

The Era Value of “Needham's Grand Question” in the Context of Cultural Confidence

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Abstract: "Needham's Grand Question" has long been a hot topic in academic research. It has no standard answers but has academic value. The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward the task of building "cultural self-confidence", and "cultural self-confidence" has become a major proposition of the modern era. This paper attempts to rethink the “Needham's Grand Question” from the perspective of “culturally confident context” and believes that the strong power brought by “Needham's Grand Question” will foster cultural self-confidence for the new era, promote the construction of socialist core values, and promote technological innovation. Realizing the Chinese dream has very important value.

1. Introduction

Since the 1980s, the “Needham's Grand Question” has been a hot topic in the study of Chinese traditional culture. It was proposed by the British scholar Joseph Needham. It is generally stated that between the 1st century BC and the 15th century AD, Chinese civilization was more effective than the West in applying natural knowledge to human practice, but why modern science only arises in the West. Didn't it rise in China (or India)? It can be said that this issue also asks about Eastern and Western civilizations. It is a resounding arrow for the study of Chinese civilization, reminding Chinese scholars to examine Chinese civilization from the perspective of world civilization. It has no standard answer, but it has academic value. It not only stimulates the positive analysis and deep reflection of Chinese traditional culture on Chinese traditional culture, but also affects the cultivation of cultural self-confidence of the Chinese people in the new era and the realization of the Chinese nation's great rejuvenation of the Chinese dream.

2. “Needham's Grand Question”and cultural confidence

Since the 18th National Congress, attaching importance to cultural construction and upgrading the country's cultural soft power have become an important part of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Xi Jinping pointed out: "We must adhere to road self-confidence, theoretical self-confidence, and institutional self-confidence. The most fundamental thing is a cultural self-confidence." In the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping proposed to strengthen the cultural self-confidence and promote the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The new cultural mission of the prosperity and prosperity of socialist culture has raised "cultural self-confidence" to the strategic height of historical mission, and cultural self-confidence has become a major issue in the current era.

In the long history of the Chinese nation, the Qin and Han Dynasties, the Tang and Song Dynasties, the Ming and Qing Dynasties flourished, and the modern civilization was weakened and bullied. In the centuries of modern history, the struggle was strong and the national sentiment was greatly traumatized. Rich and strong, and also need to be self-confident and self-reliant in spirit. Needham's Grand Question is what attracts people's attention and research in this context. On the one hand, it affirms the leading position of ancient Chinese culture, on the other hand, it reveals the pain of the nation in modern China, and prompts people to seek healing and strong bones.

Behind the "Needham's Grand Question" is a profound cultural implication. As far as Joseph Needham himself is concerned, he greatly appreciates Chinese traditional culture and tries to break the "Western Centralism" cycle.

Although Needham was born in western civilization, he was able to view Chinese traditional culture from the perspective of world culture. Joseph Needham said: "trickle of ancient science, different civilizations as rivers run to the sea of modern science, modern science, in fact, summed up the achievements of the old world all people, poured into the contribution of the various nationalities, or from ancient Greek, Roman, or from the Arab world, or the culture from China and India." "The cornerstones of culture are not only carved and laid by Europeans, but by the vast majority of the world's people," he added. As for the historical value of Chinese culture, Needham said, "if you really want to talk about civilization with historical value, then the glory should belong to China. These views of Needham have given us a profound enlightenment that culture is universal, each national culture has its inherent structure and value of existence, has made its own contribution to the development of human society, and should be treated equally. China is one of the four ancient civilizations, and its time-honored history and culture occupies an important position in the world culture. Only in this way can we stand firm in the world culture and demonstrate the power of a great power^[1].

Joseph Lee opposed the "Western Centralism" and was able to view Chinese traditional culture from the perspective of dialectical development. Joseph Needham said: "China's culture, like other countries, has a period of rapid development and a relatively static period." He also said: "Traditional Chinese society has a continuous general progress and scientific progress, only after the European Renaissance. The rapid development of modern science has been chasing after it." "China is only moving at its own unique speed, and Europe has changed exponentially after the scientific revolution." These views show that Chinese culture has always been in the process of development, but its development speed is fast and slow in different periods, and there are stages and imbalances. At the same time, for each country, the evaluation criteria for cultural development progress are different. Each culture has its own mark of specific production activities and has its own national uniqueness. This uniqueness and development and progress in Chinese traditional culture constitute the premise of our cultural self-confidence^[2].

3. The Times Value of "Needham's Grand Question" in the context of cultural confidence

In the cultural environment since the 1980s, the Chinese academic community has maintained a strong interest in the "Needham's Grand Question", which may be inextricably linked to the complex mentality of the Chinese people facing the "Needham's Grand Question". When he heard that Joseph Needham said, "The ancient Chinese science and technology is more effective than the West in practice, the Chinese people will be proud and proud. When they hear that "modern science does not appear in China," they may feel pity, even inferiority, or a little envious. This complex mentality of pride and inferiority, on the other hand, reflects the tremendous transformation of our cultural self-esteem from the literary glory of ancient times to the cultural inferiority of modern times. The "Needham's Grand Question" is a question of ancient Chinese science and Western modern science, but at the deeper level is the problem of Chinese culture and Western culture. From the "problem" to the question and answer, to the reflection of Chinese traditional culture, this has important epochal significance for cultivating socialist core values and realizing the Chinese dream in the new era.

First of all, recognize the traditional Chinese culture and enhance the confidence in Chinese culture. Joseph asked questions and was also committed to answering questions. The book "The History of Chinese Science and Technology" he wrote in the 1940s is the best explanation for this issue. The History of Science and Technology in China discusses the history of science, the history of technology, the history of scientific thought, and the history of medicine in Chinese culture. It covers the culture and civilization of China for five thousand years, and inherits the national spirit and national integrity of the Chinese people. It revived the traditional Chinese culture and created a Renaissance-style Chinese learning style in China, which brought Chinese culture to the world and re-established the important position of Chinese culture in world culture. Joseph Needham is deeply influenced by Marxism. The History of Chinese Science and Technology also reflects Joseph Needham's Marxist scientific view of history, which makes the relationship between science and

society closer. Through the History of Science and Technology in China, we can gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and explore its connection with Marxism. This has injected new vitality into the recognition of Chinese people in promoting Chinese traditional culture and Marxism in China. Conducive to our cultural confidence and value confidence^[3].

Second, inherit China's excellent traditional culture and promote the construction of socialist core values. "Cultural confidence is broader, more fundamental and deeper confidence." The establishment of cultural confidence is inseparable from the inheritance and development of excellent traditional culture. As the matrix of our cultural development, the fine traditional Chinese culture contains the deepest cultural strength of the Chinese nation and is the foundation and backbone of the Chinese nation. The cultural gene of the Chinese nation is rooted in the heart of every Chinese. As Chinese people themselves, it is more important to feel and publicize the unique charm of our national culture and inherit and carry forward the excellent traditional Chinese culture in practice.

Culture is the soul and blood of a nation. "Without the promotion and prosperity of culture, there will be no realization of the Chinese dream," xi said. "Cultivating and promoting core socialist values must be based on China's fine traditional culture," he said. Solid core values have inherent roots. To abandon tradition and its roots is to cut off one's own spiritual lifeline. These conclusions profoundly reveal the fundamental role of Chinese excellent traditional culture in building socialist core values. "Three advocates" is the essence of core socialist values based on the excellent traditional Chinese culture. Needham himself has praised the concepts of "fairness, justice and harmony" embodied in Chinese culture for many times. He said that in the Chinese ethics, "almost all the great Chinese philosophers agree that human nature is basically good, and that fairness and justice are directly generated through what we in the west might call 'the light of the spirit'." In dealing with man and nature, "the ancient Chinese sought order and harmony in the whole nature and regarded it as the ideal of all human relations. These excellent values in Chinese culture have become an important source for the conservation of socialist core values. In the new era, on the basis of inheriting China's excellent traditional culture, the core socialist values will surely lead the social trend of thought, build social consensus and boost the realization of the Chinese dream^[4].

Third, based on their own culture, promote technological innovation. The establishment of cultural self-confidence comes from the sublation and transcendence of its own culture, and at the same time it needs the close connection between its own culture and the current real problems, and its answers to practical problems. The second half of the "Needham's Grand Question" - why modern science did not rise in China, pointing to the history of Chinese modern humiliation in a hundred years, deeply stimulating the nerves of the Chinese, stimulating the pursuit and reflection of the scientific spirit of the Chinese people. It can be said that the "Needham's Grand Question" is also a problem of technological innovation to some extent. After the reform and opening up, China's economic and technological development has made remarkable achievements, but we have to admit that compared with the developed capitalist countries in the West, China's science and technology foundation is still weak, and the talent cultivation and technology management capabilities still need to be improved. Still based on imitation. Although imitation is a stage that has to be experienced to a certain extent, we must transcend this stage to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, vigorously promote the scientific spirit, and constantly promote innovation in various aspects such as theoretical innovation, institutional innovation, technological innovation, and cultural innovation. To enhance the spirit of independent innovation of the people and enhance the creative vitality of the whole society. For innovators, they must have self-confidence and courage, long-term vision, courage to explore, and be mindful of the overall situation, not afraid of failure; in terms of objective environment, we must give full play to institutional mechanisms, social trends, policy measures, cultural atmosphere, etc. to innovators and The role of innovation activities is to create a good external environment that supports innovation, protects innovation, encourages innovation and fosters innovation. Real scientific and technological innovation must also be based on its own culture, explore and study the part that coexists with modern science, and obtain content that still has value for modern science, and draw on and inspire each other in combination with modern scientific techniques and means; Learning from the advanced science and technology of the West, discovering

the advantages of the other in my communication with foreign cultures, using them in my own culture, rethinking the inferiority of my own culture in comparison with foreign cultures, correcting it, truly achieving self-reliance, self-confidence, and Good and effective.

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