

An Analysis of the Formation Process and Forms of Chinese Individual Concept

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ABSTRACT

Personal ideas are the core of modernity. The formation of Chinese personal concept has experienced three stages: learning from the West, reconstruction of learning results by modern common sense rationality, and reconstruction of Western personal concept by Chinese culture, thus forming a Chinese-style common sense personal concept. Contemporary Chinese personal concepts are different from those of the West. For a long time, people have mostly pointed out the total anti-tradition of the May 4th New Culture Movement and the breakage of Chinese cultural traditions, instead of paying attention to and carefully examining the role of Chinese modern common sense rationality in the New Culture Movement. The potential role of "in shaping China's contemporary ideology and culture" must not ignore the potential impact of its unique rational structure and cultural significance in the modern transformation of an ancient civilization.

Keywords: *Western individual concept, Chinese individual concept, Origin, Evolution.*

1. THE ORIGIN OF THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF INDIVIDUAL

The word Individual originated from the Latin individual *individuus*, and its original meaning is indivisible. This vocabulary existed in ancient Greece, and Boesius, who lived in the Roman Empire, used it to express a single, specific difference when translating the Greek word "atom" (basic particles that are inseparable in chemical reactions). An entity that can be further divided. How did a word used to express "atom" later begin to express the individual? Research pointed out that after the 16th century, with the birth of modern Western society, [1] individual began to be used to express individuals and became part of the blueprint of modern social organization. It can be said that individual expression of personal ideas originated from the process of finding the smallest unit of social organization. In Western political thought, individual (individual) is the core concept of modernity; it is the subject of power and the basic unit of social organization. However, we know that traditional Chinese and Western societies are composed of clan alliances, tribes, families (family), etc., and we have not seen the existence of individuals. Before the emergence of modern Western society, social organizations were not regarded as "individuals". The concept of

composition, on the surface, only needs to further divide the clan alliance, tribe, family (family), etc., to reach the smallest individual unit. In fact, it is not that simple. How to define the smallest unit of a social organization depends on people's reasonable blueprint for social organization. In different eras, as people have different understandings of the principles of reasonable social organization, they can have a great understanding of what constitutes the smallest unit of society as a whole. The difference.

Before the emergence of modern society, there were various blueprints of social organization, such as the blueprint of ancient Greek social organization and the blueprint of traditional Chinese social organization. The blueprint of social organization in ancient Greece was a city-state, which was also defined as a political community. People who can participate in a city-state are subject to great restrictions. Those who can participate in a city-state are called citizens. Citizens need to live in Local people who are rational and have the ability to participate in politics can also be called legal and self-sufficient family rulers, that is, parents. It can be seen that citizens must be men. Therefore, those outsiders, economically not independent people, women, children, and slaves cannot participate in public affairs. Therefore, in the blueprint of ancient Greek

social organization, the family belongs to the private domain, and its organization does not belong to the ancient Greek city state. The description scope of the organization principle. Therefore, the reason why ancient Greece and Rome did not have or did not need personal concepts was because the internal organization of the family was not legitimate in public affairs. When searching for the smallest unit based on this social organization principle, it is impossible to find the existence of individuals; the blueprint of traditional Chinese social organization is actually the blueprint of Confucian social organization, similar to the blueprint of ancient Greek social organization, and only a few elites can participate in political rule. It's just that such people are no longer called citizens, but gentlemen, but gentlemen are very different from citizens. In traditional Chinese society, although the family is still part of the non-public sphere, Confucianism has turned things like "filial piety" into the private sphere into a universal value, so it is also in the public sphere to some extent. So in traditional Chinese society, the family is an integral part of the country, and the internal organization of the family has legitimacy in public affairs. Why is it that when looking for the smallest unit of social organization, there is still no individual existence? Because Confucian ethics has opened up the values of the public and private domains, and stipulated the hierarchical order of ethics and inferiority. It is not individual individuals that make up a society, but ethical relations. Each person cannot be independent in this ethical network of relations. As an equal and independent existence, looking for the smallest unit in such a blueprint of social organization will certainly not see the existence of individuals. Therefore, in traditional Chinese society, there are only people who are the carriers of moral subjects and ethical relations, and there is no "individual" as the subject of rights and the basic unit of social organization. It can be seen that the origin of the personal concept is conditional: first, it is what people realize when looking for the most basic unit of social organization when the principles of modern social organization arise, that is, the personal concept is part of the blueprint of modern social organization; secondly, the individual The origin of the idea needs to be realized on the basis of the disintegration of social organisms, the liberation of people from moral relations and various organic social connections.

With the birth of modern western society, based on the collapse of various hierarchical social concepts, individuals (rather than groups) became the ultimate subject of natural rights, resulting in social contract theory, which regards individuals as the subject of natural rights, and society is nothing more than an organization formed by individuals using contracts to satisfy their own goals. According to social contract theory, only individuals can be found when looking for basic organizational units. Only in a contract society,

the individual, like an atom, as an indivisible entity, exists before society. Before the birth of modern society, society as an organism is naturally more important than the individual. However, with the birth of modern society, it is not sure which individual or society is more important. With the popularization of personal concepts, it appears that individuals are more important than society. The important trend of thought is individualism. Research points out that individualism was invented in France in the 1820s and later entered the English-speaking world with Tocqueville's writings, but the evaluation of individualism is different in different countries. For example, individualism in France has a negative meaning, which is believed to lead to the prevalence of egoism and harm the society, [3] but it has positive value in the United States. [4]

The origin of the modern western individual concept is rooted in the disintegration of the concept of social organism, the individual becoming the subject of natural rights and the rise of social contract theory. It is a special product of Western civilization.

2. THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF CHINESE PERSONAL CONCEPTS

The word "individual" has existed since ancient times, and has existed in spoken language since the Song Dynasty, which means myself. Appears in literary works such as poems and dramas. It refers to the person I love, but it is not the basic unit of society. In 1907, Lu Xun talked about the introduction of the term "individual" in this way: "The term "individual" has not been in China for three or four years, and he is known as a person who knows the time. It is often regarded as a big critic, and he has the same meaning as the people. People do not know well, and the righteousness of misunderstanding is to harm others and benefit oneself? In fact, it's not the case." It means "individual" who has entered China for less than three or four years. Most people who claim to know current affairs are It is a great shame to talk about "individuals", and to be judged by it at will, as being like a civilian. Maybe it was too late to know and observe, and mistakenly thought it meant harming others for self-interest? Looking at the true meaning of "individual", this is not the case at all. Two meanings are revealed from Lu Xun's words: the word "individual" was introduced by foreign countries around 1904; at that time, the word was quite negative in the minds of orthodox scholars. In fact, the exact meaning is that before the 20th century, China did not have the term "individual" in the modern sense.

To examine the origin of the concept of the individual in China, we must explore when the "individual" was regarded as the subject of rights and the basic unit of social organization, especially when it was used as the translated name of individual. In his book, Jin Guantao mentioned that the formation of all

contemporary Chinese political ideas has gone through three stages. He led a team to build a database of 120 million words related to the original literature on political thoughts, and led the research team to conduct research on 1830-1930. A statistical analysis of the significance of a large number of keywords during this one hundred years revealed the three stages of discovery: learning, selective absorption, and reconstruction. We can look at the specific process of personal ideas in these three stages according to these three stages. [2]

Before the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, it was the first stage: this was the period when Confucianism selectively absorbed modern Western ideas. For those concepts that are not in Confucianism, this stage shows total rejection or indifference. In the "Monthly Statistical Biography of Eastern and Western Research" published in 1830, missionaries used the principle of everyone's autonomy to express the modern concept of individual rights in the West. In 1885, "Zuo Zhi Yan" was the first Chinese translation of a systematic discussion of the economic principles of Western liberalism. In it, individual was translated as human, society was translated as society, and social organization mechanism was translated as natural principles, liberalism. The principle of social organization is translated as a Confucian saying "The rule of a country begins with the family", and "individual rights and duties" is translated as "On the things that should be done in the duties of life". It can be seen that during this period, personal ideas were also not accepted.

The second stage is the 20 years from 1895 to 1915: it is called the learning stage. In other words, the defeat of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 was a watershed, and the modern core values and most important concepts of the West were all introduced that year or later in 1898-1902. It can be divided into three more detailed stages: 1895. After the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, people began to realize that if they continued the blueprint of Confucian social organization, they would perish the country. The individual and social concepts in the West corresponded to each other, and it was at this time that rights and individual autonomy began to establish a connection; in 1898, during the Reform Movement of 1898, the word "individual" first appeared in Liang Qichao's "A Beautiful Woman's Adventure", but the usage was negative; From 1900 to 1915, China began to learn from the bottom up of modern Western social systems. Especially in the first ten years, there was a climax of a comprehensive study of Western modern systems. In this period, rights and individuals began to show a strong correlation. The introduction of the concepts of, rights, citizens, society, and social contract theory. The Gengzi Incident occurred in 1901, and the word "individual" was associated with individual in the West in 1902, beginning with Liang

Qichao. In his work Liang Qichao defined "individual" as a person outside the private sphere (the carrier of public morality that owns rights), and the English individual is indicated below. "The sovereignty of a country lies in the individual", which clearly expresses the Western concept of individual rights. In 1906, a preliminary constitution was announced, and the Western Republic was introduced in the early years of the Republic of China. Statistics show that in 1900-1915, when Chinese intellectuals used the term "individual", they were quite close to Western modern concepts. However, it cannot be said that Chinese personal concepts during this period were the same as Western personal concepts. The reason why contract theory can be introduced is because Confucian ideology has retreated to the private sphere. Personal ideas are only legitimate in the public sphere, but Confucian ideology is still dominant in the private sphere. This is structurally different from Western personal concepts, which are legitimate in both public and private fields.

The period from 1915 to 1924 is the third stage: its characteristic is to use Chinese thinking mode to reconstruct Western modern ideas to form Chinese-style modern ideas. During this period, the New Culture Movement began, the dualism of Chinese and Western dichotomy was denied, and the personal concepts accepted by the Chinese changed dramatically, and a full-scale criticism of Confucian ethics emerged. The new intellectuals cultivated by the new-style education can no longer agree with this view of classifying China's political ills as individualism. The general view of individualism does not matter whether it is good or bad, but because the essence of Chinese individualism is "family individualism", which makes people rely too much on the family, which leads to Chinese people's lack of independent personality and autonomy. At this time, personal concepts that were only effective in the private sphere began to enter the public sphere. Personal concepts were legitimate in both public and private fields, but they were still different from Western personal concepts. At the beginning of this stage, individualism was positive, but with the First World War from July 28, 1914 to November 11, 1918, and the May Fourth Movement in 1919, it was realized that in real life, the poor are not only economically Without the rights of the rich, it is even difficult to obtain the minimum living conditions. In the later period of the New Culture Movement, the unequal economic status of individuals questioned the moral attributes of individual rights and believed that individual rights are class-like. In this way, China's personal concepts have distanced themselves from those in the West, forming a unique contemporary Chinese personal concept.

After the New Culture Movement, the denial of individual rights, contemporary China's personal concept is a different personal concept from the West, which is called a "common sense personal concept."

3. CONTEMPORARY CHINESE PERSONAL VIEW

The contemporary Chinese individual view is a "common sense view of the individual." The common sense view of the individual is similar to the Western view of the individual. The individual is considered to be independent and society is composed of individuals. The difference is that rights are no longer individuals. The indispensable core of ideas is that individuals are not defined by the subject of rights.

Logically speaking, the blueprint of social organization corresponding to the common-sense personal view may have two forms. The first is to introduce a general new moral ideology from modern common sense or the common sense of modern people, and the individual serves as the carrier to realize this morality. In this way, the country and society are regarded as a whole based on the new moral code (identity with the new ideology), and the social organization mechanism related to this is holistic. The second one can start from the existence of universal moral laws in Shanding, thinking that morality only exists in specific interpersonal relationships. In this way, it is impossible to organize society with a new universal moral ideology. Society is imagined as an interpersonal network composed of individuals, and individuals are the center of constructing various interpersonal relationships. Modern Chinese personal concepts, although their forms may be different, are different from those of the West. The only difference between the two is that one regards individuals with common sense as moral practitioners, uses universal moral principles to integrate society, and the other negates universal laws and regards individuals with common sense as relationship builders.

These two levels of common sense personal concepts seem to be opposed, but in fact they are interdependent and coexist in the consciousness of contemporary Chinese. The Chinese can freely switch between these two levels. When moral ideology loses its charm, members who once believed in Leninist party ideology can naturally become common-sense individualists. On the other hand, when Chinese modern common-sense individualists recognize universal laws and submit to ideology and universal morality, they will become ideological individuals. But the individuals who construct the personal network still exist at the operational level, which is manifested in the establishment of upper and lower relationships and horizontal relationships as an important means of personal promotion, that is, the individuals who establish the privThe title "AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS" should be in all caps.

Ate network become the necessary supplement for the ideological individual. Hu Shi used 1923 as the

boundary and divided the Chinese ideological situation into two stages. Prior to this, intellectuals were directly immersed in the ideological trend that emphasized individual liberation. Individualism prevailed. Since 1923, individualism began to be overwhelmed by collectivism. Here, the so-called collectivism is actually an ideological view of the individual and the corresponding blueprint of social organization. Although the Kuomintang and the Communist Party have become the dominant forces in China's political arena since 1923, and the party-state model has become an overwhelming blueprint for social organization, for those intellectuals who do not agree with the party-state ideology, they can still maintain common sense individualism in their life style and mentality. After Zhou Zuoren failed to advocate the new village, he changed from an active advocacy of individualism to a mentality of focusing on the taste and charm of his own life and working with "play". After the 1930s, this kind of individualism, which focuses on individual survival, became a way of life for many literati and intellectuals to escape from political ideology.

The historical process of the emergence and evolution of Chinese personal concepts, distinguishing its expression mode, connotation extension, ideological form and deep structure, and its basic influence on the movement and trend of ideological, cultural and literary at that time are conducive to the development of a key word, a core category and Starting with concepts, retrospectively interrogating the universal consciousness structure and basic logic of modern Chinese thought, culture and literature; it is also conducive to more clearly grasp those basic and persistent things that have been affecting the entire modern Chinese literature and even modern Chinese society.

4. CONCLUSION

The formation of China's personal concept has gone through two different stages: learning from the West and modern common sense rationality reconstructing the learning results. The next stage of learning is the reconstruction of Western personal concepts by Chinese culture, leading to the formation of Chinese-style personal concepts that are different from Western personal concepts. In the first two decades of the 20th century when Chinese modern thought was transformed into contemporary thought, the philosophies and ideological propositions of Wang Fuzhi, Huang Zongxi, Dai Zhen, Gong Zizhen and others were once again discovered and highly valued, which shows that modern traditions have participated in the development of modern Chinese culture. Formation and shaping of contemporary ideas. For a long time, people have mostly pointed out the total anti-tradition of the May Fourth Cultural Movement and the breaking of

Chinese cultural traditions, instead of paying attention to and carefully examining the potential role of Chinese modern common sense rationality in shaping contemporary Chinese ideology and culture in the New Culture Movement. For the modern transformation of such an ancient civilization, we must not ignore the potential influence of its unique cultural heritage and rational structure.

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