

On Lin Zexu's Thought of Realizing the World and its Practice

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Abstract

Lin Zexu, as one of the representatives of pragmatism in modern Chinese ideological trends, mainly expressed his thoughts in the following four aspects: Lin Zexu cared about the current reality; He has a positive sense of responsibility; He has independent and innovative spirit; He pays attention to investigation and research, and has an ideological sense of seeking truth from facts. In his 40 years as an official, he practiced his ideas with his actions.

Keywords

Practical Thought; Lin Zexu; Practice.

1. Introduction

The thought of managing the world for practical use is one of the social trends of thought in modern China. It means that learning must be beneficial to national affairs. It was proposed by thinkers Wang Fuzhi, Huang Zongyi, Gu Yanwu and others in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. They believed that learning and quoting the ancient literature should take governing affairs and saving the world as an urgent matter. They opposed the unrealistic metaphysics of Neo Confucianism and had a great influence on later generations. The essence of the thought of managing the world for practical use is to govern the world affairs and make full use of it, which is the interpretation of Ciyuan. Cihai means an academic trend of thought in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, which advocates that knowledge is beneficial to the country. Therefore, it can be explained as follows: pay attention to social reality, solve social conflicts and social problems with what you have learned, and hope to achieve the ideal effect of governing the country and ensuring people's security.

This thought shows the traditional Chinese intellectuals' pursuit of fame and wealth, the spirit of being realistic and pragmatic, and the feelings of "worrying about the world and enjoying the world". The history of the thought of managing the world for practical use can at least be traced back to Confucius, a thinker before Qin Dynasty. The Confucianism founded by Confucius is the essence of Chinese civilization. A careful analysis of Confucianism shows that traditional Confucianism itself is a kind of "philosophy of entering the world". Confucius spared no effort to publicize his ideas, aiming to change the situation of social unrest in the late Spring and Autumn Period, with the collapse of etiquette and bad music, and restore his ideal social order. The characteristics of the thought of pragmatism:(1) Focus on the current reality. For scholars, the purpose of learning is to recognize the reality, have a positive spirit of responsibility, and advocate the courage to do things and change the reality. (2) Be practical and pay attention to investigation and research.(3) Being practical has an independent spirit of innovation, requires independent thinking and innovation, and never follows the example of the ancients[1].

2. Lin Zexu's Thought of Practical Application

The thought of the landlord class reformists has its historical background and ideological origin. Lin Zexu came from a family of middle and lower feudal intellectuals. At this time, Chinese society came to a new crossroads and was in the transitional period from the traditional society

to the modern society. China's feudal rule accelerated its decline. Economically, the country is closed to the outside world, valuing agriculture over commerce, and falling behind the western world; Politically, in order to strengthen the feudal rule, the autocratic dictatorship was implemented, and the germination of capitalism was strongly suppressed; In terms of ideology, the Confucian social thought for thousands of years has gradually become poor and rigid. Cheng Zhu's philosophy has become an orthodox thought, and through the utilitarian guidance of the imperial examination system, it has achieved a controlling position in the Chinese ideological circle. At the same time, the Ming and Qing practical learning, which was opposed to empty talk and "advocating reality and eliminating falsehood", rose again due to the country's internal and external troubles. The practical learning in the Ming and Qing Dynasties was strongly dissatisfied with the traditional Confucianism, which indulged in the exegesis of names and objects and was unable to solve the urgent problems in the real society, and advocated the practical application[2].

2.1. Lin Zexu cares about the World Affairs and the Sufferings of the People, and has a Sense of Responsibility

Although Lin Zexu's concern for the social change of the current situation did not touch the feudal foundation, he paid great attention to the rectification of the administration of officials, the reform of national policies and the concern for the national economy and the people's livelihood. He was not only honest and upright, but also intolerant of other people's corruption. Every time he went to a new post, he had to first issue a "pass card", and people had not yet come to integrity.

2.2. Lin Zexu is Good at Reform and Innovation

He praised the fine tradition of pragmatism in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, and thus set off a patriotic upsurge of reform and resistance to foreign aggression, pushing the practical learning of the Ming and Qing dynasties to the peak. He had a clear understanding of the decadent darkness of the Qing Dynasty and advocated the transformation of the real society. Lin Zexu lived in a time when the national crisis of the Qing Dynasty deepened and the feudal rule became increasingly corrupt. Due to the re emergence and development of capitalist economic factors, and also due to the decline of the Qing Dynasty, the Qing Dynasty lost control of ideology. In order to compete for China's market and raw materials, foreign capitalism stepped up its aggression against China, making the rise of the "pragmatism" school. Lin Zexu, a man of insight among the feudal scholar bureaucrats, realized that empty talk of justice could not solve the real social problems. He believed that etiquette and law would inevitably change with the extension and development of history. In essence, though, their reform motives are basically similar to those of the past dynasties, both of which are to maintain feudal rule. However, due to different times and bold progress in exploring the path of reform, these people's ideas of managing the world have become the internal driving force for China to enter the modern society.

2.3. Lin Zexu was Good at In-Depth Investigation and Learning from Foreign Yi People, and Began to Open His Eyes to the World

The difference between the Chinese and the barbarians began in the Xia Dynasty. The name of Huaxia Yidi can be found in Confucian classics. Lin Zexu has accepted this idea since childhood, so that it is deep-rooted. However, in the case of dramatic changes in the situation at home and abroad, the landlord class reformers focused on the new problems emerging in the struggle against foreign aggression, from which they urgently felt the need to understand and learn from the strengths of the West. Although Gong Zizhen did not clearly put forward the idea of "knowing foreigners" and "learning from foreigners"[1], he began to express dissatisfaction with the real society. Lin Zexu clearly put forward the idea of "knowing the feelings of

foreigners"[3] in the contest with the British invaders. Wei Yuan further put forward the idea of "learning from foreigners to master their skills". Lin Zexu was born and bred in the feudal environment, and was deeply influenced by the concept of "heaven goes up to the country" and "the supremacy of the Chinese and foreigners". Therefore, it is impossible not to be influenced by the traditional concept of Chinese and foreigners, and his ideas can not escape from the stereotype of the traditional concept of Chinese and foreigners, but his efforts to open his eyes to the world have widened the horizons of modern Chinese people.

3. The Practice of Lin Zexu's Thought of Realizing the World

Lin Zexu has been in politics for more than 40 years in his life. As an imperial envoy to ban smoking, he has been an official model and has made brilliant achievements. His contact with government affairs and ethnic minorities is the thought of managing the world, which has been deepened step by step in practice. If we define Lin Zexu as a doer. Lin Zexu has become the first person to learn from the West, learn from foreigners and open his eyes to see the world step by step from a feudal scholar bureaucrat who simply helped the world through practice. This is the result of the combined action of the needs of the times, historical opportunities and personal qualities.

3.1. Lin Zexu Cares about the world Affairs and the Sufferings of the People, and has a Sense of Responsibility

In 1820, he took office in Hangjiahu Road, Zhejiang Province. That is to say, he put the idea of "people are the foundation of the state" into practice, proving that he has a deep understanding of the necessity and possibility of maintaining the national economy and the people's livelihood[4]. He built seawalls in Zhejiang, promoted water conservancy, and reorganized the administration of officials. In 1823, when he was appointed as the Procurator of Jiangsu Province, he was faced with the flood, the corruption of the official administration, and the tendency of the victims to be "fierce and will change". Han Wenqi, the governor of Jiangsu Province, planned to deploy troops to suppress the disaster. Lin Ze "vigorously" mobilized troops to suppress the people who gathered to tell the disaster. He believed that the hungry people were making trouble, which was not comparable to ordinary times, and that the law could not be repealed, especially the poor governance ". He resolutely shouldered the heavy responsibility of disaster relief in the province, and implemented a series of measures to treasure disasters while protecting the rich, We should combine the rectification of government officials with disaster relief and prosperity. In 1833, Lin Zexu was appointed as the governor of Jiangsu Province. Because of the unprecedented severity of the disaster, the Qing government still urged him to solve the problem. He asked for a delay in raising the "one-day debt" and "taking the new tax into consideration to improve the people's ability". Emperor Daoguang accused him of "refusing to blame for the country, and not counting the country as witchcraft". Lin Zexu, regardless of his personal safety, repeated his stories about the disaster and the sufferings of the people, stating that "more leniency and more pursuit means more vitality"; "The national plan is linked to the people's livelihood, and the reality is that the government's expenditure and accumulation are all based on the people, so we should pay attention to the people's livelihood and raise the national plan from above", which fully shows that Lin Zexu's proposition that the people are the foundation of the state is not an expedient measure. It has become an ideological system with a global perspective and political vision, and a strategic political decision.

Lin Zexu has a strong sense of responsibility. In 1838, when he was appointed Governor of Huguang, the smuggling of opium led to the outflow of silver, "to the point where resolute measures must be taken immediately." Patriotic officials and people are clamoring for banning opium, but Emperor Daoguang is still hesitating. Therefore, Lin Zexu, who has witnessed the

endless poison of opium smoke for more than a decade and is as eager as a prayer, came forward and appealed to Daoguang: "The prohibition of opium is not only about whether there is a military to resist the enemy "and" silver to fill the gap ", Moreover, "a man who is rich is the source of hundreds of millions of lives, so he should cherish them". "The fruits are scattered in the mainland, so why not damage the superior and benefit the inferior, and hide the wealth for the people. If nothing is leaked to foreign countries, it is not appropriate to rely on bandits and robbers." This reflects the overall view and political foresight of his thought that the people are the foundation of the state, that is, by combining the interests of feudal rule with the interests of the people through "benefiting the people at the expense of the superior", we can jointly prevent silver from continuing to "leak into foreign countries and steal assets by bandits"[5].

3.2. Lin Zexu's Spirit of Innovation

The decline of Confucian culture and the new era of cultural conflict between China and the West call for a new era. In the great social change, the traditional scholar bureaucrats turned to modern intellectuals. When the Opium War broke out, Lin Zexu personally participated in the anti British struggle. Under the circumstances of dramatic changes in the situation at home and abroad, Lin Zexu realized the importance of knowing the situation of the barbarians and doing "barbarian affairs"[1]. He organized people to translate foreign newspapers and books, edit books and newspapers such as "Hua Shi Yi Yan" and "Four Continents", which played an important role in enlightening China's "going to the world" and became the first person in China to see the world. Lin Zexu insisted on banning smoking, but he also advocated actively developing foreign trade, encouraging Chinese businessmen to compete with foreign businessmen, and letting Chinese businessmen develop modern foreign trade. Lin Zexu strongly opposed the Qing government's attempt to solve the financial crisis by taking measures that harmed the interests of businessmen and people to "suddenly equalize the price of foreign money" in the view of "consulting the elderly businessmen". Lin Zexu quoted the views of businessmen and people as his own. He suggested to Emperor Daoguang that he should make silver coins himself "for the convenience of the people" and "restrain foreign money[3]". He was the first to put forward the advanced proposition of establishing a domestic silver standard monetary system, which clearly reflected his idea of "industry and commerce are fundamental" to protect domestic industry and commerce and ensure the independent development of national economy. It can be seen that Lin Zexu has clearly seen that safeguarding the interests of businessmen and people is of great strategic significance for resisting the intrusion of western economic forces, maintaining the treasury revenue and expenditure and currency circulation of the Chinese Dynasty, and has seen the importance of businessmen in maintaining the national economy and the people's livelihood.

3.3. Lin Zexu is Good at Investigating and Learning New Things

The Opium War made Lin Zexu's thoughts "learn from the barbarians", "learn from the barbarians" and "control the barbarians". Therefore, what he was commendable was that he broke through the traditional Chinese concept of the barbarians and made the Chinese see for the first time that the western countries, which had long been regarded as barbarians, were also stronger than China. This objective reality naturally led them to the idea of learning advanced material civilization from the West to resist aggression. However, Lin Zexu's thought of social change was an emergency policy put forward when the Qing Dynasty was in internal and external difficulties, or only stayed in commenting on court officials, or only asked to learn from the "strong ships and powerful guns" of the West, and did not touch on the feudal autocracy itself. Therefore, the serious national crisis often becomes the catalyst of his thought of social change.

It is rare for Lin Zexu to have a wide range of social practice. The "river affairs", "salt affairs" and "water transport" were the "important policies" of the Qing Dynasty[2]. As an official, Lin Zexu's memorials to the "river affairs", "salt affairs" and "water transport" showed that he did his own thing, loved his own thing, and put forward his own opinions and took positive and effective measures to various government affairs. These fully reflect the spirit of Lin Zexu's practical thinking, caring for the real society, being good at innovation, and being brave to take on responsibilities. At this stage, they are also of practical significance in our actual life. For many officials and cadres at present, whether in adversity or prosperity, they should do their job well. They must not leave their positions to complain and complain. Only by doing their own work well, can their talents and abilities be reflected in the work, and individuals have more opportunities and platforms to realize their own values.

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