

On the performance of conservatism in Song Dynasty and its influence on the Central Plains of later generations

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Abstract. With reference to Martin Heidegger's concept of "Machination" and Hegel's master-slave dialectic thinking, this paper explores the reasons for the emergence of the Song Dynasty, a dynasty conservative feature with special research value in ancient China, from the perspective of human social history. As a dynasty whose economy developed rapidly but was repeatedly defeated, invaded, and forced to compromise with other nationalities, the Song Dynasty was different from the radicalism and chauvinism that the previous dynasties and even more ancient dynasties had always adhered to. The conservative attitude directly led to the demise of the Song Dynasty and had an important influence on the later Central Plains, which provided a reference for the governance decisions of the later dynasties for nearly a thousand years.

Keywords: conservatism; Song dynasty; Political decision-making; decline.

1. Introduction

Contrary to activism, conservatism usually refers to a seemingly negative political, economic, and socio-cultural philosophy. The word conservatism first appeared in Edmund burke's Thoughts on the French Revolution in the 18th century. Due to different historical backgrounds and strategic needs, conservatism has different manifestations, but it also requires maintaining the social status quo and historical traditions and taking opposing major social changes as its basic proposition. For the East, as an "imported product", it is obviously a reverse description to use conservatism to describe China's Song Dynasty nearly a thousand years ago, but the two are the same. The Song Dynasty also has the core characteristics of "opposing all radical revolutions and innovations, advocating political moderation and reconciling the conflicts of interests of various social forces by means of compromise". From the history of human society, as the representative of the Han nationality, the Song Dynasty took part in the national game between the 11th and 13th centuries. During these three hundred years, Han, Tangut, Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongolian nationalities have risen one after another, and the leading roles have been constantly changed[1]. However, in the Song Dynasty, its political, economic, social, and cultural development reflected the characteristics of emphasizing literature and restraining martial arts, negative expansion, and external Confucianism and internal law. We believe that these historical conservative practices have not been able to continue the political life of the Song Dynasty, but at the same time, they have provided a reference for the governance decisions of the later dynasties for nearly a thousand years.

2. The definition of conservatism and its concrete manifestation in the Song Dynasty

2.1 The political attitude of emphasizing literature and restraining arms

In the western classification of conservative schools, cultural conservatism is a major category. However, the boundary between civil and military affairs is not so obvious in the Song Dynasty and the court. Originally a local general, Zhao Kuangyin started his dynasty in the form of some kind of military mutiny, rather than a traditional political struggle or a relatively formal procedure. This makes his appointment of military commanders not as reassuring as using civilian officials. Therefore, at the beginning of the Song Dynasty, he imposed an ideology that prevented generals or any internal

military forces from approaching the political center of the dynasty. The governance thought changed in this way directly affects the power proportion of civil and military officials, that is, the bureaucratic class of Confucianism controls a relatively large amount of power and suppresses the status of military commanders. Seriously weakened the confidence and combat effectiveness of the frontline combat troops. This policy of emphasizing literature and restraining arms was a political policy that plunged the country into a circle of death, especially in that era[2]. By the late Song Dynasty, many Song people had discovered the weakness of the country in terms of force, but they were unable to reform for a while because of the solidification of the civil servant class, and it was even more difficult to save the Song Dynasty. Finally, they were destroyed by the Yuan Dynasty after struggling.

2.2 Negative economic attitude towards expansion

As we all know, the Song Dynasty had unimaginable huge reparations in its 300 years of existence, but it always maintained a high economic situation. It can be seen that the economic development of the Song Dynasty had a relatively mature system. Although the economy of the Song Dynasty flourished with the prosperity of industry Commerce and overseas trade, it was actually a carnival of bureaucratic groups and powerful people. Because of the fundamental nature of its official and commercial economy, its vitality was limited[3]. The magnificent coat of the Song Dynasty's economic glory seems to be behind the prosperous economy, but it is full of hidden dangers and instability, among which the most important is the ability to resist risks. From the perspective of ownership of industry and Commerce in the Song Dynasty, most of them had a bureaucratic background, although its original intention was to win over officials and avoid unnecessary consumption of commercial development due to competition. But at the same time, because of the loss of competition, we tend to suppress and restrict the development space of private capital and private enterprises, which will inevitably lead to a lack of competitiveness and innovation. Therefore, although the Song Dynasty made great progress in macro-economy, industrial economy, and even enterprise system, and formed the industrial and commercial system construction under the unified and centralized system, in fact, this idea of imprisonment seriously affected the process of economic development, making the semi bureaucratic economy always become the mode of thinking in the next 1000 years and affected the whole economic development up to the period of the Republic of China, It also made this process earlier than capitalism but lost to capitalism.

2.3 The social and cultural attitude of external Confucianism and internal law

The dialectics of master and slave contains the ternary coexistence structure of "master object (desire object and its satisfaction) - slave". In ancient China under the imperial power system, the state was the monarch's country, the world was the monarch's world, and the courtiers were only high-level slaves under the imperial power. Under the political attitude of emphasizing literature and restraining martial arts, a large number of scholars became courtiers. Most of them followed the Confucian rules of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faith, but their advice to the emperor was limited to suggestions rather than opinions. Therefore, the soft cultural characteristics of Confucianism are shown. Even if there is an open political view that "the world is the world of everyone, not a world of one person and one surname", it is hard to escape the domination of the introverted soft cultural temperament. Confucianism advocates filial piety to the elderly, care for the younger generation, family harmony, benevolence and righteousness without the use of force, loyalty to the monarch, and wisdom. In fact, none of them has anything to do with intensive military training. However, it is very helpful for the formation of customs and the propaganda of the bureaucratic system. However, without a strong military as support, the plan of strengthening the country can not be really implemented. From this we can see that the culture is suitable for Confucianism; The legalist culture is suitable for making, not for speaking. The combination of the two is just suitable for the so-called political requirements of the monarch, which is also known as the art of the emperor for thousands of years. However, the emperor, the courtiers, and the common people all understand this truth and maintain superficial prosperity.

3. The reason why conservatism was carried out in Song Dynasty?

3.1 To avoid the absolute crisis of mercenaries' self-respect.

The rulers in the early Song Dynasty had a clear understanding of the dangers of military commanders' interference and arrogance in the history of the Five Dynasties. Song Taizu once said, "The towns of the Five Dynasties were abused, and the people suffered from it. I ordered more than 100 officials of Confucianism and vassals to be elected, and they were divided into big vassals. Even though they were greedy, they were not as corrupt as the military officials." Therefore, it becomes a theoretical explanation for strengthening centralization. The military strength of the Song Dynasty declined gradually by suppressing martial arts with literature. In the future, when the Jin and Yuan armies marched on a large scale, Song Jun was defeated in the First World War, and its military strength was weak. Song Ting's constant attack by foreign invaders, but no backhand power, also prompted the rulers of later generations to have the idea of "peace" and surrender[4]. In fact, the ancient civil servants were synonymous with "conservatism" to a certain extent. Different from the western world, most western philosophers' thoughts collide fiercely. Although they can't lead troops, they dare to do the fierce collision caused by their thoughts and are good at guiding military actions. The literati class is not. Generally speaking, the class dominated by literati and officialdom chose to keep the existing situation and sent troops only when they had to. But correspondingly, once defeated, conservatism will probably turn into capitulationism, hoping for a compromise. However, when the war is triumphant, great conflicts and discord often break out within conservatism. In the face of the honor brought by victory, conservatism will take risks and make positive progress. However, the limitations of conservatism make them choose to take it easy. The emperor was inclined to the latter because it would be easy to recover the relieving power and avoid the absolute crisis of self-respect.

3.2 China's traditional agriculture as the foundation of the economic model

Needham issue can be a very important starting point to study the influence of conservatism on China's development. Its theme is "Although ancient China made a plethora of important contributions to the development of human science and technology, why didn't the scientific and industrial revolution take place in modern China?" As stated in the preface, the economic model from basic agriculture to industry and commerce and preliminary overseas trade made the Chinese civilization in the Song Dynasty slowly move towards a conservative feudal bureaucratic monopoly system. However, the Song Dynasty adopted a relatively conservative attitude, which was really unlikely to have this Heidegger-style technological invention mode of "Machination" against nature in the Western way. This led to the fact that although the commercial economy was very active in the Song Dynasty, the government still pursued the policy of emphasizing agriculture and suppressing commerce. The policy of emphasizing agriculture and suppressing commerce in the Song Dynasty made a new development in combination with the actual situation at that time, showing its own unique characteristics, and had a great impact on the society of the Song Dynasty. The policy of suppressing commerce in the Song Dynasty was mainly realized by "monopoly" and the promulgation of "monopoly" laws, which adapted to the development situation at that time. The implementation of the policy of attaching importance to agriculture and suppressing commerce moderately restricted the power of businessmen, which reduced social mobility and solidified the class. However, due to the establishment of policy of not establishing a land system in the early Song Dynasty, the landlords and powerful men annexed a large number of farmers' land, which led to the aggravation of land annexation in the Song Dynasty and intensified social contradictions. It became an endogenous hidden danger of the Song Dynasty government in governing the country. Under the seemingly harmonious national economic prosperity, the increasingly weak anti-risk ability was hidden.

3.3 The confinement of Confucianism to thought

"Book of rites, Li Yun," wrote: what is human righteousness? With a kind father, a son's piety; With a good old brother, younger brother respect; The original meaning of this sentence is to

emphasize mutual benefit, not a single responsibility, and obligation of one party to the other. Unfortunately, it's just ideal. The Song Dynasty was indeed a period of great cultural and economic prosperity in China. However, the most important reason for this stability is that Confucianism and a set of the hierarchical feudal system established by Neo Confucianism in Song and Ming Dynasties magnified the value of "etiquette". The "ancestral clan law" formulated in the early Song Dynasty made the later generations abide by it and formed conservatism in social thought. "Ancestral clan system" was carried out by the later Song Dynasty emperors and influenced the whole society of the Song Dynasty. Most of the emperors after Taizong followed the patriarchal clan law mechanically, and the ancestral law was immutable, which had always been difficult to go beyond the old framework; Emphasis on moralization, and light on force; In the Song Dynasty, the social structure was often inflexible, which made the ideology of the Song Dynasty inflexible and inflexible.

4. The reflection and influence of conservatism in Song Dynasty on the Central Plains of later generations

4.1 Politics: a more garrison centralized system

The ultimate goal of the feudal rule is to strengthen the centralization of power and consolidate the rule of the emperor. The main measures to achieve this goal are nothing more than from the two aspects of thought and force. Naturally, ideology is advocating the rule of culture. As mentioned above, the feudal monarchs most highly advocate the use of Confucian culture to guide and require the subjects to obey the monarch. During the Han and Tang Dynasties, the Central Plains Dynasty maintained a confrontation with the surrounding ethnic minority states through military force and peace talks. Zhao Kuangyin established a system different from that of the Han and Tang Dynasties, and changed the policy of opening up to the outside world and spreading literature through Xuanwu. Instead, it was replaced by the strategy of "emphasizing literature and belittling military force" which was characterized by strengthening the internal and external and being deep and inward-oriented. Under the control of the policy of "governing the country by culture", the autocratic regime's autocracy and cruelty have been dispelled, and scholars have talked about the general plan for building and governing the country, resulting in the reformers with great ideas and ideals, such as Fan Zhongyan and Wang Anshi. At that time, all kinds of thoughts were inclusive and formed a variety of theories. Therefore, the characteristics of valuing culture and belittling military force make the phenomenon of defending the interior and the virtual outside, and the political state is more garrison system, which has a significant impact on military politics in the future. The central power is increased, the local power is weakened, and the system of two governments and three departments with the separation of prime ministers and powers in the central power is also inherited by later generations.

4.2 Economy: commercial development and the change of urban function

Before the Song Dynasty, the main function of the city was the administrative center. In the Song Dynasty, the boundary of Fangshi was broken, and with the promotion of paper money, the commercial metropolis gradually expanded, which can explain the rapid development of the urban economy. In this development, the political and economic development of the city in the Song Dynasty got double development. In addition, the types of the urban economy tend to be diversified, including industrial and commercial type, commercial type, manual type, and so on. Among them, industrial and commercial cities can not only use the raw materials in the city to develop the handicraft industry, but also absorb the commodities from the surrounding rural markets and their own products to develop trade, and gradually evolved into commercial cities. At the same time, people's business ideas have also changed. A series of edicts and measures issued by the government led to a boom in business in the Song Dynasty. People from all walks of life joined the ranks of businessmen and even became a fashion. The system of neighborhood connection makes the city look new. The prosperity of the night market makes people's life more colorful. These changes have had an impact on all sectors

of society. Although there are negative aspects, they have a greater positive significance on the whole. They not only facilitate and enrich the life of the people at that time but also have very important reference significance for future generations. Since the Song Dynasty, the number of employees in the tertiary industry has increased gradually.

4.3 Society: allowing for multiculturalism and different voices

In the Song Dynasty, more and more popular novels were popular, which reflected the popularity of people's reading. In the Song Dynasty, literature was very developed, and great achievements were made in poetry and prose. At the same time, there were also a number of poets and writers who influenced the culture of later generations, such as Wang Anshi, Lu You, and Fan Cheng, the four great masters of the Southern Song Dynasty. During the Song Dynasty, he not only had deep attainments in literature but also had profound attainments in medicine. At that time, there was a forensic work "Xi Yuan Lu". And medicine has evolved from three subjects to nine. In mathematics, the development of traditional mathematics has made great achievements in many aspects. For example, the numerical solution of high-order equations is nearly 800 years earlier than that in the West. Therefore, a healthy society should allow different voices. Everyone has different perspectives, positions, and breadth and depth of planning for the future. Naturally, there will be different views. Different views will bring about the development of philosophy and culture, and then affect the development of science as a whole. From the perspective of safeguarding their own interests, it is not unreasonable for the rulers to carry out policies that are conducive to their own interests. However, if they can listen to different voices critically, just like activating a fish pond with a catfish, the rulers can always keep a clear mind and make choices conducive to long-term development. At the same time, there is a life impact. With the rapid development of the economy in the Song Dynasty, many residents and ethnic minorities in the border areas of the Song Dynasty started the "mixed living" mode. The great integration of ethnic minorities and Han nationality makes our national culture become rich and colorful, which injects new vitality into our culture. Because the Song Dynasty was in the period of China's economic development from north to south, the culture of this period also began to merge from north to south.

5. Conclusion

From the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects that determine the evolution of national civilization, we can observe the history of the Song Dynasty, which goes beyond the vision of the traditional "national power" theorists and points out the basic content of the Song Dynasty as the most important turning point in China's imperial system. For example, the political maturity of scholar-officials, the remarkable progress of agriculture, commerce, and handicraft industry, the formation of an open city, numerous inventions in the technical field, and epoch-making innovations in literature and art always show the formation of a "new situation". For the long-term development of Chinese society, it is equally important that the regional layout of the traditional economy and culture in China underwent a far-reaching adjustment in Song Dynasty. While the Yellow River Basin maintained its political and military position and its important economic and cultural position, the area south of the Yangtze River began to enter an all-round development stage, surpassing the Yellow River Basin, especially the Yangtze River Delta, in all aspects of economy and culture, and became the economic and cultural center of the whole country, thus laying the basic pattern of China's social development in the next 1000 years[6].

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