

Chinese Culture and Modern Life—On the Theory of Resources and Basic Context of Chinese Cultural Soft Power to Enhance

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Abstract

To enhance the soft power of Chinese culture, an important issue is to analyze and clean up the theory of cultural soft power resources and the Current Context. Cultural soft power to enhance the theoretical resources that is Chinese traditional culture, Context that enhance cultural soft power is the modern life. But, traditional culture is not a dead, past existence, but a process of constant development; the modern life is not the life style and the thinking mode which the West leads; traditional culture is a national, special, modern life is also diverse, optional.

Key words: Soft power; Tradition; Traditional culture; Modern life

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INTRODUCTION

If a few decades ago, when you ask a Chinese person. What is the modern life in your eyes? He probably said humorously: “upstairs, downstairs, electric light and telephone.” Upstairs and downstairs expressed the ideal for housing, lights and telephone expressed the understanding of the “modern”. Now, if you ask a Chinese

person, what is the modern life? I’m afraid the answer is varied. Some people even think that modern life means a series of issues, such as obesity, fatigue, congestion, resource constraints, etc.. There is little doubt that the modern Chinese people’s life has been very colorful, and highly personalized. However, no matter how the evolution of the era, some of the tradition in the hearts of the Chinese people is deeply rooted. For example, the attachment of family, attention of interpersonal relationships, nostalgia of homeland. Great migration is a typical sign in the annual Spring Festival. Some of the traditional concept of life has been subsisting, such as tea culture, food culture. The former is the outstanding contribution of the Chinese nation on the world drinks, and the latter is the outstanding contrition on the world’s diet. In addition to the natural scenery, cultural relics, cultural achievements, traditional spirit. This traditional culture, through the era and the continuation of life, constitutes a powerful national vitality and unique cultural connotations of the Chinese people.

Culture is the root of a nation to self-reliance, is the soul of a nation. Today, the whole culture of a country has the appeal and the increasing influence of other country, an advanced culture of a nation plays an increasingly important role in the national competition. Chinese traditional culture shows its values in dealing with some of the major practical problems of today, and provides an important way of thinking in the understanding between various cultures, which consider that the future of mankind as a whole, etc.. China shows a unique way of thinking and its culture soft power increasingly influence people overall.

Chinese traditional culture as a whole is emotional, creative, flexible and inclusive. Internally, constitute a state’s internal cohesion and solidarity, so that members of the community to value the nation’s cultural identity, emotional refuge, in the history of the development to show their emotional and creative nature; externally, as a

way to attract other nations, by differences in comparison to other culture shows a powerful affinity, attraction, in the exchange and interaction reflect its unique flexibility and inclusiveness.

The so-called Chinese traditional culture, emotional, refers to the difference in the understanding of cultural understanding of the line “into the world” and the strength of its direct effect on the human mind and emotions, thus making a hidden emotions, thereby affecting people’s behavior and value. The past history as reflected in the overall context of people’s thinking, behavior and habits, and through the development history, in their own national culture and the evolution of the collision with the other culture, shows its own creative nature, and itself in the face of practical problems of great vitality; flexibility of traditional Chinese culture mainly refers to the collision with other cultures reflected in the dialectical thinking and “retreat”, “seek direct from bend” way of thinking; Chinese traditional culture, “harmony” “all-win”, “What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others” and other demands can overcome the social value system and ideological differences, to promote understanding and harmony of the state of other nations.

Chinese traditional culture in today still has a strong vitality and appeal. Western culture today is difficult to overcome their own limitations, and Chinese traditional culture will give us a new way to think and solve global problems. Therefore, it requires us to inherit and carry forward the tradition, to fully tap the excellent resources of traditional culture, especially the “love” and “harmony” and other values, the unity of man and nature, etc., from a cultural perspective to enhance China international image, to improve China’s overall strength.

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Culture is the sum of the spirit and matter, it is created by mankind in the long-term practice of life and the evolution of history. The culture is stable, also changes. The generation of Chinese culture stems from its unique history, geography, race, etc.. Because China has a relatively independent closed geographical conditions, and developed farming civilization, etc.. Chinese people formed their unique way of earth-centered, family-oriented, industrious and simple to understand the world, the society, the others and themselves. Chinese traditional culture emphasizes the long-term stability, it focus on governance rather than obtain the truth. Chinese traditional culture advocates people should actively join the society, it believes that the personal development is built on social development, and should be oriented by the development and the need of society. Chinese traditional culture emphasis on the significance and role of education. It advocates the opening up of education. All people

should be the object of education. Whether someone has a different origin, only he has the competence and integrity. Education should focus on personal accomplishment. For individuals, Chinese traditional culture advocates patriotism – “Be the first to feel concern about state affairs and the last to enjoy yourself.” “Every man has a share of responsibility for the fate of his country.” “self-cultivating; family-regulating; state-ordering; then the land great governed.” “Promise must be kept and action must be resentful.”

There are many schools in Chinese history. They have a rich cultural heritage and lofty social ideals. Confucianism advocates benevolence. It emphasizes on: “People with perfect virtue have universal love.” “Do not do to others what you do not want to be done to you.” “To die to achieve virtue; to die for a just cause.” Taoism advocates going with the flow. People should stay form the secular and be quiet.

The combination of Confucianism and Taoism formed a unique Chinese character: “In times of hardship, one should treasure himself at first; in times of success, he is expected to benefit others.” This is the complement of change and calm about Confucianism and Taoism.

The theme of Chinese traditional culture is that: “What one has learned should be useful to the national affairs.” This means that Chinese traditional culture is to serve the people, rather than from people’s curiosity and detach from reality. The purpose of learning is not to knowledge, but to use and manage the society. Its ultimate goal is the state of society which is stable, serene and ordered.

Chinese traditional culture advocates the people is the center of the universe. Zhong Yong is a famous book in China; Zhong Yong is a famous book in China. Its important idea is that only the sincere people can play nature; a series of later chain reactions are: he can play property, play nature of all things and change the world. The result is that people with heaven and earth side by side. The people are the measure of all things. The people and the universe are uniform. Under the influence of Confucian and Taoist, Chinese traditional culture has ethical characteristics, it emphasizes people-oriented. In Chinese society, individuals are put into the ethical and political relations. The value of individual, self-cultivation is embedded in social development. Everyone should assume the responsibilities and obligations in society.

Chinese traditional culture advocates personal accomplishment. It consists of eight steps. The first is to understand things. The second is to find out the internal law of things. The third is to return oneself and focus on honesty. The fifth is to practice and control oneself. The sixth is to manage family. The seventh is to govern country. The last is to achieve understanding and transformation about the universe. Overall, this is a process to external things from personal inner.

For a country, Chinese traditional culture believes the ethics, loyalty, probity and shame are very

important. Ethics is dealing with the principle of all human relationships, it is the primary. Loyalty is the important criterion in relationships. Probity is not to hide shortcomings and mistakes, not to corruption. Shame is not to together with immodest people. At the same time, people should have the sense of shame. If the ethics, loyalty and shame are not taken seriously by people, the county is likely to perish. The ethics guarantees a harmonious relationship between the people. The loyalty guarantees the social atmosphere of mutual trust between the people. The probity constitutes the foundation for rulers ruling order. The shame enables people to get close to the gentleman and away from the villain.

Chinese traditional culture considers the consanguinity is very important. Everyone should honor their parents. The family should be a state of seniority. At the same time, the Chinese traditional culture also pays attention to the social relationships, and hope that the whole community is in a harmonious and orderly situation.

Thus, Chinese traditional culture is human-centered. It is a complex and profound theory and involved in all aspects of social life. Studying the Chinese traditional culture and linking it with the China's modernization are significant.

2. TRADITION AND TRADITIONAL CULTURE – RESOURCES OF THE SOFT POWER OF CULTURE

In general people thought, Chinese traditional culture and modern life seems that there are two distinct and opposite existences. Chinese traditional culture is understood as the historical accumulation of thousands of years and cultural sediment. The latter is understood as a modern lifestyle and way of thinking from the West. And, in a certain time frame, especially after the Opium War, the western ideological culture and Lifestyle in people's minds has the impact and the challenge to the Chinese culture. In this historical background, there are two typical ways of thinking. One kind Advocates total Westernization, deny the inherent value of the Chinese culture, think that Chinese culture is should be abandoned, traditional culture constitute a serious impediment to China's access to the modern road; another advocates conservative attitude, under the eroding of Western culture, think that the Chinese have ideological confusion is rooted in Western cultural invasion.

Cause of difference of attitude of people towards traditional culture, one of the very important aspects is that people's understanding of what is a traditional, what is the traditional culture.

Treat traditional Chinese culture problem exists a very representative views, that is, believes that the traditional Chinese culture is a kind of cultural traditions. It is produce, the existence and the evolution in particular

the historical period, but after Opium War, until now, cannot call it the traditional culture. This viewpoint has fundamentally neglected the cultural inheritance and the expansibility, ignored the culture is the development of a culture, a tradition is the development of the tradition, as Gadamer points out, traditional is created by the people and in turn the people to create a new conventional thinking "premise" or create a "precondition". Chinese cultural tradition is constantly developing. Tradition is not the legacy which has been destroyed. Although the traditional means that have the time and distance with the current, tradition is not dead but living, and some potential structure exists in people's way of thinking, way of thinking and behavior patterns. It has important impact on the people. The most important is the tradition develops unceasingly in its each successor's hand. Therefore, tradition is not the past, it is process and progress.

Traditional culture is an overarching existence, includes political, social, economic, art, and so on, as a whole, its core has the integrity and the historical inheritance traditional ideas. In particular, it is people's values. But, the concept of culture means that a special characteristic, that is as a universal culture is not exist, we can only say that some cultures have had the same or similar characteristics, culture that born in specific historical tradition can only be specific. The deep connotation of the problem is that culture is the existence of special, modernization is not westernization, and it does not mean that it takes the Western modern value as the universal value.

Characteristics of Chinese traditional culture transformed into pay attention to reality and realistic effects, in dealing with the relationship among people advocates ethical order, inherently beyond the reach of the "day" awareness. It thinks that culture must be personal matters, in particular morality – intellectual and with knowledge field, rather than to take the logical, formal, systematic theoretical construction. The Chinese culture only makes the general on "External day" description, but is inferior to the West, constructs a perfect metaphysics world to give the reality the life to seek calmly. China's way of thinking is the "toe-in" style. In order to return to a search for meaning and ultimate source of value. Western thinking is "dumping" and to find out the external root, in law, and then drops it the world. This fundamental difference lead to China does not copy the Western way, and there is no need trying to find the so-called universal values. Thus, there is no universal significance value, it is only a certain number of basic characteristics of the uniform or similar.

3. TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND MODERN LIFE – THE BASIC CONTEXT OF THE CULTURAL SOFT POWER

Tradition is continued rather than fractured, the people

are the successor of the tradition, but also is the pioneers of the new tradition. For the people, modern society or modern life constitute the basic context of life. Reflect on the modern life of people, in thought, the Chinese faces an important question is the modernized question. Yet an important aspect of the modern problem is to clarify the relationship between modernization and westernization.

Modernization is not equal to westernization, every country in the process of modernization, its historical and cultural differences determine cultural diversity and development road of diversification. People tend to pay attention to the amount of social wealth and the level of technological development to judge the economic development of culture and its value, and think some concrete culture that brings a high degree of social wealth, a highly developed modern life is the advanced culture, and it is universal culture that worth other country to imitate. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of the problem. It is a kind of simplistic, unity of the mode of thinking. Many Western scholars will simplify attitude that modern equivalent to western as a way of thinking that further as the only standard to measure has a clear understanding. Robert Nisbet clearly pointed out that progress belief was already not the perfectly justified matter in the west, in the History of the Idea of Progress, harm and problems of various kinds that caused by scientific and technological development and economic growth cause the attention of people, doubt and anxiety. People began to the comprehensive reflection road that takes progresses as the development request since western modern times, and hope seeks the theory resources from the East, especially Chinese culture.

As far as China is concerned, since the Opium War, under the backward condition of the overall national strength, the people imitate the West from the external form, in particular, a large number of science and technology was introduced. Afterwards, largely introduce a lot of cultural and academic thought, and hope to improve the Chinese outlook. This is the several generations of Chinese Human Figure unremitting efforts to achieve national prosperity, and create and develop the Chinese tradition on objective. They experienced a one-sided boycott their own traditional culture positive and the introduction of Western culture introduce the Western culture in the process, reflect on western culture and combined with traditional Chinese culture, create a new culture with Chinese characteristics, so the three main stages of development. In the first stage, that is, to resist the stage of their own cultural traditions, specific performance is that some of their advanced intellectuals summarize the national strength disparity and the social reality question for the cultural disparity, and compared with Western culture, Chinese culture is backward. Therefore, they claim that comprehensive abandon and thorough breaking off to it, thus introduces the West

“advanced” the culture, achieves the rich country strong people’s goal; the second stage, reflect on the culture of the West, explore that combine some useful ingredients of Western culture with Chinese culture. Specific performance of this stage, the Western culture and the Chinese culture will fuse consciously in the contrast, both retained traditional and absorb foreign cultures; the third stage, in the period of China’s overall national strength to enhance, not only request displays oneself in the sturdy and healthy strength aspect international influence, moreover realizes that soft power play its role in international exchanges and expand the international impact, and enhancing understanding, etc.. And request consciously carries on owning culture combs, the summary, and outward promotes it.

At this time of China is in the third stage. The traditional culture has given the rich theory resources in view of people’s modern life, that face the relationship between heaven and earth (natural), human relations, man and self-relations, those are used for development, building a new tradition:

First of all, the relationship between man, heaven, and nature. Chinese traditional thinking believe that the relationship between people and the world are one. Under the guidance of this basic concept, operation and evolution of the world closely combined with people their own, proposed “the world Germany said lives”, “occurs incessantly”, but the human is spirit of the world, thus energy “approves nourishing of the world”. Do not go to work hard to find the main body of the heaven and earth, but starting from people, in return for meaning and truth, and think that “Do the thing” could be “intellectual”, advocates “side by side and all things that do not harm” the basic concept of equality, coexistence, in dealing with the relationship between heaven, earth and things, under the guidance of the concept of equality, “Masanori” to use Ministry of Health and Welfare. In this way, we will be able to achieve the feeling of “smooth things” and the harmonious coexistence of all things. This tradition to solve the ecological crisis of the modern world, to reflect on issues such as the relationship between man and nature’s important guiding sense also is the huge charm which Chinese culture own wisdom reflected. It is the huge difference which the China integrity thinking mode and the western analytic expression thinking mode manifests, especially in the modern context. People realize the power of technology as alien to the profound influence of the nature and destruction, as well as the technology to the rule of the people brought by a series of problems. As well as a series of problems which brought by technology on the people rule. The Chinese and wisdom will play to their influence to promote a comprehensive reflection of modern Western civilization and the choice of their own development path.

Second, the relationship between people. On the

relationship between people and people, the Chinese way of thinking is a family based, and the status and obligations of individuals in the family to provide for the relationship between people. Mencius's "five theories" is to define other relationships between man and man, from the perspective of natural relationships between individuals. On the issue of the relationship between individuals, in personal view of the natural relations as the starting point, to expand it to society, to build community relationships. It is a family-oriented nature of the relationship between people is the obligation to each other is based, and to advocate the cultivation of a person's social relations foundation of harmony. This has the difference with the right view that based on individual independence, since western modern times. Able to give a new solution to solve the problem of the relationship between the individual and society, build the relationship of man and society, and to avoid the extreme individualism and selfish value orientation.

Once again, the relationship between man and self-relations. Along with the development of the related science, especially since the western modern times, on the question of people, the west has adopted to the human analytic expression way. Although this way of thinking has provided a large number of positive interpretation that about certain characteristics of the human, but overall and fresh individual was disassembled for parts and pieces, and lost the integrity of the people. From the individual's point of view, with a kind of individual inner beyond type training mode, Chinese people take human as a rational and emotional, the will and desire of the integrity of the existence, and from the overall perspective of life and the unity of nature and the world understand people, on the one hand, the whole person contact and through all things in the universe, on the other hand, in human relationships contact and through others and society. To grasp the integrity, for in the modern understand person, in the technology to make people lose their return on the question of, it has very good enlightenment function.

4. TRADITIONAL CULTURES TOGETHER WITH SOFT POWER IS AN INNER PRODUCT OF OUTWARD THOUGHT

China's cultural traditions contain ancient traditions and modern traditions that are connected and same in the essence but different in the basic characteristics. Ancient tradition provided massively idea about the human and the relationship between nature and human, people and people, people and oneself. It is provided a lot of reference theory resources to understand people's way of life, the harmonious relationship between human and nature and the ethic ship between human. Modern traditions fully demonstrate the creativity of the Chinese people themselves and the understanding of history. In the process

of absorption of foreign culture and integrate with their own culture, it is not only made remarkable achievements in the world but also accumulated a lot of material and spiritual wealth. China's influence in the world along with the national strength becomes increasingly obvious. The Chinese culture displayed the penetrating power and the explanation strength in understanding and the solving the worldwide difficult problem.

The China traditional culture provided a suggestive way of thinking on the confrontation and conflict of national culture. From traditional Chinese culture of "harmony" concept allows us to transform perspective, in opposite ways of thinking master the consolidated. Differences and clash of civilizations is not a difficult problem in human development. Despite various civilizations exists difference religious beliefs, moral ethics, customs, way of thinking and values, but it does not hinder each culture to compete the harmonious paragenesis mutually. One culture obtains the superiority status not necessarily have to eliminate another culture as a price, one culture must manifest the most basic respect to the other culture. Achieves the understanding in the difference, in the competition achieved harmonious paragenesis, this is the true meaning of human culture development. For this problem, many Western scholars also made influential views take Geertz for example. They advocate that the study of culture should abandon the old way of studying that seeking culture typical. They argue that the studying and understanding of the culture should pay great attention to each cultural the unique merit. Thus, cultural heterogeneity constitutes a different explanatory power between cultures and an attraction to each other. Chinese culture has always paid attention to be inclusive and subsist in harmony with others. This attitude to respect different cultures will help to resolve the opposition and conflict between democratic cultures, to absorb each benefit of different cultures, and to solve reasonably the various problems faced by the human life together.

The understanding of China's culture about the relationship between human and nature by the whole is helpful to the understanding and the construction of global ecological civilization. The ecology civilization proposed has the historical urgency, which is the result of treating the human development in human itself as the center one-sided, ignoring the link between man and nature and transforming and using the nature unreasonable. Ecological civilization requires people to change the view from the past only from the point of view of the human beings to understand the relationship between man and nature, to the understanding of the multiple perspectives now human and the nature harmonious coexistence and realize the sustainable development. Traditional Chinese culture treats the whole relationship between man and nature as basic perspectives Considers that heaven and earth is a whole and each cooperates to live, people and the

status of all things are equal. In the relationship between people and things we advocated “Masanori” by “serves the needs and enriches the lives of the people”, sustainable and harmonious development within man and nature. In ancient Chinese view, heaven and earth each have their unique intrinsic value and operation rule. Therefore, China’s culture attitude toward the natural is a kind of respect on the basis of their own understanding limitation. That is to say, human must respect the equal of nature life to regulate their own behavior and accept the nature.

In the relations between person and society, Chinese culture with “family” as the standard, and pay attention to “ethics”. The relationship between human is founded by the nature. Extend the relationship within human in order to develop other relation in the society. Therefore, the understanding of Chinese culture about individual is neither individualism nor isolated rational subject, but a person with abundant natural and social relations and in a particular social status. It is different from the west relationship that basic on the independent individual when deal with the relation within the society. This kind of the relationship between the people is helpful to the relation within the human and between the human and the society, also helpful to deal with the problem on the reasonable people who pursue their own best interests at the expense of others or community benefit value exist deviation.

In the relationship between man and self, Chinese culture pays attention to personality cultivation, promote moral level and personal quality. The individual is the undertaker of the civilization, and embodies a nation’s traditional culture. Chinese traditional culture thought contains a large theory about ascending individual moral

and it is significant to today’s moral construction. The ultimate end point of inheriting, carrying forward and the building a country’s culture soft power is the main body of the behavior. This needs to dig deeper into the traditional culture that contains thought resources about family values, social morality, professional ethics, and other aspects. Take it as a general approval and positive performance standard of behaviors for people.

In summary, a nation should not forget its cultural tradition for its development. The development of world civilization also needs multiple ethnic cultures. For China, with the development of the hard power, we should enhance the soft power of culture. An important issue is to summarize and explain what is the Chinese traditional culture and how the Chinese traditional culture is spread. Chinese traditional cultural is a process of historical development. It continued without interruption. We should properly deal with the relationship between culture and modern life. The purpose is to play the role of traditional culture in today. Chinese traditional cultural is a rich resource for enhancement of China’s soft power.

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