regulates people's private lives so that they cannot exceed the basic lines of legislation without denying and excluding citizen's free perusing [9]. For China, cultivating unitary personality of new citizens should be based on obeying the national law and social core values so as to develop their national identity and social identity.

5. How to Implement Civil Education and Training

At present, China urban society has massive new citizen groups who lack enough civilization. Generally speaking, even if for those original urban inhabitants, they basically lack comprehensive and systematic civil education and training. Therefore, we must regard civil education and training of the mass citizens including new citizens as a significant society project during the process of urbanization. In this case, it may promote the civilization of the whole society, stimulate the sustainability of urbanization and maintain social harmony and stability to a maximum. Based on this idea, from central and local government to various fields of society, great efforts should be made to implement civil education and training, especially from the following several aspects.

First, exert the government's leading role in new citizens' civil education. Implementing civil education is the responsibility of the government, so its leading role in civil education is indispensable. The practices of civil education from home and abroad have proved that the implement of civil education must be led by the government [11]. The government should bring civil education into the overall development plan coordinated with economic and social development with the following acts. The law and policy system of civil education should be established and improved; a number of civil education institutions which can play model roles should be set; input of civil education funding should be increased and guaranteed; the supervision of civil education should be strengthened to ensure the right direction and quality level of civil education.

Second, vigorously develop society, activate social vitality and stimulate the benign interaction and positive-sum game of country and society. Only if the society is full of vitalities can it develop a great number of qualified citizens. Only in the benign interaction of country and society can individual truly participate in the national political life, effectively supervise the operation of government power, and cooperate with the government but not confront so as to foster social harmony and development. During this process, individual could also cultivate civil morality, civil consciousness and civil behavior. Besides, emphasizing social growth does not mean to develop an independent society to match the country which seems like a pattern of big society but weak country (government), but to form a pattern of strong country and strong society to establish the mutually inseparable relation between them and form an integrated force, and finally to realize "positive-sum game" and "benign interaction". Meanwhile, the pattern is suited to Chinese historical tradition (do not make strict distinguish between country and society) and Chinese current national condition.

Third, implement civil education and civil training in comprehensive and multi-channels with different platforms. The main platforms and channels of implementing civil education and training are family, school, community,

company, social organization, mass media and etc. "Family has the special cultural and psychological meaning for Chinese. Implementing civil education through family can achieve subtle and consistent effects [12]. For children of new citizens, school is undoubtedly the most important place for civil education, in which systematic setting about civil education courses and civil training project should be contained. Community is the most important platform for new adult citizens. Civil education facilities in community should be improved and service project in civil community should be set up to make them develop civil behavior and civil personality in social service. Social organization is another important platform for civil education and civil training. In various social organizations, new citizens can take part in public affairs, learn to cooperate with others and develop civil spirits of tolerance, trust and reciprocity. Company can develop new citizens' relevant consciousness about right, occupational ethics, rules, collaboration and etc. Mass media has equally important influence on the development of civil personality. In particular, the development of internet provides civil education with a new channel, from which citizens can engage in the supervision of government behavior, train democracy spirit and cultivate civil political responsibility.

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