

Analysis of Hsu Fu-kuan 's Political Cultural Thoughts——Comparing with Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi

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Abstract: Hsu Fu-kuan is an outstanding scholar and an upright ideologist in modern China. His political and cultural thoughts can be summarized as breaking the old, set up the new, and get rid of the weed and keep the flower of the leek. On the one hand, he maintains traditional culture from the standpoint of traditionalists, and on the other hand, he is different from ordinary traditionalists who just maintain traditional culture. He doesn't just agree and maintain everything in the tradition with no change, but to implement the thought of liberalism through criticism and creation of traditional culture. This paper takes comparison and demonstration between Hsu Fu-kuan and Mou Zongsan as well as Tang Junyi.

Introduction

Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi are known as the three masters of the second generation of Neo-Confucianism in China. They are not only friends in life, but also all studied from one tutor, Mr. Xiong Shili. The three are a generation of great scholars who shining simultaneously in the May 4th Movement. The three people are consistent in protecting, discovering and developing the traditional Chinese culture, integrating the essence of China and the West, and establishing Neo-Confucianism, so their thoughts are often proposed at the same time. However, Tang Junyi was born in a family of scholar, and Mou Zongsan and Hsu Fu-kuan both came from farmer family. Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi stayed in the academic circle for life, but Hsu Fu-kuan changed from political circle to academy after experiencing ups and downs as a minister. When Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi worked hard to establish their own philosophical system, Hsu Fu-kuan gave up decisively, and believed that the revival of Chinese culture was far more important than the establishment of personal philosophical system. Mou Zongsan was proud and profoundly speculative, Tang Junyi was very warm and knowledgeable, Hsu Fu-kuan was valiant, and combining knowledge with action. They are respectively regard as wise new Confucianist, benevolent new Confucianist and brave new Confucianist. Although there are differences between the three, they jointly advocate traditional culture, trying to integrate the essence of Confucianism with Western culture for breaking the political difficulties of China for nearly a century, and clearing the way for democracy and science.

Comparative Study of Chinese Traditional Culture

The consensus between Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi 's political thoughts is reflected in the "Declaration of Chinese Culture to the People in the World" jointly issued by the three and Zhang Junyi. This declaration is the first systematic and programmatic document of the Neo-Confucianism. It refutes various misunderstandings of Chinese culture at home and abroad, and expresses Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi's basic knowledge of the past, current and future situation of Chinese culture. The declaration reflected their overall conception of Chinese culture and human culture. They criticized the bias and negative effects of the May Fourth Movement, and advocated that the democracy and science supported by the May Fourth Movement should be based on the life theory of Confucianism, thereby opening the way for the healthy

development of Chinese culture. The efforts of Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi have made valuable contributions to the preservation and development of Chinese traditional culture.

Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi are the same as Hsu Fu-kuan, who believe that Confucianism has a dominant position in Chinese culture, and they all emphasize that they must ensure the dominance of Confucianism in culture when choosing and absorbing Western culture. Mou Zongsan put Chinese culture as the dominance and Western culture as the subordinate. He believed that if the dominance of Confucianism could not be maintained, even if China were modernizing, it would only change to a "colonial" country. Tang Junyi put forward the idea of "stay in the local essence, refer the foreign, and innovate basing on the root", where "the root" refers to Confucian culture, and "the foreign" refers to Western culture. His goal is to use Confucian culture as the main body and to digest Western culture and all outstanding culture of mankind to rebuild China's humanistic thoughts. According to Tang Junyi's explanation, if you do not recognize the dominant position of Confucianism in modern culture, then there is no reason to say that you are a new Confucianist. The Confucianism emphasized by Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi is metaphysical and exemplified, while Hsu Fu-kuan's Confucianism is more practical, so Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi's understanding of the connotation of Confucianism is very different. At this point, Hsu Fu-kuan once expressed his dissatisfaction with Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi: "gentlemen who talk about Chinese philosophy ... even if they love Chinese culture very much, and they are very diligent in Chinese culture, but they are very learned philosophers, like Xiong Shili, and Tang Junyi, have gone the other way. They have detected from the level of specific creatures and behavior to the metaphysical heavenly destiny, on which they set their standpoint because they thought that if they detect in other way, the thought will be unstable to stand. But they did not expect that the metaphysical things emerging one after another, and have never been stable in the history of thought. Mr. Xiong and Mr. Tang have contributed to Chinese culture, especially Mr. Tang, but because they have reversed the direction of the development of Chinese culture, they cannot comprehend the Confucianism thoroughly." [1] Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi are like Hsu Fu-kuan, they especially emphasized the subjectivity of Chinese Confucian culture. However, the basic characters of Confucianism depicted by the three are very different. Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi portrayed metaphysical Confucianism, while Hsu Fu-kuan portrayed the practical Confucianism, which is what is called "the difference cannot be hidden even the dream is the same."

Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi all put Confucianism as the main body, and in the deepest sense, they regarded morality as the center of culture. They all thought that the political ideal of Confucianism is the rule of virtue, and they are all made many attempts trying to revive the rule of virtue. However, Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi were more focused on sorting out traditional politics, while Hsu Fu-kuan was more focused on analyzing contemporary politics. This is not to say that Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi did not attach importance to contemporary politics, nor did it mean that Hsu Fu-kuan did not study traditional politics. In fact, when Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi were researching contemporary politics, they also analyzed the contemporary politics from the root, and Hsu Fu-kuan had a strong realistic bias when combing the traditional politics with contemporary politics. Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi stood at the philosophical level and integrated contemporary politics into traditional political analysis, revealing the connotation of Chinese political thought, while also constructing their sophisticated and vast philosophical systems. However, Hsu Fu-kuan did not spend time to establish his own philosophical system. He believed that the modern interpretation and revival of traditional culture is more important. Therefore, he criticized current politics, fear no strong power, speak uprightly, and analyzed the shortcomings of Chinese and Western politics in an objective, fair, and rational way. He worked hard to find a path for the development of China's contemporary politics.

Comparison of Western Culture

Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi all believed that the cultural spirit of Confucianism was superior to that of Western culture. But they also acknowledge that China's traditional politics has not developed into the democratic politics that is urgently needed today. They criticized the

disadvantages of traditional Chinese politics and profoundly analyzed the fundamental reasons why China did not move towards a democratic political path. When criticizing the failure of traditional Chinese politics, the three have similar points of view. For example, Mou Zongsan and Hsu Fu-kuan believed that the lack of people's political awareness is a major drawback of traditional Chinese politics. However, Mou Zongsan directly studied the roots of Chinese politics through the superficial phenomenon of Chinese political issues. He pointed out that there is only a "comprehensive law-exploring spirit" and no "detached law-exploring spirit" in Chinese cultural, which is the crux of China's lack of democratic politics. Mou Zongsan's research is the research in philosophers' way, not the research in historian of political thoughts, so he is much deeper than the research of historians of political thought in general and undoubtedly has important theoretical value. Tang Junyi also realized this point. He believed that Confucian culture only emphasizes moral education, but ignores the construction of the system. Relying solely on the moral self-discipline of rulers with no constraints of the legal system is one of the reasons why China failed to establish democratic politics. Hsu Fu-kuan analyzed the root of China's failure to develop democratic politics from the disconnection between Confucian political thoughts and China's political situation. He pointed out that the Confucian political thought developed in the feudal society at the beginning of Zhou believed that the people are the masters of the country, but in the reality of the history of monarchy, the ruler has become the supreme subject of the whole world. This is the fundamental reason why China has not embarked on the path of democratic politics and the stagnation of the entire society.

Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi also commented on Western culture when they took advantage of Chinese culture. These comments have similarities and also differ greatly. Tang Junyi commented on western culture from the perspective of dualistic thinking between China and the West. He believed that Western culture has more diverse sources than Chinese culture, so there are more cultural conflicts, and often it is closely combined with reality, which is prone to evil. Rationalism, idealism, and humanism are gradually lost in modern western culture, and the shortcomings of realism and naturalism are becoming more and more obvious, so the three major sins of modern western culture, imperialism, extreme private capitalism, and totalitarianism, have formed. Hsu Fu-kuan's critique of Western culture is basically consistent with Tang Junyi's opinion with different ways of expression. Hsu Fu-kuan pointed out that modern democratic politics in the West originated from "personal consciousness", and it is the first priority to fight for individual rights. In the historical facts of the development of the modern world, Western culture, driven by national consciousness, has become a tool for suppressing Asian, African and Latin American countries, which has caused a serious tendency of "immoralization". Therefore, modern democracy in the West is the "rootless" democracy, which Confucianism can make up for its shortcomings perfectly. It can be seen that Hsu Fu-kuan analyzed the shortcomings of western modern culture in a specific economic and political society, but Tang Junyi treated modern western culture as a philosophical concept. This is the difference between the two person's thoughts, and it is also the difference between primitive Confucianism and Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. Mou Zongsan proposed a comparative model of Chinese and Western cultures from multiple perspectives, such as the "comprehensive law-exploring spirit", "detached law-exploring spirit", and "pursue the law by air", "develop air on law", "representation of law's structure", "representation of law's use", "extension of law's extension", "representation of law's content". His Chinese and Western comparisons are creative, not listed descriptive cultural phenomenon. He started from determining the spirit behind the cultural phenomenon to remark on the achievements of Chinese and Western cultures, sought for the reasons for cultural differences, and created realistically to find a way out for the plight of Confucian culture. Mou Zongsan's comparative model of Chinese and Western cultures is unique in academic circle. Rather than saying that he is comparing cultures, it is better to say that he is thinking about reality.

Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan, and Tang Junyi also differed in their discussions on how to embark on a modern democratic political path. Mou Zongsan emphasized from the perspective of the Chinese and Western cultural associations that democracy and science emerged for the moral

reason, that is, self-negation. Tang Junyi advocated the combination of Chinese and Western cultures and political systems to create a democratic system with higher value. Hsu Fu-kuan started directly from the political level, and took a step from the people-oriented to democracy, and creatively merged Confucian humanism with the essence of western democratic politics.

Evaluation of Political and Cultural Thoughts

In the second generation of Neo-Confucianism, Mou Zongsan 's thought was deep, Tang Junyi 's thought was broad-bodied, and Hsu Fu-kuan 's thought was direct. Tang Junyi 's thought has the richest religious tenderness. Mou Zongsan 's thought has religious rationality, while Hsu Fu-kuan 's thought does not leave any place for religion. Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi are both philosophers, and they both created their own philosophical systems. After the death of Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan called him a "giant in the culturally conscious universe", and after Mou Zongsan's death, Taiwan scholar Zeng Zhaoxu called Mou "a giant in the philosophical universe" in the tone of Mou. These titles have gained agreements in academic circles. Therefore, Mou Zongsan contributed most in the field of philosophy, and Tang Junyi has made significant cultural achievements. However, Hsu Fu-kuan is the most successful political thinker in the field of political science. As a result, scholars at home and abroad called him as "innovative traditionalist", "fighter who sacrificed to democracy" and "humanistic liberal who dare to challenge power."

The biggest difference between Hsu Fu-kuan, Mou Zongsan and Tang Junyi is that Hsu Fu-kuan is not a scholar in the ivory tower. In my opinion, Hsu Fu-kuan 's origin is the determinant of his character and thought. Childhood life in poor rural areas left Hsu Fu-kuan with many painful images and also left him many beautiful memories, which provided Hsu Fu-kuan with the deepest personal experience of the humiliation and suffering of Chinese farmers, and made him express his sincere appreciation for the simplicity, honesty, and kindness of ordinary people. He can always find the highlights of human nature in the ordinary words and deeds of ordinary farmers. In his appreciation, he mentioned many times that ordinary people have bred greatness, and repeatedly expressed admiration for them, thinking that the mother of Chinese culture is the hardworking Chinese farmers. Yin Haiguang's student, Wang Xiaobo, recalled an experience when he studied from Hsu Fu-kuan. He said that Hsu Fu-kuan once said that Chinese culture is a way for the Chinese nation to survive for a long time, and it has been managed and accumulated by the Chinese nation for a long time. China has corrupted and autocratic emperors and ministers, but the mother of true Chinese culture is a hard-working farmer, so we cannot completely deny Chinese culture. [2] Hsu Fu-kuan rebuked the dictatorship of the ruling class and the degrade of intellectuals, but he also pointed out that the Chinese nation can survive while the ruling class is degraded proved the greatness of Chinese culture. In other words, we cannot negate the Chinese culture that has maintained the survival and development of the Chinese nation for thousands of years because the corrupt dictatorship of the ruling class and the degrade of intellectuals.

In view of the basic spirit and virtues of ordinary farmers, Hsu Fu-kuan resolutely stated that it was totally incorrect to condemn the farmer because of their backwardness. Farmers are loyal to the filial piety, working and learning at the same time, and they are the greatest achievement of Chinese culture, which is where the Chinese nation inherits for thousands of years and China's great potential and hope for a bright future. From the perspective of Hsu Fu-kuan, "It must be a virtuous minister who absorbs virtues from the countryside and applies them into politics. It must be an era of political clarity. It must be the most conscienceless intellectual, and it must be the most degrading dynasty when people wipe out the virtue in the countryside, ride on the farmers' heads, and scold them for being loser while taking advantage of them. "[3] Hsu Fu-kuan believed that the moral quality of Chinese farmers is higher than many intellectuals. According to him, the fine traditions of Chinese history and culture, especially related with morality, are easier to find among ordinary farmers than among educated people. Hsu Fu-kuan pointed out that natural kindness is the moral foundation formed by everyone's nature. Although the ordinary people have a low level of education and seem ignorant, they have sacred wisdom that can clearly distinguish the right and wrong of major political issues in society. From Hsu Fu-kuan, the reason for this is because

ordinary people are simpler than intellectuals, and show their natural goodness in their lives. Therefore, he pointed out that in the past two thousand years, the teachings of Confucius have often been abandoned by many intellectuals and ministers in China, who are either scolding the Confucius or taking Confucianism as negative example. In any case, the essence of Confucianism is passed down by ordinary Chinese people who are less educated, but hardworking and honest. Because of this belief, Hsu Fu-kuan still has great confidence in Chinese culture despite the crisis of the western culture invasion. The appreciation of the great character of the Chinese people deepens Hsu Fu-kuan 's devotion for Chinese culture. In turn, this devotion deepened his gratitude to the ordinary people in China, and consciously put himself and ordinary people in the same level.

Conclusion

In the Neo-Confucianism, Hsu Fu-kuan is undoubtedly the person who has the deepest contact, understanding and experience with real politics. Li Weiwu said, "In terms of relations with real politics, not only academic scholars like Feng Youlan, Tang Junyi, and Mou Zongsan can't compare with Hsu Fu-kuan, but scholars like Xiong Shili, Liang Shuming, and Zhang Jundai, who were once involved in the political field did not went close to the core of real politics as Hsu Fu-kuan did."^[4] Hsu Fu-kuan went from a participant in real politics to a painful disappointer in real politics, and finally became a brave critic of real politics. Whether the active participation, painful disappointment, or courageous criticism, are all come from his concern and hope for the fate and future of the Chinese nation. The rich political experience and sympathy for the working masses made Hsu Fu-kuan 's understanding of political issues deeper than other Neo-Confucian scholars. Hsu Fu-kuan 's political thought was unique and particularly important in the development of Chinese politics in the 20th century^[5].

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