

Challenges Faced by Individualism under Confucian Role Ethics

Jiahui Qin

School of Humanities, Arts and Design, Guangxi University of Science and Technology, Liuzhou 545006, China

Abstract: Roger T. Ames Philosopher is a famous philosopher who promotes the cultural exchange between China and the West. In his view, Confucianism in China can help the western ideological world get out of the stagnant predicament and move towards new development. Starting from the viewpoint of Confucian Role Ethics on the doctrinal individualism in the West, this paper analyses the viewpoint of Roger Ames Philosophy on the doctrinal individualism and the necessity of the transition from Western individualism to Confucian Role Ethics.

Keywords: Confucian role ethics, Individualism, Roger T. Ames.

1. Introduction

The Confucian Role Ethics by Roger Ames Philosophy is an important work of comparison between Chinese and Western cultures. Generally speaking, compared with Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism can attract the attention of the Westerners. Because Confucianism's outlook on life is to teach people to enter the WTO, to be active, to be productive and to be self-achievement, which is more common in the West, Westerners tend to pay attention to Taoism's "nihilism" and Buddhism's "four emptiness" in the first contact with Chinese culture. They think that this is a thought obviously from other regions, which can bring infinite imagination and thinking to them. In Roger Ames Philosophy's opinion, the revival of Confucian values is crucial to the Westerners and may give the West a second ideological enlightenment. Because he thought that the western world had stagnated, Chinese Confucianism could revive the western world and get rid of the stagnant predicament. He hoped that the focus of Western thinkers' attention would shift from a personal perspective to a relationship perspective, that is, the theory that people are concerned in relationships all the time. Otherwise, Western individualism will evolve in an extreme direction. But Roger Ames-Philosophy thinks that his first task is to clarify the misunderstanding of Chinese culture and thought, especially Confucianism, and not to put Confucianism into the western theory, which will often lead to the conflict and misreading between cultures. However, if we want to interpret Chinese thoughts in the West, it is inevitable to compare with Western thoughts, because once we leave the familiar system of thoughts, the profound connotation of Chinese national culture and thoughts is difficult for the Westerners to understand.

2. The Criticism of Confucian Role Ethics on Individualism

Roger Ames Philosophy thinks that the root of all social problems in the West is the "individualism" of the fundamentalism. The "individualism" of the fundamentalism comes from the Christian faith, that is, in the conservative Christian thought, the moral and natural equality of all, the uniqueness that God has given you, and the love of altruism.

But this love cannot exceed the love of God, and God's concern for personal redemption is also an expression of individualism, because conservative Christian thought also holds that "there is no redemption except for Christianity." This doctrinal "individualism" has laid the moral foundation for the global free market capitalist economy, and at the same time, it has also made the human beings in today's nation appear obvious inequality. Roger Ames Philosophy began to seek resources from Confucianism, and constructed Confucian role ethics to deal with the limitation of individualism and the political consequences of individualism.

First of all, the definition of "individual" in Confucian role ethics is different from the definition of "individual" in individualism. Confucian "individual" emphasizes that people do not exist in isolation. The "individual" of individualism thinks that the person is completely independent, not interrelated, and emphasizes the interests and freedom of the individual. According to Roger Ames Philosophy, the environment makes an individual, and it is impossible for everyone to achieve themselves without the environment.

Secondly, Confucian role ethics and western doctrinal individualism are different in their concerns. Confucianism pays more attention to the relationship between people, while individualism emphasizes that people are isolated individuals and should be viewed from the perspective of the whole. So individualism violates what Marx calls "man is the sum of all social relations." Confucian role ethics thinks that people have been living in various social relations and interpersonal relations, and people will gradually expand their own circle of communication, thus increasing their own contact with others. Confucianism has a unique and profound understanding of people, it thinks that the social relations of people in life are very complex, and the social relations of people are dynamic, as a combination of movement and quiet concept.

Finally, morality is the key of Confucian role ethics. Moral virtue develops from the composition of human relations, and takes human relations and family roles as cut-off points, thus perfecting and developing morality. Therefore, the starting point of the Confucian role ethics is the family relationship, taking the individual's accomplishment in the family as the expanding point, from the inside to the outside, from the part, the concrete relationship to the wide and complex social

relationship, so that the person in the family to improve his accomplishment and morality, eventually become the reinforcement of the social relationship.

3. Abandoning the Ideology of Individualism

Each of us must be aware of the need for profound changes in human values, behavioural patterns, and ideological patterns. We must abandon the thought of "individual" of individualism and gradually accept the concept of "man is the existence of relation" of Confucian ethics, but there always exists a deep-rooted concept in the western culture, that is, doctrinal "individualism," and the westerners use it only to define the person with "morality," and the person with "morality" can exercise the behavior of "justice" based on this kind of "individualism." This doctrinal "individualism" is different from the moral responsibility in Confucianism; In the enlightenment of the West, individuals are defined as individuals who are not bound, independent, rational and reasonable "selfish." Such a definition is widely spread in the West and is the basis of morality and political philosophy in the modern West.

This definition deduces that the doctrinal "independent individual" belongs to the "fiction" of the noumenon, and this definition provides the "moral" and political basis for the extreme liberalism economic system, so that the extreme liberalism economic system is the pursuit of individual independence and freedom. But once the skin of freedom and independence is removed, it is actually the source of the contradictions and inequalities among the nations of the world. "As the foundation of morality and political philosophy, the concept of independent individual will lead to certain evil results. The concept of "individual," defined in this way, provides the impetus for the development of the capitalist economy of the global free market, which has led to the unequal welfare of the human beings of all nationalities in the world today. For we must abandon the idea of "independent individuals." But if the reason for our opposition to extreme liberalism is to describe this doctrinal concept of "independent individuals" in a different way, the will of extreme liberalism will always find ways to deal with its challenges, thus avoiding moral condemnation. Therefore, if we choose a kind of "collectivism" thought in Confucian ethics, we can gradually replace the concept of "independent individual," and gradually develop to the state that Marx called "man is the total sum of all social relations." Because of the collectivism in Confucian ethics, considering the intimacy, mutual character and particularity of the different characteristics of the real family relationship, it also accommodates the difference between the family identity and the social composition. To combine harmony and intimacy.

4. The Necessity of Transforming Individualism into Confucian Ethics

The concept of man established in the relationship structure of Confucianism can be a powerful substitute for western

individualism. But we also need to realize that Confucian ethics is more concerned with people themselves, that is, individuals who assume multiple roles and are in various relationships, such as benefactors and beneficiaries, parents and children, etc. In this relationship structure, people do not exist independently, but are interconnected, and the absolute isolated individuals in Western culture do not exist in such a culture.

It is indisputable that, in Confucianism, everyone is inextricably linked to others. Everyone, everything is in the context of nature, society and culture. People play different roles in the family and society, such as being mothers, children, classmates, neighbors, etc. In order for our role in the family and society to play a moral role, we must have as a matter of fact a life closely related to us. Confucianism holds that the significance of family itself will be directly reflected in the moral accomplishment of family members. If it rises to a wider range, the meaning of the world will also be reflected in the moral qualities of the members of society and their families. Human moral literacy is the foundation of the development of human culture, and human culture can also provide a good environment for the cultivation of individual moral literacy. Confucian philosophy, based on the experience gained by people from practice, focuses on whether we can enhance our moral accomplishment by devoting ourselves to daily affairs. From a daily point of view, it seems unsurprising but significant.

Confucianism has more profound influence on us than the western individualism. Because the wisdom of Confucianism is not to provide a set of splendid universal principles, but to summarize and summarize the practical experience of all kinds of affairs at that time. Time-shifting, personnel metabolism, Confucianism through the historical clouds, to keep pace with the times, so that traditional culture in the tide of endless.

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