

The Confucianism and the Establishing of Ideology of Qin and Han Dynasty

LE CONFUCIANISME ET L'ÉTABLISSEMENT D'IDEOLOGIE DE QIN ET DYNASTIE HAN

LI Guojuan¹

Abstract: This paper delineates the development path that Confucianism outgrows as the state ideology in Han Dynasty, exploring into the selecting, changing and constructing process of ideology in Qin and Han dynasties.

Key words: The Confucianism; The legalism; Ideology effectiveness

Resumé: Ce journal trace le chemin de développement pour lequel le Confucianisme devient trop grand comme l'idéologie d'état dans la Dynastie Han, explorant dans la sélection, le changement et le processus de construction d'idéologie dans Qin et des dynasties Han.

Mots-clés: Le Confucianisme; Le légalisme; Efficacité d'idéologie

Qin and Han dynasties are in the period of great change in Chinese history, particularly the ideological and cultural change brought about by the political unity.

1. LACKING IDEOLOGY WAS ONE OF THE REASONS FOR QIN'S ENDING

Before the establishment of Qin Dynasty Lvshichunqiu is an important attempt to unify the ideology, aiming at providing theoretic and cultural preparation for Qin to conquer the other states and the new dynasty's long-term stability. Upon finding the demerits of legislature adopted by Qin, Lvshichunqiu advocates the strategy of "Combining Confucianism with Taoism, Incorporating Logicians and Legalism" to substitute the dominant legalism in Qin state. Although the suggestions in Lvshichunqiu have not been adopted by the Emperor Qin, it conducted a historic effort to unify feudal ideologies and promoted the integration of various schools at that time.

Having annexed the other six states, Qin became the first centralized feudal dynasty in Chinese history. With reference to using what kind of state ideology to rule and manage the newly-established dynasty, Qin Dynasty has also made a number of attempts. For instance, "Five Elements" theory has been used to justify

¹ Department of Ideological and Political ,Shanghai Institute of Techology,Shanghai 200235,China.

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the legality of the new dynasty. Fengshan and gods worship were invoked to promote the supremacy of monarchical power. A variety of cultures of the States including Confucianism were fused to serve its political purpose. Unfortunately, Qin Empire failed in the attempt to integrate various schools of thoughts in order to establish a unified ideology because of the difference and conflicts between the East cultural system and the West cultural system. Qin quickly took to cultural tyranny. Legalism is dominated in Qin for two reasons: one is its legalistic tradition and the other is its strategic principle. In other words, legalism in Qin Empire is a practical political strategy rather than an ideology to unify thinking and to consolidate the regime. (This can be proved by the difference between Qin Dynasty's legalism and Han Fei's ideological system.) Since cultural tyranny has prevented other various schools of thoughts from becoming the ideologies which may play the roles of regime maintenance and adjustment, Qin Empire perished soon. lacking ideology was one of the reasons.

2. THE IDEOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION FROM TAOISM TO CONFUCIANISM

Han rulers regarded reflecting Qin's tyranny as the starting point for the construction of ideology. After many years of war and reflecting Qin's tyranny and Legalism, the rulers of earlier Han Dynasty uphold Huang-Lao (a kind of Taoism) as the guiding philosophy of state ideology. Huang-Lao matched well with people's needs for peace and production, so the prosperity arose during the periods of Wen Emperor and Jing Emperor.

Despite prevalent Taoism in the early Han dynasty, Confucians are active to promote the revival of Confucianism rather than giving up political pursuit, theoretically characterizing the combination of Confucianism and Taoism. After a period of peace and production, the economy has been tremendously developed. However, Huang-Lao began to show its shortcomings and the social crisis was becoming increasingly severe. On the other hand, the status of Confucianism is rising. Thus, the contradiction between Confucianism and Taoism has become a reflection of the ideological transformation requirement. Huai Nan Zi clearly recorded the ideological transformation from Taoism to Confucianism in Han Dynasty. "the Confucianism only" has finally become a historical reality. However, "the Confucianism only" is substantially legalism with an appearance of Confucianism because Han inherited legalism in Qin's system. With such a political model Emperor Wu tended to pay more attention to legalism than Confucianism.

3. THE SALT AND IRON MEETING AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONFUCIAN IDEOLOGY

Then all sorts of political crisis appeared in Emperor Wu period. The effectiveness of Emperor Wu's policies were questioned and reviewed. Naturally, it is inevitable for people to evaluate Confucian ideology. Salt and iron meeting reflected the conflicts between Confucianism and legalism with regard to the effectiveness of Confucian ideology. In the meeting, the *Xianliangwenxue* representing Confucianism debated with the *Yushidaifu* on behalf of Legalism regarding the issues such as the dispute of kindness and benefit, purpose and result, and poor and rich. On the surface, this is a theoretical debate on the specific rules like the policy of salt and iron. However, the focus of the debate has a strong practical realistic character, that is, the effectiveness of Confucianism as the ideology. The *Xianliangwenxue* defended the effectiveness of Confucian ideology, but the *Yushidaifu* held the opposite position. After the salt and iron meeting, the relationship between Confucianism and Legalism has changed and the status of Confucian ideology has indisputably increased. Disappeared as a school Legalism has become hidden, but it played a substantial role in reality; Confucianism further dominated the society in fact, enhancing the effectiveness of Confucian ideology. Thus, combining Confucianism with Legalism has become the inevitable realistic structure of political development. Emperor Xuan summarized the political structure as "the balance of Confucianism and Legalism under the rule of Huang-lao", which means the integration of apparent

Confucianism and hidden Legalism. From “the lesson of Qin’s perish” proposed by Emperor Wu in his later years to the Renaissance during the period of Emperors Zhao and Xuan, it has been proved that the state policy of “the balance of Confucianism and Legalism under the rule of Huang-lao” is a political model in which Confucian ideology functions effectively. It is the establishment of this model that facilitates Confucianism to be the dominant ideology in traditional Chinese society.

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