

Analysis of Marriage Payment on Rural Marriage Relationship

-- Based on the Investigation of M Village in Henan Province

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Abstract

The basis of kinship is the combination of marriage, and marriage payment is the most important part of marriage. Taking M Village, Xiangcheng City, Henan Province as an individual case, this paper sorts out the marriage customs and habits of the village and analyzes the real function and function of marriage payment, which is helpful to correctly examine the phenomenon of bride price in rural areas and correctly understand the cultural and practical significance. The case of M village shows that the marriage payment has the role of paying the family, subsidizing the offspring and saving mutual benefit, which supports the establishment of the new family and consolidates the new social network alliance formed by the husband's family and the mother's family.

Keywords

Rural Areas; Marriage Payment; Marriage Relationship.

1. Introduction

Kinship is a culturally defined and based on a blood bond or marriage [1]. The basis of kinship is the combination of marriage, and its basic unit is the family, so kinship is rooted in a certain marriage and family. bride price and dowry, as the main research content of marriage payment, are indispensable elements in the marriage relationship. Bride price refers to the financial transfer from the husband's family to the woman's family, which usually symbolizes the establishment of the marriage relationship between two families or families, the transfer of female rights and the establishment of status; dowry refers to the property transferred from the woman's family to the woman, which usually has the function of symbolizing the status of female relatives.

As a very important daily life practice, marriage payment is a big social resource that affects and creates the social network, which directly affects the marriage network. This paper tries to use a case study of M Village in Xiangcheng City, Henan Province, to explore the description and analysis of marriage payments.

2. M Village, Taken as an Individual Case

M village is located in the south of Xiangcheng City, about 40 kilometers away from the county seat, about 8 kilometers east and the junction with Anhui Province, near the 106 national Road, convenient transportation. Before the 1990s, the village used agricultural planting as the main livelihood; in the past 30 years, the young and strong workers in the village gradually went out to work, and some people settled outside, the elderly, women over 40 left at home farming, similar to most areas of Henan. Young and middle-aged migrant workers are gradually increasing their income because of their extensive working experience, and now most families can build two-to three-story buildings at home.

Influenced by the concept of son preference, the number of suitable women in the area around M village is less than the number of suitable men, so the status of the woman's family in

marriage has gradually increased. The man's appearance, personality (neighborhood evaluation), family income, family structure and other factors have become the important criteria for the woman to choose the marriage object, and strive to pursue the superiority of various conditions. The bride price, which can best measure the strength of the man's family, has also become a focus and hot discussion for the woman and her relatives, friends and neighbors. The villagers will also measure the quality of their marriage and their families according to the bride price and dowry. Affected by these factors, high bride gifts came into being and gradually exceeded the growth rate of family income. And the continued rise in marriage payments has exacerbated the problem of marriage.

3. Marriage Customs and Habits of M Village and Nearby Areas

In M village and surrounding villages, the following marriage customs (local name "rules"):

(1) Meet. By the matchmaker introduced both men and women to know, the meeting place is generally the girl's home, the time is generally the second day that both sides have the will to meet, by the matchmaker led the man to the girl's home. When the man wants to wear some decent, and there must be cigarettes in the pocket, to the woman's home to see people smoke, leave also need to leave a pack of cigarettes, so the neighbors and the woman's family will praise the man can do things, can indirectly improve the success rate of blind date.

(2) Get along with. Within ten minutes to an hour with a girl, the man should try to know as much information to make sure she is for life. Afterwards, the matchmaker will ask both sides about their wishes, and usually give a clear answer the next day. If both sides think it is feasible, the man will invite the girl to go shopping, this is the second time to meet, to give the meeting gift to the girl, generally about 1000 yuan. In addition to buy some things to girls back, not expensive, but have. After further understanding of each other, the two sides will discuss the gift date through the matchmaker, according to the girl's zodiac sign. During this period, the man needs to accompany the girl to the street, to help the girl to buy clothes, "three gold" (gold necklace, gold earrings, gold ring) and so on.

(3) Pay a bride price. The gift here is the bride price. Since both families have the time and energy to deal with this matter during the Spring Festival, it is usually every Spring Festival. Gift points dry ceremony and wet gift, dry gift for full cash, in recent years, dry gifts are about 100,000 yuan, of course, there are higher prices, depending on the situation of the man's family. Wet gift for items, is a common supermarket gift items, such as milk, fruit, ham sausage, bread and so on. Category and quantity should be 6,8 or 9, such as 9 categories, each 9 cases category. In addition, there should be a whole pig, a whole sheep, smoke, wine, sugar and so on. The woman's family should put on a good banquet, treat the male man's family, both sides should ask the wine, can be on the table relatives and friends "fight", see who can drink who, see which can get the other party drunk. Anyway, just getting drunk is a shame. So on the wine table, we will try to let each other party drink, and strive to win glory for their own party.

After that, if one party is not willing to return, the two sides will negotiate to refund the bride price, and generally the woman will return the dry gift to the man, and the wet gift is not counted. in the case of an imbalance, few men are reluctant.

(4) Visit parents of both sexes. Every wheat and Mid-Autumn Festival, the man's family will bring gifts to the woman's home to visit the woman's parents. It doesn't matter if the boy is not at home, and the man's parents can do it. After the ceremony, the girl will come to the man's house at the beginning of the first month to visit the future in-laws, the reception is usually the man's sisters, sister-in-law, aunt and other women. At this time, the parents-in-laws will prepare to pay New Year money, generally more than 1000 yuan.

(5) Set auspicious days. Is to determine the wedding date, will see a good day according to the birthday of a man and a woman. Sometimes the two sides agree, sometimes find fortune-telling

a good day. If the next ceremony time is during the Spring Festival, you will usually get married before the next Spring Festival. From blind date to marriage, the time span will not be long, because the longer the time, the more intermediate risks, the more people will doubt whether there is any problem with the marriage, the man's family cannot afford the festival consumption, the woman's family will also fall a bad reputation for greed (picture the man's family property).

(6) Prepare for marriage. The man's family is responsible for buying all the furniture and decorating the new house. The woman's family will also buy some dowry for her daughter, such as wardrobe, computer, quilt, also including a little money. It is worth mentioning that some women's families will prepare a lot of dowry, in order to make their daughters married decent. In today's increasingly rich material life, many items in the dowry can be bought, but some family mothers will also make new quilts for their daughter handmade, infiltrating the mother's deep love and blessing for their daughter.

(7) Wedding. On the wedding day, the groom's family will send a car to pick up the bride and its male relatives, the male relatives of the bride are called "dowry lift", because in the past the main way of transportation was walking, the bride's dowry is many and heavy, requiring men to undertake the task. When the bride arrives at the groom's house, there will be a drop-off ceremony, usually between 6,000 yuan and 20,000 yuan. Some still have get on the car gift, want to see both sides agree. The bride to the man's home, to the in-laws wash water, the cost is about 1000 yuan.

4. Function and Function of Marriage Payment

It can be seen from the marriage customs and habits of M Village that marriage payment is the most important content in the whole process of marriage, which is the issue of marriage relations. Around the study of marriage payment in Chinese society, two explanations have gradually formed: marriage payment theory and marriage funding theory (Yan Yunxiang, 2000:192-193). The premise of marriage repayment theory is repayment, that is, the in-laws must provide compensation for the mother's joining. In this interpretation, women become a gift, a gift of reproductive value and labor value, which can bring about population and wealth growth. Marriage repayment theory emphasizes the relationships between groups and ignores the intergenerational relationships. The marriage funding theory highlights the position of newly established families in the group and emphasizes the important role of intergenerational relations in marriage exchange. Following this theory, the bride price and dowry are a kind of intergenerational funding. Below, this paper will explore the role of marriage and marriage payment according to these two explanations.

(1) To pay off the family home

For the man's family, the marriage payment is mainly the bride price. according to Friedman, the betrothal price has three functions: gratitude to the woman's family, the transformation of women's rights between groups, and means that the man's family is superior to the woman's family.

In the past, the livelihood of the M village was mainly farming. In the period of low agricultural mechanization, a male young and middle-aged labor was wealth for the family, while weaker women had less value for production than men. Therefore, the mother's family can raise her daughter is made a certain sacrifice and pay. When a woman reaches the marriageable age, her in-law's family will marry her home, which means more family members, more labor force, more population reproduction, and more family continuation. But for the mother's family, this is equivalent to "giving birth to a daughter to others". Even today, this emotional orientation of the family still exists. Therefore, it is necessary for the in-laws to express their gratitude to the "mother-laws for their kindness", and to show the legitimacy of the transfer of power through property compensation. This supports the interpretation of the marriage solvency theory.

(2) Supporting future generations

So is the current in-laws marriage payment any other effect? The answer is yes, and that is funding for future generations. For her in-laws, it is necessary to support the offspring. First, in-laws families can continue and enhance intergenerational relationships through funding for new families, demonstrating the interdependence of families. If the parents do not come forward when the son is married, Parents' face will be damaged, And will affect the prestige of families in social networks; second, If the in-laws don't have any support, It said that the parents did not agree with their son's marriage, Will provoke a daughter-in-law to dissatisfaction, Not conducive to the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law after marriage, May breed a potential for family conflict; third, If the family does not have any funding, Prove that there is no family support behind the man, It's hard to afford a marriage, And will let the man as an individual alone to face the woman and her family, Will affect the man's voice on some major issues; fourth, If the family is not funded, In contrast to the family's dowry, Will put the in-laws in a very bad position, May bring your son closer to his family, This is the last thing the parents want to see; sixth, under certain circumstance, The bride price will eventually be used to the new family, Because the mother's family usually transfers the bride price to her daughter for custody, No amount of marriage payment is the property of the son, It ends up to your own people, not outsiders. For these reasons, her in-laws will pay the bride price.

For the family, the dowry also has the role of funding the offspring. In the past, the family thought that the girl had married, she had lost a lot in her heart and wealth, and the dowry had to go with her daughter's family, since it was given to her husband's family, somewhat random. Moreover, the woman's family usually has at least one younger brother or elder brother, and the married girl should also consider her son's marriage, and the bride price obtained by marrying the girl becomes the key to solve her son's marriage. Therefore, this local logic has always dominated the traditional payments of marriage.

In recent years, the marriage payment tradition of her family is changing, and some families 'dowry is gradually converging with the bride price of their parents' family. first, With the increase of the resident household income, For your own family, Not as precious as before; second, Implementation of the family planning policy, Make today's only-child families increase or make some families without sons, The family has no need to consider their "marrying", Even began to worry about the continuation of the family, So the dowry as a "marry uncle" money; third, Due to the change of ideas, Most families begin to value their daughters, The family also understands that the economic power and discourse power is often proportional to the truth, So he increased the daughter's dowry money, To make the daughter be valued in her husband's home. In the M village, the practice of many family families is to transfer the bride price to their daughter by dowry to support the daughter's new family. This also supports the interpretation of the marriage funding theory.

(3) Face and mutual benefit

In addition to the above material considerations, marriage payment also has a mutually beneficial effect in face. In the rural acquaintance society, every family will become a hot topic among the villagers, especially in the marriage payment issue, which can best reflect the handling style and property strength of a family. Both the in-law's family and the mother's family value the marriage payment issue, because it is related to their own image and face in the eyes of the villagers. Higher, relative marriage payments can earn enough face for both parties. This is where the cultural connotation of marriage payment lies.

5. Conclusion and Surplus

Marriage payment with bride price and dowry as the main expression form is related to the face of both families, and provides a material basis for the new family. To some extent, marriage payment can be considered as a strategy adopted by the husband's family and her family, and

a strategy to support the new family. From the point of the whole process of marriage and its social network internal communication, the dowry and dowry are based on social and cultural sense of economic exchange, is to consolidate the in-laws and family union into the new social network alliance, any lack of marriage payment will make marriage relationship is not harmonious, imperfect, new social network alliance will also face disintegration.

It should be noted that marriage payment plays a positive role if it must be equal and within the scope of the family burden. if this premise is exceeded, social phenomena such as "sky-high bride price" will occur from time to time. How to make marriage payment play its real role is the key to promoting the reform of changing customs.

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