

On Empire and Nation

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Abstract

There are many common features of the empire in the history, the vast land, numerous nationalities, monarch centralization, strong military power plays an important role in the maintenance of empire wide territory. The emperor was the core of the unified empire and the legal basis of empire, without the “emperor”, “country” would have collapsed. The object to whom every nation living in the empire subjected to and pledged loyalty to be the emperor. However, for the nation-state, what to give allegiance is an abstract community. In theory of law, nation state is different from the empire. But, at any times, there is no single-nation state. Most Nation-state is a combination of different proportions of nations with a priority ethnic.

Key words: Empire; Nation; Territory; Military; Religion

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INTRODUCTION

There were many Empires in the history, most famous of them were the Persian Empire, Alexander Empire, the Roman Empire, the Arab Empire, the Mongol Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the British Empire and so on. They have many common characteristics, for example, a vast land, numerous nationalities, monarch centralization, strong

military power plays an important role in the maintenance of empire wide territory. The basis of the Empire is “emperor”, the “emperor” can be called the emperor, king or Sultan, khan, Augustus and even the Tsar, he/she was the core of the unified empire, and the legal basis of empire, without the “emperor”, “country” would have collapsed. The object to whom every nation living in the empire subjected to and pledged loyalty to be the emperor. People who don’t pledge allegiance to the emperor would be suppressed by the military force. So, every nation lives together, blend together, gradually formed a new national identity. However, for the nation-state, what to give allegiance is an abstract community. Nation state is legally different from the empire. But, at any time, there is no single-nation state. Most Nation-state is a combination of different proportions of nations with a prior ethnic group.

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EMPIRE IN HISTORY

1.1 Vast Territory

The Roman empire, which has lasted for centuries, was the earliest empire that across Europe, Asia and Africa in the history. Its biggest territory: West from Spain, Britain, east of the Euphrates river upstream, south from north Africa, north of the Rhine and Danube, and Mediterranean became an inland sea. Including today’s Italy, SAN Marino and the Vatican, Andorra, Malta, Cyprus, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Monaco, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Romania, part of Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Asia’s Lebanon, Syria, Israel, the Palestinian territory, Turkey, part of Jordan Africa’s Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, part of Morocco. Its wide territory, in the world at that time, only Han dynasty of China can

compare with. The difference is that the Han dynasty had single nationality, race, whose culture maintain until now. Nevertheless, in the Roman Empire, national ethnic composition was complicated, and it never recovered after declining.

The following Arab empire had a biggest territory east from Indus and Cong Ling Ridges, west to the Atlantic coast, north from Caucasus, the Caspian sea and the southern border of France, south to the Arabian sea and the Sahara desert, whose land area was 1,340 square kilometers. Although much of Western Europe was out of the Arab empire, but influenced by its culture.

Territory of the Mongol Empire, east from Japan sea, west arrived in the Mediterranean, north across Siberian, south to the Persian Gulf, stretch over the whole Eurasian continent, recognized as one of the largest empire in the history of the world, when in heyday, about 2400 square kilometers large, if count the lonely frigid area, about 3300 square kilometers. Include most parts of Asia, central and eastern Europe, and a part of northern Africa. But the situation is transient. The empire quickly divided.

The Ottoman Empire's (1299-1922) extreme territory also across three continents, included the Balkans, Middle East and most of north Africa. West to north Algeria, east arrived in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf, once arrived in the Caspian Sea. All these empires in history have a significant effect, because they have a vast territory, influence scope is extremely broad.

In addition, such as the Persian Empire, Alexander Empire, Assyrian Empire, in terms of its productivity level at that time, also belongs to more wide.

1.2 The Second Characteristic of the Empires Is Having Many Nationalities

Despite the lacking of modern national idea, but there still existed consciousness of different "people". For example, under the Roman empire, lives the Romans, the Greeks, Gaul, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Egyptians, German and so on, the Arab empire also had many nationalities, and "Along with the completion of the conquest, one large Arab empire across Africa and Asia formed. This is a theocracy country of many nationalities. Besides Arabs, it comprised Persians, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and the Berbers of north Africa." (Peng, 2002, p.55)

In the same, the Ottoman empire, in addition to the Turks, having Balkans Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria, and many other ethnic groups, such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Arabs, etc., not only races but also religious beliefs was different, some were Muslim, some were Christian, and some believed in original religions. All of these nations were subjects of empire.

1.3 Centralized Political System

The empires were centralized autocratic monarchy. The head of state had holy titles, such as, respectively,

Emperor, Augustus, Sudan, khan, and King or Queen. Empire within each nation, although used to independent nations, now was all loyal to the autocratic monarch rather than owed allegiance to this nation. In other words, the object of loyalty is emperor. Even loose consortium like the British Empire, formally, the queen was the head of every state.

So, what did such power rely on?

First of all, a powerful military force. The common characteristics of the largest empires, without exception, were relying on the powerful military force to maintain national unity. In the process of conquest and rule, slightly disobeying or resisting, means to slaughter. In the case of secession, also suppress with military force. Even some placatory measures are still backed with military means. In addition, means of religion also done. Such as Roman polytheism, no matter which original god from different polis, as long as the polis conquered by the Roman, its god would be brought to Roman temple to be worshiped together, in this way, they can play the effect of winning over the masses.

Different from that, in the Arab empire, it is force that to promote Islam by. To the newly conquered areas, according to the different attitudes of people to convert to Islam, there were three different kinds of policy: to the initiative converts, no killing and duty-free, surrender but not convert to, pay taxes, neither conversion nor surrender, kill. The universal formula to conquer the world by Muslims: Islam - tribute - sword. Either convert to Islam, or pay tribute and taxes, or solve through arms (Shang, 2014, p.68). The discrimination made a lot of people to convert. it was an important cause of widely spreading of Islam.

To Arabian, used aggressive tribes, achieve unity under the banner of Islam. New religion has powerful national cohesion and enormous charisma to the fragmented tribes. The Arab people become a new role on the stage. At that time, they were faithful and fearless. The Jihad slogans and the stimulation of economic interests prompted this force moved outward. (Peng, 2014, p.54)

In the process of conquest, the Mongol empire's situation was different, most of the Mongols converted to the local religion, including Islam and Christianity. It also determined the transience of the Mongol empire.

Within the territory of the Ottoman Empire, Islam was the state religion, but also allows the existence of other religions. The empire existed as mosaic. The Ottoman Empire located at the junction of civilization and had to control the traffic line between east and west up to six centuries of civilization. During its existence, the empire absorbed the Byzantine culture, established the Ottoman unique pattern of Ottoman Turkey - Islamic culture. After 18 century, because of the influence of western culture and the practice of Islamization and modernization, the boundary of civilization has become more and more blurred.

As for the political system, every empire was basically theocracy, military and political unity, heads of state had highly centralized political, military and religious power. That is very different with the Western Europe after Roman Empire. In Western Europe at that time, the king hardly had such centralized power like an emperor, let alone called empire. This is an obvious difference between the empire and the kingdom.

2. THE RESULTS OF THE COLLAPSE OF EMPIRES

Any unified empire hides crisis of division. Some of these crises come from the centrifugal tendency of different national culture and some come from the local elite's competition; Some come from the resistance of class oppression and even some from external shocks. When splitting strength exceeded the centralized control, splitting occurs.

The collapse of the Roman Empire is the result both of internal competition, and of the external invasion. Starting from the three or four centuries, the emperor of the Roman Empire often sidelined, the emperor was often held by warlords' dethronement. Especially in the final stage, nine emperors was killed or deposed, until finally a kid emperor Romulus Augustus was deposed in 476 AD by soldiers, the Western Roman Empire collapsed. After the Roman Empire splitting, hundreds of large and small feudal estates built on the ruins of the Western Roman Empire. These feudal estates, kingdom governed by the duke, earl, baron, although there have been the East Gothic Kingdom, still fragmented such as the Visigothic Kingdom, the lombard kingdom, The Frankish Kingdom, etc., Even once formed a Charlemagne Empire and so-called the holy Roman empire, but, either time was short, or with a false reputation. No one had actual jurisdiction and had controlled the feudal aristocracy within the jurisdiction. This situation continues from the falling of the west Roman Empire to the formation of the 17th and 18th century modern national country, lasted more than one thousand years.

In the long stage, the residents of feudal domain had feudal lords and the Vatican as the object of loyalty, secularly leech on to feudal lords, mentally to Christianity as the spiritual pillar. And the Pope is the supreme leader. The latter was especially important. There was no national concept yet. Germans have at least dozens of large and small branches.

About the formation of modern national country, many scholars believe that it has something to do with the Hundred Year's War. Britain and France's people were all Germanic branch, and the Britain king was a subsidiary noble of France, known as the duke of Normandy, due to William the Conqueror, with English King's enhanced strength, the French king can't stand extrusion on his

own territory, that led to a longtime war between British and French. In the mean time, the two countries' people enhanced national consciousness, eventually formed the French and English national consciousness. And chain caused the awakening of national consciousness of German, Italy and other regions.

After Renaissance and industrial revolution, along with the strengthening of Western European industrial and military strength, European kept expanding outward. That was called colonialism. Under the stimulus of colonialism, resistance-type national consciousness rose. Especially to the ancient country like China, since ancient times, only has the idea "All the land under the Heaven belongs to the emperor", and has no concept of ethnic groups. But with the resistance movement against colonial aggression, in the midst of advanced intellectuals, a national idea came into being, or, more precisely, It is from the west and Japan that Chinese people introduced the concept of nationality, which resulted in a large Chinese nation's awakening and consciousness. This is also the main path that western national consciousness affects the east, especially China, India, and other regions such as Africa.

At the same time, in other parts of the world, we can see, as the European powers was rising, the Ottoman empire declined, the collapse of this empire led to the continuous loss of territory, and on the land of old empire many national countries rose. The League of Nations allowed France collocate originally belongs to the empire's Syria and Lebanon, and allowed UK mandate the Mesopotamia and Palestine (later divided into Palestine and Transjordan). On the Arabian peninsula, Ibn Saud founded the kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. Iraq declared independence in August 1921, built an Iraqi kingdom under British protection—Faisal dynasty and got fully independent in 1932. Syrian declared its independence in 1943. Palestinian split, the eastern half is Transjordan and western half rule by the British directly, the Jews established Israel, the Arab-Israeli conflict continues until today. In the Caucasus, Armenians established a provisional government, later became a republic. After the world war II, there has established nearly 40 nation-state on the Ottoman empire land.

In this process of same goal by different ways, from the feudal kingdom to the nation, from empire to the nation-state, there was a country walk upstream path yet, that Russia, a Moscow dukedom from the fifteenth century, gradually expanding, annexed surrounding large areas, to the beginning of the 20th century, has formed a vast empire across Eurasia, enveloped the whole frigid region of more than 2000 square kilometers. It swallowed up Poland, the Baltic countries, many grassland khanate in central Asia, and occupied the vast land of China, formed a czar centered feudal serf country. If not Lenin led the October revolution which made the czar's ruling to an abrupt end, it would be difficult to assess when could the

empire's aggressive expanding policy stop, although a lot of land among it won is the most inaccessible desert.

In north America, not the awakening of national consciousness led to the United States' independence, but a roughly similar substitute of national consciousness—country consciousness, actually, in American English sense, nation and country have the same meaning. The America, is both country and nation, this is the psychological subject by which they resist against British—its suzerain. He acted, he succeeded, the United States generated.

In Latin America, it was on battlefield opposing to the old Portuguese Empire and the Spanish Empire, a series of national country produced, such as Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, etc., After grew up in the swaddling of ancient empire, the inhabitants came from the Iberian peninsula also established their own national idea, through relentless fight, finally achieved independent status.

In fact, in a sense, the United States also gains national independent in opposition to the British Empire – The sun never set. But north American independent did not bring fatal blow to the “The sun never set empire”, the real impact occurred after the second world war. India, Myanmar, Singapore and South African colonies successively get rid of the control of the British empire, “sun not falls empire” officially cease to exist. Previously, Canada, Australia and other places have obtained independent status through other forms of relatively peaceful.

In short, in the second half of the 19th century and in the first half of 20th century, the general world situation was empires broke up, nation-state become the main form. The tsar Russian empire is the only buck the trend. Only under the impact of the communist movement it stopped expansion.

So what's the difference of nation-states compared with empires?

3. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NATION-STATE AND THE EMPIRE

First of all, the integration core of the nation-state and the empire is different, the so-called national integration, is a process based on the condition of certain spiritual bond and the system, making all the national of a country identity, eliminate the tendency of separation.

The primary difference between nation-state and the empire is not the difference between the social hierarchy and equality of society, because, even in a country of single-nation, there still probably has a hierarchical society, and the existence of feudal kingdom. Therefore, everyone is equal or hierarchical is not the difference between nation- state and the empire. The most basic difference is the object of loyalty given to.

As mentioned earlier, empire is often multi-ethnic, there is a sacred head of state, and it rely military force as strong back of the country. Both of them are indispensable. Therefore, within the territory of the empire, various ethnic subjects, including aristocrats, in the highest political sense, obedient to the emperor, khan or Sudan's personality, or under the condition of theocracy, obey a unique heads has both divinity and humanity. While in the military sense, that can often mean expansionary.¹

The object that the nation-state allegiance to be the abstract ethnic community, due to the kinship and cultural habits which condense a consistent political entity. In accordance with Benedict Richard O'Gorman Anderson, it is the “community of imagination”. So, even without the emperor, they would still be loyal to the country, to the nation. The nation idea in the modern sense originated from Western Europe, spread all over the world.

In the empire, not only the emperor is all the people's emperor, but also the appointed officials came from various nationalities. The later period of the Roman empire, several emperors came not from Rome itself, but from the outlying provinces, such as the famous emperor Traianus, (Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus, 53 - 117 AD), the emperor Hadrianus (Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus, 76-138AD) were both born in Spain (Xia, 2014, p.207, 211).

The rapidly expanding Ottoman Empire also managed with loyalty, smart talent, whether it's Albanians, Faneuil, Armenians, Serbs and Bosnians, Hungarians, or other races. This empire appointed Greeks, Muslims and Jews to reform administrative system regardless of religious background. Appointment of bureaucratic in Yuan Empire is even included every races of people. Besides Semu people, there were such foreigners like Marco Polo.

Of course, this is only an appearance of Imperial power and tolerance in a certain period, not the nature of the empire. Weather in Arab Empire or in the British Empire, senior officials were mostly of its own ethnic group.

Another kind of consciousness called nationalism also generated at about the same time as the democracy. Although both generated from the Renaissance, the reasons are completely different. Nationalism occurred because a group people struggle with another group. To be specific, according to the mainstream view, is the result of the war Between the two Germanic countries, England and France.

While the consciousness of modern democracy is a return to ancient Greek and Roman political system along

¹ Measure with this standard, the so-called Chinese empire is not appropriate, Chinese history is basically with a Huaxia nationality as the main body of the country, if not in the modern sense of ethnic identification, it is difficult to tell which group belongs to which nation, therefore, China is a nation-country ruled by the emperor, and because of military conservativeness, stability, it is hardly an empire.

with the awakening of liberalism and humanism since the Renaissance. In Roman republic (509 BC-27 BC), the earliest democracy performed in Rome square, a Roman citizen deliberation together here, decided the country's affairs in the form of direct democracy. There were still other authorities of the republic as the senate, assembly and so on. But, with the continuous expansion of the empire, this form of direct democracy has been unable to work. Increased in the number of citizens of remote areas step by step, they were not able to come to Rome and participated in the square. Until later, even the senate also manipulated by warlords. Senators were killed by military commander of many times. Thus it can be seen that under the condition of that political technology, in the era of no representative, direct democracy has got to its biggest effect, and direct democracy republic failure! It had to be replaced by the empire.

In the 12th century, the rediscovery of Roman law made people to recognize how high the ancient Roman civilization was. So to speak, the rediscovery of Roman law, make people begin to realize the significance of human being itself. After the 15th century, by the excavation of Dante Alighieri, Baruch DE Spinoza, John Locke, Baron DE Montesquieu, and Jean Jacques Rousseau etc., the idea of democracy rediscovered its vigor, then become a kind huge flood of anti-feudalism and anti-monarch. Under this torrent British bourgeois revolution happened, after more than one hundred years, another revolution in France came in to be.

While it is in the same historical stage, or just a bit earlier, the European nation-states also began to form, and it is formed in the fight. The two floods, have their own source, but basically affected the political map of the world at the same time. A series of national country produced, some of them in succession took place bourgeois democratic revolution. Even in German, Italy, where still didn't establish a unified country, also completed the unification with the speed of the raging storm, and set up monarchy, and then revolution rapidly happened.

Two different sorts of the political tide attacked the European territory one after another. Poor the Austro-Hungarian want to maintain a two-nation united empire, he got neither, a country divided, monarchy cancelled. The condition of the Ottoman Empire as mentioned above, under the impact of the strong European powers, fragmented, Sudan abdicated, only a Turkish republic was kept in the Asia Minor.

Because most of the modern nation-state in the form of democracy, with very few countries exceptionally maintaining monarchy. So, it is necessary to explore slightly another idea difference of democracy and the empire. That is the distinction between holism and individualism.

In modern times, democracy is based on freedom, which is different from the ancient democracy, as Benjamin Constant mentioned in the freedom of ancient compared with that of moderns, this freedom based nation-states, its philosophical foundation is individualism, that is to say, everyone is free, although belong to a "nation", that can't affect the right equality, public sphere and private sphere is bounded. State can not violate private interests in the name of public interests, can not infringe the interests of the individual for the benefit of the whole. This is a fundamental limit against the state.

The individual idea in republic nation-state are completely different from that in empire, in the empire, it is indisputable that any personal interests can sacrifice for the benefit of the whole, just as Famous poet of Tang dynasty Du Fu wrote in "Shi Hao village officials" and "soldiers and vehicles processing". Of course, in democratic nation-states, military service is still a citizen's obligation, yet a lot of anti-war movement happening.

How to deal with the boundaries of individual interests and whole interests is not an easy problem.

Collectivism and holism, is not a simple trade-off problem, overall activists claim individual is difficult to survive without the whole, individual activists assert, the whole is not a goal, individual happiness and perfection is the destination. These two kinds of orientation, lead to the pursuit of liberalism and the pursuit of nationalism.

Since 14th and 15th century, the two political and ideological trend, national and democracy, has been affecting the process of the world, until now, these two trends are still play its great role, these are two most important factors influencing the political process of the world nowadays.

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