

Asymmetrical Perceptions" in The Context of Political and Cultural Differences Between East and West

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Abstract: Comparative politics focuses on the examination of different countries, making comprehensive descriptions and profound explanations. Among them, the difference of political culture between different countries is one of the comparable points. Based on the difference of political culture between China and the West, this paper tries to find out the reasons for the difference of political culture between China and the West and the "asymmetric cognition" in the political and cultural communication between China and the West.

Keywords: Political culture, Comparative politics, Asymmetric cognition.

1. Introduction

Political culture plays a huge role in the political life of a country, and it's an important factor in understanding the politics of different countries or different periods. If we don't take political culture into account, we can't understand how politics actually works. Because political culture first provides legitimacy explanation for the establishment of political system; Second, to provide ideological and ideological support for the stability of the political order; Third, it provides guidance for the development of political ruling system. The in-depth study of Chinese and Western political cultures and the understanding of their main characteristics and differences are of great significance for understanding the different political behaviors of the two countries and establishing new political cultures. Therefore, this paper discusses the differences between Chinese and Western political cultures from the perspective of "asymmetric cognition", and summarizes and explains the manifestations thereof.

2. Concept of Political Culture

For what is political culture, academic circles have not reached a unified conclusion. Some people think that culture may be a fuzzy concept naturally, and its definition cannot be determined, so there is no need to pursue a simple and definite definition[1]. There is an urgent need to examine what culture is not[2]. Others advocate that the extended similarities of numerous cultural concepts be summarized into several aspects, such as ideology, life style, spiritual materialized products, etc. They believe that "rather than pursuing a simple and precise definition, it is better to determine an elastic range from the perspective of collection". This idea is also opposed by some theorists. They emphasize that while cultural categories are difficult to establish, it is not impossible to find reasonably clear boundaries; The so-called practice of "determining an elastic range" is not beneficial to the study of cultural foundation theory. Generally speaking, there is a broad sense of the concept of political culture and the narrow sense of the concept of political culture. In the narrow sense, political culture is ideological and the sum of certain political views, political values and political customs. In terms of the

broad concept of political culture, political model and political system are the physical form of political culture, political behavior is the external expression of political culture, politics is the systematic arrangement of political culture, and political psychology is the internal element of political culture. This article is discussed from the broad concept of culture.

On the definition of political and cultural connotation, Western scholars and Chinese scholars have put forward different views. In the west is more representative Almond, he initially proposed: "each kind of political system into the concrete of the special orientation of political action, this special orientation mode is the political culture of the political system, and from a personal perspective, political culture is a subjective orientation of politics and political evaluation." [3]. Later Almond further defined it as: "the set of political attitudes, beliefs, and feelings prevailing in a nation at a particular time." Chinese scholars have roughly four views on political culture, but the most typical one is the class subject theory, which holds that: "Political culture is the aggregate of political ideology, political psychology and political evaluation of the real political system and its various components formed by a certain class in a certain social, political and economic form and in a specific social and political life. It plays a guiding and restricting role in people's political direction, way and method." [4] Although China and the West have different understandings of political culture, their definitions of political culture include attitudes, beliefs, feelings, cognition, values and other aspects.

3. The Differences Between Chinese And Western Politics and Culture and Their Causes

3.1. Chinese and Western traditional political and cultural differences

3.1.1. Differences between Chinese and Western Constitutions

The Constitution is the fundamental law of the state, stipulating the fundamental tasks and systems of the state. Some people have used the US Constitution as a template to measure and evaluate China's Constitution, arguing that

contents in the preamble, such as "China is one of the countries with the oldest history in the world and strives to maintain world peace and promote the cause of human progress," do not meet the standards of the US Constitution. [5] The Constitution of China and the Constitution of the United States are essentially identical. The basic political system of the state stipulated in the text of the Constitution must be the product of the integrated action of its specific social political economy and ideological and cultural conditions, which can not be the same. For example, China has a political and cultural tradition of "great unification" since ancient times, due to its vast territory, large population, internal diversity, and uneven development, in order to prevent local breakaway and warlords from fighting each other. Therefore, the Constitution also clearly states that China is a "unified multi-ethnic country". On the other hand, the United States inherited the political practice of high degree of autonomy in the colonial period, and on the basis of being surrounded by sea and relatively balanced regional development, constructed the whole country with relatively loose federalism.

3.1.2. Differences between Chinese and Western Political Parties

China's political party system is a system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which is fundamentally different from the multi-party system in the West. To understand the differences between China's political party system and the Western party system, we cannot simply start with the one-party system or the multi-party system. We must first recognize that the political party system of each country is determined by the different historical conditions of each country. It is decided by the capitalist social system that western countries adopt multi-party system. The party system in the modern sense emerged after the bourgeois revolution and the formation of the bourgeois representative system, which is the product of adapting to the capitalist political and economic system. Moreover, the relationship between the multi-parties in Western countries is between the ruling party and the opposition party, the ruling party and the opposition party, and the relationship between political opponents. There is no mutual assistance and cooperation.

The multi-party system is at odds with each other, and no one represents the interests of the working people. The political party system of contemporary China is the historical necessity of inheriting the Leninist party tradition of the Soviet Union, and it is also the historical result of the interaction of various party organization models in the revolutionary practice. This system is based on the socialist economy with public ownership as the main body and is the foundation of multi-party cooperation. There is no conflict of fundamental interests between the CPC and the democratic parties, and all parties are striving to build socialism with Chinese characteristics.

3.1.3. Differences between Chinese and Western Economic Systems

China and the West are at different stages of development. After hundreds of years of capitalist development, the West has completed three industrial revolutions, and its productive forces are highly developed. Its industrial and technological civilizations have become the leading social civilizations, and it has built a market economy. In order to realize the self-perfection of the capitalist system, western countries began to change the private economy in the traditional sense, gradually

increase the government's intervention in the market, and develop to the mixed economy system. Chinese society experienced nearly 2,000 years of feudal society, followed by more than 100 years of semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. Only in 1978 did China begin to reform its economic system and establish a socialist market economy with public ownership as the mainstay and coexistence of various forms of ownership. Different from western capitalist countries, China has not experienced the stage of capitalist development, in other words, China has just begun to modernize on the whole national level.

3.1.4. The Difference Between Ethical Political Culture and Legal Political Culture

One of the major features of the political activities of China's feudal society for thousands of years is political ethicalization. In ancient China, social order was maintained not by law, but by clan, blood, the three Cardinal principles and the Five constants. Rule of propriety replaced rule of law, and the standard for measuring people's political behavior was "loyalty and filial piety". The focus of the teaching of Gangchang lies in the three cardinal Principles, and the core of the three cardinal principles lies in the patriarchy, which is an extension of the patriarchy. In feudal society, "the foundation of the country is at home"[6], The family and the country are entities in the social system, and the individual is just an appendage of the community as an entity. The individual interests are unconditionally subject to and subordinate to the common interests. Therefore, in ancient China, the state and the family were connected, and "loyalty to the king" and "service to the country" were mutually used. The result of political ethicalization is that in the process of political activities, introspection is emphasized, legal system is ignored, and practical political utility is emphasized. Different from Chinese ethical politics, the consciousness of law is more prominent in the process of western traditional political activities. For example, Heraclitus, a famous philosopher in ancient Greece, put forward that a city-state must be armed with laws, and only with laws can people live a good city-state life. [7] Pericles, the outstanding representative of Athenian democracy, put forward three basic principles of democracy in his political speech, the second of which is "the rule of law", he required everyone to obey the law, and put forward: "The law is equally fair to all people." [8] Of course, it does not mean that there was no ethical politics in ancient Greece. The ancient Greek thinker Socrates put forward the ethical politics thought, and he emphasized that the ruler should have "virtue" and "knowledge". Aristotle also discusses ethical politics in his Politics. From the perspective of legal system, Roman law has had the most profound influence on the modern European continent. The real spread and promotion of Roman law began in the 2nd century AD and reached its climax in the 6th century AD. In this process, some basic principles put forward by jurists were transformed into general social ethics ideas and became a Western political value orientation.

3.2. Reasons for the Difference Between Chinese And Western Politics and Culture

3.2.1. Physical Geographical Environment

Facing the sea, in southeastern China is located in the northeast Asia, the west and north is desert and mountains, which made the Chinese long cut off from the outside world in ancient times, have closed the geographical environment caused by the long history of the Chinese nation has both

ancient, and lack of communication with foreign culture in-depth, collision, the condition of mutual reaction, It directly influenced the vision of ancient Chinese people and determined the experiential closure of their thinking. The modern culture of the West originated from Greek culture, from the geographical location, Greece is located in Europe, Asia, Africa three continents at the intersection, southeast to west facing the sea, its northern mountains did not cut Greece off from the outside world. The geographical environment of Greece determined the openness of Greek society to the outside world, and at the same time directly promoted the Greeks to understand the world, broaden their vision, active thinking, and contributed to the development of natural science and ancient Greek philosophy.

3.2.2. The Economic Foundation of The Formation of Chinese And Western Political Culture

China is a big agricultural country in history. It is based on agriculture, but it is not without the development of commerce and the existence of industry. But their status in the social life is very low, they have no important influence on the political life, their subjective consciousness and psychological tendency can not be reflected in the political culture system. While in the west, the development of commodity economy throughout the whole process of its history, the ancient Greek society's economic development has obvious characteristics of the commodity economy, business and industry developed and parts of commercialization of agricultural production, the development of commercial center city and currency exchange, became an independent department of industry and commerce, businessmen became independent class. These characteristics determine that commodity economy has become the foundation of political life.

3.2.3. The Political Foundation of The Formation of Chinese And Western Political Culture

Due to the special physical and geographical conditions in China, clan consanguinity is largely preserved. The close combination of blood relations and political relations, and their integration and isomorphism in the political power system and structure, formed the patriarchal clan system in ancient China. Its specific principles and norms change from time to time, but the status of individuals dependent on the family, society, the state without independent personality is basically unchanged. China's feudal absolute monarchy system had a long existence, complete organization, with the distinctive characteristics of the supremacy of the monarchy and a high degree of centralized power. The development of Western commodity economy makes individuals become citizens who gain independence and freedom and the relationship between rights and obligations, forming the civic culture of democratic system. The main manifestations are as follows: state power is the aggregation of all citizens' power, and public will is the public welfare embodiment of citizens' will; Law is generally regarded as the embodiment of common citizenship. Obedience to the authority of law is not only the basic virtue of citizens, but also the basic obligation of citizens. Freedom is regarded as the requirement of human nature, to get rid of all kinds of inhibitions of personality, to achieve human freedom. Because of these different political and cultural backgrounds, there are great differences in political and cultural understanding between China and the West.

4. "Asymmetric Cognition" Caused by Political and cultural Differences between China and the West

In globalization and regional interaction, Chinese and western ancient and modern elements mutual reaction of deep modern society, because of the discourse, possession of information, knowledge structure, way of thinking, values and other differences, people's understanding of social political culture and evaluation are often prone to bias or misjudgment, this phenomenon is the asymmetry of "cognitive". It includes not only the same subject's asymmetric cognition of different cultural objects, but also the different subject's asymmetric cognition of the same cultural phenomenon. The Occidental theory is a typical example of asymmetric cognition, which uses abstract and illusory western political value standards to cut Chinese history and describes Chinese political culture as a pre-modern, mysterious "foreign land". In fact, scientific political and cultural research should adhere to the historical, dialectical, equal and comprehensive attitude. On the basis of comprehensive application of history, culturology, comparative linguistics and comparative politics, the similarities and differences between Chinese and Western political cultures should be made clear, and the essence should be removed from the dross. Thus lay a theoretical foundation for establishing confidence in the road, theory, system and culture.

4.1. Due to the Difference of Natural Geographical Environment, Chinese And Western People Have Fundamentally Different Understanding of "Politics and Tao"

The difference between Chinese and Western political culture lies in the difference between "political principles", and the understanding of this difference requires historical and materialistic analysis. China is located in the eastern Eurasia, the earliest Chinese culture intelligence to flat, fertile soil in the northwest and central plains area, farming is the basic mode of production, the ancient Chinese "blood - geopolitical" is the basic framework of social relations, the Chinese people advocate nature and humanity, be particular about ethnic character of ethics, attaches great importance to the cultivation of body and mind. This kind of character is implemented on "governance", which is manifested as a way of thinking based on "human nature is inherently good", advocating that harmony is higher than conflict, ethnic groups are higher than individuals, and obligations are prior to rights. In contrast, most Western civilizations originated near the ocean. Maritime trade is the basic way of production and life, and exploring the strange world and getting to know strangers is the basic form of communication. Therefore, Western society has formed a cultural style that attaches importance to individual independence, interest game and social contract. Ancient Greek culture can be said to be the cradle of European civilization. "The mention of the name Greece naturally evokes a sense of home in the minds of educated Europeans, especially in our German minds," Hegel said.[9] This is also reflected in the "political doctrine", which is based on the "evil nature of human nature", forming a way of thinking in which individuals take precedence over groups, the rule of law is higher than morality, and rights are higher than

obligations.

4.2. Due to the Difference of Cultural Value, Chinese And Western Political Cultures Have Different Understandings of "Politics"

The word "politics" has been produced in ancient Chinese and Western society, but there are essential differences in the meaning of the two. Politics in English originally refers to the castle or acropolis, which mainly refers to the right of citizens (including slave owners and freemen) except slaves to participate in the decision of public affairs of the city-state. It is the sum of class rule, city-state management, political participation and other public life behaviors. In modern times, the view of state power of social contract theory has become the core of Western political theories. Different from the West, the "politics" in ancient China refers to a kind of legitimate and harmonious wisdom of governing a country based on the people and generated by education. In ancient China, the word "politics" was usually used separately. Confucius said, "The ruler is also right." In ancient China, the word "politics" was usually used separately. "Shuowen Jie Zi Zhu" pointed out that "governance" means "governance as a principle".[10] Therefore, the ancient Chinese "politics" is not the Western concept of power, but more closely related to the management of society, people and things. In traditional Chinese political culture, the government and the state do not obtain the legitimacy of the regime through the protection of God and the social contract, nor do they aim to realize the interests of monadic individuals. Instead, they emphasize that those who win the people win the world, take public opinion as the fundamental standard for selecting talents and exercising abilities, and take the people's interests as the fundamental purpose of governing the country.

4.3. Due to the Translation Error, The Chinese and Western Political Cultures Have Different Understandings of "Democracy"

Democracy has become a common value of modern Eastern and Western societies. However, due to the translation, the word "democracy" is often misinterpreted, which leads to the "asymmetric cognition" between the Eastern and Western cultures. In the Western context, "democracy" is "the domination of the majority", and the majority of eligible voters is the supreme authority to decide on national political affairs. In Chinese, democracy means "the people are masters of the country". The people are the source of all power, as well as the value or significance of all activities or behaviors. The will and interests of the people are the supreme authority to construct state power. Socialist "democracy" emphasizes that citizens, regardless of their birth, gender, class, status or income, enjoy basic human rights and political and economic rights according to law. And bourgeois "democracy" reflects not the interests of the whole people, but only the interests of a few bourgeoisie. For example, in Athens, ancient Greece, known as the birthplace of "democracy," this qualification to participate in the adjudication was only in the hands of men who owned land and were over 20 years old. Women, slaves, outsiders, non-landowners, and men under 20 years old were not entitled to this qualification. Britain and America, which gave rise to representative democracy in modern politics, took more than two centuries to give blacks and women relevant political credentials. In the face of the "asymmetric cognition"

between Chinese and Western cultures, we need to have a deeper understanding of the differences between Chinese and Western cultures.

5. Conclusion

Political culture itself is inextricably linked with family life, social life, moral life and ethical life, and political culture is diffused in the larger social culture. It can be said that the political culture of each country has traces and characteristics of its own historical tradition in different degrees. Different modes of economic production and economic forms shape different structures of political life, breed different political and cultural environments, cultivate different political emotions and political mindsets, and form different political ideas and thoughts Both Chinese and Western political cultures are closely related to the social and political life of human beings. The differences between Chinese and Western political cultures take various forms of expression, and there are also many deep reasons behind them, which guide and restrict the direction, mode and method of people's political behaviors and other social behaviors. Since only comparison can distinguish between good and bad, and because political culture is not only class, historical, and national, but also connected, it stems from the globalization of world development or global symbiotic interaction, so the comparative study of political culture has important meaning. Through comparative research, we can both oppose xenophobia and resist the overall Westernization theory; we can not only carry forward the essence of traditional Chinese political culture, absorb the elements of Western political culture that meet the common requirements of human political civilization, but also discard the negative aspects of traditional Chinese political culture. , resolutely abandoning the so-called "the theory of the superiority of Western civilization", which is of great significance to deepening the mutual understanding, cooperation and win-win between Chinese and Western cultures.

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