

The Analysis of the Plutarch Political Thought

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Abstract—Plutarch is hailed as a great biographer, moralist, but not a politician. In his code of ethics, however, politics has been the most prominent. He thinks the best political system is the monarchy. He has a low opinion of ordinary people, who believe that they are ignorant and short-sighted, and that he thinks that democracy is but a government of rabble. He inherited Plato's philosophy that the monarch should be held by a good philosopher. But when Plutarch lived, it was impossible to achieve it, so he proposed that the philosopher should be assisted by the concept of the monarch.

Keywords—Plutarch; Political thought; Democracy; Analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Plutarch is a famous biographer and moralist. His two great books, "biography of the famous" and "the moral treatise", are widely circulated in western literary and historical circles. Once active in the Greek politics of well-known scholars, Plutarch's views on political issues have his own uniqueness and representative and forward-looking, is the study of Plutarch and their writings unavoidable topic. While Plutarch doesn't want to talk too much about political theory, he doesn't talk about political theory without theory. It is not difficult to analyze his views on basic political theory from his teaching to the political. Based on the existing data, this paper tries to make a preliminary discussion of Plutarch's political thought. The study of Plutarch's political thought contributes to a more profound understanding of the humanistic style of Greek and Roman society around the first century AD.

II. THE VIEW OF THE REGIME OF PLUTARCH

Although Plutarch emphasized the role of politics in human society, he did not systematically discuss various forms of government. His articles are mostly about the specific management of the government. However, from his inculcation, he can still see his basic evaluation of different types of government and government forms.

Plutarch believes that the monarchy is the best political system. He called the two most beautiful things "monarchy" and "virtue", [1] and rated the king's job as "the greatest and greatest of all political functions". [2] Whenever Plutarch mentions his respect for the king, always use "alpha beta sigma tau lambda tau kappa omicron predominate zeta" this adjective to describe their own to pay homage to the king. [3] Plutarch, like Polybius, was struck by the astonishing achievement of Alexander the great king. In Alexandria, once they see a man of extraordinary ability when the king, he play out, will be how powerful is the force of changes he brings to the country and the world will be how amazing. Although Alexander is the conqueror of the

Greeks, but Plutarch still could not help but to such a world praise the Lord, he is "make millions of primitive tribe to the civilization of the great philosopher." The idea of [4] was obviously influenced by Plato's philosopher-king. But it has to be clear that the monarchies that Plutarch appreciates must be virtuous, moderate and competent. Otherwise, once the king has fallen, the monarchy will become a tyrant. The tyrannical rule of Plutarch is the same as that of Plato and Aristotle's tyrannical system, which refers to the rule that no king is only for his subjects.

With regard to "minority rule", Plutarch clearly divided it into "aristocracy" and "oligopoly". The aristocracy was a good, noble and caring form of government for Plutarch. The best example of the aristocracy was the Spartan, the Spartan of Mr Lukuku, which Mr Plutarch highly admired. Moreover, he also stressed that Thucydides described Pericles government is actually a kind of aristocracy, although it is ostensibly democratic, but it is because of Pericles is not democracy, made in Athens, firmly established in the critical moment. But this minority rule became oligarchic when the aristocracy of the regime fell, hardened, and arrogant, and only considered the interests of their small group. When Plutarch described oligopoly system, he often use "omicron lambda tau gamma alpha rho chi tau kappa omicron predominate zeta" a neutral adjectives, or adverbs by changes it "omicron lambda tau gamma alpha rho chi iota alpha" to describe he doesn't like the oligarchs. Whether it is "omicron lambda tau gamma alpha rho chi tau kappa omicron predominate zeta" or "omicron lambda tau gamma alpha rho chi iota alpha", give a person a kind of negative feeling. That way of expression has made Plutarch's aversion to oligarchy leap.

Mr Plutarch's assessment of democracy is not high. Plutarch says democracy is not exactly the same democracy as we are talking about today. What he calls democracy, like the democracy Aristotle describes, is the democracy of the poor, the democracy of ordinary people. [6] so when Plutarch refers to democracy as a political system, it often means that the people directly manage the country, and that it means that the people are truly the masters of the country. Because of the subtle influence of Greek democracy, Plutarch also has certain preferences when it comes to democracy. In most cases, however, Plutarch is more concerned about the system that governs most people. He feared that once the masses lost their senses, they would drag the whole country along, and the country would be in an unmanageable mess. He even described the banishment of Athens as a means of abuse of democratic rights. [8] Plutarch is probably ambivalent and complex when it comes to democratic government. On the one hand, Plutarch wants to stick to the democratic tradition of his ancestors; on

the other hand, he does think that democratic government is extremely unstable, and that it is easy for the ignorant to be incited by politicians.

In his writings, Plutarch has repeatedly emphasized that good rulers can serve as examples for their subjects to lead the nation toward good. [9] Is what it means: "good leaders make good followers." [10], which makes the ruler better, makes the whole country ideal, and seems to be easier to achieve in authoritarian governments. He was therefore more inclined to support the moderate, humane, and very good control of the state of government, the monarchy and the aristocracy; Opposition to a tyrannical, tyrannical, dictatorial tyrant, and an oligarchic government, against an overly radical democratic government.

III. THE VIEWPOINT OF THE COMMON PEOPLE OF PLUTARCH

From Plutarch's writings, you can see that he doesn't seem to care about ordinary people's actions, nor is it attaches importance to the role of people in history, his most excellent work of celebrity biography is high above the politicians and generals, the ethical review of articles on politics are also give officials put forward Suggestions and advice, did not give people what meaningful advice is put forward. But Mr Plutarch's disregard for the masses in his work is not simply a matter of his uninterested interest in the public, but a close link to his basic view of the people.

Plutarch thinks people are ignorant and short-sighted. In Plutarch, citizens of the city-states can be divided into two categories, one of which is a small number of outstanding citizens, who are usually well known as education, noble and rich; The other group is the majority of ordinary people in the city-state, who live in poverty and have basically no education, often described by Plutarch as "ignorant" or "stupid". Plutarch himself belongs to the former class of so-called fine citizens, and the friends he associates with are all part of this class. For another class, ordinary people, Plutarch always seems to be standing in the opposite points, said they like paranoid and capricious beasts, calm, shout for a while. In a sympathetic tone, he says that prominent figures such as lukuku and numa manage a fractious group of troublemaker. And he thought that stupid people, even when they were generals, ministers or public speakers, would not behave like politicians. From these words in Plutarch, [12] can clearly feel that he is prejudiced against the general public, with a disdain for his words.

Plutarch believes that the power of the masses is enormous and cannot be ignored. In the nikitas, Plutarch says, the ruler can't pay too much respect to the public, but must not ignore them. [13] Because in the democratic government of Greece, the voice of the people can often determine an important decision of the country, determine the fate of a politician and even determine the future of the whole country. Even when Plutarch lived, the civilian population was not directly involved in government management, but still had the power of irrationality. They can achieve their goals through various means. They can support a politician, or oppose him, for a performance or a distribution. So Plutarch believes that, while ignorance is vulgar, the power of the masses cannot be ignored.

Mr Plutarch thinks the right way to deal with people is to control the public in the context of full consideration of the interests and aspirations of the people. Him in the eyes of good government in the management of countries, must consider the desire of the people and requirements, agreed to make rulers and the ruled, coordinated, otherwise it will become Plutarch's eye bad government. Thus, while Plutarch often appraises the public as ignorant and gross, he wants the rulers to care for the interests of the governed and to treat them gently. On the question of how to manage and control people, Plutarch claims that people could persuade education way, he was opposed to using violence to force people to obey, or use a variety of means a practice to draw people. Mr Plutarch stresses that the virtues of politicians themselves are potent weapons of persuasion. Because a politician is like a man living on the stage, his every move will be noticed by the public. So politicians must lead by example and nurture their own good character, so that they can be more persuasive when they speak, and can be immune or less popular. [14] Therefore, the morality of the statesman is the essential factor to control the masses, and the talent of the speech is an important means to control the people. Thus, Plutarch hoped that the rulers would keep control of the masses, but did not want them to use any crude means.

IV. THE CONCEPTION OF MONARCH OF PLUTARCH

Although the ancient greeks had a tradition of pursuing democracy, they were no strangers to the rule of one. Plutarch's "to an ignorant rulers" although very short, but it is clearly displayed on the Plutarch king's basic views, its views to a large extent inherited the traditional Greek concept of kingship. Plato's view of power was particularly profound to Plutarch. This is mainly manifested in the inheritance and development of the concept of "philosophy king" in Plutarch. Plato's views are often quoted directly or indirectly in the "moral studies", and the process of logical reasoning is similar to that of Plato. God (or god) is the master of the world, the avatars of righteousness and goodness, who is in charge of human life. But god does not manage man directly; he needs the Kings of man to take his place in man. But how can a king attain the same qualities as god so that he may perform his duties better? Philosophy is the path to righteousness and good, and righteousness and goodness have the same qualities as god. Therefore, the king must learn philosophy. And philosophy can make people modest and prudent, and avoid the rulers who steal the glory of god from arrogance. Thus, in Plutarch's view, the king is a substitute for god's duty, and the world must submit to the authority of the king. At the same time, a monarch needs a philosopher's mind to be competent. In Plutarch's view, Alexander's success was a necessary link to his learning and philosophy, because he possessed the appearance of a king and the mind of a philosopher. [15] lukuku was also a perfect example of the philosopher's king, and Plutarch praised him, saying that he was greater than the philosophers who wrote a great deal of work.

Plutarch has made appropriate additions and improvements to the traditional concept of kingship, which has given the monarch a new meaning and role to make it more in line with the social and political environment of the time. First, Plutarch emphasized the role of the king, arguing that the king

should be a role model for the world to learn and emulate. He thinks that the power of a role model is enormous and irresistible, and that people see good examples will produce a strong desire to emulate him. [16] And the king has a duty to be a role model for the world to learn. Good rulers make good followers. In the second place, Plutarch developed the idea of Plato's "king of philosophy" and translated it into the philosophy of "the philosopher assisted the king". In the context of the philosopher, in particular, should talk to the authorities, Plutarch, points out that if a philosopher's teachings can affect a ruler, politician, philosophy can by a person the benefit of all. Under Roman emperors, the philosophers had no chance to become the ruler of the country. The real rulers were only the emperor, and the philosophy of the king was impossible. So Plutarch came up with another way to make philosophy serve politics, the collaboration between philosophers and those in power. In this way, philosophers can't only indirectly participate in the practice of administering the country, but also make the ruler influence the philosophy and realize the ideal of the king of philosophy. The philosophy of the philosopher and the ruler of the ruler embody Plutarch's interest in realpolitik, which is a reasonable adaptation of traditional political theory according to the reality.

V. CONCLUSION

Plutarch's view of the government, the people and the king inherited both the traditional Greek political theory and the reasonable flexibility of the Roman social reality. First, he believed that the good and bad government had no relation with the specific political system and management form, but directly related to the moral level and personal qualities of the ruler or leader. He attributes the decline of the government to a decline in the moral standards of the ruler. In comparison, he preferred the aristocracy and the monarchy. Because in these two regimes, the individual ability of the ruler is not easily disturbed by ordinary people, which is more conducive to the management of the country of genuine virtue. Second, Plutarch is not highly critical of the public, who think they are short-sighted and powerful, and are often used by politicians and demagogues. But Mr Plutarch is not advocating a brutal approach to the public, because it is not in line with his humanitarian values. In the end, in the view of the king, Plutarch inherited Plato's conception of philosophy. But he didn't have a copy of Plato's theory, but in the identification of Plato's ideas about Kings basic at the same time, according to the reality of the emperor rule, has carried on the appropriate adaptations to the old theory, making them more in line with the needs of the society at that time. His innovation of the traditional concept of kingship was mainly manifested as: first, the role model of the monarch was more emphasized. Second, he was able to work around the idea of philosopher-king as a philosopher and a king. Therefore, in the view of basic political theory, Plutarch inherits the traditional political theory of Greece, and also has a new understanding and opinion based on the reality.

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