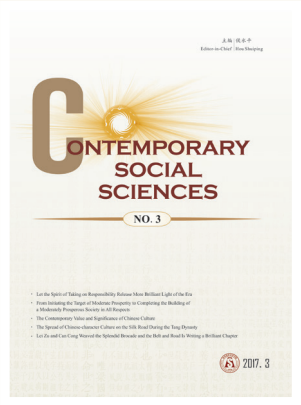
A Brief Introduction of Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences

Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences is the think tank for the provincial government of Sichuan and provincial branch of the Communist Party of China, with full financial backing of the Party and the government. The Academy consists of 15 institutes, 1 graduate school, 10 departments of scientific research management services and 17 branches. At the end of 2015 the staff numbered 1200, including 710 employees with full financial allocation (459 on-the-job employees and 265 retired employees), and 405 master graduate students. Among the scientific personnel, 62 employees have senior professional titles, and 125 employees have associate senior professional titles; 19 employees are experts entitled to special allowances of the State Council, 21 employees are provincial academic and technical leaders, 16 employees are experts with outstanding contributions at provincial level; and 115 employees have doctorate degrees. The publications sponsored by the Academy are 9 magazines and 1 newspaper, namely *Social Science Research, Research of Mao Zedong Thought, Studies on Deng Xiaoping, Reform of Economic System, Rural Economy, Forum on Chinese Culture, West China, Contemporary County Economy, Contemporary Social Sciences (English), and Entrepreneur Daily;* three websites are hosted (namely the portal website of provincial philosophy and social sciences-Sichuan Social Sciences online, website of the Academy-Tianfu Think Tank, English website). With abundant literature information resources, Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences has a collection of 720,000 books, and over 2000 kinds of Chinese and foreign periodicals. Besides its own database resources, the Academy has access to a variety of academic databases, including China National Knowledge Infrastructure, SOSHOO, Zhonghongwang.com, Duxiu.com, Chaoxing.com, National Social Sciences Database, Communist Party of China's political and theoretical resources database, Dachengdata.com, and DRCnet.com.cn. It has 8 provincial key disciplines and 11 excellent disciplines, 5 first-level disciplines and 44 graduate degree programs of second-level disciplines, 1 joint PhD program, and 1 national post-doctoral research station.

Under the guidance and support of the leadership of the Provincial Party committee and government, Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences will adhere to the theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and scientific development concepts as a guide for scientific research work and completion of its main objective: to accelerate the construction of a strong theoretical position, a high-end decision-making think tank, a first-class academic institution and an important base for popularization of science. Its comprehensive strength in local academies of social sciences is among the best nationwide.



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Let the Spirit of Taking on Responsibility Release More Brilliant Light of the Era

—On the Spirit of Taking on Responsibility of the Communist Party of China

Du Feijin*

Abstract: The 95-year great struggle of the Communist Party of China indicates profoundly that the CPC has always been following the trend of history, taking on the historical responsibility, bold in making great sacrifices, and reflects the selfless and fearless spirit of taking on responsibility. This spirit comes from the Chinese national spirit, the truth of Marxism and the great practice of revolution, construction and reform. The new requirements of the era must be clear and definite and the connotation of the era must be grasped, enabling the spirit of taking on responsibility to release more brilliant light of the era. First, it is striving for and dedicating selflessly of the country, and taking on historical responsibility to achieve the country's prosperity and strength. Second, it is serving the people, reducing difficulties and anxiety for the people and taking on historical responsibility to attain people's well-being. Third, it is sharing cares and burdens for the Party, keeping loyalty to the Party, and taking on historical responsibility so that the Party can provide a strong leadership core for the continued development of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The CPC is expected to produce new and more excellent answers to history and the people.

Keywords: the Communist Party of China; the spirit of taking on responsibility; light of the era

Throughout its 95 years of struggle, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has firmly relied on the people, overcome difficulties and obstacles time and time again, and won one victory after another. It has made great contributions

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to history for the Chinese nation, realizing China's great leap from thousands of years of feudal autocracy to democracy, from continuous decline to fundamental reverse of fate and steady development to prosperity and strength of the Chinese nation, from help Chinese people stand to become richer and stronger. The great struggle indicates profoundly that the CPC has been following the trends of history, taking on historical responsibilities, bold in making great sacrifices, and reflects the selfless and fearless spirit of taking on responsibility. The baton of history is passed on to today. Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, expounded in depth the CPC's responsibilities to the nation, to the people and to the Party itself, as soon as he took office. He put forward that the people's wish for a good life is our goal and we should realize the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation. In a Russian Television interview, he said that serving the people and fulfilling due responsibilities was a summary of his concept of governance. In a significant speech at the ceremony of the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, he further proposed, "Stay true to mission" in eight aspects, all of which highlighted the spirit of taking on responsibility of the CPC. Under the new and complicated international situation and the arduous domestic tasks of reform, development and stability, it is imperative for Party members and cadres to have a deep understanding of the connotation of taking on responsibility from the height of promoting the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and achieving the "Two Centenary Goals" and the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and consciously unite around the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core. The spirit of taking on responsibility should be interpreted with practical actions, and release more brilliant light of the era.

1. The selfless and fearless spirit of taking on responsibility of the CPC comes from the Chinese national spirit, the truth power of Marxism and the practice of revolution, construction and reform.

Taking on responsibility is a distinctive character of the Chinese Communists. The selfless and fearless spirit of taking on responsibility is an important manifestation of the advanced nature of the Party. On the occasion of national peril, the Party assumed the great cause of national rejuvenation with indomitable heroic courage, the historical mission of fighting for national independence and prosperity, and people's liberation and well-being. It has written a magnificent epic and created a development miracle of human society during the 95-year struggle. There is no other political party in the world that is as bold in making a solemn commitment to all the people that it would lead people to create a happy life and unswervingly pursue common prosperity along the road of socialism, or as consistent in uniting and leading all the people to forge ahead toward the great goal. This selfless and fearless spirit of taking on responsibility is the distinctive feature of the great spirit of the CPC. The spirit of taking on responsibility of the CPC comes down in one continuous line with the patriotism-imbued national spirit, and the truth power of Marxism and is refined in the great practice of revolution, construction and reform in which the Party led the people for 95 years.

First, the spirit of taking on responsibility is the highlight of the patriotism-imbued national spirit in this era. In the course of more than five thousand years of development, the Chinese nation has formed a national spirit with patriotism as its core. The spirit of taking on responsibility, an important part of the national spirit, is deeply rooted in the outstanding

cultural traditions of the Chinese nation. All the wise words and noble deeds of the ancient sages vividly interpret the patriotic feelings and intrinsic endowment of the spirit of taking on responsibility of the Chinese nation, like, "As Heaven keeps vigorous through movement, a gentleman should unremittingly practice self-improvement" in *the Book of Changes*, "I will work heart and soul for my country to the day I draw my last breath." of Zhuge Liang, "To establish the heart of life for the world, to indicate a jointly followed direction for the people, to inherit the knowledge by former saints like Confucius and Mencius and to build foundations for permanent peace for future generations" of Zhang Zai, "Be the first to concern yourself with the affairs of state and the last to rejoice in personal happiness" of Fan Zhongyan, "Everyone will one day die; When my day comes, may my loyalty be inscribed in the pages of history." of Wen Tianxiang, "The rise and fall of the country is everybody's concern and business" of Gu Yanwu, "In line with the conviction that I will do whatever it takes to serve my country even at the cost of my own life, regardless of fortune or misfortune to myself" of Lin Zexu, "March forward courageously, in concert with the noble spirit and face death with indifference" of Sun Yat-sen. The spirit of the Chinese nation is deeply rooted in Chinese people's blood. The CPC was born in modern times and in those early dark years the impoverished and enfeebled China was facing domestic troubles and foreign invasions. The Party is the inevitable product of the Chinese people's tenacious struggle and indomitable exploration. Since its inception, the Party, with the fearless spirit of taking on responsibility, has assumed the future of the country and the destiny of the nation and people, shouldered the historical responsibility of the great rejuvenation of the nation, to lead China to rise from poverty and weakness and stride for national unity, prosperity and strength. History and practice show that Chinese Communists are the elite among the Chinese people, the conscious successors, best practitioners and vigorous advocators of the spirit of the Chinese nation. The spirit of taking on responsibility of the Party is the highlight and enhancement of patriotism-imbued national spirit in this era.

Second, the spirit of taking on responsibility comes from the truth power of Marxism. The Party always adheres to the Marxist principles as the guide, constantly advances the adaptation of Marxism to suit China, modernization and popularization of Marxism, which is the solid ideological foundation for the spirit of taking on responsibility. Marxism is an advanced and scientific theory, and a powerful ideological weapon for us to understand and transform the world. The scientific truth of Marxism enables our Party to transcend the limitations of all other political forces that came before it, which always sought to advance their own special interests, and fulfill the historical responsibility that other political forces in modern China failed to fulfill. Drawing from the scientific spirit of materialist dialectics, and from its selfless and fearless embrace, the CPC has led and advanced China's revolution, construction, and reform, and achieved victories one after another. Marxism endows the spirit of taking on responsibility with great wisdom and courage to assume historical responsibility. The Party establishes Communism as its lofty ideal, and determines struggling for Communism and Socialism as its guiding principle. This lofty ideal and noble pursuit has inspired generation after generation of communists to fight courageously. During the revolutionary wartime, thousands upon thousands of martyrs laid down their precious lives for this ideal. In times of peace and construction, thousands upon thousands of builders set the national interest above their own for the ideal, bent their bodies and exhausted their energy for national

prosperity and revitalization, and people's happiness. The lofty ideal of Communism endows the spirit of taking on responsibility with powerful force to assume responsibility and sacrifice. Standing on the people's side represents the fundamental political stance of the CPC, which acts as the significant mark to distinguish a Marxist political party from other political parties. Over the past 95 years, the CPC has stood together with the people in times good and bad, maintaining its close bond with them no matter what fate may bring. Apart from the interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people, the Party has no special interests of their own. Standing on the people's side endows the spirit of taking on responsibility with feelings for the people and placing people's interests above all else, and the invariant core of unremitting struggle for the cause of the Party and the people.

Third, the spirit of taking on responsibility comes from refining the practice of revolution, construction and reform. The spirit of taking on responsibility of the Party was formed and developed in the great practice of the revolution, construction, and reform by a substantial number of Chinese communists and the people of all ethnic groups. It has become purer after being refined by great practice and deeply reflects the advanced nature and purity of the communists. Be it the extraordinarily times in the flames of war, the construction period with boundless enthusiasm and burning passion, or the vigorous era of reform surging high and sweeping forward, thousands and thousands of Chinese communists always adhere to the principle that the country, the nation and the people is supreme and lead the masses to work hard and perseveringly, and interpret their responsibilities in the different historical periods. These continuous struggles gave birth to a multitude of heroes, and the spirit of taking on responsibility has been further manifested. Countless heroes sacrificed their lives for national independence and people's liberation, like Peng Pai, Luo Yinong, Fang Zhimin, Xia Minghan, Liu Hulan, Dong Cunrui, and Jiang Zhuyun. QiuShaoyun, Huang Jiguang, and Yang Gensi died to protect our homes and defend our country. The older generation of scientists like Qian Xuesen, Deng Jiaxian, Li Siguang, and Hua Luogeng overcame many obstacles and returned to serve the motherland in the most difficult times. The advanced model characters like Lei Feng, Wang Jinxi, Jiao Yulu and Shi Chuanxiang struggled hard amid difficulties and made selfless contributions to the country. These heroes of different times established a spiritual monument of the courage of fulfillment and sacrifice. In these continuous struggles, the plentiful and substantial results have constantly made new practical footnotes for the spirit of taking on responsibility. Our Party united and led the Chinese people to complete the New Democratic Revolution, achieving national independence and people's liberation, establishing the People's Republic of China, to complete the socialist revolution, establishing the basic system of socialism, eradicating all exploitation systems, advancing the socialist construction, to launch the great new revolution of reform and opening-up, realizing great liberation and development of social productive forces, greatly enhancing the vitality of social development, significantly improving people's lives, markedly growing overall national strength and significantly improving our international status, and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation shows an unprecedented prospect.

2. The new requirements of the era must be clear and definite and the connotation of the era must be grasped.

Selflessness and fearlessness are the essence of

the spirit of taking on responsibility of the Party. It is the inexhaustible source for the spirit of taking on responsibility to adhere to Marxism as our guiding ideology, and fight for communism and socialism. It is the invariant core of the spirit of taking on responsibility to place the Party's principles and missions and people's interests in the first place, and regard the country, the nation and the people as supreme, have the courage to fulfill responsibility, to contribute and to sacrifice. At the same time, the specific requirements of the spirit of taking on responsibility develop with the changes of the times, and varies as per the requirements of practice. Today, our country is standing at a new historical starting point, and the decisive stage in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, the critical point of comprehensively deepening reform, and the important node in the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The "Two Centenary Goals" and the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation are calling the communists to carry forward the spirit of taking on responsibility and forge ahead. As pointed out by General Secretary Xi Jinping, "Our responsibility is to rally and lead the entire Party and the people of all China's ethnic groups in taking on this task, and continuing to pursue the goal of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, so that China can stand firmer and stronger among the world's nations, and make new and greater contributions to mankind." Today, in carrying forward the spirit of taking on responsibility it is most fundamental to take the baton of history. Only in this way, can we ensure that the Party is always the firm leadership core guiding the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and lead the Chinese people to achieve the glorious dream of rejuvenation of the Chinese nation following the Chinese path.

First, it is striving and dedicating selflessly for the country, and taking on responsibility of history to achieve the country's prosperity and strength. Backwardness made us vulnerable to attack, whereas only development makes us strong. National prosperity is the premise of national rejuvenation, the support of people's happiness, and heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the communists. Since the reform and opening-up, our economy has been developing rapidly, and the comprehensive national strengthening has been increased at a high speed. China has become the second largest economy, the largest goods trading country, the second largest service trading country, the major country in foreign investment, the country with the largest foreign exchange reserves, and the most important engine for world economic growth and is now ranked first in the contribution to global economic growth. However, the problem of being large but not strong economy of China is still prominent and the extensive mode of development has not been fundamentally reversed. The issue remains the same: That China is still in the primary stage of socialism and will continue to be so for a considerable period of time to come. The principal contradiction in Chinese society that the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people are unable to be met by China's underdeveloped social production has not changed. The international status of our country as the largest developing country remains the same. We are facing a series of contradictions and problems when planning for development today. From an international perspective, the international financial crisis has not yet subsided, slow recovery of the global economy leads to sluggish external demand. With further promotion of worldwide multiple polarization, economic globalization, social informatization and the world economy has entered a transition period, and science and technology is brewing a new breakthrough. This fast-changing world offers opportunities and challenges that will determine the future development of China and test the wisdom

and courage of the ruling party regarding whether we can overcome the difficulties and seize the opportunity to catch the express train of the new science and technology revolution. From a domestic perspective, with the growth of our economy, our economic development has entered the New Normal, the requirements for transformation and upgrading have become more urgent, the difficulty to maintain sustained healthy economic growth has been greatly increased, energy resources and environmental constraints have become restrictive and more severe, and reform is facing a hard nut to crack. All kinds of contradictions are intertwined. It is also a big test for the ruling party whether we can maintain a good situation, let economic development further step up and become more efficient, fairer and create more sustainable development. With this arduous task, it is normal for many cadres to work seven days per week and work day and night all the year round, engage in daily work with high degree of tension, and work wholeheartedly but ignore themselves and their family members. Is it hard? Yes, indeed. But it is much happier than sacrifice at any time in the revolutionary wartime. Is it exhausting? Yes, indeed. But it is worth our hard work for a new world of development. The spirit of taking on responsibility of the era is reflected in the forms like exerting all one's strength and wisdom, attending office morning and night, and selfless dedication instead of charging the enemy lines. We should overcome all the difficulties, make pioneering renovations, have the courage to reform and become better and better at reforming, and spare no effort to contribute all our strength to national prosperity and rejuvenation and people's well-being.

Second, is serving the people and excluding difficulty and anxiety for the people, taking on historical responsibility to attain people's well-being. People are the creators of history, while the masses are the real heroes. People's well-being is included in the meaning of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It is our Party's unswerving goal to lead the people to create a happy life. Since the founding of our Party, the people have been placed in the highest position and the Party adheres to the fundamental tenet of wholeheartedly serving the people. The Party led the people to overthrow the "three big mountains" (imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, which weighed like mountains on the backs of the Chinese people before liberation) and establish a new China, launch a socialist transformation and construction, which lays a fundamental premise for the people's well-being. Over 30 years of reform and opening-up the Party united and led the people to create a Chinese miracle of accomplishing people's well-being. More than 700 million people have been lifted out of poverty and China's contribution rate to global poverty reduction is more than 70%. Gross national income per capita has grown from $190 to $7,880, and China has moved from a low-income country to a upper-middle-income country. The living standard of 1.3 billion Chinese people has achieved a qualitative leap. All these have been recognized as "unprecedented achievements in human history." However, we must be aware that, as the largest developing country in the world, China still has tens of millions of poor people, and it is our unshakable responsibility to help lift them out of poverty and enter a moderately prosperous society in all respects. The problem of unbalanced development has arisen in the socialist market economy, and the regional gap, the gap between urban and rural areas and the income gap reduce people's happiness, and sense of gain. We must make great efforts to reverse this situation and provide a solution. People still have many specific demands to be satisfied in employment, health, education and social security. In short, there is a gap between our work and people's expectations for a better life. Today, the

responsibilities on our shoulders for people's well-being are not reduced due to our great achievements. Therefore, we cannot be pleased with ourselves. Instead, we should set people's expectations as our goal, hold it in hand and put it into action, with an even stronger sense of responsibility and mission. As requested by General Secretary Xi Jinping, we should seize the most concerned, most direct and most practical issues of people's interests, seize the people most in need of care, complete one task after another year after year, move forward with perseverance. We should be able to suffer grievance and assume the responsibility for people's well-being. The tasks are arduous and complex, involving a wide range, affecting the interests of many people. It is normal to be misunderstood by the masses. We should be patient and careful in persuasion. We should bear unfair and scolding words by people, rather than leave the masses disappointed. We should be able to unswervingly work for them despite of their misunderstandings. In the revolutionary wartime, the communists would rather sacrifice their lives to protect the masses. In peacetime, what is the point of suffering from injustice for the Party members and cadres? We should keep in mind that the people are kind-hearted with sharp eyes. Finally, we would obtain understanding and support of the masses as long as we work wholeheartedly for them. Third, we should assume the historical mission to share cares and burdens for, and keep loyal to, the Party, and ensure that the CPC remains the firm leading core of the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in an important speech during the celebration assembly for the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, "China's success hinges on the CPC. The leadership of the CPC constitutes the most essential attribute of Chinese socialism, and the greatest strength of this system. The foundation and lifeblood of the CPC and the country, and the interests and well-being of all Chinese people, boil down to upholding and improving the leadership of the CPC." It is the fundamental guarantee for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation to ensure that the Party remains the firm leading core of the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It has been proved by practice that our Party adheres to a scientific theory with distinctive advanced characteristics. It does everything for the people's benefits and serves the people wholeheartedly. It is able to withstand a variety of risks and challenges, and becoming mature and self-confident, it has always been the core force leading the people of all ethnic groups, and adhering to the socialist development with Chinese characteristics of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Under the leadership of the Party, we have made remarkable achievements, of which we have every reason to be proud. However, we must be aware that under the new situation, our Party faces many severe challenges, and there are many problems to be solved. In particular, some Party members and cadres are corrupt, divorcing from the masses, applying formalism, and excessive bureaucracy. Great efforts must be made to resolve these problems. Meanwhile, the Party is facing long-term and complex tests in ruling, reform and opening-up, market economy, and external environment, incompetence, alienation from the masses, passiveness and corruption. As a result, it is of significance and urgency to promote self-purification, self-improvement, self-innovation, and self-enhancement. Since the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC, the CPC Central Committee, with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has intensified an all-out effort to comprehensively govern the Party with strict discipline. As a result, the conduct of the Party and the government has created a new atmosphere, and the advanced nature and purity of the Party has been further strengthened, and

the fight against corruption has built up irresistible momentum. These have won the wholehearted support of the people. However, joint efforts of all Party members are expected, and needed, to maintain the Party's advanced nature of purity, as each communist is a cell of the Party body as a whole and each is a banner for the Party. The power of the Party is united by the power of all the Party members. The image of the Party is represented specifically by each member. The governance mission of the Party relies on the fruitful work of thousands and thousands of Party members, and the answer to the people is prepared by all members of the Party. Therefore, each Party member carries the mission of the Party, the country and the people, and assumes the responsibility of keeping loyalty to the Party, sharing cares and burdens and undertaking obligations for the Party. It is imperative for us to enhance the sense of urgency, discuss issues related to the Party, and concern for the Party, and put specific actions like love, concern and defending the Party, and efforts for the prosperity of the Party into all aspects of work and life. We should effectively improve our work style, keep close ties with the masses, and be closely attached to the people, and unite and pursue a common endeavor.

3. Vigorously promote the spirit of taking on responsibility of the Communist Party of China, produce more excellent answers for the people and history

Today, we are closer to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation than at any other time in history, and we are more confident and capable of achieving this goal than at any other time in history. But we should realize that we have a long way to go to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The road ahead is not smooth, so we should be ready to cope with various difficulties and challenges, and launch many great struggles with new historical features. Mao Zedong put forward the saying, "Go to the capital to sit an examination," This test is by no means over, and it is continuing right now. Since the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC, the spirit of taking on responsibility has been vigorously promoted by the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping as the core, stressing that the leading cadres should have the courage to assume responsibilities, which is of strong practical relevance. First, it is put forward for the realization of "Two Centenary Goals."At present, facing the unprecedented opportunities and challenges, the Party Central Committee has pointed out that the scientific path is to constantly put forward the realization of "Two Centenary Goals," that is, to advance the overall layout of promoting balanced economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological progress, to promote the layout of "Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy" in a coordinated way, and improve people's well-being, national prosperity, strength and beauty. We should persist in putting economic construction as the central task, adhering to lead the new normal economic development with new principles, making efforts to promote the supply side structural reform; and speed up the formation of an institutional environment in which innovation is revered, coordination is emphasized, green development is advocated, openness is fostered, and sharing is encouraged, so as to bolster our country's economic strength and overall national strength. The path is clear, the blueprint is ready and the tasks are arduous and urgent. Party members and cadres at all levels should carry forward the spirit of taking on responsibility, have the courage to assume the heavy burden of reform and development, so that the bright blueprint will come true. Second, it is put forward for the phenomenon of "the act of omission" of a few cadres. The mainstream of our cadres is good,

but it does have a small number of people, who are unwilling to take on responsibility, do not dare to take on responsibility, and incapable of taking on responsibility. Seemingly, "the act of omission" is a small individual issue only with a few individuals, but in actuality, it jeopardizes both the cause of the Party and the people and the image of the Party. To solve this problem, rules and regulations are to be established to run the Party strictly, meanwhile, Party members and cadres should improve their ideological consciousness, political character, ability and quality, and therefore the spirit of taking on responsibility should be vigorously carried forward.

First, we should make Party members and officials develop a firm and correct worldview and a firm and correct attitude toward power and career. The spirit of taking on responsibility is the inheritance of the spirit of the Chinese nation, reflecting the outlook on the world, power and career of Marxism on the spiritual level. With the outlook on the world, power and career of Marxism and persisting in the people's position, the Party members and cadres will naturally generate the selfless and fearless spirit of taking on responsibility. If the outlook wavers, or we hold an outlook on the world, power and career of non-Marxism, it will become unavoidable to be unwilling to take on responsibility, dare not to take on responsibility and be incapable to take on responsibility. So, General Secretary Xi Jinping points out, "Whether a cadre has the spirit of taking on responsibility, loyalty and diligence, capability for fulfillment, and sense of responsibility is a critical part to test if each leading cadre really represents the advanced nature and purity of the communists."This prompts us to carry forward the spirit of taking on responsibility It is the most important to make sure that each Party member really believes, understands and uses Marxism, and firmly establishes the outlook on the world, power and career of Marxism. For this issue, General Secretary Xi Jinping had a profound exposition on the 2010 autumn semester opening ceremony of the Central Party School, "To establish a correct world outlook, leading cadres must strengthen the communist ideal and the socialist belief with Chinese characteristics, and consciously integrate their life pursuit and values and goals into the struggle for national prosperity and rejuvenation and the well-being of the people. Marxist outlook of power is summed up as: Power is endowed by the people and is to be used for the people. Whatever position the leading cadres are in, they are obliged to serve the people and place the people's interests in the highest position for employing the power. The people's satisfaction should be set as the basic standard for the exercise of power, and fair employment and fair service are required as well. The outlook on the career of the Chinese communists is to fight for the interests of the people, for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. With Marxist outlook on the world, power and career established, we will become spiritually noble, open and broad minded, rich in life, indifferent to fame and wealth, selfless and fearless, make wholehearted devotion to public duty and march forward courageously. We will be able to realize that we can realize that the exercise of power and responsibility are closely linked, power is in nature responsibility and fulfillment. Our power is entrusted by the Party and the people, and can only be used for sharing cares and burdens of the Party, serving the country and seeking profit for the people. Only in this way, can we fight unswervingly and confidently for the interests of the people and the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and focus our energy and talent on every piece of work, be it in favorable or unfavorable circumstances."

Second, we should adopt appropriate ways and means, face problems directly and have the courage to adhere to principles. With the spirit and courage of taking on responsibility, the proper

means should be grasped as well. The core is to face problems directly, have the courage to explore, adhere to principles, and be conscientious and responsible. Problems are the horns of the times, the outstanding performance of contradictions as well as a breakthrough to the situation. There are only four years left to achieve the goal of a moderately prosperous society in all respects in the year 2020. The good situation of development can be maintained and further expanded and the established objectives can be achieved by facing problems directly, aiming at and chasing the problems, keeping opening in front of tough problems, coping with contradictions and boldly taking responsibility despite of risks. Party members and cadres face a multitude of problems, like the new trend of reform and development so as to resolve the major issues of the department and unit locally for the sake of long-term development, the new expectations of the masses so as to resolve the outstanding problems, as well as the transformation of the subjective world so as to resolve problems of a certain tendency, sign and potential in way of thinking and work style. In this sense, the attitude towards problems acts as the touchstone and tests for whether Party members and cadres have the spirit of taking on responsibility. The ability to solve problems is definitely required as well as facing problems directly. For this purpose, we must strengthen learning, improve Party spirit, advance the theory and knowledge, and then enhance fulfillment ability like situation judgment , scientific decision-making, organization and coordination, to know the subordinates well enough to assign them jobs commensurate with their abilities, mass work , and respond to emergencies. We must uphold innovation, keep the indomitable courage and the spirit open to new situations, and have the courage to think, to do and to bear, and work creatively for the course of the Party and the people. We must stick to principles and be conscientious and responsible, be bold in taking a clear-cut stand and seriously tackle tough problems. We should act as demanded by General Secretary Xi Jinping, "Have the courage to take resolute actions in the face of major issues , to tackle difficulties head-on in the face of conflicts, to step forward in the face of crises, to admit their share of mistakes and to resolutely fight against misconduct." We should be the tough grass and true gold of the era.

Third, we should be in pursuit of lofty realms and take on extraordinary responsibility with selfless dedication. The spirit of taking on responsibility varies. The state attained is the measure of the spirit, instead of the specific position the member is in. Jiao Yulu was the Secretary of the county Party Committee. In the eyes of some people, it is not a position of high level. The secretary is responsible for the development of a county, while there are several thousand of administrative divisions at the county level or above it, let alone other Party and government departments at the same level or at the higher level. But Jiao Yulu interpreted the spirit of taking on responsibility of the communists by his selfless dedication of life. He had the servant feelings, "keeping all the people in the heart except himself," the realistic style with explorations, "accumulating hands-on experience and collecting information," fighting spirit, "dare to make sun and moon shine in new skies," and "act as a hero in face of difficulties," and moral sentiments of hardworking and plain-living, integrity and public-spirited and, "do not engage in privilege at any time."

It is this extraordinary spirit of taking on responsibility that makes the Jiao Yulu Spirit, named after him, become a precious spiritual wealth of the Party, and studied and admired by thousands and thousands of Party members. It is pointed out by General Secretary Xi Jinping that one cannot be fearless without selflessness, and the spirit of taking on responsibility cannot go without selflessness.

one's career relies on one's responsibility, and one's achievements rely on the responsibility he fulfills. Today, it is necessary to fulfill great responsibility with selfless dedication, to give full play of the spirit of taking on responsibility. We should adhere to the Three Stricts and Three Honests; maintain the right worldview, outlook on life, and values; be mindful of the Party, the people, their responsibilities, and the rules; and regard selfless contribution to the causes of the Party and people as their highest aspiration in life.

(Translator: Huang Yan; Editor: Xiong Xianwei)

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From Initiating the Target of Moderate Prosperity to Completing the Building of a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects

Yang Shengqun*

The past 40 years has seen the remarkable history of the building of not only socialism with Chinese characteristics but also a moderately prosperous society by the Chinese people led by the Communist Party of China. By 2020, China will have finished building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and realized the second strategic objective of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It took some western developed countries one hundred or even several hundred years to complete this cause. A review and analysis of this historical cause today may help us better understand the historical logic and the theoretical logic in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

1. Proposal of the target of modernization in Chinese style–the target of moderate prosperity

The rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is to completely change the passive state since the Opium War, turn China into a strong modernized socialist country, so that the Chinese nation may once again emerge as one of the advanced nations of the world. This has been the greatest hope of the Chinese people for over a hundred years, and many outstanding individuals have made a variety of attempts and struggles for it. However, before the Communist Party of China, no one has really put forward the correct and comprehensive way for the great rejuvenation of the nation, not to mention practical development strategies and development objectives.

* This article is a speech made by Yang Shengqun at the Academic Symposium on Studying and Implementing the Spirits of the Sixth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee.

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It was the Communist Party of China that put forward the strategy and objective of modernization development for China and started China's modernization process in a real sense. Mao Zedong founded the theory of new democracy, successfully guided the triumph of China's new democratic revolution, and correctly answered a series of important issues concerning the modernization construction after the victory of the democratic revolution in China, an agricultural country with backward economies and cultures. In particular, he pointed out that the fundamental way of modernization for China is industrialization and that our agricultural country should be turned into an industrial one. Thus, China's modernization has been turned from a fantasy into reality.

The founding of the new China provided the fundamental conditions for nationwide large-scale modernization construction. In September 1954, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai put forward the goal of "Four Modernizations" at the 1st National People's Congress: through seven five-year plans, that is, by the end of the 20th century, our country would be built into a great modernized socialist country. The proposition of the "Four Modernizations" has far-reaching significance and influence on China's modernization and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Objectively speaking, however, limited to the understanding of modernization, this objective, especially the schedule, lacked sufficient objective basis. Coupled with various reasons later on, the Party's anxiety for success in economic construction developed into "Leftist" errors in guiding ideology, which resulted in a serious setback in the implementation of this objective. By the end of the 1970s, although China's economy remained at a high rate of growth and the economic system was built up, the foundation had been weak and disproportionate. In particular, the people's livelihoods had not been improved accordingly, and even food and clothing problems had not been solved. Deng Xiaoping was soberly aware that it was impossible to realize modernization of international standards by the end of the 20th century. So he proposed in 1979 the "Chinese-style Modernization" or the modernization in "Chinese standard": the target of moderate prosperity (per capita GDP of USD 1,000). The target of moderate prosperity is a realistic objective which is down to earth. China has largely achieved this objective at the end of the 20th century, realized a stage goal in the modernization in Chinese standard, fulfilled the promise of the Communist Party of China, and turned a century dream of the Chinese people into reality.

At the beginning, the target of moderate prosperity was just an objective for improvements in per capita GDP and people's living standards. In March 1985, upon field visit to Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai and other places where the target of economic moderate prosperity had been achieved Deng Xiaoping analyzed and summarized the local situations and put forward a new development objective, the building of a moderately prosperous society. The objective to build a moderately prosperous society is one characterized by coordinated economic and social development and comprehensive development. First, a moderately prosperous society is one in which people generally have ample food and clothing and live and work in peace and contentment. Second, a moderately prosperous society is one in which material progress and the construction of spiritual civilization develop at the same time. "Not only should we develop the economy, we should also create a good social order and a good social atmosphere" (Deng, 1993). Third, a moderately prosperous society is one leading to common prosperity, fairness and harmony.

By combining people's traditional ideals with realistic demands and embodying the basic principles and advantages of socialism, the objective

to build a moderately prosperous society has outlined a social vision that is close to the people. As a target of economic and social development by leaps and bounds, this objective has highlighted the Chinese nation's ambition to catch up with the advanced and has greatly mobilized people's enthusiasm and creativity to build a better country with their own hands and wisdom. It is also a realistic objective which is down to earth. Based on China's national conditions, it has identified the historical starting point and realistic basis for China's modernization.

The objective to build a moderately prosperous society is a strategic goal of dynamic development. It has broadened mind of the Communist Party of China to lead the people to keep pace with the times and determine China's long-term strategy and objectives in modernization construction based on the reality of China. It was in the process of brewing this objective that Deng Xiaoping put forward the "Three-Step" strategic plan which, for the first time, provided China's modernization drive with a clear and practical development strategy, goals and a timetable. Upon entering the 21st century, while basing itself on reality, focusing on the future and keeping pace with the times, our Party has constantly enriched, expanded and deepened the objective to build a moderately prosperous society and the "Three-Step" strategic plan.

2. Entering a new development stage in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects

In the historical periods of revolution, construction and reform, the Communist Party of China has always timely set clear and inspirational objectives in accordance with the wishes of the people and the development of the cause and unified and led the people to strive for it. By the end of the 20th century, China had largely achieved the target of moderate prosperity and realized the second stage strategic goal of the "Three-Step" strategic plan. However, the Communist Party of China did not rush to deploy the third step, that is, basically realizing the goal of modernization by the middle of the 21st century as a direct development objective. Instead, it made a new strategic arrangement. In November 2002, the 16th CPC National Congress made it clear that "As human society entered the 21st century, we started a new phase of development in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and speeding up socialist modernization", and clearly put forward a new objective that "we need to concentrate on building a moderately prosperous society of a higher standard in an all-round way to the benefit of over one billion people in the first two decades of the 21st century" (CCCPC Party Literature Research Center, 2005).

The establishment of the objective to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects opened up a new development stage in China's socialist modernization construction.

The objective to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects was determined according to the objective process of China's modernization construction and the actual situations of the periodic changes in economic development. By the end of the 20th century, after more than 20 years of reform and development, China's economic and social outlook had undergone profound historical changes. The national economy maintained rapid growth, the national economic strength was significantly enhanced, the people's overall average living standard reached the moderately prosperous level, the problems of food and clothing that had long been faced by the people were fundamentally resolved, and the dream of generations to lead a moderately prosperous life finally became a reality. However, from the perspective of the stage of social development, China is still in the primary stage of

socialism, and the changes in economic and social outlook are still periodic ones in the entire initial stage of socialism. In particular, the moderately prosperous level of people's overall average living standard is still at a low level which is not all-inclusive and is very uneven. On such a basis, it still takes stages and time to reach or get close to the level of moderately developed countries. The objective to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects put forward by the 16th CPC National Congress is aimed at consolidating and improving the level attained, and turning the low level, not all-inclusive and very uneven moderately prosperous state into a higher level, relative all-inclusive and relatively balanced one.

The building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects is an indispensable connecting stage of development in the process of socialist modernization in China. China must go through this stage, and from a higher starting point, strive to achieve the third step of strategic objective by the middle of the 21st century.

The objective to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects is a constantly evolving objective with specific and rich connotations and requirements. The 16th CPC National Congress put forward the basic objective to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects by developing social economy, politics and culture with Chinese characteristics, and made clear the programmatic requirements: the development of economy is the primary task of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; we should continue to uphold the banner of reform and opening up we should realize social progress in all respects based on economic development; and the starting point and the ultimate goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects is to improve the living standard and quality of the people of the whole country.

With the progress of the times, profound changes have taken place. In October 2007, the 17th CPC National Congress put forward new requests on building a moderately prosperous society in all respects in response to new restrictions in economic development, new characteristics in social transformation and new changes in the international environment. It enriched, expanded and deepened objectives set by the 16th CPC National Congress and made new strategic plans on economic, political, cultural, social and ecological development that constitute the fundamental objective system. This objective system made highlights and put forward the following requests: the first is to guarantee the coordination of the development while ensuring a fast and sound growth of the economy in the face of the imbalanced economic situation of the country; the second is to address people's new aspiration of participating in politics, through the expansion of the socialist democracy and the guarantee of people's rights and social justice; the third is to strengthen the country's soft power through the promotion of cultural construction and the guarantee of people's ethical standards across China; the fourth is to address the incoordination between economic development and social development, which highlights the improvement of living standards through social construction; and the fifth is to protect the environment and promote ecological construction, and basically form the industrial structure, growth mode and consumption mode of energy and resources conservation and environment protection.

Practices have proven the correctness of the struggle objective of building a moderately prosperous society set by the 16th CPC National Congress and the fundamental objective system set by the 17th CPC National Congress. With the encouragement and under the leadership of such an objective system, our country has embarked on

a sustainable path towards the target of moderate prosperity. China's economic and social development have gone into depth and our national strength and international competitiveness have reached a higher level, which lays a solid foundation for the realization of the "Third-Step" strategic plan by the mid-21st century.

3. Ensuring to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects on time

The second decade of the 21st century is a decisive stage in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. The 18th CPC National Congress put forward the struggle objective to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2020 and made solemn commitment to the Party, the people and the history. It further elaborated on the objective system of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects in accordance with the economic and social development, and put forward a series of new requests on economic, political, cultural, social and ecological development. The 18th CPC National Congress also made it a major focus to address the imbalance, incoordination and unsustainability occurred in economic and social development; it highlighted the requests on deepening reform and opening up, promoted efforts to address development issues, perfect the socialist market economy and improve all kinds of institutions with reform approaches, so as to add dynamics and provide system guarantee to finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; it incorporated the ecological construction into the struggle objective, and put forward the reform objective of accelerating the ecological construction for the first time.

After the 18th CPC National Congress, President Xi Jinping described profoundly and vividly the Chinese dream of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, a dream that is aspired by Chinese people generation after generation, and reiterated the "Two Centenary Goals" set by the Communist Party of China. He also pointed out that finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects is a critical step to realize the Chinese dream in the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation (CCCPC Party Literature Research Center, 2016). To realize such an objective, the Central Party Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core insisted on building socialism with Chinese characteristics based on the reality of China and promoted the "five in one" layout combining economic, political, cultural, social and ecological development. It set out the "Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy" with finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects being the foremost strategy and deepening reform, advancing the law-based governance of China and strengthening Party self-discipline being the three pillar strategies. The "five in one" layout and the "Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategies" are integrated and coordinated.

The Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee made an overall strategic plan to deepen the reform and brought a new wave of reform. Reforms in each sector speeded up, the scale and the strength of which were unprecedented. The reforms were carried out in an all-round way and breakthroughs were made in key areas with a proper speed and good momentum. The Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee made the first decision of strengthening the rule of law in the history of the Communist Party of China, and made clear that law-based governance of the country in every respect is the fundamental strategy of people's ruling the country under the leadership of the Party. The Fourth Plenary Session also proposed a series of practical approaches to implement this strategy and to provide a favorable legal and social

environment for economic and social development. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the Central Party Committee has put forward new and higher request to the Party itself, and unswervingly pushed forward the objective of strict self-governance in every respect, and rule-based governance, attacking corruption at all levels. On such a basis, the working styles of the Party and the government took on a new look.

These efforts provided important conditions and guarantees for finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. By the end of 2015, our country had successfully completed all tasks and objectives set by the 12th Five-Year Plan and made great achievements in economic and social development. China's economic strength, scientific strength, national defense strength, national influence and people's living standards have reached a higher level. This progress has laid a solid foundation for finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

The five years from 2016 to 2020 is the decisive stage in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "The course of struggle in the first two decades of the 21st century reaches the historical moment of making the final dash to the finish line" (CCCPC Party Literature Research Center, 2016). In October 2015, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee made a comprehensive strategic plan, issued a mobilization order to dash towards the goal of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and made the Outline of the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016—2020) on National Economy and Social Development.

The 13th Five-Year Plan reviews our economic and social development in an all-round way, and proposes new objectives and requirements for the finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects in response to the development "drawbacks". The objectives include maintaining the high speed of economic growth, achieving remarkable results of innovation, enhancing development coordination, improving people's living standard, enhancing people's quality and social civilization, improving the ecological environment on the whole and making all institutions more stable and mature. All these objectives are centered on a key word in the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, which is "comprehensiveness": a moderately prosperous society should cover all sectors, one that is defined by the "five in one" overall promotion of economic, political, social, cultural and ecological development; it should cover all population, one that benefits all people; it should cover all areas, in which urban areas and rural areas develop together, including building a moderately prosperous society in rural and underdeveloped areas. These objectives reflect the new aspiration of Chinese people. Nowadays, to realize people's aspiration of common wealth, we should not only reduce the disparity in growth speed between urban and rural areas and the disparity in people's income, but also narrow the gap in infrastructure and basic public services of different areas. To realize people's increasing material and social needs is no longer sufficient. Rather, we should create and provide social conditions and environment suitable for all-round development of oneself.

The 13th Five-Year Plan not only sets clear comprehensive objectives for finishing building a moderately prosperous society, but also puts forward comprehensive strategic plans. In the face of complex domestic and international situations confronting the decisive stage in finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and in the face of new opportunities and challenges posed by economic and social development, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee insisted on idea of people-oriented development,

and put forward the ideas of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development. These new development ideas set clear the strategy, direction and focus of our country's economic and social development, and become a driving force and guarantee for sustained development and finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. The idea of innovative development highlighted the importance of the development driving force and answered the question of how to maintain and strengthen the development and what is the impetus for finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; the idea of coordinated development highlighted the most important objectives and answered the question of how to maintain the sustainable and healthy development of society and economy and what are the approaches of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; the idea of green development revealed the necessary perquisite of permanent development and people's pursuit of decent life from the view of human-nature relationship, which sets a goal for promoting development and finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; the idea of open development highlighted the importance and necessity of our country's engagement in world's economy under new historical conditions, and pointed out a necessary approach to promote development and finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; the idea of shared development highlighted the essence of the socialism with Chinese characteristics, and pointed out fundamental principles for promoting development and finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

A moderately prosperous society is an ideal society and has been pursued by Chinese people for generations. From the proposal of building a moderately prosperous society to finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, the Communist Party of China has encouraged Chinese people to make continuous efforts to make the long-endeavored dream come true. The Chinese nation will fully embrace modernization and the ancient Chinese civilization will generate new vigor and vitality through the process of modernization.

(Translator: Li Liang, Yang Xiaonan; Editor: Jia Fengrong)

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The Contemporary Value and Significance of Chinese Culture

Chen Lai*

1. Introduction

History has endowed the Chinese people with a very influential and unique culture, which advocates harmony in diversity and integrates different cultures in practice. While unfolding a spectacular scene, and spreading benefits around the world, it also quietly nourishes ordinary households without even being noticed. More importantly, having witnessed many thousand years of vicissitudes, it has never stopped developing. It demonstrates the great perseverance and cohesion of the unique Chinese civilization and highlights an inclusive and open attitude regarding interactions with other civilizations.

As our profoundest intellectual treasure, our culture nourishes and enables the Chinese nation to grow and thrive, forming salient strength and strong soft power. Today, unprecedented importance is attached to the creative transformation and innovative development of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation. Recently, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council jointly issued *Opinions on Carrying Out the Work of Inheriting and Developing the Excellent Traditional Culture of the Chinese Nation* and notified all regions and departments to carefully implement the Opinions based on their actual conditions. This move highlights a new direction for Chinese culture and a guiding concept of "consolidating tradition while embracing innovation" under new circumstances.

Today, we launch a new column named "Seeking the Root of the Chinese Spirit: Traditional Culture Series" and invite renowned experts and scholars to interpret the value connotations of our excellent traditional culture and decode the spirit of the Chinese nation. This new column aims to make our frequently used yet seemingly

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invisible Chinese culture "visible" to the Chinese people. Meanwhile, concerning the mistakes and problems in current practice of traditional Chinese culture, it makes analyses and reflections and rectifies deviations in a bid to regain our rational judgment on, and respect for, our traditional culture. Only by accurately pinpointing the root of the Chinese spirit, both in theory and practice, can we expect to truly absorb the essence of our excellent traditional culture, and at the same time open our eyes to the world and make China's voice heard in the international arena.

The core of the Chinese people, or the essence of the Chinese nation, is more cultural and spiritual than physiological. Without Chinese culture, there would be no room for the survival of the Chinese people or the Chinese nation. Only by securing the sustainable development of the Chinese nation can we truly appreciate the essential value of Chinese culture.

Chinese culture is fertile land for socialism with Chinese characteristics. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is an internal extension of Chinese culture. For this reason, socialism with Chinese characteristics has a range of Chinese culture-related needs, such as building and consolidating the cohesion of Chinese nation, enhancing moral and value construction, and learning the governance experience and wisdom from Chinese history.

Centering on the major issues facing the world development, by virtue of the wisdom of Chinese culture, we should strive to come up with "Chinese solutions" embodying China's stance and values. The Chinese civilization vests us with a world view and capabilities to handle complicated issues, forming an inherent strength to support the Chinese nation to maintain sustained development for thousands of years.

Regarding three major characteristics of Chinese history and culture, three questions have correspondingly been raised by modern historians. How did the Chinese ancestors manage to exploit this vast territory and develop such a large population? How did China achieve such high-degree of national integration rarely seen elsewhere? How can the Chinese civilization maintain sustained development over the whole span of human history? According to some historians, judging from the abovementioned three features, there is bound to be a great power driving the Chinese nation throughout the history of human civilization. What exactly is that great power? No definite answer has yet been given by any modern historian or cultural scholar. Now, we hereby present our own answer–that power is the national spirit of the Chinese nation, which endows the Chinese nation with great vitality and cohesion. One of our major tasks today is to inherit and vigorously develop Chinese culture, particularly the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, so as to promote the development of the Chinese nation.

2. The significance of Chinese culture to the Chinese nation

Culture is the soul of a nation. The 5,000-year-old Chinese culture embodies the spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation and has become a symbol of spirit unique to those of other nations. Its core values have shaped the mind of the Chinese people, and its basic values have formed a cultural gene of the Chinese nation. Over time, Chinese culture has developed into the spiritual lifeblood of the Chinese nation. Inheriting Chinese culture means maintaining the spiritual lifeblood of the Chinese nation. The Chinese nation and Chinese culture are interdependent. Without the Chinese nation, there wouldn't be Chinese culture. Likewise, without Chinese culture, there wouldn't be the Chinese nation. The core of the Chinese people, or the

essence of the Chinese nation, is more cultural and spiritual than physiological. Without Chinese culture, there would be no room for the survival of the Chinese people or the Chinese nation. The spiritual character and value pursuit of Chinese culture has supported the sustained development of the Chinese nation for thousands of years. It still is and shall always be a strong spiritual power of our nation. The ethos of Chinese culture is the "Chinese spirit" we are advocating today. The advocacy of the Chinese spirit is key to bringing together Chinese strength and firmly sticking to the Chinese path. Without a thriving and prosperous Chinese culture, the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation would not be possible. Therefore, we must fully realize the importance of Chinese culture.

In the history of world civilizations, the Chinese nation has created our time-honored Chinese culture featuring its unique cultural traditions, value systems, ethnic characteristics and historical course. Its long-term evolution shapes our cultural identity, brings about great vitality and creativity, and develops our unique development route. In the meantime, the cultural connotation of the Chinese civilization, with great values transcending time, space and national boundaries, makes great contributions to the progress of human civilization and shared values. Today, we are shouldering the great responsibility of our national development. Under such circumstances, we must safeguard its vital nutrition and carry forward its conviction. The fundamental approach to keeping our national character and carrying on our national spirit is to promote Chinese culture. Only by securing the

Culture is the soul of a nation.

sustainable development of the Chinese nation can we truly appreciate the essential value and significance of Chinese culture.

3. The value of Chinese culture to contemporary China

The long lineage of the Chinese civilization is a profound historical origin of and realistic basis for the Chinese path. Carrying forward Chinese culture echoes the real need in the practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics. President Xi Jinping's series of remarks made since the 18th CPC National Congress affirm Chinese culture as the fertile land for socialism with Chinese characteristics. Xi reiterates that socialism with Chinese characteristics must take root in Chinese culture and that Chinese culture is the historical origin of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Chinese culture is of primary significance to socialism with Chinese characteristics in contemporary times. As there is an earth-root, or source-river relationship between the two, we should regard socialism with Chinese characteristics as the internal extension of Chinese culture. Given that, "Chinese characteristics" is not an external manifestation of the historical development of Chinese culture, but an inherent fruit of its own development. There is an intrinsic continuous relationship between socialism with Chinese characteristics and Chinese culture. To build socialism with Chinese characteristics, we must consciously understand such a relationship and identify Chinese culture as its historical origin. The original essence of Chinese culture provides abundant resources and nutrients for socialism with Chinese characteristics. And socialism with Chinese characteristics can expect better development by fully absorbing the nutrients of Chinese culture. This is also the direct and realistic significance of carrying forward Chinese culture.

The practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics is a process of all-round social development, which has a variety of needs for Chinese culture. The most important of all is to build and consolidate the cohesion of the Chinese nation. Today, with the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation well under way, Chinese culture serves as a fundamental driver to unite over 1.3 billion Chinese people and bring together our national strength. The extensive and profound Chinese culture provides all Chinese people with a unified culture, shared values, as well as common thoughts, emotions and spirit, thus enabling the Chinese people to build a sense of belonging, cultivate a recognition of Chinese culture, and lay a foundation for enhancing national cohesion. Chinese culture has always advocated patriotism, placed collective interests over individual benefits, and attached great importance to the interests of the country and the Chinese people. Thanks to this, the Chinese nation has been able to unite to accomplish national rejuvenation. Second, we should enhance our moral education and value construction. Chinese culture emphasizes ruling the country by virtue and influencing others with virtue, and forming a sound and complete system of moral culture. Since ancient times, China has enjoyed the laudatory title of "land of propriety and righteousness." This highly developed moral culture is a prominent feature and integral part of Chinese culture, and the great commitment to safeguarding a stable and harmonious society is one of its important characteristics. Inheriting and developing this system of moral culture is the core and principal part of cultural-ethical development in contemporary China. The excellent moral tradition of Chinese culture is the source of core socialist values. Without inheriting and carrying forward such an excellent moral tradition, our core socialist values would be groundless and our shared values wouldn't be developed in contemporary China.

Third, we should learn governing experience and wisdom from Chinese history. As a country with a long history, China enjoys abundant books and records, among which are historical writings on state governance. With a humanistic view of the world, Chinese culture attaches great importance to the past and present development course, and advocates to learn experience and lessons from history to form a correct governance concept. One important reason for the Chinese nation's permanent development lies in its capability to keep drawing on the experience and lessons from history to enrich its governance concept. Today, the Chinese government is faced with governance challenges more complicated than ever before. Even so, the rich experience reflected in our culture plays a vital role in inspiring the current government. There are many ideas in Chinese culture, such as "people-oriented governance" and the "whole world as one community," which can be geared to modern society and guide our development.

The active inheritance and development of Chinese culture is part of our due responsibility of national development, and at the same time responds to the actual needs of social development in contemporary China. As aforementioned, Chinese culture is of great significance to the core value of socialism. Since the launch of Reform and Opening-up, the Chinese society has been in a process of modernization, with its market economy thriving. Yet at the same time, accompanied with such an economic boom are a series of tough challenges, such as loss of social values, moral decline and rampant corruption. Under such circumstances, it is urgent for China to reshape its social values and ethics. Through thousands of years of development, Chinese culture has formed a value system centering on benevolence, filial piety, integrity, propriety, righteousness, frugality, honor, loyalty and forbearance. This system dominates and influences China's economic, political and legal systems and policy implementation and supports the ethical relations in the Chinese society. Also, it guides the Chinese people's actions, fosters their values, promotes social stability, and advocates kindheartedness. This system is the value basis of the excellent Chinese qualities of self-improvement and social commitment. In other words, it is the value connotation of our national spirit. The Chinese nation's continuous development over the past several thousand years is closely associated with this core value system. And it is precisely this value system that forms the essential nature of the Chinese people. The Chinese nation, along with its unique vitality, originates from these values and their practice. In fact, these values have been fully embodied by the heroic undertakings made by numerous people with lofty ideals since the Opium Wars. These values are the source of our core value system of socialism.

In the context of socialist market economy, the society's core value system features both similarities with, and differences from, the value system of ancient China. This means we need to pay attention to innovation while inheriting the Chinese ideology and culture to adapt to the changes and requirements of the time. The social order and ethical values cannot be separated from history or traditional ethical culture. In terms of reassuring people, traditional Chinese culture plays an irreplaceable role in establishing the basic law of social life, code of ethics, as well as culture ascription. For thousands of years, our people-oriented traditional culture has contributed greatly in reassuring and inspiring the Chinese people, and promoting a harmonious society. For modern society, however, some traditional values may be directly applied to practice, while others need to be updated before use. This "update" means rearranging and summarizing the essence of those values in accordance with current challenges and needs to transform them into the core values of the new era.

4. The implications of Chinese culture to the challenges facing the world

Regarding its contemporary significance, Chinese culture is vital to the survival and development of the Chinese nation and the current development of the Chinese society. More importantly, it can be helpful in resolving the conflicts and tensions facing humanity today. In this contemporary era, there are five major conflicts in need of immediate solutions, which respectively are; the conflicts between humans and nature, between humans and society, between people, between individuals and their egos (inner world), and between civilizations. Throughout human history, these conflicts, in various degrees, have always been there. It is just that the process of modernization intensifies those conflicts and tensions, making them a worldwide challenge. People have more and more realized that it is impossible to rely solely on modern Western values to solve those conflicts and tensions. Subsequently, insightful men have turned their eyes to other civilizations, like the Chinese civilization. For example, Chinese culture advocates the principles of "unity of nature and man," "loyalty and forbearance," "harmony in diversity" and "integration of individuals with community." Unity of nature and man focuses on the harmony between man and nature and helps to alleviate the tensions between the two. Loyalty and forbearance emphasizes do not do to others what you would not have them do to you, which can be useful in solving interpersonal disputes. Harmony in diversity is conducive to the exchanges between civilizations. Integration of individuals with community can help to solve the conflicts between individuals and society. Chinese culture contains many ideas which can inspire people to solve conflicts in the world.

Therefore, one important purpose of inheriting and developing Chinese culture is to tackle the major challenges facing global development today by presenting concepts, proposals and solutions which represent China's stance, wisdom and values. It is hoped that the Chinese civilization, along with the world's other civilizations, can offer ideological guidance to all humans. What solutions can best represent Chinese characteristics? Evidently, the solutions best representing Chinese characteristics are those which combine the philosophy and wisdom of Chinese culture with real practice and subsequently propose ideas in line with the actual situation and with universal significance. From a perspective of civilization, China is among the world's major civilizations. Through thousands of years of uninterrupted development, this extensive and profound civilization has supported its huge population scattered around a vast stretch of land. Being highly cultivated and mature, it developed and grew in Asia, delivering a far-reaching impact on East Asia. By virtue of its rich experience and accumulated wisdom, it made immense contributions to human civilization in the past and can definitely contribute to the world today. As we know, over 2,500 years ago, Confucius advocated the concepts of "do not treat others what you would not treat on you" and "harmony in diversity," which not only serve as universal rules to deal with human relationships but also demonstrate the Chinese people's wisdom in addressing human challenges. The same is also true of the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" proposed in the 1950s. In its own way, this represents the best of China. Given that, it is necessary for us to comprehensively sum up the experience of China's historical development, thoroughly explore its practical wisdom, carefully appreciate the world view and values contained in Chinese culture, and cultivate a consciousness of civilization. Only by doing so can we expect to formulate truly feasible Chinese solutions to address human challenges. The Chinese characteristics

in the Chinese solutions is based on our ancient civilization's profound culture accumulated over the past 5,000 years. Without the inheritance and development of that traditional culture, there would be no way for us to present any Chinese solution. In terms of soft power, Chinese culture vests us with a world view and capabilities to handle complicated issues, forming an inherent strength to support the Chinese nation to maintain sustained development for thousands of years. The inheritance and development of the Chinese civilization requires using the Chinese wisdom to confront the challenges of our time with people from all over the world. This helps to win respect for China in the international arena. It is in this sense that we should stand our cultural ground, inherit our cultural traditions, showcase our cultural wisdom, and above all enable Chinese culture to contribute even more to humanity.

Chinese philosopher Feng Youlan used to argue, "China is among the world's major ancient civilizations. In contrast with the decline of other ancient civilizations, China survived the vicissitudes of time, and successfully transformed into a socialist country. As a country, China is both old and new. There is a saying in the *Book of Songs* that 'although Zhou Kingdom is an old country, it has a mission of reform.' An old country with a new mission is exactly the term to describe contemporary China. What we need to do is to give full play to these characteristics." "Old country" refers to a country with a long history and rich cultural deposits, while "new mission" means its willingness to keep renewing itself. We must always remember our original intention, learn the experience from other countries, and be future-oriented. That means enhancing the vitality and influence of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation and reviving and supporting the best of Chinese culture.

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The Spread of Chinese-character Culture on the Silk Road During the Tang Dynasty

Zheng Acai*

Abstract: The spread of Chinese characters and Chinese classic works during the Tang Dynasty presented diversified discourses of acceptance and development in different periods and regions. This was due to the differences in commercial, economic, political, religious, and cultural environments proportional to the real environment's demand for Chinese characters and Chinese classical works. Chinese characters were introduced to Gaochang, Qiuci, Khotan, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam as early as the Han Dynasty, with different development paths in these regions. It is easy to form a long lasting culture spread by Chinese language and characters, as long as official languages are consistent with national or religious languages of the regions. It is difficult to form a long lasting culture spread by official languages and characters if the official languages and characters are inconsistent with either languages of daily life or religious languages. Once there is replacement of official languages and characters, or a change in religious belief, it would cause incompatibility between official languages and daily life languages, Chinese–character culture is bound to decline and gradually fade way. But if there are Han people, they will retain the use of Chinese characters.

Keywords: Tang Dynasty; Chinese–character cultural circle; the Silk Road; Gaochang; Qiuci; Khotan; religious belief

1. Research purpose

The "Chinese-character Culture" refers to a culture with Chinese characters as the carrier. A Chinese character is square-shaped principally with a single syllable morpheme, word or notes. Over more than two thousand years, as a communication tool and cultural carrier in the vast regions of China and East Asia,

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Chinese characters helped to promote the unity of the Chinese nation, and has had a significant and far-reaching impact on the development of national cultures and character creation in the surrounding regions. The Han culture has been admired by surrounding nations and countries since B.C. With frequent exchanges between China and the Western countries and countries in East Asia, Chinese characters, as a carrier of cultural communication, were introduced to the Western countries, the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese islands as well as the Indochina Peninsula, thus forming the vast cultural circle of Chinese characters. In the past, the main research objects of the academic circles were Japan, Korea and Vietnam, focusing particularly on the traditional Chinese classics which had spread locally. Later, attention was gradually transferred to Chinese language literature like classic books and documents. In fact, many ethnic groups and countries along the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty, read and wrote with Chinese characters, and many Chinese classics spread in these regions. Many states were a part of the Chinese-character cultural circle, like the Gaochang State and Gaochang Prefecture in Turpan, Qiuci in Kuqa and Khotan in Hetian, and the Western Xia Regime founded by the Dangxiang People, and the Liao Dynasty founded by Qidan in the same period, where Chinese characters, Chinese classics and Chinese culture had a long-term impact. This cultural phenomenon is worth discussing.

The Silk Road was formed in the third century B.C. and here were multiple ethnic groups with different languages along the Chinese section of the Silk Road; Chinese, Tocharian, Khotan Saka, Kuchean, Turkic, Sogdian, Qocho Uyghur, Tibetan, Tangute(Xixia), among others and characters were applied to record the written systems of these languages.

In the history of human development, language arises before characters. Each nation develops its own language, but it may not have characters of its own. In this case, some nations borrow characters from other advanced nations to record language, history, and culture, to inherit the knowledge and experience of its ancestors. This further draws in the essence of the more advanced nations and uses their development experience, through their classic books. There are many examples of nations along the Silk Road and East Asia borrowing Chinese characters, language and classics. Therefore, this paper intends to focus on the differences in the spread of Chinese characters among different ethnic groups along the Chinese section of the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty, and study the different phenomena produced in the acceptance and development of Chinese characters among the different ethnic groups, countries and regions, and try to put forward a reasonable explanation.①

2. The channel and people of the spread of Chinese characters along the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty

The Silk Road was a route of commercial activities. People naturally think of a company of travelling merchants shuttling back and forth on the Silk Road. The initial cultural exchanges between East and West took place with trade. There were small-scale folk activities in the preliminary stages, and later large-scale converted trades in the form of

① Rong Xinjiang discusses the Chinese classics spread in the West Regions and their state and spread channels, and explores the reason for failure in continuity based on Chinese documents unearthed in Kuqa and Hetian in the modern times. The same opinions will not be quoted to avoid repetition. Please refer to *Acceptance and Exclusion of the spread of Chinese Classics in the Western Regions of the Tang Dynasty* by Rong Xinjiang, in the *Silk Road and Exchanges between the East and the West* published by Peking University Press in 2015 , on page 210– 225.

tribute and reward (the border trade and tributary trade). Therefore, trade was the way of early cultural exchange, and merchants were the main disseminators of Chinese characters and culture at this stage.

The Silk Road refers to a specific route, while the Western Regions refer to specific regions. They are not equal to each other despite being closely related and mutually involved. But people usually unconsciously or habitually mix "the Western Regions" with the "Silk Road," and even equate them. When talking about the "Silk Road," people would associate it with the western border as well as with merchants. An army was required for guarding the frontier, and soldiers for garrisons were mainly from the central mainland, who also played the role of disseminators of Chinese characters and culture. When the two sides had exchanges or confrontations, diplomatic envoys were relied on to communicate or resolve disputes and diplomatic envoys became the main people for cultural exchanges and communications. In the event of a dispute, they appealed to arms. When the war was over, there was a flow of different cultures between both the conqueror and the conquered. So, the army was also one of the main disseminators.

In the middle ancient times, monks and missionaries shuttled back and forth on the Silk Road, who were also important cultural disseminators. Particularly, after Buddhism was introduced to China after the Eastern Han Dynasty, many works of Chinese translations of the Buddhist scriptures took place and Chinese Buddhism developed rapidly. The Chinese section of the Silk Road became an important region to spread Buddhism. Buddhism did not decline until the eleventh century. Therefore, the monks on the Chinese section of the Silk Road played a critical part in the cultural communications of Chinese characters, in the process of lecturing, translating, and interpreting Buddhist scriptures. These were the most typical kinds of disseminators in the channels of cultural exchange and communications on the Silk Road with collective communications of four cultures and five religions.

Government officials were important disseminators of Chinese characters as well. Since the Han Dynasty, a large number of imperial edicts, decrees, documents delivered by posts, official and private correspondence between officials and envoys, income and expenditure accounts of land taxes, and records of vehicles and horses on the bamboo silk discovered at the courier stations set up at the vital communications hubs of the Northwest frontier like the Ruins of Xuanquanzhi Dunhuang, gradually developed into a superb collection of things like official and private documents discovered in the Western Regions of the Tang Dynasty under the system of legal articles, official documents, gaoshen(hierarchy), guosuo, banci, and shici issued by central and local administrative organs at all levels. ①

Merchants, the army, monks, diplomatic envoys, and government officials were the major disseminators of Chinese characters, Chinese classics and Chinese culture during the Tang Dynasty. With different missions, these people spread different contents and focused on different tools, characters and classics. Today, the archaeological remains along the Chinese section of the Silk Road record the overall presentation of the cultural transmission in different historical periods,

① This issue can be referred to *Record of Khotan of Gao Juhai of the Five Dynasties*, and *Travel to Khotan of Wang Yande of the Song Dynasty* (*Annotations of Travel to Khotan* by Wang Guowei), *Diplomatic Envoys to the Northwest Regions in the Late Tang Dynasty, the Five Dynasties and the Early Song Dynasty* of Zhang Guangda, in *Documents, Classics, and Historical Records of the Western Regions*, published by Guangxi Normal University Press in 2008.

of different people, for different purposes.

3. The key media of cultural exchange of the Silk Road in the Tang Dynasty

3.1 Language: communication of translators

Historically, the activities of many ethnic groups impacted the Chinese section of the Silk Road, like Turpan, Qiuci in Kuqa, and Khotan in Hetian, and there were complex and diverse features in languages. In addition, these regions had close relationships with the Central Plains region, particularly, during the Tang Dynasty, these regions had long been under the control of the Central Plains regime, therefore, it can be inferred that there were languages like Chinese, and other ethnic languages which had contact with the languages of these regions.

Most Han people did not understand the Hu language, while the Hu people did not understand Chinese. So, "language translation personnel" ① were required for communications between the Han people and the Hu people. The official position of translator was set up in the Central Plains Dynasty, for the convenience of contact with foreign countries and the surrounding ethnic groups. There was frequent communication between the great Tang Empire and the neighboring ethnic groups and countries. Due to multiple ethnic groups and different languages, translators were more urgently needed. These translators often appeared on the occasions like military, oath of alliance, trading and commercial activities. With the advantage of ethic language, the Hu people mostly took the positions of translators in the Silk Road regions during the Tang Dynasty.

During the Tang Dynasty, the organizations of translators of the central government were mainly for Court or State Ceremonials and Secretariats. There were also folk translators because of the demands for trades between merchants. Because of the limited number of official translators, practical and special needs of local authorities were done with the assistance of folk translators in handling related issues in the Frontier Regions.

In recent years, there has been a good deal of research regarding these translators.② The article *Translators of Xizhou (Turpan) in the Tang Dynasty*, written by Li Fang(Li,1994,pp.45–51), believes that people of ethnic groups mainly took the positions of translators through the formal establishment of the local authorities of Xizhou, with a majority of Sogdian, and Turkic people, and a few Han people. They acted as translators in military and trading activities, and sometimes, they acted as translators in the trials of the ethnic minorities. In *One Side of Translators in the Tang and Song Dynasties*, TakataTokio explored the real situation of translators in the Tang and Song dynasties from the perspective of social history, with the objects of Dunhuang, Turpan and the eastern coastal areas. He believes that the essence of the occupation of translators is closely related to commercial activities. In Turpan, most of the translators were Sogdian.③

Translators and commercial activities were closely related. There were frequent business travelers and heavy trade along the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty, so interpreters in Chinese language were in great demand, with the largest

① "Language translation personnel" are the translators of the Central Plains and neighboring ethnic groups.

② Please refer to *Translators of Changan in Tang Dynasty* by Hanxiang, published on *Historical Monthly* the first issue in 2003 on page 28– 31; *Translators in Foreign Affairs of the Tang Dynasty* of Zhao Zhen, published on *Academic Forum of North City*, issue 6 in 2005 on page 29– 33; *Translators on the Silk Road of the Tang Dynasty* of Zhu Lina, published on*Studies on Ethnic History*, issue 12 in 2015 on page 212– 228.

③ *One Side of Translators in the Tang and Song Dynasties* by TakataTokio is a paper on the international academic seminar Outlook on Codicology of Dunhuang in the Next Two Decades held on September 6– 8, 2014, in Princeton University of America.

translation demands for interpreters between the Turkic and Sogdian languages, and Chinese.

In addition to interpretation of trade communication, based on the needs of acceptance of credentials in the trading between the two parties, interpreters should have the abilities of literal translation and writing. A lot of monks became the main bilingual and multilingual translators on the demand of Chinese translation of the Buddhist Scriptures during the Tang Dynasty as well as foreign language needs of eminent monks' seeking scriptures in India. Bilingual Buddhist classics of Sanskrit and Chinese were compiled for translation and interpretation of Buddhist Scriptures (Chen, 2009, pp.58–68). These were the main media for communication and the spread of Chinese, but trading and missionary activities had different demands. The spread of the Chinese language classics contributed the most to the promotion of Chinese characters along the Silk Road.

3.2 Word: The appearance of a bilingual dictionary

Translators were responsible for literal translation besides oral interpretation. There were many bilingual documents unearthed along the Silk Road, like three documents obtained by Sven Hedin (1865–1952) namely Hedin 15, 16 and 24 (Zhang & Rong, 2008, pp. 48–69), the bilingual documents in Khotanscripts, and Study on and Differentiation of Chinese Language and Khotan Language collected at the Museum of Renmin University of China with serial number GXW0038.① The nature of these documents shows that translators were responsible for literal translations of legal documents as well as oral interpretations. So, they must be able to read and write Chinese characters besides listening and speaking Chinese.

There are many bilingual books among the published Turpan documents, including one Chinese-Turkic bilingual document, 6 Chinese-Tibetan bilingual documents, 229 Sogdian-Chinese bilingual documents, and 76 Qocho Uyghur-Chinese bilingual documents, collected in the Otani documents of Japan, one Sogdian-Chinese bilingual document, 6 Tibetan-Chinese bilingual documents, and 3 Chinese-Qocho Uyghur bilingual documents, collected at the German National Library,14 Qocho Uyghur-Chinese bilingual documents, 59 Chinese-Qocho Uyghur bilingual documents, collected at the St. Petersburg Oriental Research Institute of Russia, one Qocho Uyghur-Chinese bilingual document, one Sogdian-Chinese bilingual document, collected at the British National Library, and 12 Chinese-Brahmi bilingual documents, at the Buddhist Caves of Bezeklik China bilingual documents.

The multi-lingual translations of the different languages were required for the unsegregated long-term living together of the Hu people and the Han people. Therefore, it was necessary to implement bilingual education for the cultivation of two-way communication talents. It was more urgent to implement bilingual education in Dunhuang, under the special time and space of the intersection of Chinese culture and ethnic cultures, particularly during the Tibetan regime in the Middle Tang Dynasty and the regime of Xixia in the Early Song Dynasty. People mainly learned Chinese characters, Chinese language and Chinese classics locally in Dunhuang. Based on the actual needs of bilingual systems for ruling and daily life, bilingual education was centered in Dunhuang (Zhang&Zhu, 2007, pp.99–103).The Tibetan manuscript P.T. 1046(namely

① GXW0038 was named *Bilingual Agreement of Chinese and Khotan*, and was finally named *Study on and Differentiation of Chinese Language and Khotan Language* by Duan Qing, refer to *Money and Silk–Interpretations of Khotanese–Chinese Documents Collected at the museum of Renmin University of China* of Duan Qing and Li Jianqiang. The paper was published on *Research on Western Region*, the first issue of 2014, on page 29–38.

Chinese manuscript P. 3419) collected at the French National Museum is the Chinese-Tibetan bilingual version. The remaining *Thousand–character Classic* has 53 lines with 13 characters in each line. Line 2 to line 44 are in Chinese and written vertically. There are Tibetan annotations on the left of each character. On the back of P.T. 1263, there are 20 lines Tibetan-Chinese characters. The Tibetan language comes before the Chinese language. Tibetan characters are written horizontally, while Chinese characters are written vertically. The content roughly falls into three categories; daily life words like "the four corners of the world," nouns of locality like "the lunar January and February," and names of months; names of the tribes and their chiefs of the Han, Tibetan and Uighur; names of animals like camel, cattle and sheep. On the whole, they are mainly the practical words of daily life and social communication at that time. (Tokio Takata, 1988).

Fan Han He Shi Zhang Zhong Zhu, the Xixia (Western Xia, 1038-1227) document, is a Tangut-Chinese Bilingual Dictionary, which is a basic textbook of Tangut characters, as well as a reference book of Tangut and Chinese languages. This book was compiled by GuleMaocai, a Tangut Scholar, in the 21st year of Qianyou of the Western Xia Regime (1190). It says in the preface, "People today should be proficient in both the Tangut and Chinese languages. The Han people cannot communicate with the Tangut people if they do not speak the Tangut language; the Tangut people cannot integrate into the Han people if they don't speak Chinese. The Han people do not respect the wise Tangut people, while the Tangut people do not admire the distinguished Han people, due to the language barrier." ① This

Fan Han He Shi Zhang Zhong Zhu

clearly suggests that this bilingual dictionary is for language and cultural communication between the Tangut people and the Chinese people.

3.3 Chinese classic books: Transmission of education and culture

Chinese classic books were the sum and main carrier of history, thought and culture in the Central Plains. In the spreading process in extraterritorial regions, the Chinese classics played an important role in education and cultural instillation. Foreign countries and nationalities could have a deep understanding of the core and essence of Chinese culture through reading and learning Chinese classics.

Since the 19th century, the Chinese section of the Silk Road has been the region for archaeological activities by the Western powers, Hetian, Kuqa, Turpan, the surrounding areas of Lop Nor, Dunhuang and Khara-khoto have been the places for competitive explorations of archaeologists of many countries. Large-scale excavations in the long term enable hundreds of thousands of pieces of ancient Western cultural relics to be discovered, and provide

① Please refer to *Fan Han He Shi Zhang Zhong Zhu* of GuleMaocai, Literature of Blackwater City of Russia compiled by St Petersburg Oriental Research Institute of Russia, National Institute of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and Shanghai Ancient Books Press, volume 10, published by Shanghai Ancient Books Press in 1999 on page 214– 218, 685 and 4777; the fragmental ages of *Fan Han He Shi Zhang Zhong Zhu* (carving copy in Tangru) collected at Museum of NingxiHui Autonomous Region, N11. 001 (09299); the fragmental ages of *Fan Han He Shi Zhang Zhong Zhu* (carving copy in Tangru) collected at Dunhuang Institute G11: 181 (B184: 9) 241, refer to Xixia Literature of China by Shi Jinbo and Chen Yuning, published by Gansu People's Press and Dunhuang Art Press in 2005.

fresh new and valuable materials for the research of the disciplines of ancient Central Asia like language, character, nationality, religion, history, geography, and art. In these regions, the Russian D.A. Klementz and S.F. Oldenburg, German A. Grünwedel and A. von Le Coq, British M.A. Stein and Japanese Otani expeditions once excavated a substantial number of relics and documents. From 1959 to 1975, people even unearthed documents in the Chinese language in the period from the Eastern Jin Dynasty (Gaochang Prefecture) to the Tang Dynasty (Xizhou), in the ancient tomb areas. Later, there were many excavated relics by the archaeological units in Turpan areas. The Chinese documents unearthed and published include *Chinese Literature Excavated in the Third Archaeological Studies of Stein in Central Asia (Non–Buddhist Scriptures)* by Sha Zhi and Wu Fangsi(Shanghai Dictionary Publishing House, Edition), Collective Documents of Otani by OdaYoshiku (4 volumes, 1984—2010 edition of the French National Museum), *The Unearthed Documents in Turpan* by Tang Changru (text books and ancient augural books, Cultural Relics Publishing House edition 1992—1996), and *The Newly Unearthed Turpan Documents and Their Stu dies* by Liu Hongliang(Xinjiang People's Publishing House, 1997). *Chinese Buddhist Classics Unearthed in the Bezeklik Rock Cave of Turpan* (Cultural Relics Publishing House, 2007) by the Turpan Institute of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and Research Institute from the 3rd Century to the 9th Century of Wuhan University, and *Newly Unearthed Turpan Documents* (Zhonghua Book Company, 2008) by Rong Xinjiang.

The sites for the unearthed documents cover regions like Kuqa, Hetian and Turpan, namely the TurutulAsl Site, the Ancient city of Lou Lan Site, and the DandanUrik Site in Kuqa, the BalaChwast Site, the Yingpan Site, the MazarTagh and Damago Site in Hetian, and the Astana Cemetery, the ancient city of Gaochang, the ancient city of Jiaohe, the Moutougou Site, the Bezeklik Rock Cave, the Tuyugou Site, the Badam Tombs, the Munal Tombs, the Taizang Tower, and the Yankhi in Turpan. The unearthed documents provide proof of the spread of the Chinese language and Chinese classics in these regions.

4. The remains of Chinese literature along the Chinese section of the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty

The unearthed Chinese literature along the Chinese section of the Silk Road by different countries since the 19th century was distributed throughout three regions, namely Gaochang (Turpan region), Qiuzi (Kuqa region) and Khotan(Hetian region).

4.1 Gaochang

In ancient times, the Turpan region was named Gaochang, an important ancient road of east-west traffic. The history of Gaochang can be roughly divided into three periods. First, before Gaochang was destroyed and the Western Zhou Dynasty (c.11th century-771 BC) was established in the 14th year of Zhenguan in the Tang Dynasty (640). Second, during the regime of the Tang Dynasty (640–755). Third, after the founding of the Uighur Khanate (803).

Before Xiyu was connected to the Han Dynasty, Gushi was founded here. In the second year of Shenjue (60 B.C.) the Han emperor defeated Xiongnu and Gushi. Gushi became a part of Cheshi and a garrison commander was set up, which was changed to the Wuji commander in the first year of Chuyuan of the Hanyuan Emperor (48 B.C.), and soon its local government was moved to Gaochangbi. The Wuji commander was still existed here in the dynasties of the Eastern Han, Wei and Jin, namely Gaochangbi Period.

Zhang Jun of the Former Liang set up Gaochang Prefecture in the second year of the Eastern Jin

Dynasty (327), with Gaochang City under the governance of the prefecture seat. Later, the Western Liang and Northern Liang adopted this seat. In the 8th year of Chengping Northern Liang (460), the remaining forces of Juqu destroyed by Rouran and Kanbozhou were proclaimed the king of Gaochang. Later, the Kings with the surnames of Zhang, Ma and Qu were proclaimed kings of Gaochang successively, which was named the times of the "Gaochang State."

Gaochang was destroyed in the 14th year of Zhenguan of the Tang Dynasty, and Xizhou was set up in the region of Gaochang. Gaochang City became the governor's office of the Western Zhou Dynasty. Gaochang was ruled by the Han people in that period. There were diversified ethnic groups. Besides the aborigines, there were mainly the Han and Sogdian nationalities. The languages they spoke and wrote included Chinese, Turkic and Sogdian. People believed in Buddhism and Gaochang was an important Buddhist city. It was under the control of Uighur Khanate after the forces of the Tang Dynasty withdrew in 803. The Gaochang Uyghur Kingdom was founded in the end of the 9th century (namely the so-called Xizhou Uyghur), people changed their belief from Buddhism to Islamism, and Buddhist belief fade away.

Chinese culture played a leading role in the Kingdom of Gaochang, with the majority of the population the Han people. It is recorded in *Zhou Book Commentaries on Gaochang*, "They used the same characters as the Central Plains, and the Hu language was adopted as well. There were Chinese classics like *Mao Poetry*, *The Analects of Confucius* and *The Book of Filial Piety* as teaching materials. The students learned and read these books in the Hu language" (Linghu Defen et al., 1971, p. 915). "The Hu language was adopted" indicates that people spoke different languages, focusing on Chinese. Writing in the Hu language was adopted by temples and foreign businessmen. Since Chinese characters were official characters, the non-Han nationality people, who spoke the Hu language, had to learn Chinese characters and Chinese classics when they took positions as officials. A substantial number of Chinese documents excavated in Turpan were produced at that time, suggesting that Chinese characters were indeed the main characters for learning and reading.

With the mass migration of the Han people to Xizhou (Gaochang) under the ruling of the Tang Dynasty, there were frequent personnel exchanges, so the popularization of Chinese characters was largely enhanced, which was also reflected in the quantity of Chinese documents of the Tang Dynasty unearthed in Turpan in modern times. In the late 19th and the early 20th century, explorers from different countries excavated a large number of relics. The newly unearthed literature in Turpan was mainly produced from the 3rd to the 8th century in the dynasties of Jin and Tang, with a majority written in Chinese characters, as well as other languages like Qocho Uyghur, Karasahr, Kuchean, ancient Turkic, Sanskrit, Sogdian, and Tibetan. There were a variety of documents, like imperial rescripts, legal instruments, account books, official documents and correspondence of civil and military authorities, argument of cases, business contracts, employment agreements and private letters. The unearthed Chinese classics included Confucian classics, historical records, poetry, and traditional children enlightenment books, as well as lots of Buddhist classics in Chinese. The books represented all the aspects of the Tang Dynasty and the period before locally, namely politics, economics, military, religion, ideology, culture and more, of significant value for historical research.

Official documents included registration books, account books, *Fu* (Books on the art of war), *Die* (an official document or note), *Biao* (a document

for the ministers to submit statements, request or suggestion to the emperor), *Qi* (similar to Biao) and others. It suggests that Chinese characters were the official language at that time. Different types of documents of temples were written in Chinese characters, including internal registration books and texts, and correspondence. There were private folk documents like loan agreements, rent agreements, sales agreements for slaves and maid-servants, letters and commercial activity documents, with a huge quantity of Chinese characters, indicating that Chinese characters were extensively adopted by the public as well. Meanwhile, there were a great quantity of remaining papers for writing practice, as well as traditional children enlightenment books like *Thousand Character Classic*, *Important Admonition for Enlightenment*, *and Domestic Discipline of Grandfather*, and relics of schoolchildren for literacy and exercises in calligraphy. These suggest that Chinese characters were widely adopted in that region with a profound influence of Chinese culture.

4.2 Qiuci

Qiuci was the most important oasis kingdom on the north route of the Silk Road in the dynasties of Han and Tang. Located on the Tianshan Mountain in the north, it was adjacent to the Taklimakan Desert in the south. The residents used Sanskrit and the Tocharian language of the Indo-European language family, which let Qiuci become the natural gateway for Buddhism into China. In that region, Buddhism was highly developed, with a multitude of rock caves and temples. Kumarajiva, the great master of Chinese Buddhism, was born in the kingdom of Qiuci, and was proficient in many languages namely Kuchean, Chinese, Sanskrit, and Gandhari. Before the Western Regions were unified by the Tang Dynasty, Qiuci and Yanqi (Karasahr) used the Karasahr language, which was a kind of character written in the Central Asia italics of India Brahmi to record Kuchean, also named Tocharian. In the first century B.C., Qiuci had frequent contacts with the Central Plains Dynasty. In the 60th year BC, the Western Regions were formally controlled by the Han Dynasty. In the 3rd year of Xianqing of the Tang Dynasty (658), the West Turks State was destroyed, and the Frontier Duhu Command in Anxi was moved from Jiaohe City of Xizhou to the capital of Qiuci, with jurisdiction over four townships namely Anxi(Qiuci), Khotan, Shule (Kashgar) and Yanqi (Karasahr). Qiuci became the military and political center for the regime of the ruling of the Tang Dynasty over the Western Regions.

After a complete military defense system was formed in the four townships of Anxi in the Tang Dynasty, the system of "Long March Fighters" under the system of Jiedushi (governor of one or more provinces) was implemented, so that soldiers did not have to be replaced regularly, but just guarded all the year round in the Western Regions. As a result, their family members had the opportunity to live together with the army. By this change, there arose the demand for reading by generals, sergeants, and family members, and books in Chinese were introduced to the Western Regions.

In the early 20th century, expedition teams from different countries made a multitude of excavations in Kuqa, the old state of Qiuci. In 1903, Watanabe Tetsunobu and Hori Kenyu of the Japanese Otani expedition team excavated documents and books in Chinese and Hu languages in Kizil and Kumutula, later they unearthed documents and books in Chinese language again in Doyle DuallAhuer. It was estimated that they unearthed about 56 pieces of documents and books in Chinese. In 1907, the French Paul Pelliot expedition team excavated many documents including more than 20 pieces of documents in Chinese in Kuqa. In 1928, Huang Wenbi unearthed 3 pieces of documents in Chinese in the ancient Tunguska bashkortostan city in Xinhe County of Xinjiang. In general, the Chinese

documents unearthed in Kuqa mostly were social instruments except a small number of fragments of Buddhist scriptures.

Qiuci was the location of the Anxi Frontier Command, where Chinese characters were employed widely, under the influence of the Tang Culture. There were documents from the Khotan military depot in the Tang Dynasty discovered here in modern times, which were official documents. It suggested that Chinese characters were employed by the army organization of the Tang Dynasty. There were also folk loan documents unearthed, which were private documents. It indicated that Chinese characters were employed by the public as well. Rong Xinjiang discovered that there was literature written in Chinese in Qiuci during the Tang Dynasty exhibited in the "Turpan Collections" of the German National Library, which were regarded as literature written in the Turpan language, therefore, he wrote particularly to state that most of the Chinese literature was originally classics collected at libraries or temples or were official documents, and were introduced to Qiuci by the forces of the Tang Dynasty, including legal instruments, rhythmic dictionaries, historical records, and Chinese translations of Buddhist scriptures (Rong, 2010, pp. 161–172).

4.3 Khotan

Khotan was an ancient state in the Western Regions, one of the oasis kingdoms there. Khotan language and Khotan characters were employed, and the characters are Alphabetic writing. Kohtan had been directly or indirectly under the ruling of Xiongnu, the Han Dynasty, Kushan, the Wei State of the Three-Kingdoms Period, the Western Jin Dyansty, Rouran, Hephthalites, and Western Turks.

Khotan was under the jurisdiction of the Anxi Frontier Command, after the Western Han Dynasty ruled the Western Regions. In the Northern and Southern Dynasties, Khotan maintained close contacts with every dynasty of the Central Plains. In the last year of Zhenguan of the Tang Dynasty, Khotan Township was founded, becoming one of the "Four Towhships of Anxi" in the Tang Dynasty. In the second year of Shangyuan (675), the governor's office of Pisha was established, under the jurisdiction of the Anxi Frontier Commander. In the late 8th century, Turpan was magnificently situated in the Western Regions with Khotan as its dependency. In the 3rd year of Tianfu of the Later Jin Dynasty, the head of Khotan was proclaimed the King of DabaoKhotan. In 1006, Khotan was destroyed by the King of the West Uighur Kara Khan.

Khotan employed the Kharosthi language in the Period of Wei, Jin and the Southern and Northern Dynasties, and started to adopt Khotan characters created from the Central Asia italics of India Brahmi, which were popular until the late 9th and early 10th century. It was quite early when Chinese characters were introduced to Khotan. The Chinese-Kharosthi bilingual coins of the Eastern Han Dynasty discovered in Hetian in the late 19th century are evidence for this.

The Khotan people believed in Buddhism, and Khotan was an ancient state of Buddhism along the Silk Road. Around the 2nd Century, Buddhism was introduced to Khotan, and Khotan quickly became an important township of translation and research of Buddhist Scriptures. There were diversified religions here, namely Buddhism from India and Central Asia, religions of local characteristics, and Chinese Buddhism. There were 14 large Buddhist temples and many small temples in Khotan, which was the cultural center of Mahayana Buddhism of the Western Regions. In the 18th year of Zhenguan of the Tang Dynasty (644), Monk Xuan Zang stopped over here and expounded the texts of Buddhism when he returned from India to China. In 1006, after Khotan was conquered by the West Uighur Kara Khan Dynasty, Khotan changed the religion belief

Monk Xuan Zang

from Buddhism to Islam, and residents gradually gave up the original Khotanese language and started to learn Uyghur. Buddhism gradually disappeared .

In the modern times, the main relics excavated in Hetian include Sampula, Niya, Rawak, Charkhlik, Malik Watt, Yotkan, DandanOilik, and Damago (V. Hansen, 2015). Rawak is a spectacular temple ruins. Buddhist literature in languages of Khotanese, Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan were excavated as well as *Prajna Paramita* in the Chinese language, reflecting a thriving scene of Mahayana Buddhism. During the reign of Wu Zetian, Sikshananda and Devapraja, the eminent monks of Khotan went to the Central Plains for translation of Buddhist Scriptures to develop and expand Mahayana Buddhism. In the first year of Zhenyuan (785–790), Sila dharma, the Exorcist from Khotan hosted translation at Beiting, to translate *Ten Stages Sutra and Hui Xiang Lun Jing* from Sanskrit to Chinese. The Dunhuang version P. 3918 of *Vast and Quiet Dharani of Steel Altar* was translated by the monk with the surname of Liu (Tanqian) of Anxi (Qiuci), based on the version in Sanskrit collected at the Buddhist temple of Khotan (Rong, 1991, pp28–38).Stein discovered the fragments of a writing practice book of *Orchid Pavilion in DandanOilik*, in which it says, "Student Li Zhongya copied this article and presented to your respected (E. Chavannes, 1913). It was a relic of a local student's learning of Chinese characters.

5. The phenomenon of the spread of Chinese-character culture and the speculation of its rise and decline

The Chinese documents, the archaeological relics of the Chinese section of the Silk Road, are valuable material for the observation of the spread of Chinese characters and the development of Chinese-character culture during the Tang Dynasty. The documents are mainly collected at the British National Museum, the French National Museum, the German National Museum, the St. Petersburg Oriental Research Institute of Russia, the East Asia Library of Princeton University, as well as the Omiya Library of Kyoto Ryukoku University, the Tokyo Calligraphy Museum, the Osaka Four Heavenly Temple and the Nara Ningle Art Museum of Japan. Please see details in the Euro-American collected volume and Japan collected volume of Turpan Documents. ①

Gulinuer Hanmudu and Li Yadong (2013, pp, 196–198), of the Information Center of the Turpan

① Chen Guocan and Liu Anzhi compiled *Turpan Documents* published by Wuhan University Press in 2005; Rong xinjing compiled *Turpan Documents (the Euro–American collected volume)*, published by Wuhan University Press in 2007.

Studies Institute made statistics in *The Quantity and Languages of Turpan Unearthed Documents* that there were nearly 150,000 documents unearthed in Turpan in 21 languages. Among these documents, there were nearly 9,000 pieces of Chinese documents, including 3,768 pieces publicly and privately collected in Japan, 2,140 pieces in the German National Museum, 455 pieces in the St. Petersburg Oriental Research Institute of Russia, 525 pieces in the British National Museum, 2,704 pieces of archaeological excavations in Xinjiang of China (1,633 pieces in Astana, 152 pieces in Khara-Khoja, 530 pieces of Chinese documents at the Buddhist Caves of Bezeklik China, and 389 pieces of newly unearthed Chinese documents). The similarities and differences of the spread of Chinese-character culture will be analyzed in the three major regions of the Tang Dynasty namely Gaochang (Turpan), Qiuci(Kuqa) and Khotan (Hetian).

5.1 The differences of the spread of Chinese-character culture

Gaochang, Qiuci and Khotan were under the influence of the Chinese-character culture of the Central Plains when a substantial number of Han people immigrated there as early as the Han Dynasty. However, there were several marked differences between these regions. The popularity of Chinese characters of Gaochang (Xizhou) was significantly higher than that of Qiuci and Khotan during the Tang Dynasty, with proof of a greater quantity and a larger variety of Chinese documents of the Tang Dynasty unearthed in Turpan than that of Kuqa and Hetian.

In these unearthed literature remains, the proportion of Chinese is different from that of non-Chinese (namely Khotanese, Tocharian, Qocho Uyghur, Persian, Syrian, Sogdian, Tibetan and others), suggesting the difference of popularity of Chinese characters between different ethnic groups. Under the reign of the Tang Dynasty, Chinese was the universal language in the operation of administrative systems, so it was natural the Chinese was employed in the correspondence between army organizations and local authorities and bilingual documents were presented when necessary, like Chinese-Khotanese bilingual official documents. For the public, each nation employed local languages and characters, namely a parallel application of Chinese language and characters and non-Chinese languages and characters. For business transactions, agreements and legal proceedings, people sought help from translators for oral interpretation or literal translation.

From the presently published related Chinese literature, Buddhist Scriptures are the most in quantity, followed by social and economic documents as well as official and private documents, with the fewest being traditional Chinese classics. Preliminary statistics show that the expedition team of Xinjiang Museum had 13 excavations in Astana and Khara-Khoja at 465 ancient tombs. There were 1,844 Chinese documents unearthed at 118 tombs.① These documents were mostly made into funeral objects like shoes, hats and clothes in the forms of official documents like Die, Zhuang, Ci and Tie as well as agreements and letters. Most were private letters and a few were Buddhist Scriptures, Confucian classics, history, philosophy, literature, and poetic prose. In addition, there were about 516 pieces of social and economic documents and official and private documents, 317 pieces of Buddhist Scriptures, and 30 pieces of other Chinese classics collected and now at the British National Museum. There were about 224 pieces of social

① *The Unearthed Documents in Turpan* volume 10,by Tang Changru published by Relics Press, in 1991; *The Unearthed Documents in Turpan* volume 4, published by Relics Press, in 1992– 1996.

and economic documents and official and private documents, 8 pieces of Buddhist Scriptures, and 2 pieces of other Chinese classics collected and now at the French National Museum. There were about 4,537 pieces of Buddhist Scriptures, 119 pieces of social and economic documents and official and private documents, and 99 pieces of other Chinese classics collected and now at the German National Museum. There were 112 pieces of Buddhist Scriptures of Gaochang Chinese documents which are now in the Osaka Four Heavenly Temple in Japan, including 7 pieces of social and economic documents and 4 pieces of other Chinese classics. There were 128 pieces of Turpan Chinese documents collected which are now at the Neiaku Museum and all of these are social and economic documents.

Official documents cover different aspects like land, household, taxes and corvee, military affairs, legal proceedings, courier stations, and more, presenting the real situation of the employment of Chinese characters under the long-term reign of the Tang Dynasty in Gaochang. Private documents are mostly related to folk economic activities like private loans and sales agreements, also indicating the employment of Chinese characters by the Han people, the main body of Gaochang people. Despite the quantity of traditional Chinese classics and poetic proses being relatively small, the situation of the spread and learning of poetic proses locally can be documented. This suggests that the literary development of Gaochang was corresponding to that of the Central Plains during the Tang Dynasty. Indeed it is like what Zhu Yuqi said (2010, pp.182–194), this phenomenon, "is closely associated with the factors like the spread of inland immigrants, the security of cultural systems and the welcome of literary fashion, presenting a unique scene of the acceptance and spread of Han culture to frontier regions"

The remains of a multitude of Chinese Buddhist Scriptures suggest the prevalence of Buddhism in the Chinese section of the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty, and Hu monks for preaching sermons from the East and Han monks for bringing back the sacred Buddhist scrolls from India, shuttled back and forth in the Chinese section. Most of the Hu monks from Gaochang, Qiuci, and Khotan were proficient in Chinese and were able to read Chinese characters. They held the Buddhist Scriptures in the Hu language in hand, and recited Scriptures in Chinese, presenting a relatively high cultural level of Chinese characters.

There are many records of the long history of Buddhism in the Kingdom of Gaochang , namely *Wei Book*, *On the Translation of the Tripitaka* and *Biographies of Eminent Monks*. "The former kingdom of Cheshi," the Gaochang region held Buddhism as its state religion during the Eastern Jin Dynasty. After the founding of the Kingdom of Gaochang in the late 4th century, the translation of Buddhist scriptures was popular and Buddha Dharma was thriving. There were temples standing in great numbers and many eminent monks. The great number of classic Buddhist Scriptures unearthed in Turpan is the real reflection of this spectacular phenomenon. In 840, Uighurlars migrated to the West and believed in Manichaeism, and founded the Kingdom of Turpan, where the Han monks still continued to preach Buddhist Scriptures soundly in Chinese. There are examples in the Scriptures S. 6551 left in the Xizhou region.①

Qiuci, the oasis kingdom of the Silk Road, was the natural gateway for Buddhism to China. Although the specific time of the introduction of

① Chinese Literature of Dunhuang About Uyghur Xizhou—S. 6551 Historical Study of Scriptures, published on *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, issue 2 in 1989 on page 24– 36, Differentiation and Study of Uyghur S. 6551, published on *Xinjiang Social Sciences* issue 4 in 1989 on page 88– 97.

Buddhism to Qiuci is not clear, it can be shown that Buddhism was highly developed with a number of Buddhist temples before the Tang Dynasty from the Kizil, Kumu Tula, SenmuSimu, KeziNaiha, MazhaBoha, Tuohulake Aiken, Taitaier, Wenbashi and Yatuer Grottoes. Hu and Han people dwelled together unsegregated, and Buddhist Scriptures were widely translated. The eminent monk translators with the surname of Bai and Bo were mostly from Qiuci. The famous Kumarajiva was a translation master of the Kingdom of Qiuci. Although there werea limited number of Chinese Buddhist Scriptures excavated in Qiuci (Kuqa) today, the thriving scene of Buddhism can still be seen from the relics of literature and historical records and scriptures at the temples.

Khotan is geographically related with India. As early as the 2nd century B.C., Buddhism was introduced from Kasmira to Khotan. Khotan quickly developed into the largest kingdom of Buddhism in the southwest of Xinjiang. There were large and small temples in great numbers. It is easy to imagine what a spectacular scene it was from the unearthed sites. In 644, the monk Xuan Zang stopped at Khotan on his return from India to China after seeking Buddhist Scriptures, and preached here. There are many records about the legends of the founding, folk customs and the prosperous Buddhism of Khotan in the *Records of the Western Regions of the Tang Dynasty*. The Buddhist world of Khotan can be observed as well. The Chinese Buddhist Scriptures of Gaochang (Turpan), Qiuci (Kuqa) and Khotan (Hetian) are the basis and hot spot of the research of Buddhist development process on the Silk Road (Fang, 1992, pp.115–123).

Gaochang, Qiuci and Khotan are basins or oasis kingdoms. They are both traffic arteries of the Silk Road and trading cities for business transactions between East and West. There were many Han and Hu merchants with frequent transactions. A large number of various economic letters of business activities and official and private documents and letters of social activities① have reflected the active market and numerous economic activities.

In the thriving period of the Tang Dynasty, Gaochang, Qiuci and Khotan were under the jurisdiction of the Tang Dynasty, with state and fu seats. Chinese characters can be seen in the business documents of the official administrative systems. In the dependencies of the Tang Dynasty with increasing Han immigrants, the correspondence between common people and the government were written in Chinese. Because other ethnic groups had their own language for writing, there were bilingual documents when it came to legal proceedings and agreements. This is consistent with the content and quantity of excavated documents from the Tang Dynasty.

The quantity of Chinese classics is comparatively fewer than that of Buddhist Scriptures and social and economic, official and private documents, focusing on the Confucian classics like *Analects of Confucius*, *the Book of Filial Piety*, *Mao Poetry*, *Shang Shu*, and *the Book of Rites*, and enlightenment literary teaching materials of the Tang Dynasty like *Thousand Character Classic and Important Admonition for Enlightenment*, as well as *Family Education of Grandfather*. This indicates that the education of Chinese language in these regions during the Tang Dynasty was basically consistent with that

① There were frequent traffic on the eastern section of Silk Road, and southern and northern part of Tarim Basin, and a lot of letters were discovered. The Chinese bamboo documents unearthed along the Great Wall, letters take a large proportion. Many letters were maintained in the documents of Dunhuang. It is not accidental, proving indirectly that Chinese played an important role in the interaction of multiple nations in the Chinese–character cultural circle. The most famous document is letter in ancient Sogdian language by Stein, as well as two letters in Persian language of the late 8th century. One was discovered in 1901, collected at British National Museum Or. 8212/ 166, the other was collected by Beijing National Museum. Please refer to *Silk Road and Economy of the Western Regions* of Yin Qing published by Zhonghua Book Company in 2007.

of the Central Plains. Limited to environment, the characteristics were adaptive, simple and practical. ①

5.2 Speculation for the development and decline of Chinese-character culture on the Silk Road

There were many factors for the development and decline of Chinese-character culture on the Silk Road during the Tang Dynasty. Besides external forces like political power and economic activities, the most critical ones were the nations, languages, characters and beliefs. The nationalities, languages, characters and religious beliefs of Gaochang (Turpan), Qiuci (Kuqa) and Khotan (Hetian) along the Chinese section of the Silk Road are listed below (table 1), for reference to the reasons of the development and the rise and decline law of Chinese-character culture. In addition, Turpan, the Western Xia Regime and Liao are also included for reference.

The cultural inheritance and development can be long-lasting and profound if it is proactive and internally requested. It will be short lived if it is passive and externally requested. The development history of Chinese-character culture during the Tang Dynasty is consistent with this principle. Chinese characters have their own nationality and region, so they have different results compared to those without.

Despite of official promotion, the former one is passive and externally requested, with a parallel development of Chinese characters and non-Chinese characters, under the control of political power of the Han people. So, Chinese characters are only employed when people communicate with the government, and it is hard to take root and the general people still stick to their own language, understand a bit of Chinese at most. They are incapable of reading and writing in Chinese. The universality of Chinese characters depends largely on political power. Once it declines, Chinese language and characters will vanish together. It was so with the development of Gaochang, Qiuci and

Table 1 Nationalities, languages, characters and religions of Gaochang, Qiuci, and Khotan

Kingdom/ Region	Nationality	Language	Character	Belief
Gaochang (Turpan)	Mainly Han nationality, multiple nationalities (Uyghur)	Mainly Chinese, multiple languages (Uyghur)	Mainly Chinese, Turkic, Qocho Uyghur, Sogdian	Buddhism (Islamism)
Qiuci (Kuqa)	Kuchean (Uygur)	Tocharian, Chinese, Sanskrit (Uygur)	Tocharian, Chinese (Uyghur)	Buddhism (Islamism)
Khotan (Hetian)	Serbs (Uygur)	Serbian, Qocho Uyghur (Uyghur)	Khotanese, Qocho Uyghur, Chinese (Uyghur)	Buddhism (Islamism)
Turpan	Turpan (Tibetan) people	Turpan (Tibetan)	Turpan (Tibetan)	Buddhism
The Western Xia Regime	Tangut, Chinese people	Tang Gus, Chinese	Chinese, Tangut	Buddhism
Liao	Khitan and Chinese people	Khitan, Chinese	Chinese, Khitan	Buddhism

① For the Chinese classics and enlightenment materials, please refer to Studies on the Basis of the Unearthed Documents of the Western Regions published on *Jigu Academy* in 2006; The Spread and Acceptance of Chinese Literature in the Turpan Region of the Middle Ancient Times by Zhu Yuqi, published on the *Chinese Social Sciences* issue 6 in 2010 on page 182– 194.

Khotan.

In the latter case, people did not have their own characters before the introduction of Chinese characters, which were borrowed as a reading and writing tool. They learn Chinese language and characters out of real demand, which is proactive and internally requested. Therefore, they not only read and communicate using Chinese for a long term, but also record and inherit culture and civilization in Chinese. Later, when they have their native characters, which are created based on Chinese characters, when native characters replace original Chinese characters and language, Chinese-character culture is still deeply rooted in the cultural core and becomes an indispensable part of its national culture. In the history of China, it is so with Turpan, Xixia and Liao during the Tang and Song dynasties, and Korea, Japan and Vietnam.

Turpan did not originally have native characters. SongzanGanbu (?–650) dispatched TunmiSangbu to learn Sanskrit and Buddhism in the 7th century. After he completed his studies, he returned to Turpan and created the Turpan language based on Sanskrit under the requirements of SongzanGanbu. Li Yuanhao, of the Xixia Dynasty, imitated the Han system and proclaimed to be emperor in 1038, and required YeliRenrong(?—1042) to create Tangut based on Chinese characters in the first year of Daqing (1036). The creation of Khitan script was started in the 5th year of Shence, of the first founder of the Liao Dynasty, and was finished on lunar September 14th (October 28th, 920). The emperor issued for enforcement, and the writing style was similar to Chinese characters.

The nations of the Korean Peninsula and the Islands of Japan in Northeast Asia have earlier cultural exchanges with China, which were with the help of Chinese characters in the early years, as these nations had a late creation of characters. This can be proved by the early Shih-Wen Chin left by three Korean states namely Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla (Inoue Naoki, 2009, pp.29–56). Korea did not have a native language before the 15th century, and adopted Chinese as its official characters. The national classics, decrees and regulations, and files were written in Chinese. Shizong, Emperor of the Li Dynasty, set up the onmun bureau, and required Zheng Linzhi and Cheng Sanwen to create onmun. Since the publishing of *Xun Min Zheng Yin* (Korean Script) in 1446, Korea has had its native characters.

Despite its old culture, the creation of native characters in Japan was also rather late. In the ancient times, the Japanese borrowed Chinese characters as their early-stage characters. The remaining Shih-Wen Chin is proof. (MorishitaShoJi, 2009, pp, 57–68). For a long period, Chinese characters were regarded as the carrier for thoughts and emotion expressions, and were called "true name." At the beginning of the 5th century, the "kana" appeared in Japan, which borrowed the phonetic Chinese characters. Ultimately, the creation was completed by KibiMakibi(692–775) and Kukai (774–835) successively. Since the 10th century, Kana characters went popular in Japan, but Chinese characters were not abolished.

Chinese characters had been employed as the written language nationwide in Vietnam from ancient times to the early 20th century. Even though the new character Chu Nom was created in Vietnam, Chinese characters are still the mainstream of written languages there. Based on Chinese characters, chu nom expresses Vietnamese language in the methods of echoism, phonetic loan and associative compound. The specific time for the generation of these characters is unknown. In the two short dynasties of the Hu Dynasty (1400–1407) and the Xishan Dynasty (1786–1802), Chu Nom failed to replace Chinese characters. It went parallel in importance at most. People must understand Chinese characters before they can employ chu nom,

therefore, Chinese characters are still regarded as the orthodox characters. From the late 19th to the early 20th century, Vietnam was captured by France, and Latinization of Vietnamese was promoted. Chinese characters officially stopped being employed, but general scholars still wrote in Chinese. The employment of Chinese characters was completely ended after the Second World War.

Chinese characters were employed for writing by Korea, Japan, and Vietnam for a long period. They wrote classics in Chinese and left a large quantity of poetic proses and classics. In recent years, great importance has been gradually attached to the Chinese language, and there has formed a newly thriving Sinology field of "overseas Chinese culture" and "overseas Chinese classics."

For the spread and development of Chinese characters for different nations and under different context of languages and characters, the realistic demand is a major impetus for learning, particularly for commercial activities. The reasons for translators of different nations to be shuttling back and forth along the Silk Road of the Tang Dynasty remain the same for foreign trade today. Moreover, the sacred charm of religion is an important support for the spread of Chinese-character culture. The Chinese Buddhist classics are the largest quantity among the unearthed documents along the Chinese section of the Silk Road. This suggests the efforts of monks from different places and different nations in the spread of Chinese Buddhism, particularly in the translation, lecturing and copying of scriptures. The eminent monks who were proficient in several languages including Chinese were a strong force in the development of Chinese character development. After the Tang Dynasty, there were major changes in the religious beliefs in different places and Chinese Buddhist Scriptures with Chinese characters as carrier disappeared. These are phenomena worth considering.

6. Conclusion

Chinese characters are the carrier of Chinese culture, and the spread of Chinese characters and culture plays a major role for the export and inheritance of Chinese culture. The state of the spread of Chinese characters and classics on the Silk Road in the Tang Dynasty is closely associated with the systems, characteristics, and development processes of each nation's language and characters, the opportunity of the spread of Chinese characters and classics as well as the economic, political, religious, cultural and living environments. Over time and space, there was a development process of acceptance and rise and decline. Compared with the cultural circle of East Asia characters, we can understand the laws of the rise and decline, success and failure, and its influence in the spreading process of Chinese-character culture.

The degree of the formation, existence and development of the Chinese-character culture circle is proportional to the demands for Chinese characters and classics by the real environments in the different regions. Before native languages were created by the nations and countries with late development of character creation, they had to borrow characters of other countries or nations as a tool for cultural exchange and inheritance. Chinese characters were introduced to Gaochang, Qiuci, Khotan, Korea, Japan and Vietnam as early as the Han Dynasty, and had different results of development over a long period. The spread of Chinese characters and classics and the development process of Chinese-character culture present the following laws, to provide reference and enlightenment to cultural exchanges and development of Silk Road culture.

First, regions with a native language and characters, promoted the development of culture and education through administrative systems, to enable the spread of Chinese characters and classics, under

the control of the regimes of the Han people. Due to the incompatibility of the systems of native language and characters and that of Chinese language and characters, the large number of Chinese documents were mostly official and private documents in the aspects of economy, law, and society, like agreements, legal proceedings, and letters, followed by Buddhist Scriptures, and few classics of Chinese culture, focused on Confucian classics as teaching materials. The content and proportion of unearthed Chinese documents rightly reflect the real situation in these regions. The documents unearthed in Gaochang, Qiuci and Khotan are mainly related to trade, followed by religious spread and military affairs, and administrative influence of the government of the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, the real Chinese-character culture did not penetrate into the culture of these nations, and could not take root. Because of the disappearance of the political power of the Tang Dynasty, the employment of Chinese characters and classics quickly disappeared.

Second, the nations, with late development of character creation, employed Chinese characters as their character system for reading and writing for a long period, like Turpan, the Western Xia Regime, Korea, Japan and Vietnam. In these countries and regions, Chinese classics were widely popular, whose decrees and regulations, systems, education and ideology had been deeply affected by Chinese culture. Chinese culture penetrated extensively into local culture. Even though characters of their own were generated, they were mostly created by borrowing Chinese characters. After the newly created characters of these nations became popular, the employment of Chinese characters was reduced but the Chinese-character culture still went deep into the daily life. Besides language and characters, the connection of religious belief, particularly the prosperity of Chinese Buddhism, even the nature of an agricultural society or a semi-agricultural society, all of which are impetus for the development of a Chinese-character culture.

Third, large-scale population immigration and contact promotes exchange of different cultures, mainly represented in aspects like language and characters, religious beliefs and dietetic culture. Language and characters are the most important factors in population immigration, contact and interaction, which develop most quickly and have significant and profound influence.

Fourth, when we observe the spread of Chinese-character culture, we can find that there is a potential law, namely official language and characters can spread and form a certain culture and become long-lasting like the Western Xia Regime, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam when there is consistency between the official language and characters and the local national language and characters. Conversely, a culture by the spread of official language and characters is not easy to form nor will it last long. Once political influence disappears, there will be a replacement of the official language and characters, and alterations in religious beliefs. The spread culture of the official and religious language and characters will gradually decline and vanish. In the late Tang and Five Dynasties, as the central power declined in the frontier regions, the Chinese-character culture circle gradually disappeared. As long as there were the Han people, they will maintain the use of Chinese characters.

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Lei Zu and Can Cong Weaved the Splendid Brocade and the Belt and Road Is Writing a Brilliant Chapter

—The Chengdu Consensus of the Academic Seminar on the Land of Abundance and the Silk Road

Li Mingquan*

"Dawn sees saturated reds; the town's heavy with blooms." We, more than 90 experts and scholars from home and abroad, attended The Academic Seminar on the Land of Abundance and the Silk Road held by the Association of Chinese Historians, the Guangming Daily Press, the Society for Chinese Archaeology, the Chinese Society on Ancient Capitals, the School of Archaeology and Museology of Peking University, and Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences, on April 8, 2017 in Chengdu. We are to conduct in-depth exploration of the history between Sichuan and the Silk Road, the development context, as well as jointly discuss the strategies for the development of Sichuan and the Belt and Road. We reached the following consensus..

1. Mulberry growing and silkworm breeding enjoy a long history and our brocade weaving techniques lead the nation

Sericulture and rice culture together mark the maturity of agricultural civilization in East Asia. Sichuan is one of the origins of Chinese silk culture. The oral history indicates that the primary wife of the Yellow Emperor, Lei Zu, created the mulberry growing, silkworm breeding and silk production, which

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have been propagated by our ancestors in Sichuan. The silk dresses of the standing bronze statue of the Sanxingdui Ruins Site serve as the intuitive evidence of the superior workmanship of silk weaving in the Shu area during the Bronze Age. In 2012, in Chengdu Tianhui Town, four wooden loom models and 14 textile craftsmen painted figurines were excavated in the Han Dynasty Tomb in Laoguan Mountain, which are so far the earliest known jacquard loom models. It filled the gaps in China's history of textile science and technology, representing the world's highest level of textile and brocade technology at that time. Zhuge Liang's governance philosophy of the Ancient Shu is "The supply in the war against enemies entirely depends on the Shu Embroidery industry," which shows the vital importance of silkworm breeding and brocade production for the prosperity of a kingdom. *Odes of the Shu Kingdom* by Zuo Si depicts the splendid scene the Shu embroidery production as, "The sound of looms in numerous households has created great harmony. And the brocade, as splendid as shells, the wash water of which has dyed the river its color." Liu Yong also echoed and chanted, "Shu is spectacular and silkworm trading market is bustling." Known as "the mother of the world's brocade," together with the Song and Yun Brocades of Jiangsu province and Zhuang Brocade in Guangxi, Shu-style is one of China's four most famous schools of brocade. Thus, Shu brocade is recognized in history as "exclusive to Shu." Taken as an important production base of mulberry growing and silkworm breeding, Sichuan excels in silk waving nationally. Chengdu enjoys fame as the world's embroidery capital. Since ancient times, the Land of Abundance has been acting as a steady provider of silk goods along The Belt and Road, contributing remarkably to world culture through its exquisite craftsmanship and splendid artistic creations.

2. Numerous transport routes in Sichuan have made the region pivotal for countries along the Silk Road

As early as the Han Dynasty, Zhang Qian, the Chinese imperial envoy, confirmed, "The Ancient Shu-Hindu Road" is actually the "South Silk Road," which reached South Asia as well as West Asia from Chengdu through Yunnan and Myanmar. Sima Qian, the historian, described the ancient path, "extending as far as a thousand li and as an access to all directions"; the ancient Shu Road to the North, such as the Jinniu Route, the Micang Route, and the lizhi Route which were closely linked to the "Northern Silk Road." In 1995, in the ruins of the Niya, in Xinjiang, an unearthed Shu brocade arm-protector with the Chinese characters "Wuxing chu dongfang li zhongguo (The appearance of the five stars in the east is favorable to China)" embroidered into the fabric has been dated back to the Eastern Han Dynasty to the Wei and Jin Dynasties, corresponding to Chengdu's early emergence into the North Silk Road as well as its early introduction

Wuxing Chu Dongfang Li Zhongguo

of the Great Unity philosophy in Chinese culture to the Western regions and overseas. In ancient Sichuan, when travelling from the west to north through the Central Shaanxi Plain, the Hetao Area and the Mongolian plateau, were connected to the "Prairie Silk Road." When heading east, extensive exchanges with the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River were also recorded, for example, in Su Xun's poem, "Mountains and rivers extended for thousands of miles, so fast as going straight from Shujun to Chu as if it were a thoroughfare." Via this route, commodities such as silk, lacquerware, porcelain, tea, and Chinese wolfberry jam were sold all over the world. History records that since ancient times Sichuan has been closely connected to the Northern, Southern, Prairie and Sea Silk Roads. Today, it is still the western hinterland of the building of the Belt and the Road. These "Cultural Canals" which made up the transport routes in the Silk Road have been boosting world economic development.

3. The culture of the Silk Road is bright and colorful, and the integrated resources will add brilliance to the present splendor

Du Fu, a great poet in the Tang Dynasty, wrote "The linen of Shu and salt from Yangtze River and Huai River have been exchanged since ancient times, the speed of the giant boats on the river are as fast as the wind." Sichuan, through its extensive contact with the Silk Road, not only spread its Bashu culture, but also witnessed the influx of exotic customs and commodities. Starting from the Tang Dynasty, the horse-tea trade along the Silk Road found itself thriving in the Song and Ming Dynasties. Thanks to this, Mengding Tea, produced in Sichuan, was not only offered to the emperor in Chang'an (capital of the Tang Dynasty), but was also able to suffuse its exquisite fragrance all over the world. The "Hollyhock" was also introduced to Europe in the fifteenth century from China and its presence can be found in paintings of Tiziano Vecelli, the father of Western oil painting. The musical instruments in Shu Yongling's "Twenty-four Gigaku" such as the Jie Gu, Bei, and Standing Konghou also were bought from South and Central Asia. Pepper, celery, onions and other foreign foods arrived in China via the sea–land Silk Road and were first introduced into Sichuan, shaping and helping the Sichuan cuisine to prosper. As far back as the Western Jin Dynasty, Chinese monks went to India to seek the Dharma via "Zangke Road" in Sichuan and Chongqing. The Monk Xuanzang of the Tang Dynasty took his journey to the Western Regions and South Asia through Chengdu. The Zen Master, Wu Xiang, first seek the Dharma in Shu as the prince of Silla Kingdom, was honored as the founding father of the Daci Monastery. The respected Monk, Lanxi Daolong, who was born in Fujiang County which was within the old regime of Sichuan, went to Japan to carry forward the teachings of Buddhism and enjoyed a reputation comparable to Monk Jianzhen. The Tang Dynasty witnessed the emerging of engraving in Chengdu, known as the Xichuan Printing Technique, which also prevailed overseas. In the Song Dynasty, the first Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka *Kaibao Tripitaka*, overseas engraved as Korea Tripitaka, appeared. Looking back at the development of the Silk Road, the Bashu Culture has made its unique contribution to the exchange and integration of the world's diverse cultures. Reviewing the ancestral glory of Bashu, it is imperative to highlight the unique functions and values of Sichuan as the intersection and hub of the Silk Road, to profoundly explore and utilize the cultural resources of the Bashu Silk Road, and to take the

initiative to join in the magnificent symphony of the Belt and the Road.

4. Vigorously promote the Silk Road spirit and effectively promote the People-to-People connectivity

Since ancient times, the geographical environment of being surrounded by high mountains and deep valleys has constantly inspired the Sichuan people's dreams and desires to cross those mountains and discover what was beyond.

This has cultivated the willpower of the Sichuan people to "restlessly collapse the mountains and earth to build the link between the heavy stairs and stone routes", which fostered the willingness to conduct friendly exchanges as, "Boats from Shu restlessly go south while southern boats also come frequently to Shu." It has been building the lofty pursuit of "The Min River flowed day and night and the waves reach to the sea in the East". It has been given expression to the brocade craftsman's spirit of "the splendid and mesmerizing brocade and silk is the ultimate manifestation of distinction." It has also demonstrated the inclusive and open-minded thinking of, "At times all the countries share the similar style, and the view from the Jingjiang River is comparable to that of the capital city." Sichuan people, with their wisdom, courage and aspirations, have acted as a connection between civilizations, commerce and trade as well as the traffic roads in Egypt and the African continent to jointly foster the Silk Road Spirit characterized by "peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit." Standing in our new historical starting point, Sichuan people bear in mind the philosophy of "the calculating of losses and gains should be applied to all people under the heaven" and aim at promoting practical cooperation in all fields, and building a community of shared interests, destiny and responsibility featuring mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural inclusiveness. Sichuan will more proactively and confidently engage in the extensive cultural and academic exchanges, personnel exchanges and cooperation, and promote the people-to-people connectivity. Sichuan will build the Silk Road 4.0 version characterized by promoting policy connectivity, infrastructure connectivity, trade connectivity, and financial connectivity, thus ultimately distinguishing itself in the process of globalization and modernization.

5. Promote the advancement of regional development and jointly build the Belt and Road

Located in the important linking part of the Belt and Road and the Yangtze River Economic Belt, Sichuan serves as the frontier of reform and opening-up in China's interior as well as the strategic base of China's Western Development. It is imperative to include Sichuan in the top-level design and development strategy during the planning process of building the Belt and Road. "The Jingjiang River extends as far as ten thousand miles and the emperor's boat could reach Yangzhou by river." The people in Sichuan, whose wisdom is as splendid as the Shu brocade, with enthusiasm as intense as Sichuan Spirits, together with their exquisite character and bearing, are devoted to the building of the Belt and Road and are looking westward to make full use of the advantage of the Alashankou domestic land ports, to speed the formation of the economic corridor leading to Central Asia and Pakistan, to optimize the "Chengdu-Europe Express," and the "Central Asian freight class." Looking to the south, to align the southwest open

bridgehead construction and establish the China-India-Bangladesh Economic Corridor and the sea transport routes in the Southeast. To the north, the Chengdu-Xi'an-Bohai Rim railways and roads are to be built, connecting with the Eurasia Land Bridge. To the east, the integration of Luzhou Port and Yibin Port are to be built and promoted. At the same time, to establish the efficient and convenient Eurasian aviation logistics channel and place itself in the center of the Air Silk Road. On April 1st, China's third batch of seven pilot free trade areas were listed and the Sichuan FTA opened the prelude to the new, comprehensive and all-round opening-up pattern featuring the coordination of the East-West, of the development of the land and the sea.

"To mount a long wind and some day break the heavy waves, we will sail straight and bridge the deep, deep sea." Sichuan, with an air of invincibility and the spirit of endless trying until winning, is taking solid and steady steps to jointly build the Belt and Road and to contribute to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

(Translator: Qiao Qian; Editor: Xiong Xianwei)

Bashu Culture and Du Fu's Poetic Space

Zhang Zongfu*

Abstract: Bashu culture has an important position in Chinese culture. Du Fu's poems on the theme of Bashu account for a considerable portion of his poems, due to his long–term stay in Bashu and the vital effects of Bashu culture had on him. The unique Bashu culture enriched his creativity, and greatly expanded his poetic space. Du Fu's Bashu poems show the natural scenery, human geography, local customs and practices, and the cultural personality of the Bashu people. In addition, Du Fu combined organically his care for the fate of his nation and the people with Bashu culture, to realize more abundant and profound space of his poems.

Keywords: Bashu culture; Du Fu; poetic space; abundance; profundity

Bashu sub-culture enjoys a special status in the spectrum of Chinese culture and it has had a profound impact on Chinese culture and literature. The works of writers and poets, who had a close relationship with Bashu culture, have had a major influence on Chinese literature, even world literature. Du Fu made Bashu his home over a long period of time. Bashu culture had influence on his poetry creation in many aspects, at multiple levels and perspectives. In terms of the study of his Bashu poems, there are many classifications, so it is necessary to study the Bashu poems of Du Fu from the perspective of Bashu culture. His Bashu poems have characteristics like multiplicity in theme, abundance and profundity in content and emotion. Therefore, the word "space" is selected in this paper to present the abundance, profundity and multi-faceted characteristics of his poems. The Bashu poems of Du Fu are abundant in quantity and perfect in artistic technique. They highlight the all-embracing artistic characteristics in Du Fu's poems. It can be said that the Bushu culture helped Du Fu becoming the "sage of poets".

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Chinese culture is a pluralistic river-source culture with the Yangtze River and the Yellow River as the main source, absorbing other cultures in the surrounding areas. The Yangtze River culture is composed of the Bashu culture of the upper reaches of the River, Chu-xiang culture of the middle reaches, and Wu-yue culture of the lower reaches. The cultural circle of Bashu is one of the seven cultural circles of the Bronze Age in China (Li, 2003, p. 63), and an indispensable part of Chinese culture, with a special status. Bashu culture has a long history and created a system of its own. It has continuity in both history and pattern of manifestation. Wushan man(a kind of homo habilis) and Ziyang man(a kind of homo sapiens) lived in Bashu before the birth of civilization. Then Bashu experienced the unique Grey Pottery Culture Age, Stone Culture Age, Jade Culture Age and Bronze Culture Age. A general outline of the generation and development of Bashu culture is shaped by civilizations and cultures ranging from the early city civilization of the Chengdu Baodun, Yin-shang Western Zhou Dynasty of the Guanghan Sanxingdui Ruins and the Chengdu Jinsha Ruins, to the Kaiming Dynasty Wangs in the Warring States Period, the legendary Can Cong, Bo Guan, Yu Fu, Du Yu, and Kaiming. They verify the continuity in both history and the manifestation pattern of Bashu culture, and provide strong evidence of the Chengdu Plain's status as the center of the development of ancient civilizations on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River (Liu&Tan, 2003).

Bashu culture, with a long history and a system of its own features, plays an important role in the evolution of Chinese culture. Mr. Yang Yi made a brilliant exposition on this point in *The Development of Chinese National Culture* and the *Ethnic Minorities in Southwest China*. Bashu is likened to a "Tai Chi Eye" with a special role in the process of the south-north advancement of Chinese culture in a vivid and visible way. He said, "Since we are talking about the 'Tai Chi Movement', it is necessary to look for where the 'Tai Chi Eye' lies. The location of the 'Tai Chi Eye' is critical and is the important factor of decisive value of the pattern and the result of the movement. It is worth noting that Bashu in the west and the Taihu Basin in the east have played a special and critical role in the south-north Tai Chi movement. Apparently, it is not too outrageous to regard Bashu as a 'Tai Chi Eye'. History has repeatedly told us that in more than 2,000 years of the cultural community of the Chinese nation, 'ancient China would separate after a long time united, and also it would do the opposite after long time separated.' The powerful political groups who captured Bashu would have a good chance to unify the whole China" (Yang, 2012). Due to the special status of the "Tai Chi Eye," the ruling class of successive Chinese dynasties attached great importance to the governance and development of Bashu, and one of the important

Du Fu

measures is immigration. In *Han Book · Biography of Xiao He and Cao Shen* it records, "All of Qin immigrants made their home in Shu" (Ban, 2012). In *Chronicles of Huayang · Chronicles of Shu*, "After King Hui of Qin State, and Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of Qin, conquered the six vassal states, they moved gallant people into Shu" (Liu, 1984). In the Han and Tang Dynasties, immigrants accounted for the rapid increase in population of Bashu. Zhuge Liang advised Liu Bei to capture Bashu and to bring a substantial number of talents and common people into Shu. This was immigration, as a matter of fact. "Huguang people fill Sichuan" was also a large-scale immigration in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Immigration policy objectively promoted the development of the politics, economy and culture of Bashu. Ban Gu wrote in *Ode to the Two Capitals*, "The wealth of Guanzhong (the central Shaanxi Plain) was close to Shu" (Li, 1977). Zhuge Liang praised Bashu as "Tianfu soil (Tianfu refers to self-sufficient and strategically located region)" (Pei, 1982). Chang Qu named Bashu, "Land of abundant natural resources" and "Tianfu" *in the Chronicles of Huayang* (Liu, 1984). Chen Zi'ang wrote in *Report of Military Affairs of Shuchuan*, "Our country is bestowed with Bashu, a wealth of Tianfu" (Dong et al. 2001). The economic strength of Bashu exceeded Guanzhong in the period of the Eastern Han Dynasty. In the Tang Dynasty, there was the saying "Yangzhou the first, and Yizhou the second." Yangzhou was ranked in first place and Yizhou (Chengdu today) was ranked in second place in terms of prosperity of industrial and commercial economy. Chengdu's economy was the most developed in China during the Song Dynasty. "Chengdu's economic prosperity was unequalled" (Wen, 1936). Chengdu, in the Yuan Dynasty, was an international metropolis described by Marco Polo, and it was among the most prosperous cities in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Rulers of successive dynasties realized unification of the country by occupying Bashu to continuously cultivate their strength and take advantage of geographical characteristics. The unifications were similar in the Qin, Han, Jin and Sui Dynasties. It has been repeatedly proven by history that Bashu was the decisive advantage for unification of the country.

Bashu is critical as political territory, as well as cultural and literary territory. Lu Xun (1995) said, "China has roots in Taoism", while Taoism was established by Zhang Ling based on the culture of immortality of the ancient Shu. Here two points are disclosed: Taoism has a close relationship with the Shu culture and the Bashu culture has a special status in Chinese culture. The culture of immortality of the ancient Shu has its origin in the protohistory of the ancestors of the ancient Shu like Can Cong, Bo Guan, and Yu Fu, over one thousand years earlier than the origin of Taoism. Bashu culture attaches importance to "immortality," and sufficient evidence can be discovered in the legend of the immortal Shu King, the archaeological discoveries of the Sanxingdui and Jinsha Ruins. Legends present the extraordinary imagination of the tribes of the Shu King, that is, to become immortal, like Can Cong, Bo Guan and Yu Fu, "Who became celestial beings," the Wang King turned into a cuckoo and the Kaiming King flew to heaven and became a magical beast at the gate of heaven. The idea that "A human body can fly like a bird" is vividly demonstrated in statues like the Bronze Man Body Bird Feet Statue, the Man Face Bird Body Statue in the bronze tree No. II, and numerous cuckoo statues with an eagle's head, particularly the bronze birds with prominent crown feathers. The priest image carved in the jade cong of the Jinsha Ruins expressed that man directly turned into a bird. The Sun and Immortal Bird Ornament and Frog-like gold wares also show the meaning of, "The sun is the soul of heaven, while the moon is the soul of earth, and they are jointly called a god." The soul of

the human mind and the soul of the body integrated into one with the sun and the moon thus generating the god by unity of heaven and man, who flies to the sun and the moon and becomes immortal. This idea of ascending to the heaven and becoming immortal is the origin of the immortality culture of the ancient Shu. Taoism is divided into six major parts, and the six parts is briefly summarized as a word "Tao." "Tao begets one, namely infinity; one begets two, namely *Yin–Yang*; two begets three, namely *Yin–Yang* coordination; three begets everything, namely all the things in the world." "Tao" expresses the infinite space for imagination and development, which is the distinctive interpretation and discovery of the issue of human destiny by the thinking of the Chinese nation. "Tao" is not only an expression of the clear theme of respect for nature, quietism, life value, and harmonious development, it also provides inspiration for people's unlimited interest in exploring the world, and their further appreciate the idea of "flying to the great pure, forgetting about power and natural law, and abandoning uncommonly flowery language." The Chengdu people's way of life and their life attitude are generated from the immortality culture of the ancient Shu, characterized by a leisurely and carefree state as natural and smooth as floating clouds and flowing water (Tan, 2009).

The immortality culture of the ancient Shu has had a profound influence on Chinese culture and Chinese literature. Many writers and poets had close relationships with the Bashu culture in history, and their works always exude eternal artistic charm. "Immortality has its origin in Shu" and "Taoism has its origin in Shu." Both jointly determine "Masters of Chinese literature have their origin in Shu" (Tan, 2009). The immortality culture of the ancient Shu, as an important part of Bashu culture, stimulates the creativity and imagination of scholars to the largest extent. There is no essential difference between "Celestial beings" ascending to the heavens and becoming immortal and writers and poets traveling in the space of art. "Tao" has similar interpretations about the world as literature's grasp of the world. Therefore, "Celestial beings" and "Tao" play an enlightening role in the thinking and creation of writers and poets. "Masters of Chinese literature have their origin in Shu" finding the internal logical relationships between "Celestial beings" and "Tao." The writers and poets who had relationships with the Bashu culture can be understood in the following two aspects. First, the writers and poets who were born and grew up in Bashu had long been influenced by the Bashu culture and their cultural personality was formed accordingly. "Celestial beings" and "Tao" opened the space for artistic innovation and imagination, and their literary achievements have had a significant impact on Chinese and world literature. Since the ancient times, Bashu has produced numerous gifted scholars like SimaXiangru, Yang Xiong, Chen Zi'ang, Li Bai, Su Shi, Zhang Wentao, Li Diaoyuan and Guo Moruo. They are encyclopedic cultural giants, and they had in-depth relationships with the Bashu culture. Second, they are the scholars and writers who came to Shu region and made Shu their home. Take the Tang Dynasty as an example, "Four Literary Eminences in Early Tang," namely Wang Bo, Luo Binwang, Lu Zhaolin and Yang Jiong, had relationships with Bashu to varying degrees. In the heyday of the Tang Dynasty, there were famous poets like Du Fu, Cen Shen, Gao Shi, Zhang Shuo and others. They made Bashu their home, or secured an official position in Bashu, or visited Bashu as an envoy. Poets in the middle and late Tang Dynasty like Yuan Zhen, Liu Yuxi and Zheng Gu left famous masterpieces in Bashu.

Du Fu, undoubtedly, is the most important representative of all writers and poets who were not born or grew up in Shu, and he had profound relationships with the Bashu culture. It was his

own choice with historical inevitability for Du Fu to make Shu his home. At that time, despite of the recovery of Chang'an, the prices were soaring and there were beggars and bodies of the starved everywhere. Henan, the hometown of Du Fu, was still occupied by An and Shi rebel forces, so he had a home he could not return to. This was what Du Fu was confronted with. Where should he go? It was a practical issue rather than a philosophical proposition for the poet. The western Shu kept its temporary stability, and naturally Du Fu regarded Chengdu as an ideal place. In the poem Departure from Qinzhou (Qinzhou is Tianshui City of Gansu Province today), the poet wrote, "Being clumsy and lazy, I am down on my luck. I fail to feed and clothe myself, so I would like to go to well-off area (for the sake of food) and southern area (for the sake of warm climate)" (Qiu, 1979). (All the poems of Du Fu mentioned in this paper are out of this version.) "Southern area" mentioned in the poem refers to Bashu, as the poet believed that the bread-and-butter issue of the whole family could be solved there. His life was changed greatly by his entry into Shu. The "great change" is more important than the family glory and self-confidence of the poet namely "my grandfather has outstanding achievements in poetry writing," the consciousness of poetry creation namely "poetry writing is in the blood of our family," and the experience in study and poetry writing namely "read wide and you will wisely write." Thanks to this "great change," "his exploration to the essence of poems was not ruined by his position as Zuo Shi Yi (advisory proposal officer) (Feng, 2003, p.63). The magical land of Bashu provided a boundless world for the poet. His eyes were brightened, and the world of poetry creation suddenly became light and spacious with a breadth of vision.

Throughout his life-long poetry creation, the poems on the theme of Bashu take a prominent status among all his works. They are unmatched by any works in other periods in his life due to the substantial number, rich and profound content and artistic techniques approximate to perfection. Du Fu naturally became a typical poet who entered Shu. According to the statistics, Du Fu wrote 906 poems (708 themes) when he resided in Bashu, accounting for 63% in the more than 1450 existing poems of Du Fu. Among these 906 poems, there are 30 poems on travel (24 themes), 255 poems on Chengdu (206 themes), 147 Zi Lang poems (170 themes) and 451 Yun Kui poems (331 themes). Du Fu had brilliant achievements in poetry writing, which largely benefited from Bashu culture. The Bashu land created a hitherto unknown novelty of the natural world and human world for the poet. By this stimulation, the poetic space of Du Fu developed at multiple levels and in multiple dimensions. His Bashu poetry is of diversified themes, which show the beautiful and magnificent natural world and a human world of the profound culture of Bashu, and further expresses, to the largest extent, the richness and profundity of his emotion.

The Bashu land is the concentration of splendid China, inclusive of almost all the geographical scenery like plains, plateaus, hills, mountains, and grasslands. It has the characteristics of both the luxuriant green of graceful South China and the wide and deep plateaus of North China. In Preface of Travel to Shu, Wang Bo wrote, "Bashu has a stunning landscape in the world, due to its verdant and breathtaking mountains, and roaring rivers" (Dong et al., 2001). The geography of mountains and rivers, and other natural scenery in Bashu have the characteristics of "grandness, steepness, quietness and grace" in one. Pot-like mountains and rivers of Bashu and "thousands of rolls of" land of abundance (Tan, 2011). The magical natural world of Bashu inevitably opened the boundless imagination space for the poet, and stimulated his inestimable creativity. Driven by the social situation of the Tang

Dynasty, Du Fu resided in Bashu, and had intimate contact with the mountains and rivers and the land of abundance of Bashu. Consequentially, he left wonderful poems about Bashu land.

Chengdu is both the center and the essence of Bashu land. Chengdu people's way of life and their attitude towards life are leisurely and carefree just like floating clouds and flowing water, under the influence of the immortality culture of the ancient Shu. "Chengdu is a city where you never want to leave once you reside" can be discovered in many works of poets in the Tang Dynasty. In the poem of *Shu Zhong*, Fang Gan wrote, "Most of the wanderers did not return home after they visited Shu. In the breeze of spring, Shu wine gave forth a deep and fragrant flavor. They were a little bit drunken freely and leisurely humming a tune of bamboo beside Cardamom lace" (Peng et al., 1999, p.653). In the poem of Sikong Shu *Seeing Offing Liu Zhen for His Travel to Shu*, "The high walls were connected to the blue clouds, streams of bustling people busily coming into and going out of the fair. On the festival when Yi people offered sacrifices to King Bamboo, tung flowers were blooming and parent magpies fed their young in the tung trees. People drank to forecast a harvest in the coming year, and played *Gu–qin* (a musical instrument) to welcome the King Bamboo. The celebration lasted until the sun set. I always heard that visitors stayed here without homesickness" (Peng et al., 1999, p.293). In the poem *Seeing off Xu Tang to Shu of Zhang Qiao*, "In the Shu pass, there were a substantial number of apes. I drove my horse to climb the mountain and lived on the top of the mountain when it was late. When it was raining, I saw the sun was hidden behind the clouds. Despite the fine scenery of Shu, I did not want to get old in Jincheng" (Peng et al., 1999, p.638).

As a scholar who was neither born nor grew up in Shu, what was Du Fu's impression of Chengdu? It is a strangeness completely different from that of the North. The strangeness of Chengdu was fully represented in his poem *Chengdu Fu*, "There were spreading shades of dusk, and my body was enveloped by the brilliance of the setting sun. My travel witnessed the changes of mountains and rivers, and in the twinkling of an eye I was on the other side of the sky. I came across strangers one after another, and had no idea when I would be back to my hometown. The mighty river flowed eastward, and I would reside in the strange land even longer. The high-rise stood in great numbers in the city with green trees in the severe winter. In the bustling metropolis, people played musical instruments, sang and danced to extol the good times. I was unable to adapt to this gorgeous urban life, and had no choice but to look sideways at the distant mountains. When darkness fell, the birds went home. There was not any news from the Central Plains in the flames of war. The rising moon hung in the sky with twinkling stars added radiance and beauty to each other. Lots of people had resided in a strange land as guests since the ancient times, why should I be sad alone?" "The changes of mountains and rivers," "the other side of the sky" and "strangers" are representations of Bashu's strangeness due to its "mystique." Du Fu was amazed at everything in Bashu like layer upon layer walls (big city wall, small city wall, and Zhoucheng wall) of the metropolis, the high-rise and gorgeous houses in great numbers, the hustle and bustle of the marketplace and the artistic atmosphere of "people's instrument playing, singing and dancing." Different from the severe cold in the North, it was warm and humid in Chengdu. There were verdant trees in the city even in the twelfth lunar month. Du Fu immediately found comfort in the sense of "strangeness" provided by the beautiful scenery and abundant products of Shu plus its compound human historical accumulation. Chengdu soon became Du Fu's poetic dwelling place. Chengdu was of significance for the whole

life and poetry creation of Du Fu. Feng Zhi wrote in *Biography of Du Fu*, "When people talk about Du Fu, they neglect the places of his birth and death, but will never forget about Du Fu's Thatched Cottage in Chengdu" (Qiu, 1979, p.96). The poems on the theme of Chengdu have become one indispensable wonderful movement of the magnificent symphony of Du Fu's poetry.

The leisure and laziness of Chengdu can completely dispel Du Fu's tension and anxiety brought by his wandering. The poet was natural and unrestrained, and self-adapted, as free as floating clouds and flowing water, just like Chengdu people. Du Fu was observing and appreciating everything around him and presented almost without any omission in his poems. He opened the poetic space from another direction. Centered on the thatched cottage, he slowly unfolded the beautiful and gentle natural picture scroll of Shu in his poems,

"On the west side of Wanli Bridge, there stood my shabby thatched cottage. There were few visitors to my cottage. Baihuatan Lake kept me company so that I could accommodate myself to circumstances," "Coming out of Bi Ji Fang, I departed from western suburb for my thatched cottage," "Covered with cogon grass, my thatched cottage stood against the city wall on the high land along the Jinjiang River. From the cottage, I could overlook the lush countryside scenery." "My thatched cottage was located to the west of Wanli Bridge and to the north of Baihuatan Lake," "My thatched cottage was in the west of Shisun Street," "Next to the Jinjiang River, I built a thatched cottage," "The thatched cottage was in the north of the village and in the west of the city" and so on. The poet was surprised at everything, like the dragonfly flying up and down, the waterfowl drilling in and out of the lake, the round lotus and the tiny lotus leaf and the fine wheat and light flower. In this grand picture of nature, there were birds like cormorant, swallow, gull, Oriole, young mallard, Heron, and flower ducks, insects like butterfly, dragonfly, bee and ant, flowers and trees like clove, Rhoeadine, cape jasmine, loquat, willow, lotus, peach tree, plum tree, mulberry, pine tree, bamboo, and alder. The colorful natural sceneries were full of boundless vitality, and deeply attracted the poet. In the poems of Du Fu, the natural world is always bright, fresh and natural, as beautiful as pictures, "The willow branches were swinging and pairs of loquats were emitting fragrance" *(Farmhouse)*; "The fish swayed its body in the drizzle, spitting bubbles, and happily swam to the surface of the water. The swallow's soft body, in the gentle breeze, leaned over the misty sky…" (*Against the threshold it commanded a distant view, inducing a feeling of well–being*); "With the breeze it sneaks into the tranquil night and nurtures every spring life spontaneously and silently..." (*Delighting in Rain on A Spring Night*); "The moon is hidden by the clouds, with the fragrance of spring flowers" (*Qian Yi*); "There were two or three families living in the quiet bamboo grove beside the deep river, and the red flowers were in full bloom against the white ones" (the third poem of A Lonely Flower Seeker along the River); "The blue river before Huang Shi Tower (a cemetery for monks) was flowing to the east. People felt sleepy and would like to rest on the breeze of spring. A cluster of bloomy peach blossom leaped to the eyes. Which one did I prefer, the deep red or the light red?" (The fifth poem of *A Lonely Flower Seeker along the River*); "The path was covered with branches of rich multicolored decorations. The branches were drooping with blooming flowers. On the petals, there were dancing butterflies. Orioles were singing merrily beside the path." (The sixth poem of *A Lonely Flower Seeker along the River*); "All the flowers came into bloom at the same time, and the petals would fall off one after another. I wanted to talk with flowers if they could bloom slowly." (The seventh poem of *A Lonely Flower Seeker along the River*). These poems added

fresh and bright, delicate and gentle paragraphs to the magnificent symphony. Throughout the poems of Du Fu, there are substantial fine pieces of writing chanting nature in a delicate and rich way only in Chengdu. This is the result of close contact and integration between Du Fu's emotional world and the beautiful natural scenery of Bashu.

The Zilang and Kuizhou poetry of Du Fu differ greatly from his Chengdu poetry, even though they were all depictions of natural landscapes and scenery. Three main reasons account for the differences. First, the poet did not have enough time to taste the natural landscape and scenery in exile, which were not exquisitely expressed in the beautiful poems; second, different from the fresh elegant mountains and rivers of Chengdu, the landscape and scenery in Zilang and Kuizhou are particularly magnificent. The poet preferred to depict the major characteristics, and represented in the broad, lofty and simple and vigorous poetic state; third, Du Fu epitomized the classic poetry of China, and constantly pursued for innovative techniques of poetic expression, and there were often changes in his techniques for varying objects. These were signs in the Zilang poetry of Du Fu. In *Song of Yuewang* Tower he sketched a map of one hundred miles of northern Sichuan, "Blue tiles and red ridges set off each other. The Yangtze River under the Yuewang Tower was deep and clear." He described in *Climbing Niutou Temple* a macroscopic view the Niutou Temple on Niutou Mountain in southwestern Zizhou, "The rolling green hills brought an endless awakening of spring. On that day, I climbed Niutou Mountain." In *Song of Langshan Mountain* grand and wide landscape painting of Langzhou was presented, "On the Tomb Sweeping Day, people of Langzhong worshipped their ancestors and gods in Lingshan Mountain. There were white flowers and white banners all over the mountain. In the meantime, Yutai Mountain was filed with green yarns in the north of the city. Over a long period, the white flowers and green yarns were hung on the pine trees. The worship took place on the surface of the river and on the land at the same time. People blew and beat, sang and danced so loudly that the rocks were almost cracked." The poet described the great scenery even for the less well-known places like Tongquan County of Langzhou. He constructed a grand poetic picture, "The stream flew into the river from the top of the mountain, which was gorgeous scenery. It looked spectacular today."

The landform of Kuizhou best embodies the grand and magnificent mountains and rivers of Ba. Du Fu was completely engrossed in sketching the major characteristics and expressed in a broad, lofty and simple poetic state. The first poem of *Ten Quatrains of Kuizhou Song* gave a summary of the general condition of Kuizhou, "In the east of Zhongba, Kuizhou was famous for great mountains. The river had been running in the Three Gorges. Baidi City was located on the top of the natural defense of the Qutang Gorge, which was of strategic importance. The Qutang Gorge was even more breathtaking than the Bailao Pass." The historical sites and scenic spots were presented one after another in Du Fu's poetry, like Qutang Gorge, Yanyu Heap, Fish Complex, Eight Matrix Graph, Ranghe East, Ranghe West, and Gaotang Taoist Temple. The Qutang Gorge was described in *The Two Mountains of Qutang Gorge*, "Why was the Three Gorges so well-known among people? The two majestic mountains namely Chijia Mountain and Baiyan Mountain, along both sides of the Yangtze River, added magnificence to the gate of the Three Gorges. The precipices ran into the sky and went down to the bottom of the river. The aged people walked on the precipices, and the flood dragon hid itself in the Dragon Palace underwater. Lady Xi He, the Goddess of the Sun, was driving the cart of the Sun on a winter day. When she arrived at the two

mountains with steep cliffs, she was afraid that the cart would turn over, so she drove away from the mountains." In volume 57 of *Fang Yu Sheng Lan*, it was recorded, "The Qutang Gorge was in the east of Kuizhou, previously named Xiling Gorge, which was the gate of the Three Gorges. The two mountains stood facing each other with one river in the middle, which looked like a gate." In the poem, the poet gave an account for no sunlight on Kui Men on a winter day, as Xi He was afraid of turning over the cart and she avoided driving on the mountains. This idea was imaginative and skillfully designed. The poet intended to highlight the breathtaking mountains. It was the same in *Meditation on the Past at the Qutang Gorge*, "Thousands of ditches and rivers rushed down in the southwest of China and poured into innumerable mountains and valleys, just like a strong enemy splitting the cliff of Qutang into two parts. The land and mountain root cracked, the Yangtze River flew from the west where the moon came out. The steep Qutang Gorge and Baidi stood opposite each other, and the lofty and precipitous balcony was hidden in Kongqu. Compared with the magnificent Three Gorges dredged by Da Yu, the great power of nature was more amazing." The poem of *Yan Yu Heap* intended to highlight the extraordinary odd risk of Yan Yu Heap, "A pile of rocks stood majestic in the strong current of Qutang Gorge. A large part of the huge rocks was above water when it was cold and the water was shallow. A head of cattle was submerged in the water to worship the mountains and rivers. Even though people were blessed by the god of mountains and rivers, they dared not drive boats when the Yan Yu Heap was as large as a horse. This was a god-made obstacle in the river, and boats had the risk of turning over on cold days, as the boats was close to the eaves of the houses, and the falling eaves may hurt people. Therefore, people untied the mooring lines of the boats." In volume 148 of *History of Chinese Geography*, "Yan Yu Heap, of a circumference of twenty zhang (a unite of length), was in Qutang Kou in the center of the Shu River, two hundred paces to the southwest of Baidi City. The water was shallow in winter and the heap was exposed above water. The water rose in summer and the heap was several zhang under water. The heap was so hard that people driving boats dared not to approach it. Therefore, it was called Hesitation Heap." Du Fu wrote many poems about the natural landscape of Kuizhou, like, "The rocks of the Qutang Gorge were too hard to drill" (*Water Diversion*). "The Baiyan Mountain stood separately from the mountains, rooted beside the deep river. Other peaks were close to the earth, while you were the unique one to be near to the high sky" (*Baiyan Water*). "The deep river imported into the sea finally. In the fascinating autumn, the cart of the sun was almost covered by the mist" (*Brushwood Gate*). "The Gorge was as long as 4,000 li, and hundreds of streams imported into the river" (*Residing as a Visitor*). "The torrents of water were thunderous, and the mist covered by trees of emerald green and rattans of deep-green dazed the sun and the moon" (*Baidi*). "The surging waves were roaring inside Wuxia Gorge. The dark clouds overhead were over the ground closely" (*Autumn Urged Poetic Mood, Poem I*). "Boundless leaves fell from the woods, rustling; the endless river was rolling everlastingly" (*Mountaineering*). Du Fu wrote these poems for the grand landscape, with a broad, lofty and deep poetic state. The poetry was of extraordinary momentum, and great power.

Bashu, the concentrated splendid China, deeply attracted Du Fu, and the poet was completely absorbed in the secluded and beautiful gardens and magnificent mountains. He put the worldly fame behind him, and acquired a tranquil, natural and unrestrained way of life. The pastoral scenery and mountains and rivers of Bashu had been always regarded as the aesthetic objects in Du Fu's poetry

and were depicted heartily in his work, like Chengdu poetry, Zilang poetry and Yunkui poetry. It was rare in his poems of other periods in terms of the colorful content and diversified techniques of artistic expression. Bashu poetry was an important aspect of Du Fu's multi-faceted creativity. It largely enriched the content of his poetry and further expanded his poetic space.

Du Fu resided in Bashu for a long time, and had deep experiences and a through understanding of the cultural personality of the Ba and Shu people, and the local customs of Bashu. His Bashu poetry was largely enriched with these two aspects as performance objects. Some essentials of the cultural personality of the Ba and Shu people were vividly revealed in his poetry, and the folk customs of Bashu were displayed critically as well.

The Shu culture has its inner essence in finding contentment in poverty, the pursuit of perfection, and harmony and tolerance. This is fully reflected in the Bashu poetry of Du Fu. Chengdu people's leisurely and carefree way of life and attitude towards life like floating clouds and flowing rivers, is derived from the ancient Shu culture. As the county magistrate described in *A Neighbor in the North*, "He resigned from his post office to retire from the world. He lived in the fresh air of a bamboo forest along the clear river. How leisurely and carefree he was! When he tasted good wine, and wrote poetry, he was very satisfied. From time to time, he visited my thatched cottage." The regular visitor loved drinking and was adept at writing poetry. He visited the poet casually, and an elegant and detached image stands vividly on the paper. The poet had close associations with another neighbor as well. In the poem, *A Neighbor in the South*, "There was a gentleman in a black scarf along the Jinjiang River. He harvested many taros and chestnuts in the garden every year, so he did not live a poor life. He had visitors very often, and his children were used to the visitors. The birds often foraged on the stairs as they were tame. The river was only four or five feet deep in autumn, and the ferry boat held just two or three people. It was late, and the green bamboo forest was gradually shrouded in darkness. Mr. Jinli saw us off at the brushwood gate when the moon was just rising." Mr. Jinli, in a black scarf, described in this poem, was content with poverty and devoted to spiritual things. He was upright, sincere and enthusiastic and not unsociable. Even the ordinary people around them would like to keep contact with him. They got along so well and casually. In the poem, *A Friendly and Kind–hearted Farmer Invited Me to His Home for Drinking Good Wine When I Took the Position of Yan Zhong Cheng*, there described the casual invitation mentioned in, "I took a leisurely walk in scandals to admire the beautiful spring. At the sight of the bright red blossoms and green willows, I was flooded by mixed feelings. A friendly and kind-hearted farmer invited me to his home to taste good wine on the day of the spring equinox," the openness mentioned in, "He asked his wife to open a big jar of wine and poured the wine into a basin for me," and the importunities mentioned in, "I arrived at the farmer's home early in the morning, and drank there the whole day from seven o'clock in the morning to seven o'clock in the evening. The farmer asked his family loudly to bring me fruits and nuts. When I stood up to take leave of his family, he grabbed me tightly on my arm. In the evening, the moon was rising, he still asked me to stay and drink more." Where he was living in this environment, he was deeply infected by the cultural atmosphere. He wrote in the poem *Arrival of My Guest*, "There was a pool of spring water around the cottage. I saw a flock of seagulls flying around and round every day. The path through the courtyard was filled with flowers, which was not cleaned for the respectable guest. The gate of my cottage was open especially for your visit. I had simple dishes at home as the market was far away. I did not have

extravagant meals to treat you due to my poor condition as you know. Would you like to drink with my neighbor? If you agree, I would call him across the fence." In the interesting atmosphere of "spring water" and "a flock of seagulls," the guest made a visit without prior notice and the host treated him with courtesy. Everything was as natural and as free as floating clouds and flowing rivers. This poem suggests that the poet had been infected by Shu culture.

For the Ba culture represented by Kuizhou, Du Fu had a deep understanding of the toughness and righteousness of the Ba people. As described in the *Boatman*, "The males of Kuizhou Gorge preferred driving the boat on the river to studying and taking a post. They even regarded wealth more important than their lives. The rich people drove big ships while the poor drove small boats for a living. Children just read a little and went to learn boat driving when they were older. The outstanding seamen drove skillfully and stably on the roaring waves. They departed in the morning from Baidi City and arrived at Jiangling in the afternoon. It only took one day to complete the journey of one thousand li. I could not believe it only when I saw it by myself. The Qutang Gorge and the Tiger Beach were extremely dangerous, however, the boatmen sailed across easily with skilled techniques. It was said that the people here were narrow-minded, chasing after fame and gain. There was a barrier between scholars in the south and in the north. If there were no talents in this area, why was there the former residence of the great poet Qu Yuan? It could be concluded that people had to give up study and chase for wealth forced by life." The people of Kuizhou were familiar with water and took risks fearlessly. This was the best proof for the braveness and righteousness of the Ba people, however, it was satirized that Kuizhou people just took risks for chasing interests, and they were narrow-minded and short-sighted. Du Fu did not agree with this, and he wrote a question at the end, expressing his profound understanding about the essence of the Ba people's characteristics and their risky spirit. In the seventh poem of *Song of Kuizhou Ten Jueju*, "There were material exchanges in Sichuan and the lower reaches of the Yangtze River, by many business boats. The boatmen sailed rapidly on the high waves singing loudly. The businessmen were only keen on gambling in the sun." The poet made a sharp contrast between the poor life of local people and the gambling indulged in by the businessmen, to compare their totally different living status, however, it is far from being enough to just stay at this level. The commercial transactions took place via "many business boats" in the waterway of the Yangtze River, while only the elder experienced boatmen could drive the business boats. They shouted, "a work song on the Yangtze River," and took risks driving the boats. Their hard work provided support to the commercial transactions on the waterway of the river. This poem also suggested the tough folk customs, representing the fearless spiritual character of "the elder" and "the experienced" boatman. The women of Kuizhou were hardworking and diligent. They cut firewood in the mountains and offered it in the market for sale every day, to support the whole family. Sometimes, they even sold illegal salt. Du Fu wrote in the poem *Walking with Firewood on the Back*, "In local customs, men enjoyed a higher status than women, so women stood when men were sitting. The majority of women had to go out to collect firewood every day, to afford the whole family and pay for tax levies. They risked their lives to climb high and cut firewood. The firewood was offered for sale in the market. Besides firewood, they shouldered salt on their backs as well." The folk custom "man sat while women stood aside" was mentioned in the poem, the diligence of women and their braveness in selling illegal salt. Everything demonstrated the spiritual characters of the Ba

women, namely hardworking, bold and risk-taking.

The local customs and practices were the special form of regional culture, best embodying the features of regional culture. They are the major objects of literary works. Du Fu resided nine years in Bashu, and had a deep understanding of the local customs. His experience and understanding was reflected in his Bashu poetry. The poem Nan-chi described the folk songs and dances of witch-style in front of the temple of Liu Bang beside Nanchi of Langzhou, "There was the ancestral temple of the King of the Han Dynasty, and for years people prayed as sacrifice and divination. They sang and danced in the loose clothes. How ridiculous the customs are! The King sat solemnly in the hall and his spirit was still upright. He should not enjoy the drink and food on the empty hillside. The witchcraft sacrifice had been handed down since the ancient times, and it did not have its origin in Sichuan." The first poem of *Humorous Poetry II to Dispel Boredom*, written in Kuizhou, "The customs and habits here were so strange that foreigners could not live together with them. People fed Wu Gui (tortoise) with yellow croaker in every household." The second poem, "Wizards practiced divination with tiles to deliver the will of the heaven." Both poems described the witch customs. "Wu Gui" in the poem was tortoise. Tortoise shell was a miraculous thing for divination in ancient times, so almost every household "fed tortoises." When the witch practiced divination, he would go to collect one shell. "The delivery of the will of the god by divination with tiles" was a custom for the Kui people to recover from disease and be saved from disaster. It was annotated: The wizards knocked on the tiles, and determined good or ill luck by the texture of the broken tiles. In the annotations of *Record of Natural Conditions and Social Customs of Yueyang*, "The people in Jing-xiang (Jianghan-Dongting Lake Plain) did not visit doctors when they were ill, but requested wizards to practice divination by knocking on tiles." In the poem of Du Fu, the scene of the Kui people praying for rain in drought seasons was described, "In drought seasons, it did not rain despite of dark clouds. In the south, farming was very hard. The people beat drums to pray for rain. The Dragon King could not hear, and it did not rain." (*Thunder*) The wizard led people to beat drums loudly, sang and danced, however, "the dragon kept silent." The people could not expect rain, so they prayed for rain by burning the mountain. "In the drought seasons, people burned Chushan Mountain. According to local customs, people burned the flood dragon for one month, and the dragon was so frightened to spray water. The monsters in the mountains cried loudly. The trees on the mountain were of one thousand years. After the fire, they were burned to ashes, and so there was no place for the clouds' habitat." The rain did not arrive as expected, but the environment was badly damaged. The poet did not stay at this shallow level describing local custom, but analyzed this custom critically.

In the *Preface of Collected Works of Li Hanlin*, "Since Pan Gu created the world, the air of the heaven and the earth remained in the southwest. The Jianmen Pass ran across the river and ended the twists and turns of Minshan Mountain, thus generated the Jinjiang River. There were numerous outstanding talents in Shu over a long period of five hundred years, like SimaXiangru, Jun Ping, Wang Bao, Yang Xioing, Chen Zi'ang, Li Bai, and others" (Wang, 1983, pp.1447–1448). This paragraph has an enlightening effect on our further understanding of Bashu culture. In the process of cultural evolution, a long-lasting and deep historical culture was accumulated on the Bashu land, and there arose many outstanding figures who played important roles in the process of Chinese historical and cultural development, like SimaXiangru, Yang Xiong, Zhuge Liang, Chen Zi'ang, Li Bai. These

figures bore the unique spirit and values of Bashu culture, and are worthy of our deep understanding and further exploration, and even concentration. Du Fu's thought about the outstanding figures brought about by the historical and culture sites of Bashu. Take poems in praise of Zhuge Liang, Chen Zi'ang, and SimaXiangru, Du Fu focused on the statement and commended the unique spirit and values of Bashu culture borne by these historical figures. Undoubtedly, these poems are an extremely brilliant part of the Bashu poetry of Du Fu.

There are more than twenty poems in total in praise of Zhuge Liang, and the most famous ones were created by the poet's feelings triggered by historical sites in Chengdu and Kuizhou. *The Prime Minister of Shu* was one of them, written in the third year of Qianyuan. The poet evaluated from the perspective of a scholar. In his opinion, Zhuge Liang realized the "career achievement" of the values of life of Confucian "three immortals." "The former emperor made three calls at Zhuge Liang's thatched cottage and Zhuge Liang assisted two emperors in the founding and successive governance of the kingdom, with his bosom full of loyalty." In Kuizhou, he wrote several famous poems like Walking Beside Cypress, *Pay My Respect to the Temple of the First Emperor, Five Poems of Singing Historical Sites* (the fifth poem), *The Temple of Marquis Wu, and Eight Matrix Graph. In Pay My Respect to the Temple of Liu Bei*, he sighed with emotion for Zhuge Liang's unfulfilled wish and entire devotion, "He drafted a long-term strategy to recover the Han Dynasty and the recovery of the Central Plain fully relied on the old and loyal prime minister. He left his wish frustrated despite painstaking efforts". In the Temple of Marquis Wu, "The frescoes peeled off at Wuhou Temple of Kuizhou, and wild grass and trees grew and spread. Zhuge Liang bent his body and exhausted his energy, and submitted *Memorial on Sending out the Troops* to the last emperor and did not have and intention to return to Nanyang anymore." The fifth poem of *Five Poems of Singing Historical Sites* praised the great achievements he made, and his talents in military management and dedication to his career. "Zhuge Liang left a reputation through the ages in the world. His lofty and solemn sculpture won infinite reverence of people. With his careful planning and management, the period of three kingdoms was established. Therefore, people were deeply impressed by his peerless image for hundreds of years. His achievements in assisting the Shu-han power were as great as that of Yi Yin and Lv Shang, the founding prime ministers in the ancient times. He was calm in governing and planning military forces, and even the notable subjects in the early Han Dynasty like Xiao He and Cao Shen were detracted from their glory. Despite that the empire of the East Han Dynasty could not be recovered, he was devoted to military affairs day and night and finally fell sick from overwork." The poems have something in common, namely the profound exploration and high refinement of the cultural spiritual values borne by Zhuge Liang. His loyalty, insistence in chasing ideals, and his positive life attitude has added rich connotations to theBashu culture.

Du Fu, in total, wrote three poems, singing Chen Zi'ang. Among these poems, *The Former Residence of Chen Shiyi* was the most representative, and the creation was triggered by historical sites. As far as Du Fu was concerned, the cultural spiritual values of his existence in the world shining like the sun and moon, was "loyalism" repeatedly manifested in the poem *Inspired by My Experience*. It was written in *The Former Residence of Chen Shiyi*, "The ancient house of Chen Zi'ang would decline finally but the poetry of Du Fu embodied the loyalty of Chen Zi'ang completely. So, it was handed down for generations from the ancient times." Chen Zi'ang was a controversial historical figure, and Du Fu

evaluated him beyond the limitations of history. His evaluation criteria of "loyalism" was far beyond that of any poet of any dynasty, in which the basic judgment was heart-aligned with the safety of country and the sufferings of people. Wang Shisi wrote in *Du Yi*, "The poem *Inspired by My Experience* of Chen Shiyi had been famous for a long time. After reading his biography and his suggestions to the emperor, I can see that he made loyal and honest proposals. In the first half of the poem *Inspired by My Experience*, he wrote about the saints, and in the second part of the poem he wrote about loyal gentlemen. It can be concluded that Chen Shiyi is a man of loyalism, and that accounts for his undying image in people's minds. Du Fu made an objective evaluation about Chen Zi'ang. After reading his evaluation, I can know better Chen Zi'ang's values." (Wang, 1983, p157). "Du Fu made objective evaluation about Chen Zi'ang," referred to Du Fu evaluation of Chen Zi'ang at the height of social historical development. He proposed what others had never thought of. So to speak, the "loyalism" of Chen Zi'ang kept consistency with Du Fu's ideas like one should be concerned about his country and his people, people are one's brothers and sisters, and one's appreciation as a personal favor. These poems were created after the encounter of two great spirits, and were the highly refined essence of the cultural spiritual value "loyalism," and were more enriched the cultural meanings and upgraded state of the Bashu culture.

The broad mind of a scholar was presented through Du Fu's feelings and experience to the final identification of Bashu culture. The meeting of SimaXiangru and Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty, as well as SimaXiangru's love story with Wenjun, naturally became an object admired by successive scholars. The culture of Xiangru and Wenjun was becoming richer and richer with story-telling by scholars of successive dynasties. *Qin Tai* was the representative of Du Fu's poetic statement of Xiangru and Wenjun culture. Therefore, it was not excessive to say that Du Fu was the important carrier of Xiangru and Wenjun culture. In this poem, Du Fu visited Qin Tai and pondered on the past. He chased the distinguished and admirable, and heaped praise upon the eternal love of Xiangru and Wenjun. "When SimaXiangru was worn with age, he was still deeply attached to Zhuo Wenjun. Their feelings were not diminished." The poet gave credit to their breaking the barriers of the common, and recalled their love story. Xiangru played *Feng Qiu Huang (Courtship)* to express his adoration for Wenjun, while Wenjun was so moved that she rushed to meet him at night. "They had to open a pub for living. I wandered on the Qin Tai and looked far to the blue sky and white clouds, admired so much." He associated "wild flowers" and "green creeping weeds" with the good image of Wenjun. "He thought about the smile of Wenjun at the sight of a bunch of wild flowers at the Qintai, and thought about the skirt of Wenjun at the sight of bunches of green creeping weeds." The end of the poem was his sigh with regret, "Music of stringed instruments, a faithful friend is hard to find." "It was an eternal miracle of SimaXiangru's pursuit of Zhuo Wenjun, never heard of before." We find Du Fu's identification of the Bashu culture's characteristic of daring to be the first in the world through his poetic statement of Xiangru and Wenjun culture. Bashu, in the southwest of China, was far away from the political and cultural center, was under a comparatively light impact of Confucian culture. Its regional culture bred more factors of freedom and romance. "Shu area was remote and humble of barbarian style" (Ban,2012,p.1923). Elopement of men and women was quite common, and even the myths and legends spreading in Shu were related to the Shu King's lust for women. Sima Xiangru regarded this emotional experience as a story passed on with approval. "Sima Xiangru came across a

young widow in Linqiong, and he fell in love with her immediately and married her later. He regarded it a pleasing kind of love and worthy of spreading" (Sima, 1959, p.228). *(Records of Historians Biography of SimaXiangru) Records of Historians*, *Han Book and Notes of Xijing* had generally consistent records about the elopement, marriage and making a living by selling wine of Xiangru and Wenjun (Ge, 2006, pp.82–83). The culture of the Tang Dynasty was succeeding that of the Han Dynasty. Triggered by the historical and cultural sites of Chengdu, Du Fu wrote the poem *Qin Tai*, which was a poetic statement and glory for the characteristic daring to be the first in the world of Bashu culture, borne by historical figures like Xiangru and Wenjun, and had a direct impact on the positive evaluation of these two people by later generations.

The natural world and human world of Bashu had greatly enriched Du Fu's poetry creation. With the influence of Bashu culture, his poetry was more colorful and multidimensional. In Bashu poetry, he carefully depicted the beautiful and magnificent natural world of Bashu mountains and rivers, and deeply reflected the cultural personality of the Bashu people, and critically described the local customs and practices of Bashu. He explored and expounded on the inner spirit of the Bashu culture through historical figures. As it should be, Du Fu's Bashu poetry is not limited to this, and it has an even richer content than our understanding.

As Du Fu resided in Bashu for many years, every blade of grass and every tree of Bashu, widely different from that of the Central Plain, triggered his homesickness. Therefore, there were a large quantity of poems with a homesick theme among his Chengdu poetry, Zilang poetry and Yunkui poetry. *In Mountain with Clouds*, "Outside the Yunshan Mountain far away from the capital city, I had not received any news for a long time. Exhausting my efforts, I looked at the direction of my hometown. I was sick and lay in the cottage along the river, expecting my family and friends to visit me. The white gulls would perch along the river, and why did they cry so whiningly?" This poem has of strong homesick feeling because the news and letters from family were cut off. He was extraordinary desolate and sad. He expressed his feelings in *Qian Xing*, "The country was still at war, and I had no idea where my sisters and brothers were. I cried so sadly that I could not attend to comb my hair. In the wilderness, the river was as quiet as a mirror. I was badly sick and I did not think we can meet again." The war had not ended, and his melancholy of family dispersion and sentiment of wandering aimlessly in a strange land and aging diseases arose simultaneously. "I cried miserably with my hair scattered" was particularly profound. *Returned Geese* implied meaning in the object and expressed deep feeling of homesickness, "The spring had come, and when could I return to my hometown? The saddest is that even the wild geese could fly freely to the north, but I could not leave." *Su Mu* expressed the poet's misery when he stayed alone in Mufu, "The tree leaves were trembling in the autumn wind at night; only the candle residue was shining on me. The tragic horn was talking to itself; nobody enjoyed the beautiful moonlight with me. As time passed quickly, where should I enquire about the news of my family? The path to the pass was depressing, and it was hard to look for a road for home. I had endured ten years of wandering life, and I just resided here for a temporary living." The poem revealed his sentiment of the flying time, long-term drift, cut off news and letters and hard path for return. *Spring Afar* is also a poem describing homesickness, "Flowers fell off one after another. In daytime, there were always birds as few visitors came to my thatched cottage in the remote area. Enemy of Guanzhong invaded and the Tubo forces were quartered at the foot of the West Mountain. Since I could not return to my

hometown, I had no other choice but to stay with the troops." It described the scene of late spring, expressing his worry about the country and sighing that it was difficult to return. Du Fu, wandering in Zizhou, went wild with joy at the news that the government had recovered the regions north and south of the Yellow River. He could expect to return to his hometown Luoyang, and escaped his lips *Recapture of the Regions North and South of the Yellow River*, "When I heard in Jiannan that the government army had recovered Henan and Hebei, my happy tears wet my clothes. I looked back to my family and the sorrow of my wife and children disappeared immediately. I rolled up the books casually and I was mad with joy. I was unable to restrain myself from singing loudly and drinking to my content on the sunny day. With the company of spring sunlight, I could return to my hometown. I was ready to go through the Ba Gorge and the Wu Gorge, and then go to Xiangyang and arrive in Luoyang later." In the poem *On the Trip at Night, Expressing My Political Ambition*, "The breeze was blowing the fine grass on the bank of river, and the boats with high masts were mooring alone on the moonlit night. The stars drawn low by the vastness of the plain. The moon rushed forward in the river's flow. It was not due to my poetry that I won recognition. Now I should retire as I am aged and sick. What do I like? Just a seagull flying in the sky." In the poem *Mountaineering*, "The wind was blowing hard, and the apes were crying sadly. Birds were wheeling above the river delta of clear water and white sand. The boundless leaves fell from the woods, rustling; and the endless water of the Yangtze River was rolling on in waves. I sighed with regret facing the bleak autumn scene for my years' residing in Chengdu as a guest. I was eaten up with diseases, and my hair at the temples became white after years of difficulties and hardships. My mind was full of decadence and put away the wine glasses." These poems are famous works deploring exile and drift.

Although Du Fu was far away from the political center in his later years, he did not stay away from politics and his poetic creation was never away from loving all the people and animals, concerning about his country and his people. In the Chengdu thatched cottage, he wrote *The Broken Thatched Cottage Sang for the Autumn Wind*, expressing his humanistic feelings that he would rather sacrifice himself and let the poor people be free of hunger and coldness. He thought about the exploited people's experience at the sight of dry brown wood, "The poor people were exploited just like brown wood. The dead had passed away, and how could the living ones defend themselves?" *Farewell with Resentment* represented multiple themes, "I wandered around after I left Luoyang, now I was four thousand li away from it. It had been five or six years since the rebel forces of An and Shi marched into the Central Plain. Weeds and trees turned from green to yellow. I was blocked by the rebel forces and aging gradually on the waterfront. I missed my hometown and my younger brother. I was sleepless in the cool moonlit night. In the chilly daytime, I lay down watching the clouds and fell asleep. I was happy to hear that Situ had overcome Heyang and was following up a victory, and would capture Youyan soon." The poet had to drift in other places due to the disordered situation and social unrest. Both his pain of parting and concern about the situation were reflected in his poetry. Du Fu always had cared about the sufferings of the people, and the social unrest. In the end, it was the people who suffered from war. The poem *The Thatched Cottage* described Li Zhonghou's killing of Chengdu people after the death of Xu Zhidao, "There were three heads in one country, and the common people became fish to be killed. The forces tyrannically abused their power and who were the innocent victims? They slaughtered people while laughing. It was the cries of the people

everywhere." *Trip in Guangluban*, *Trip in the Hard War and Trip in the Chilly Autumn* described the turmoil in Shu. *Five Poems of Feelings*, *Three Poems of Historical Statement*, *and Five Poems of the Lament on the Passing of Spring* reflected his worries about national crisis. The poet in exile was still concerned about the war between the Tang Dynasty and the Tubo. When he heard about the crisis of Song, Wei and Bao, he wrote *Emergency*, *Order of the Emperor*, *Soldiers and Three Poems of the West Mountain*, expressing his anxiety about the crisis at the border of west Shu. The poem *Soldiers* was particularly heavy hearted, "How many people were there every ten household? Most of the houses were empty. I just heard people's cries instead of singing." The people were suffering a lot from military service and forced labor, and the west Shu became a withered place. *Three Poems of Jueju* were created in Yun'an. The first poem described the turmoil of Shu, "the Cishi (a government post) was killed in Yuzhou, a city of one thousand years history, and the Cishi was killed this year in Kaizhou. The mobs were like fierce tigers, and who dared to leave his family there?" The second poem described the exile of people. "Twenty-one families moved into Shu at the same time, and now only one person was able to escape from Luogu. He said that his two daughters had been killed by the mobs crying with grief." The third poem described the ruthlessness of the government forces, "Despite that they were brave and battle-wise, their brutality was like that of the nomadic forces. They slaughtered many people on the Han River and most of the women had become captives in the military camps." The poet wrote the poem *Night at the Loft* about the disasters brought about by years of war to the people in Kuizhou, "The daytime had been shortened gradually, the distant horizon was shrouded by the cold snow at night. I heard the tragic horn in the military camp at dawn. The shadow of stars became the ripples on the Three Gorges. Families in the wilderness cried for war, the sorrowful song of a fisherman came from afar. The great heroes like Zhuge Liang and Gongsun Shu finally backed to the earth, and why should I care about the less and less news and fewer and fewer letters from my family?"

The content of the Bashu poetry of Du Fu was extremely rich. However, the profundity could not be ignored despite its richness. His concern about the political situation and the people is the demonstration of richness and profundity of Du Fu's Bashu poetry. Love for people, treasuring life and nature, and concerns about the country and the people are the major elements of Du Fu's poetry, always running through of his poetry. From "the broken country and the poor government caused by war" to "people cried sadly on the street and nobody could hear any songs," from "despite my patriotic zeal" to "I was sleepless due to worry about the situation, I had no power to devote myself to the country," from his own experience to others' similar experience, we can experience the deep feelings and his profound concerns about the country and the people.

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Tao, Virtue, Benevolence, Righteousness and Propriety: On the Core Values of Shu School

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Abstract: The core concepts of Confucianism were developed over the change of the times by Confucian scholars after Zi Si and Mencius, and have formed their respective structures: The three great principles of "benevolence, wisdom and bravery," and the self-cultivation model of "benevolence, righteousness and propriety" by Confucius. Following Confucius, Zi Si vigorously advocated the five virtues of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sage." Mencius initiated the four cardinal virtues of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom." Xun Zi often constructed the collocation of "benevolence and righteousness, rites and music, and loyalty and trustworthiness." Dong Zhongshu finally developed the five constant virtues of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness." In a simple, clear, practical and feasible way, the core values of Confucianism have won support among the people and have had an impact on Chinese society for more than two thousand years. Being open and inclusive, the connotation of Confucianism took advantage of the strengths of different schools of philosophy in ancient China, and adopted changes from philosophies with positive attitudes. The Bashu area, in the southwest of China, has inherited the tradition of adhering to the Tao (natural order of the Universe) and valuing morality. Shu scholars have creatively built the core values of "the Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety," and developed a characteristic branch of philosophy above and beyond the Confucian scholars of the Central Plains. This concept stems from Yan Junping of the Western Han Dynasty, promoted by Yang Xiong, developed by Zhao Rui of the Tang Dynasty, Zhang Shangying and Su Dongpo of the Song Dynasty, and Lai Zhide of the Ming Dynasty, then further developed by Liu Yuan and Duan Zhengyuan of the Qing Dynasty, and formed the persistent system of core values of the Shu School. Compared with the values of orthodox Confucianism, the core values of the Shu School have the functions of "a unity of metaphysics and physics" and "a combination of theory and practice," which remedy the lack of Confucianism's ultimate concern for ontology and the lack of Taoism's realistic concern for practicality.

Keywords: Shu school; core values; five conducts; five virtues; Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety

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Chinese scholarship has fine traditions like self-cultivation and real application. In most cases, mature academic studies form essential and applicable core values as well, as they are in the pursuit of comprehensiveness. The philosophers after Lao-tzu and Confucius, had academic thoughts of constructing main purposes, and formed concise core value structures. It is summarized in the *Lv's Spring and Autumn*, "Lao-tzu advocated to use softness to overcome hardness, Confucius advocated benevolence, Mo-tse advocated fraternity, Guan Yin advocated honesty and frugality, Lie Zi advocated a pure heart and few desires, Chen Pian advocated equity among all lives, Yang Sheng advocated to take oneself as first, Sun Bin advocated powerful force, Wang Liao advocated to prepare strategy before battle, and Er Liang attached importance to examining work and summing up experiences after battles."[1] It can be seen that all the philosophers have their own core connotation and subject spirit, which constitute the important trends and realized the value of the academic theories of all the philosophers. In fact, we find all mature academic theories are the same in this respect when we take an overview of Chinese academic history, and the Shu School is no exception, and thus grew to great renown and influence. The Shu School has a long history of development, ranging from Qilu (Shandong Province) to the Central Plains. It has enjoyed the reputation "The prosperity of the Shu School dominates in China with infinite influence,"[2] and "the literary works of the Shu scholars are peerless in China."[3] As an ancient cultural pattern and academic school rich in content, the Shu School is rooted in the land of Bashu. It has a radiation effect on the surrounding areas, even on the Central Plains, and has promoted the prosperity of Chinese traditional culture and academic thought. How can the Shu School have such widespread influence? This is inseparable from its extensive content and profound core. "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety," to be revealed in this paper, is the successful construction and important innovation in the respect of value system of the Shu School in history. The formation and construction of core values, of course, may also change with the times, however, reviewing the literature, we can find that the overall spirit, fixed structure, and historical inheritance and innovation represented in core values are relatively consistent and coherent.

1. From Confucius to Dong Zhongshu: Inheritance and evolution of the core values of Confucianism

Confucian value "benevolence, wisdom and perseverance" and "benevolence, righteousness and propriety," with benevolence being the core.

Confucius

Confucius proposed a variety of values, taking "benevolence" as the core, so the understanding in *Lv's Spring and Autumn* is correct, namely, "Confucius advocated benevolence."Then, how should we practice benevolence or help to perfect one's virtue? It says in the *Analects of Confucius Xian Wen*, "There are three respects for a gentleman, which I have not achieved: The benevolent does not worry; the wise have no confusion; the brave are free from fear."Here benevolence, wisdom, and bravery are arranged in one group. *The Doctrine of the Mean* says, "People have five ethical relationships in common, and there are three virtues to handle these five relationships, namely the monarch and his subjects, father and son, husband and wife, brothers and friends. These are the common ethical relationships among all the people in the world. Wisdom, benevolence, and bravery are virtues to handle these relationships. The reason is the same for the implementation of the three virtues. Confucius said, 'To love learning is akin to knowledge; To work diligently is akin to benevolence; To know shame is akin to courage. You will know how to self-evaluate if you understand these three points, you will know how to manage other people if you know self-evaluation, and you will know how to govern the world and the country if you know managing other people.'" *The Doctrine of the Mean* regards benevolence, wisdom and bravery as "three great conducts," and combines benevolence, righteousness and propriety in one group. "A benevolent man can be called a real man. It is the most important to love his parents, it is necessary to value morality and justice, and it is a priority to respect the sages. Thus benevolence and righteousness can find their root in propriety."“Benevolence, wisdom and bravery" and "benevolence, righteousness and propriety" are the core content of Confucianism. Confucianism "adheres to the Law of Yao and Shun in governing the world, follows the systems of King Wen of Zhou and King Wu of Zhou, and respects the saint Confucius as the founder of Confucianism" (*the Yi Wen Record of the History of the Former Han Dynasty*). Its ideology finds its roots in the traditions of Yao and Shun, later inherits the thoughts of King Wen of Zhou, King Wu of Zhou, and the Duke of Zhou, and ultimately receives the core ideas of Confucius. Therefore, the system of core values constructed by Confucius had critical effects on the development and evolution of later Confucian schools.

After Confucius, "Confucianism was divided into eight schools," "there was the Confucian School of Zi Si, the Confucian School of Mencius and the Confucian School of Sun" (*Han Feizi · XianXue*). Zi Si, Mencius and Xun Zi (namely Sun) are three great Confucianists, who played important roles in promoting Confucian schools after Confucius. Zi Si was the grandson of Confucius, and Mencius studied under a disciple of Confucius. The succession of these Confucianists has formed the "Si-Meng School."Zi Si inherited the thoughts of his ancestor and formed the "five conducts" (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and mastery) with "four virtues" (benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom) as the core, which was developed and promoted by Mencius. It says in *Mencius · JinXin Xia*, "Benevolence for father and son, righteousness for the monarch and his subjects, propriety for the host and guest, wisdom for the wise gentlemen and sage man for the natural Law, all are determined by destiny, and one's nature plays a role as well, therefore, a gentleman never stresses the role of destiny."[4] In Zhu Xi's annotation of Mencius, it says that "Sage man for natural Law, man was a redundant character." This saying has been verified by newly excavated texts. "Sage man" hereof should be the character of "sage," namely the virtues of the sage. Mencius named "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom" the "four

virtues" and "four great conducts" and vigorously promoted them. As Mencius said in his article *Li Lou*, "The essence of benevolence is to serve the parents. The essence of righteousness is to be obedient to elder brothers. The essence of wisdom is to understand the truth of the above mentioned two and not to depart from them. The essence of propriety is to act with respectful attitude."*GaoZi Shang* says, "Sympathy for the misfortunes of others is "benevolence," shame for one's own ill conduct is "righteousness," respect for others is "propriety," understanding of right and wrong is "wisdom."Our understanding of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom is not acquired from the external environment, but owned already, and we just get used to ignoring it."It can be concluded that "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom" are the core concepts emphasized by Mencius, therefore, they are combined with "sage" and become "five great conducts."The proposal of Mencius should academically originate from Zi Si, and it was under the criticism of Xun Zi. Its origin can be seen accordingly. *Xun Zi Fei Shi ErZi*, "A new theory was created based on the old ones, which was named "the five great conducts" ... but they whitewashed their remarks and said solemnly: 'This is the speech of our teacher of the old generation.' This was advocated by Zi Si and echoed by Meng Ke." [5]According to Xun Zi, "A new theory of five great conducts was created based on the old ones" by Zi Si and Mencius, however, he did not mention the specific conducts, and it is confirmed there should be five conducts. *In Annotations of Xun Zi* written by Yang Liang of the Tang Dynasty, it says, "The five elements are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness." Yang Liang wrote that "the five elements" were also named "the five constant virtues" namely benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness. Yang Liang's interpretation about "the five constant virtues" originated from that of Zheng Xuan. *In the Annotations of the Book of Music* by Zheng Xuan, "The conducts of the five constant virtues" are described as "the five elements." In his annotations of *The Doctrine of the Mean of Zi Si*, he made the main theme clear at the very beginning, "The god of wood is benevolence, the god of gold is righteousness, the god of fire is propriety, the god of water is trustworthiness, and the god of earth is wisdom," implying that the "Theory of Five Elements" proposed by Zi Si was "Five Constant Virtues". But this saying, more than not, is incorrect. According to existing documents, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness were collectively called the "Five Constant Virtues," starting with Dong Zhongshu of the Han Dynasty. In the Warring States period, the four virtues of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom were arranged in one group together with "sage."[6] In the newly excavated bamboo slips of the Guodian Chu Tomb, it says in *The Five Elements* that, "The internalized benevolence is called conduct of virtue, while the externalized is called moral conduct; the internalized righteousness is called conduct of virtue, while the externalized is called moral conduct; the internalized propriety is called conduct of virtue, while the externalized is called moral conduct; the internalized wisdom is called conduct of virtue, while the externalized is called moral conduct; the internalized mastery is called conduct of virtue, while the externalized is called moral conduct. The five conducts of virtue are collectively called virtue, while the four moral conducts excluding mastery are collectively named kindheartedness. Kindheartedness is the Tao of mankind. Virtue is the Tao of nature."[7] This is similar to the Five Elements in the silk book unearthed in the Ma Wangdui Han Tomb. The only difference is in the sequence of the five elements namely "benevolence, wisdom, righteousness,

propriety and sage." In the *New Book Six Virtues* written by Jia Yi it says, "There are six directions in the universe, and humans have five moral conducts of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sage." [8] He still followed the collocation of the core values proposed by Zi Si and Mencius in the Warring States period.

In the late period of the Warring States, as the "Confucian school of Sun," Xun Zi's value system had benevolence as the core, namely "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music."He told the scholars about the route of study and virtue cultivation, "If one can trace back to the Law of the emperors in the ancient times and examine the original meaning of benevolence and righteousness, it will be the right approach to learn propriety. It is just like when one person holds the leather collar and comb with five fingers, the fur will be naturally smooth. If he does not follow the virtues…he will not achieve his goal. Therefore, if he respects propriety and law, he will be a law-abiding scholar, despite his failure to achieve great perception and eloquence. If he does not respect propriety and law, he will be a law-breaking Confucian scholar despite his great perceptions and eloquence."[9] As far as Xun Zi is concerned, "benevolence, righteousness and propriety" are the essential conditions of a refined scholar. He put forward in the chapter of Honor and Disgrace, "Benevolence took the leading position in the law of the emperors in the ancient times in the ruling of the world, and this ruling law was further divided into four parts namely the classic books (*the Book of Songs* and *Shang Shu*), rites and music." [10] He included "classic books" as well as "benevolence, righteousness and propriety." He believed in the previous chapter, "Classic books do not fit in the reality," "it is just like pounding millet with a dagger and measuring the depth of a river with a finger," which is absolutely inapplicable. "Classic books" here exist in name only. The focus is still on benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music. [11] In the thought of Xun Zi, benevolence and righteousness are still the top priority. In the chapter of Military Forces, it says, "When you talk about military affairs, you often regard benevolence and righteousness as the key. A benevolent man loves his people, and a righteous man follows the law. So, how can they fight with each other?"[12] In the chapter of *Original Evil of Human Nature*, it says, "The emperor Yu was sagacious, as he applied benevolence and justice. Then, there is truth knowable and achievable." [13] Law is propriety. It says in *Encouraging Learning*, "The Rites and the Classic of Music only indicate rough moral standards,"[14] therefore, it can be concluded that "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music" are the core values of Xun Zi. In the chapter of *Da Lue*, there are interpretations about these four values, "Benevolence is fraternity for people, so that people can be close to each other. Righteousness is sensibility, so that it can be put into practice. Propriety is appropriateness, so that people can succeed. There is a place for benevolence to settle down and there is pass in and out for righteousness. Benevolence will not be itself in the true sense if it is settled down in the inappropriate place. Righteousness will not be itself in the true sense if it does not get in and out from the appropriate pass. If people do not bestow insensible favors, it will not be the real benevolence. If people understand the reasons but dare not to follow, it will not be the real righteousness. If there is a system established but the ruler fails to keep a harmonious and coordinated relationship among people, it will not be the real propriety. If the harmonious and coordinated relationship is not expressed, there will not be music. Therefore, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music have consistent goals. A gentleman coped with benevolence based on righteousness, then benevolence was created. He followed righteousness based on propriety, then

righteousness was created. He came back to grasp the fundamental principle of propriety, then he completed the details, thus propriety was created. After he was proficient in these three, he got to the right law."[15] Benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music are supplementary to each other, and "law" was formed later. The core values of Xun Zi have the connotation of "law, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music."

Since the Warring States period, with the disputes between states and the prevalence of alliance and non-alliance strategy, generations of Confucian scholars have attached great importance to "loyalty and trustworthiness."In the chapter of *Ruling by Justice and Ruling by Force*, Xun Zi promoted the status of "loyalty and trustworthiness," as well as stressed "benevolence and righteousness.""If the ruler achieved loyalty and trustworthiness, and manifested benevolence and righteousness, all the talents will be gathered." [16] The collocation of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness" was fixed by Dong Zhongshu of the Western Han Dynasty. He attached much weight to "trustworthiness," in *Bloom in the Spring and Autumn Dynasty · King Zhuang of Chu*, it says, "Spring and Autumn Annals shows esteem for propriety and trustworthiness," in *Han Book · Biography of Dong Zhongshu*, it says, "The significance of Spring and Autumn Annals lies in respect for trustworthiness and overlooking treacherousness."As a result, "sage" was replaced by "trustworthiness," the "five conducts" namely "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and sage" of Mencius were transformed to "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness," and "the five constant virtues namely benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness" were built."[17] He believed that these five virtues constantly worked and they were the regular rules for as long as there was heaven and earth ("constant virtues"), therefore, they were called "five virtues."After the Wu Emperor of the Han Dynasty promoted the cultural policy of "expelling all schools of philosophers, only keeping the six classic books of Confucianism dominant namely *Book of Songs, Shang Shu, Yi Li, Book of Music, Book of Changes*, and *Spring and Autumn Annals*, "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness" had become the core elements in the Chinese value system with an impact on China for more than two thousand years. To deify "Five Virtues," Dong Zhongshu further associated "Five Virtues" with the philosophy of *Yin–Yang* and the five elements. From his point of view, humans had the conduct of five virtues and the universe had the truth of five elements, which interacted with each other. Therefore, he matched the five virtues with the five conducts. In *Bloom in the Spring and Autumn Dynasty · Generation Among Five Elements*, it says, "As the basis of farming, the East had the property of wood and referred to officials in charge of farming. They advocated benevolence, those who introduced the classic books and understood the five elements provided guidance to the emperors, following their virtues and remedying the disadvantages… The South had the property of fire and referred to Sima. Sima advocated intelligence and wisdom, and recommended virtuous and intelligent people to the emperor. These people had astronomical knowledge. Before the aura of the heaven appeared, and the bud of things emerged, they could clearly discover the key to survival and success, and great order throughout the land and the source of unrest… The Center had the property of earth and referred to Junguan. They advocated credibility and integrity. As he was born humble, he got up early and worked late day and night. He encouraged the intention of the emperor by citing ancient deeds…The West had the property of gold and referred to Dali Situ. Situ advocated righteousness. An official died for

the monarch while an ordinary person died for his father. There was distinction of rank and status among people, and they died for their own career… The North had the property of water and referred to Sikou, who was in charge of law enforcement. Sikou advocated propriety. There were fixed positions for monarch and subject, and fixed respect for seniority. Dong Zhongshu interpreted "five constant virtues" with "five conducts," and interpreted "natural law" with "humanity."He not only mystified social ethics, but also endowed them with absolute authority, so that he completed the process of moral philosophy and ultimate ethics which was unfinished by the school of Zi Si and Mencius.

2. Develop a new style: The construction of the core values of the Shu School

The ancient Shu School, bred on the Bashu land, and has core values of its own, namely "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety."According to existing literature, the systematic construction of this fixed collocation started with Yan Zun in the Han Dynasty. In *The Purpose of Ethics · Man with Highest Virtue Does Not Manifest It Formally*, it says, "The Tao is the origin of all the things in the world, virtue is the beginning of all the things in the world, god is the master of the heaven and the earth, supreme harmony is the ancestor of the heaven and the earth. The Tao varies in depth, virtue varies in thickness, god varies in clear and turbid, and harmony varies in height. The clear is the heaven, while the turbid is the earth. *Yang* is male, while *Yin* is female. People have two sides of debit and credit, receipt varies in quantity, nature varies in coarse and fine, life varies in length, emotion varies in good and evil, meaning varies in big and small. People fall into different categories, namely villain and gentleman. They are further divided into Taoist, the virtuous, the benevolent, the righteous, and person of propriety. I would like to know what are their different behaviors for their different titles. Zhuang Zi said, 'A person with nothingness and enlightenment is named a Taoist. A quiet person with nothingness is named a virtuous person. A person loving everything and granting infinitely is named a benevolent person. A person with righteousness is named a righteous person. A person politely declining and observing harmony is named a person of propriety. These five kinds of people live a long life." [18]

This is amendment and supplementation of the opposition theory of five virtues mentioned in *Lao–tzu*, "Monarch of past dynasties promoted virtue after the Tao was lost, promoted benevolence after virtue was lost, promoted righteousness after benevolence was lost, and promoted propriety after benevolence was lost," as well as correction of the opposite states of Confucianism and Taoism. Yan's theory constructed the core values of the integrated "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety" of Yi, Confucianism and Taoism. The construction of this system is developed and derived from heaven and earth, *Yin* and *Yang*, male and female, thick and thin, nature and life, emotion and meaning, god, and harmony. It came down in one continuous line with the construction of the Three Primordial Sovereigns: Fuxi (Emperor of Heaven), Shennong (Emperor of Earth), and Huangdi (Emperor of Humans).

Besides Yan Zun, the scholars of the Shu School, with intensive study and classifications, mostly adopted this system, for example, *Discourse of Four Scholars* about Virtue written by Wang Bao of the Han Dynasty, "The monarch of keen intelligence and excellent judgment respected and promoted ethics, fulfilled ruling with benevolence, required people to learn the classical six arts and to be familiar with rites. He frequently issued wise imperial edicts, encouraged recommendations of outstanding and virtuous talents and seeking Taoists." [19]

In *Fayan · Wendao* written by Yang Xiong, it says, "Law should be applied to guide people's behaviors, virtue should be applied to win the hearts of people, righteousness should be applied to help people establish appropriate relationships, propriety should be applied to help people learn rites. All of them are laws of nature. They jointly constitute a whole, and cannot play the roles if they are fragmented."[20] The five constant virtues, namely the Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety, are regarded as a must for one's self-evaluation. In Volume IV *Wen Shen*, "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety are involved in everything." [21] In *Tai Xuan Jing · Xuan Chi*, it says, "The rule of the formation and operation of the universe is called the Tao. Following the moral order in the world is called virtue. Showing fraternity to various groups of people is called benevolence. Examining appropriate situations when confronted by an enemy is called righteousness. Upholding and implementing law, virtue, benevolence and righteousness is called achievement."[22] Based on the "five constant virtues" of Dong Zhongshu, scholars added "Tao and benevolence" to construct "seven virtues."In *Ju Qin Mei Xin*, it says, "Blessed by the god and trusted by the people, the ruler should practice Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom."[23]

Later Zhao Rui of the Tang Dynasty gave a complete interpretation of the significance and their interrelationships "law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety" as well as "wisdom and trustworthiness" from the perspective of human action. He also said in *Chang Duan Jing · Liang Cai*, "After law, virtue, benevolence and righteousness are determined as the principles of conducts, the world will be ruled in the right way."[24] In *Ding Ming*, it says, "Therefore, there are concepts of law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness. What is the Tao? The Tao is the rule that people must follow. When one person is sitting, he knows what he will do; when he is traveling, he knows where he is going; when he is coping with a problem, he knows the conditions he depends on; when he is acting, he knows when he should stop. This is law. There is another saying that the Tao is the rule that people must obey, so that everything will not get lost in their principles. What is virtue? Virtue is people play their respective roles. Benevolence is selfless fraternity gaining benefit and removing evil. There is another saying that benevolence is a caring heart. Sympathy and compassion develop into benevolence. Righteousness is appropriateness, and the boundary line between right and wrong, affirmative and negative is righteousness. There is another saying that righteousness is people acting appropriately in everything, and establishing achievements by reward for good and punishment for evil. Propriety is some certain codes that people must practice, and there must be difference between senior and junior, young and old. Wisdom is the knowledge people acquire, to be used for judging gain and loss and right and wrong. Trustworthiness is people's commitment. It is trustworthiness to regard the willingness of the supreme commander as the standard."[25]

Zhang Shangying of the Song Dynasty carried on the basic theoretical thinking of Zhao Rui, and it says in Volume I, *first chapter origin* of *Huang Shi Gong Su Shu*, "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety should be regarded as a whole. Tao is what people should obey. Virtue makes everything get what they want. Benevolence is represented in affection, sincerity, respect and humility. People should show generousness, compassion for everything to make them exist naturally and comfortably. Everything in the world should grow and develop in the appropriate integration of nature. Righteousness is to reward the good and punish the evil. People should make

everything comfortable through appropriate arrangement, to achieve their aspirations. Propriety is the natural order of human relations. People should strictly abide by it." [26] Zhang Shangying's inheritance of Zhao's doctrine is clear, but he had promoted and upgraded it in the respect of the specific expression and interpretation of the five virtues. Even in the chapter layout of *Su Shu*, we can see his inheritance and respect for the core values of Yan Zun and Yang Xiong namely, "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety."Chapter I is *Origin*, namely Yan Zun's theory "virtue is the origin of everything." Chapter II is *The Right Tao*, namely Yan Zun's theory "the Tao is the root of everything." Chapter III is Ambition of Talent, namely Confucian school "benevolence and filial piety is the base of everything," Chapter IV is *Virtue–rooted and Tao–aimed*, namely "Tao-guided and virtue-acquired" of Yang Xiong and Zhao Rui. Chapter V is *Righteousness–followed* (namely "righteousness is appropriateness" of Yang Xiong and Zhao Rui. Chapter VI is *Propriety*, namely "propriety refers to appropriate behavior," "people should act according to etiquette just like they walk in shoes" of Yang Xiong and Zhao Rui.

In *The Preface of Works Collection of Ouyang Xiu* written by Su Dongpo, it says, "People should act according to propriety, music, benevolence, and righteousness, to conform with the great Tao of the universe."[27] There is "the great Tao of the universe" above "propriety, music, benevolence, and righteousness."In *Works Collection of Fan Wenzheng (Fan Zhongyan)*, it says, "He (Fan Wenzheng) was so eager for benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, royalty, trustworthiness and filial piety, just like a man who is hungry for food, and he could never forget about it. It was just like the heat of fire and the wetness of water. It was part of his nature." [28] "Benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, loyalty, trustworthiness and filial piety" were determined by his nature. The nature is the Tao, while the character is virtue, in which the value judgments of "law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety" are implied. In *Confucians Maintain Predecessor's Achievements*, it says, "The sages have no intention to conquer the world, for example, hundreds of valleys merge into rivers and oceans, and all kinds of birds and beasts gather around kirins and phoenixes. How can the rivers and oceans, and kirins and phoenixes reject such confluence and gathering? Da Yu fought the flood and eliminated the worries of generations, transforming gullies into fertile soil and mulberry fields and transforming uncivilized people into civilized people in dress and hat. After Xie took the position of Situ, enlightenment was implemented and after HouJi became the official in charge of agricultural matters and taught people to cultivate crops, the common people ate grains. His virtues became popular among the people. Tang of the Shang Dynasty and King Wu of Zhou saved poor people and founded long-lasting states of benevolence and virtue, therefore, the common people went to pay respects to them. These three sages were so great that their people insisted on their ruling despite the fact that they politely declined. They felt that they had more responsibility to keep good governance of the states and clarify education to help their people cultivate good habits. These sages conquered the world and maintained the states with these virtues. The states were run by ten generations, while the people did not betray. Is there any other reason? The Kingdom of Zhou became weak in power, and all the vassal states went on punitive expeditions. If people's mistakes cannot be corrected with benevolence and virtue, the strategy of resourcefulness will be applied to win.If the state cannot be overturned with resourcefulness, force will be applied to seize the power. In the reign of the First Emperor of Qin, there was no social order at

all, and the whole world was corrupt. Nobody knew that there should be benevolence and righteousness. Liu Bang (founder of the Han Dynasty), led the uprising as an ordinary civilian, and conquered other states within five years. Although he slowly applied benevolence and righteousness to rule the state, the officials he appointed respected and advocated resourcefulness and bravery and power, and greatly promoted political trickery and resourcefulness. Therefore, they won the battles time and time again, and they gained land and goods after capture. After the world was pacified, it was Liu Bang's pity that there was no strategy for him to enjoy the achievements, maintain the state and pass down to his descendants. Unfortunately, the warriors and advisors were not talents who could maintain achievements with their emperor. So, Lu Gu remonstrated with the emperor, 'Your majesty conquered other states by force, but how can you expect to run the state by force again?' Shu Suntong advised, 'It is hard for us to attack an enemy with a group of Confucian scholars, but they will play a critical role in maintaining the achievements with us.' As a result, they started to consider the appropriate guidelines like propriety and music in all ages."[29] "These three sages were so great that their people insisted on their ruling despite the fact that they politely declined," which refers to the issue of "the Tao." Afterwards, "Yu" "Qi" and "Ji" (the emperors) ran the states with "Tao and virtue," and "Tang" and "Wu" (the emperors) won the world with "benevolence and righteousness." "Benevolence and righteousness" were destroyed and abandoned in the Qin Dynasty, while they were recovered by Liu Bang, who restored his political domination with "propriety and music." Su Dongpo was narrating the history. Meanwhile, he was expounding the transformation rule of "law-virtue-benevolence and righteousness-propriety and music."

Su Ziyou made comments on the *Biography of Lao–tzu in Ancient History* "Confucius educated people with benevolence and righteousness, and ran the state with propriety and music. As there were endless changes with benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music, he said, 'I adhered to the Tao consistently'. If there was no fundamental principle to adhere to, he would apply the virtues separately. In Yi, it says 'metaphysics refers to things void and spiritual, while physics refers to things specific and material.' In Yu, it says 'A gentleman is accomplished in benevolence and righteousness while a villain is good at seeking material wealth.' Confucius called himself 'common sense understood, then the Tao studied'. In daily life, *Book of Songs*, *Shang Shu*, *Yi Li*, *Book of Music* were applied. That is the reason why a gentleman has a good understanding of the Tao, while a villain is committed to seeking material wealth. By understanding the Tao, a gentleman can adhere to one principle despite changes. By understanding the core of material, a villain can maintain material wealth. This is what Confucius means. As Confucius was very careful and considerate, he presented the material with the Tao hidden. Therefore, the ones sensible to the Tao are accomplished while the ones insensible are confused. By comparison, Lao-tzu assumed himself deep in understanding, so he presented people with the Tao and neglected material, so that the ones sensible to natural laws are accomplished while the ones insensible cannot find access to it. Both Confucius and Lao-tzu are committed to the study of the Tao, the only difference lies in the sequence of their implementation."[30] Confucius paid more attention to practice, so he educated people in benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music, and left the Tao there to wait for the people with keen intelligence. By comparison, Lao-tzu was detached, and distained to mention material, so he was in pursuit of metaphysics instead of physics. Su Ziyou also said in *Annotations of Lao–tzu*, "The top-level

sage would abandon intelligence" and "Confucius managed the state with benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music, while Lao-tzu abandoned these principles, probably that is the difference between them." In Yi it says, "Metaphysics refers to things void and spiritual, while physics refers to things specific and material."

Confucius had deep consideration for later generations, so he presented the material world and hid the Tao, so that the ordinary people could understand how to maintain their material wealth rather than get confused by the Tao, and they could further act as gentlemen. Those who had a better understanding about natural law could get closer to it and grasp the core. Lao-tzu acted in the opposite way, being committed to expounding the Tao. Although it is hard to describe the Tao in words, it is easy to describe the similar ones. The masters distinguished the truth from the false, while the benighted ones adhered to the false ones, and trapped in the big mistakes. There were lots of scholars who got access to the Tao, guided by Lao-tzu, while the ones who pursued Confucius' studies suffered from no access to the Tao. Both sages educated people in different ways."[31] The thinking patterns of Su Ziyou are similar. He made annotation at, "Life is the mastery of nature," "life is the wonder of nature. Nature can be described in words, while life cannot." In Yi, it says, "The extreme truth is life."The sages started with seeking the limit of truth and ended with restoring nature through seeking the limit of nature. The sages handle everything with benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music. This must be the reason for the application of benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music… the gentlemen acted after they understood the reason, this is seeking the limit of truth… sages were not obscured by the material, with clear characters they did not achieve understanding of truth with deep thinking, and handled everything in an appropriate way, this is seeking the limit of nature… the lives of gentlemen and the nature had the core that they handled everything without thinking about themselves but entrusted their lives, this is restoring nature." [32] He mentioned that besides "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music" there was also "truth," "nature" and "life."Truth was the Tao, while nature and life were virtue. Therefore "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music" are the important framework and content of Su Zhe's thought.

Additionally, Yang Shengan of the Ming Dynasty, maintained the thought of Taoism in *Suo Yu*. After the codes of benevolence and righteousness were established, the Tao and virtue disappeared. After the standard of "propriety and law," the natural "pure simplicity" scattered."[33] Lai Zhide later inherited the tradition with integration of Confucianism and Taoism and consolidation of law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety from Yanzun of the Shu School, "Advocate Tao and virtue, practice benevolence and righteousness, learn from all schools of philosophers, study the classical six arts." [34] After that, Liu Yuan of the late Qing Dynasty, founded the "Liu School," Duan Zhengyuan of the Republic of China founded the society of Tao and virtue. All the Bashu scholars were devoted to the study of the three regions namely Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, highlighting law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music and combining Confucian spirit and Taoist cultivation.

It can be concluded that the Shu people consciously applied the five virtues of "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety" in a complete and systematic way. It was coherent and involving when scholars applied and interpreted these virtues from Wang Bao, Yan Zun and Yang Xiong to Zhao Rui and Zhang Shangying. It is clearly remarkable that the core values of the Shu

School were consistent and developed. It was the combining of Confucian and Taoist of the Shu people that there was the collocation of "law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety." Yan Zun was a master of *Da Yi*, *Lao–tzu* and *Chuang–tzu*, while Yang Xiong was proficient in Confucianism and Taoism, and wrote *Tai Xuan* and *Fa Yan*. Zhao Rui was accomplished in different schools of philosophy, while Zhang Shangying had a good command of the three schools. All of them are representatives of the Shu School's miscellaneous and integrated content of different schools.

3. The application of "law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety" by scholars in other regions

In other literature, "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety" are mentioned, in addition to Bashu literature. But the literature was later than that of Yang Xiong and Yan Zun, or at the same time with them. Some were too extensive lack of original core values. Several examples are discussed here.

In *GuiGuZi · NeiJian*, it says, "To do things in the world, a sage discussed everything with his first hindsight, which was derived from Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, idea and strategy. First, he referred to *Book of Songs* and *Book of History*, made a comprehensive analysis of advantages and disadvantages, and finally decided to take the position or to resign. To cooperate with others, he must use his power internally. To quit the position, he must use his power externally. It is necessary to obtain clear theory and method to deal with big issues." [35] The concepts of Taoism (law and virtue), Confucianism (benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music) and political strategists (strategy) stand side by side. Despite the fact that Su Qin and Zhang Yi studied under GuiGuZi of the Chu State, the book *GuiGuZi* did not originate from the early Qin Dynasty. This book was not available in *Records of Han*, the quote of *GuiGuZi* in *Shuo Yuan* is not available in this book today, so in *Complete Library of Four Branches of Literature*, it adopts the saying in *Bi Cong*, written by Hu Yinglin, a scholar of the Ming Dynasty, and believes that "there were thirty-one articles of *Su Qin in Records of Sui*, and ten articles of *Zhang Yi*. The essence of these two books namely *Su Qin* and *Zhang Yi* were assembled here in the East Han Dynasty, and they were included in GuiGuZi as well." Guan Chen, according to annotation of HuangfuMi about *Sui Zhi*, believed that, "GuiGuZi must be a book written after the Dynasties of Wei and Jin."[36] *GuiGuZi* may have been completed during the East Han Dynasty or after the Dynasties of Wei and Jin, in any event, it should be later than *Dao De ZhiGui*.

In the preface of *the History of the Northern Dynasties*, it says, "(Li) had seven sons, born by Princess Fengting, daughter of Wang Xie of Pengcheng, who were named Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness."[37] Here, the integration of the concepts of Confucianism and Taoism was only applied for naming, without any reference to a formal value system.

Influenced by the Bashu culture, Li Quan, a scholar of Longxi, during the Tang Dynasty, says in *Tai Bai Yin Jing*, "Scholars usually applied Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, loyalty, trustworthiness, poetry, book, classic, biography, zi, and history." [38] He seemed to arrange "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety" of the Shu School together with "music, loyalty, trustworthiness" and literature forms "poetry, book, classic, biography, zi, and history" in one group, to construct more extensive core values and a broader cultural system. But this confusing collocation, with concept, system and literature mixed together,

cannot be regarded as core values.

Zhang Shuo, in charge of the compilation of *San Jiao Zhu Ying*, in the reign of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty, had integrated the core values of Confucianism and Taoism. In the *Song of Grand Ceremony of Worship of Heaven in the Tang Dynasty*, it says, "There are three aspects of significance for the worship, while there were seven strategies for the emperor, namely Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, trustworthiness in the literature. Those who conform to are named holy philosophers, while those who go against are named the perverse." [39] Zhang Shuo claimed that it was quoted from literature. Actually, it was quoted from other scholar's articles. Probably he was under influence of literature similar to *Dao De Zhi Gui*, *Tai Xuan*, *Fa Yan* as well as *GuiGuZi*.

In *On Yuan Qi*, the fifth and sixth chapter of *Yun Ji Qi Qian*, Zhang Junfang says, "The five concepts of Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety are inseparable, those separable do not belong to these five concepts. The Tao is trustworthiness, in the center, named Tao of the Yellow Emperor. Virtue is wisdom, in the north, named virtue of the Black Emperor. Benevolence is human, in the east, named benevolence of the Blue Emperor. Righteousness is time, in the west, named righteousness of the White Emperor. Propriety is legal matters, in the south, named propriety of the Red Emperor. These five concepts were named the great Tao by the Three Emperors, while they were named the constant Tao by the Five Sovereigns. They have the same meaning despite being given different names." [40] In *Chronicles of Huayang · Chronicles of Shu*, it says, "There was no posthumous title for the emperors at the very beginning, but their shrines were named Blue, Red, Black, Yellow and White Emperors." [41] Therefore, it is the historical tradition of the Shu people to follow the "Five Sovereigns" system. Taoism was founded in Bashu,

Three Emperors and Five Sovereigns

absorbing many concepts of the Bashu culture in its doctrine, like the Three Emperors "Emperor of the Heaven, Emperor of the Earth and Emperor of the Human." The spirit and belief system of Taoism was established, namely First Three Emperors(Fuxi, Nuwa, and Suiren), Second Three Emperors(Fusui, Nuwa and Zhurong), and Third Three Emperors(Fuxi, Nuwa and Shennong).*Yun Ji Qi Qian* borrowed the concepts of the Bashu Culture like "Five Sovereigns" and "Five Elements" and understood them thoroughly.

Su Shu written by Zhang Shangying interprets "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety" in a systematic way. Although it says that Zhang Liang studied under the old man on the bridge, namely Huang Shi Gong, in the Western Han Dynasty, this book is not the works of the Western Han Dynasty. In *Jun Zhai Du Shu Zhi* written by Yao Gongwu, it says, "*Su Shu* has no system with

numerous and jumbled content, so it is consisted of theories of other classic books."[42] Huang Zhen of the Southern Song Dynasty, argues more systematically in volume V and VI of *Huang Shi Ri Chao*, "*Su Shu* consisted of six chapters, namely *Origin*, *Right Law*, *Ambition of Talent*, *Virtue–rooted and Law–aimed*, and *Righteousness–followed* Propriety. It adheres to the theory that the five concepts of law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety should be regarded as a whole, but the detailed description and argumentation are missing with insufficient truth. It is not the book that Huang Shi Gong gave Zhang Zifang. Zhang Shangying talked nonsense and quoted from Lao-tzu, "Monarch of past dynasties promoted virtue after Tao was lost, promoted benevolence after virtue was lost, promoted righteousness after benevolence was lost, and promoted propriety after benevolence was lost," which is exactly contrary to the theory of the five concepts. Even in the epilogue, he said, "During the chaos in the Jin Dynasty, some people robbed the tomb of Zhang Zifang and found the book *Su Shu* in a jade pillow," how ridiculous it is! It is lucky that such nonsense words are from Zhang Shangying who people distained and gave little attention." [43] It says in *Complete Library of Four Branches of Literature* of the Qing Dynasty, "There has been nobody who believes in what Zhang Shangying said. It says in *Ting Yu Ji Tan* written by Du Mu of the Ming Dynasty, "From the Jin Dynasty to the Song Dynasty, there has not been any other scholar who had similar record as Zhang Shangying," so it should be fake. In *Bi Cong* of Hu Yinglin, it says, "The biggest problem of this book lies in scattered spirit and nonsense," it is just a book of the plainest truth of Taoist and Confucian classics. Zhang Shangying liked to study the principles of Chan Buddhism, so this book included his sayings and behaviors. As for the annotations, they have similar sayings as the main content. It can be concluded that the annotations were prepared by Zhang Shangying himself." [44]Zhang Shangying was from Xinjin of Shu.

In *Da Zang Bing Di San Shu*, Volume VI of *He Dong Ji* written by Liu Kai, it says, "The Tao of sages does not lie in the additions and deletions of *Book of Songs*, *Shang Shu*, *Yi Li*, *Book of Music*, *Book of Changes*, and *Spring and Autumn Annals*. People need to think deeply what the classics deliver, including Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, penalty and politics. When the time is appropriate, people practice and advocate them and when time is inappropriate, people are responsible for maintaining the classics of the sages to prevent the classics from becoming lost. Why should people purposely make annotations?" [45] Here "law and virtue" (Taoism), "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music" (Confucianism) and "penalty and politics" (Legalists) are consolidated out of the consideration of ethical philosophy rather than establishing a system of core values.

In Volume VII of *Ming FaGaiKe Shu*, it says, "Legal system is the last measure for state management, created in the turbulent times. Emperors adopt Tao and virtue, sovereigns apply benevolence and righteousness, monarchs adopt propriety and music, overlords adopted loyalty and trustworthiness. The above measures are inapplicable to the declining state, so a legal system is applied to coping with the problems, if it is too strict, people will betray and become rebels, if it is too loose, people will become traitors, both will lead to decline again." [46] Here the concepts and measures of "law and virtue" (Taoism), "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music" (Confucianism) and "loyalty and trustworthiness"(Legalist) as well as "exiles" (legal system to cope with decline) are placed in the same category, which is out of the consideration of chaos governance rather than establishing a system of core values.

In *Yi Dui*, Volume 14 of *Xiao Chu Ji*, written by Wang Yucheng, it says, "The ancient people dwelled in the caves and ate raw animal flesh and drank the blood, there is neither system for monarch and his officials, father and son, husband and wife, young and old, nor the concepts of law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, penalty, and politics, and people were born and passed away unconsciously. At that time, all the people in the world lived a life in the same way. Fuxi, Shennong, the Yellow Emperor understood the Tao and started to teach people to cultivate crops, cook food, make clothing and tools, and domesticate cattle and horses in the way of the Tao of the emperor. Shaohao, Zhuanxu, Gaoxin and Tangyu established and promoted the system of monarch and official, father and son, husband and wife, and young and old in the natural law of the sovereign. In the Dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou, the rulers advocated Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, penalty, and politics in the natural law of monarch. After three generations, the vassal states promoted the natural law of overlord like Duke Huan of Qing Kingdom, Duke Wen of Jin Kingdom." [47]Here it is an objective narration of history, the concepts of "the Tao of emperor, sovereign, monarch and overlord" developed and evolved with the changes of the times. "The Tao of emperor" is defined as "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, penalty, and politics," which is out of consideration of state governance, a measure rather than the core values.

In *Shuo Fei Yi* written by Zeng Zigu, it says, "People failed to accord with the law of nature, so the sages appeared and governed the world in the principles of Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom. People started to follow these principles, and they lived a comfortable life and maintained coordinated and harmonious relations with each other. In western China, there was a remote place where the evil Buddhists took advantage of the weak Han Dynasty and promoted false reasoning and scandals." [48] In the debate of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, Zeng's School stressed the "benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom" of Confucianism, and "law and virtue" of Taoism, but demoted Buddhism as "false reasoning" and "scandals."

In Volume 25 of *Er Cheng Yi Shu*, it says, "Lao-tzu said, 'Monarch of past dynasties promoted virtue after Tao was lost, promoted benevolence after virtue was lost, promoted righteousness after benevolence was lost, and promoted propriety after benevolence was lost,' then Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety became separate from each other." [49] To criticize the theory of Lao-tzu, Cheng Yi integrated the five concepts for the purpose to include them in "truth," which was his core concept. This proposal also appears in *Yao Shi Ke Yu*, "The good deed of Yao and Shun is contrary to the evil deed of Jie and Tuo. Lao-tzu said, 'Monarch of past dynasties promoted virtue after Tao was lost, promoted benevolence after virtue was lost, promoted righteousness after benevolence was lost, and promoted propriety after benevolence was lost,' then Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety became separate from each other.' So, Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety became five parts separately." [50]

In *MengZi Jing Yi* written by Zhu Xi, it says, "Mencius said, 'A person had four beginnings just like he has four limbs.' He was born with four limbs, and he would not be regarded as a normal man without any limb. There is no sequence of these four limbs. Lao-tzu said, 'Monarch of past dynasties promoted virtue after Tao was lost, promoted benevolence after virtue was lost, promoted righteousness after benevolence was lost, and promoted propriety after benevolence was lost,' then

Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety became separate from each other, and propriety usually was the first in the chaos due to lack of loyalty and trustworthiness.' It can be seen from such a statement that he did not understand the real meaning of Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety. He said that propriety usually was the first in the chaos due to lack of loyalty and trustworthiness, suggesting later generations that propriety was not significant. Emperors in the ancient times developed propriety from daily behaviors of people. How can it be regarded as one concept of lightest significance?" [51] The aim of this article is to refute the theory of Lao-tzu, rather than establishing a system of core values.

In Volume 20 of *Si Bian Lu Ji Yao* written by Lu Shiyi of the Qing Dynasty, it says, "Talent selection was different from talent cultivation, as the former focused on those who were proficient in poetry, fu, ci, and qu, while the latter focused on law, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music, poetry, and classic books. Therefore, the emperors of the ancient times only attached importance to talent cultivation instead of talent selection." [52] Here the concepts for the purpose of teaching were listed simply as "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety, music" and "poetry, and classic books," without more in-depth interpretation of meaning.

Scholars outside Bashu did not establish systematic interpretations for "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety," which is not a purposeful construction of core values, despite that they mention these five concepts in one group. From literature, it is evident that Bashu scholars included these five concepts in one group and provided overall and systematic interpretations for the concepts, thus constructing a value system, which was adhered to throughout their whole lives.

4. Conclusion

In the structure of the core values of the Shu School, "Tao" and "virtue" take the leading role, and "benevolence," "righteousness" and "propriety" act as principles for action. In this academic system, there are values and significance from the following perspective.

First, the harmony and unity of Taoism and Confucianism are realized. Lao-tzu promoted Tao and virtue, but denounced benevolence and righteousness. Confucius attached importance to benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music. Each has emphasis and bias, while the Shu School combines both, which is the reflection of coexistence of different religions and a complementary cultural atmosphere of different schools of philosophers.

Second, the unity of metaphysics and physics is realized. In Yi, it says, "Metaphysics refers to things void and spiritual, while physics refers to things specific and material." Tao develops in a void while material things are tangible. Benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music are daily practice. The natural and intangible state is the ultimate target for Taoists. Lao-tzu proposed, "Human behaviors must follow the law of earth, the earth must follow the law of the universe, the universe must follow the law of Tao, and Tao runs with nature." Confucius seldom mentioned life and the natural Tao, Mohists disagreed with born destiny, instead, they advocated ghosts and gods. The Shu School combines metaphysics and physics, to correct the bias problems of the above schools, to be better implemented and promoted.

Third, it is the combination of theory and practice, of principles and actions. Tao and virtue attach importance to theory, while benevolence, righteousness and propriety pay more attention to practice. Law and virtue will benegated without the support of benevolence, righteousness, propriety

and music, and without Tao and virtue, benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music will become vulgar. The Shu School combines both, with benevolence, righteousness, propriety and music developing with the philosophical basis of Tao and virtue, and the theory of Tao and virtue of practical values.

The structure of "Tao, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and propriety" of the Shu School is the best template of "the unity of knowledge and action." It is the effective way for ultimate care concern for Confucianism's lack of noumenon and Taoism's lack of daily practice, to seriously explore this value system, and is of great theoretical significance and realistic value for changing the flashy style of study and the impetuous mode of society.

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China's Universal Second-Child Policy: Grounds, Effects and Strategies

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Abstract: The 13th Five-Year Plan (2016—2020), with the balanced development of population being the core element, is crucial for China. The superimposed effect of an aging population and low birthrate leading to a reduction in the labor supply would have a fundamental influence on the long term balanced development of China's population, implying that China's population policy must be adjusted. This paper argues that a gradual relaxation of the family-planning policy adjustments accords with the original intention of the population policy design and development direction. The universal second-child policy is the logical results of the adjustment and improvement of China's family-planning policy, and is designed to bring about positive effects on future demographic and economic development, particularly in sustaining the long term balanced development of China's population, easing the marriage squeeze, extending the demographic dividend, and delaying the population aging process. China needs to develop and improve support and governance systems for fully implementing the universal second-child policy, realizing the policy transition from rewarding one-child families to population security and the modern transition of governance systems and capacity to a universal second-child policy.

Keywords: universal second-child policy, fertility intention, policy effect, policy transition, governance transition

1. The adjustment basis of the universal second-child policy

Long term balanced development is inclusive of balances in multiple aspects, with population balance itself as the basis and core, which

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depends on rational adjustments of the family planning policy. In 2015, the family planning policy of China was further adjusted and improved during the Fifth Plenary Session of the Eighteenth CPC Central Committee, by the proposal "Promote balanced growth of the population, adhere to the basic state policy of family planning, improve the population development strategy, fully implement the policy of allowing couples to have two children and actively cope with the challenge of an aging population." This was a far-sighted major strategic decision. China's family planning policy has been further adjusted to a "universal second-child policy," and it is mainly based on the followings considerations.

First, adjustment and improvement of the universal second-child policy adheres to the basic state policy of family planning. The fundamental reality of China's large population base has not radically changed. Population is still one of the key issues restricting the social and economic development of China. After more than thirty-years of practice, development and adjustments, the family planning policy has been gradually improved. It is in line with China's basic conditions, and is the result of practical application. The results of family planning should be evaluated in a fair way, and we cannot deny that it is scientific and correct. Planned birth control covers a wide range of policies ranging from the earliest one-child policy and the later family planning policy, selective second-child policy for only-child parents (couples who are both from one-child families can have two children), to selective second-child policy (couples with only one partner from a one-child family can have two children), executed in 2014, and now the universal second-child policy to be launched and executed soon. The state policy of family planning has been constantly adjusted and improved through the changes of national and social conditions.

Second, adjustment and improvement of the universal second-child policy is a new manifestation of the two production theories in the new period, which date back to the early 1980s. The theories reveal the characteristics and adaptive law of the interrelationships between material production and human production itself, explain the dialectical relationship between population and economy, and form the theoretical basis of our population policy and family planning work. During the 1980s, a series of problems were identified and highlighted; our enormous population, fertility unrestrained, and difficulties in production and life. Confronted with the contradiction of material production and human fertility, the one-child policy became the inevitable choice for family planning. In recent years, the superimposed population structure of the coexistence of declining fertility and an aging population leads to a reduced channel of labor, which would have a profound influence over the long-term balanced development of the Chinese population. Thus, mandatory adaptive adjustments of material production and human fertility should be made to the population policy. After a prudent investigation of the long-term cumulative effects of the family planning policy, a gradual adjustment has been made from the one-child policy to the universal second-child policy. It was the rational choice of historical practice and realistic demands.

Third, the gradually relaxed family planning policy and the adjustments conform to the original intention of policy design and development direction. The universal second-child policy is the logical result of the adjustment and improvement of our existing family planning policy. In 1980, after the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued *An Open Letter to All Communist Party Members and Communist Youth League Members on Control of Population Growth of Our Country*

(hereinafter referred to as *An Open Letter*), the one-child policy was successively implemented in the urban and rural areas of China (excluded some ethnic minorities and rural areas near the borders). In 1982, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council proposed that some people who did have difficulty and requested to have two children could have one more child in a planned way after approval, and in some provinces the selective second-child policy (couples who are both only-child children can have two children) was started and implemented in the rural areas. In 1984, the CPC Central Committee put forward that several more rules be considered and added based on the rule issued in 1982, and the selective second-child policy (couples who are both only-child children can have two children) was adopted and implemented. In 2013,duringthe Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the selective second-child policy (a couple with only one-child partner can have two children) was put forward in *Decision of the CCCPC on Some Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening the Reform* (hereinafter referred to as *The Decision*) and in 2014 the selective second-child policy was launched and implemented. In 2015, during the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the universal second-child policy was put forward. This was a major measure to promote the long-term balanced development of the population at the strategic height of China's long-term development. The evolution of the family planning policy through series of adjustments and improvements is in line with the inherent law of population development of China, and it is also consistent with the scientific foresight and political commitment of *An Open Letter*: "After 30 years, when the current extremely tense population situation is alleviated, a different population policy can be adopted." A fertility level that is too high or too low is not conductive to the coordinated development of the population, economy, society, resources and environment. A gradual relaxation of family planning policy benefits the stability of China's moderate fertility level and slows alleviates the structural population problems created by a rapid decline in population after the population reaches its peak.

Fourth, the universal second-child policy is currently in line with the mainstream values and market orientation of society. Population security and family happiness have become the mainstream value orientation. The universal second-child policy has brought about greater room for fertility choice, and its implementation is conducive to the return of population policy to human nature and humanity. In 2013, during the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, it was proposed in *The Decision* that "The market plays a decisive role in resource allocation." It conforms to "China's national conditions and people's opinions" to make adjustments to fertility policy through market-oriented measures like interest-oriented mechanisms in the framework of fertility control. Jiuquan City of Gansu Province, Yicheng County of Shanxi Province, Chengde City of Hebei Province and Enshi City of Hubei Province were pilot areas for the second-child policy in the middle of the 1980s, and the measures like late marriage and late childbirth as well as interval birth were adopted to control and adjust childbearing behaviors. In 2000 and 2010, the average total fertility rates in these four places, Jiuquan, Yicheng, Chengde and Enshi were 1.31 and 1.52 respectively, with 0.09 percentage points and 0.34 percentage points higher than the national levels (1.22 and 1.18 respectively in 2000 and 2011). With the universal second-child policy, there was only a relative and limited increase in the total fertility rates in the pilot areas.

2. The Effects of the Universal Second-Child Policy

2.1 Whether the universal second-child policy will lead to a short-term fertility accumulation effect

The accumulation of fertility puts forward a basic theoretical question of demography, namely due to the wider fertility policy adjustment, how a group of women of childbearing age give birth to a second child with an involuntary interval after the first child (Yao Yinmei, Li Fen, et al. 2014). There are two fertility patterns after the adjustment of the second-child policy, namely a slow release pattern and a burst release pattern. A slow release pattern refers to women who are relatively young and therefore extend the interval between their first and second child. A burst release pattern refers to women who are relatively older and therefore rush to give birth to a second child. When childbearing behavior turns to the burst release pattern from the normal pattern, it will have a significant impact on birth population size and fertility levels of a country or a region in the short term, thus forming a fertility accumulation effect. The younger the women of childbearing age who meet the requirements for the second-child policy, the lower the second-child fertility release rate in the first few years after the policy adjustment, and the closer it is to the normal second-child fertility pattern. In 2014, the selective second-child policy was launched and implemented in China (a couple with only one only-child partner can have two children), which was focused on comparatively young target population. The National Health and Family Planning Commission estimated that, in 2015, 77.8% of the population who met the requirements of the selective second-child policy were under the age of 35, with 69.2% born in the 1980s and 8.6% born in the 1990s. Moreover, this younger population has a lower economic level, so only 1.76 million couples nationwide had applied for the birth of a second baby by September 2015, accounting for merely 15.78% of the target group for selective second-child policy. As we can see, the fertility release pattern of the selective second-child policy is slow, and it is a natural and progressive fertility process.

The size of the universal second-child policy target population is bigger than that of the selective second-child policy target population. It has been estimated that 60% of the families of 152 million women of childbearing age ranging from 15 to 49 with only child in 2012 had the desire for a second child (Zhai Zhenwu, Zhang Ailing et al., 2014). That is, roughly 69 million families (with target groups of selective second-child policy) in the target group of the universal second-child policy were ready to have a second child, which would probably lead to fertility accumulation.

Moreover, the target group for the universal second-child policy is older women of childbearing age, with 60% above 35 years of age, including 50% between 40 and 49 (National Health and Family Planning Commission, 2015). Generally, the older the women of childbearing age who are in line with the adjustment of the family planning policy, the higher the fertility release rate of a second child in the first few years after the policy adjustment, the more inclined it is to the burst release pattern. It will increase the possibility of fertility accumulation after implementation of the universal second-child policy. However, there are still a number of other factors affecting the accumulation effect of the universal second-child policy. Accumulation release or accumulation effect refers to the childbearing behavior of couples of childbearing age who were not allowed to have second child because of the one-child policy, but can now give birth to a second child due to the implementation of the universal second-child policy.

First, multiple factors like childbearing concept and child-raising costs have caused Chinese families to become smaller, and children's potential growth and demand have changed significantly. The birth motivation reflects diverse needs, and its basic logic is that fertility is a means to meet certain needs. Since the rational "second-child" families face higher direct cost and opportunity cost of fertility as well as the gradually improved pension system, healthcare and service system for the elderly, there is a substitute for fertility demand, so China's total fertility rate has maintained a low level for a long period. After 1990, our total fertility rate has been lower than the replacement level. It was 1.22 and 1.18 respectively in 2000 and 2010 shown by population census data. It was 1.04, 1.26 and 1.24 respectively in 2011, 2012 and 2013 in the sample survey, much lower than the average world level and fertility replacement level of 2.5 and 2.1 respectively, and at an extremely low fertility level (Kohler, Billari, Ortega, 2002, 2006).① From the experience of Europe and the United States, a total fertility rate of 1.5 is a highly sensitive warning line. If it is below 1.5, it is possible to fall into the low fertility trap. At the same time, there is a big gap between fertility desires and actual fertility rates. The figures of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed that the average total fertility rate of twenty-four countries is only 63.5% of the ideal number of children. At present, the average ideal number of children of our country is 1.6–1.8 (Hou Jiawei, Huang Silin et al., 2014), which is one of the lowest in the world. The concept of fewer births has formed with the superimposed effect of the rapid modernization and long-term implementation of the "one-child" family planning policy of our country. In addition, increased costs and the reverse of intergenerational wealth flow (wealth flows from the elder generation to the younger generation) jointly lead to a diminishing marginal effect, and the number preference of children has been replaced by a quality preference. The difficulty of encouraging fertility may even be greater than that of Taiwan China, South Korea, Europe and the United States. As a result, the actual fertility rate will gradually become lower.

Second, the population of women of childbearing age continues to shrink and becomes aged. Even if the universal second-child policy is implemented, this factor will weaken the fertility accumulation effect. Since 2012, there has been negative growth of women of childbearing age in the range from 15 to 49 and the women of golden childbearing age in the range from 20 to 29 (presently, 2/3 of all children were born by women in this childbearing age range). The total number of women of childbearing age will decrease from 383 million in 2011 to 293 million in 2030, while that of women in the golden childbearing age range will decrease from a peak of 114 million in 2011 to 65 million in 2032 (under the condition that the total fertility rate stays the same). According to further calculations, most of the target groups for the universal second-child policy are older women of childbearing age. Around 60% of eligible women for the universal second-child policy are above the age of 35, including 50% of women at the age from 40 to 49. Since there is a decline in the number of women of childbearing age and the older childbearing age, it will be difficult to witness a sharp increase in the new born population or a large fluctuation of the fertility accumulation effect, even in the framework of the universal second-child policy.

Due to the larger target population of the universal second-child policy and older women of

① According to research of low fertility rate of Europe by Kohler, Billari and Ortega (2002,2006), with the dividing line of total fertility rate of 1.3, the level below 1.3 (1.3 included) is regarded as extremely low. TFR below 1.5 is regarded as "quite low fertility rate" in accordance with international standard.

childbearing age, the release fertility pattern of the universal second-child policy will, to some extent, deviate from the normal pattern, and tend toward the burst release pattern, and the release fertility rate of two children will be relatively high in the short term. However, owing to the offsetting effects of factors like the formation of a new type of fertility concept, reduction in the number of women of childbearing age, and aging, the short-term fertility accumulation effect of the universal second-child policy will be weakened to a certain extent. The universal second-child policy will only enhance the fertility rate of women of childbearing age to a certain degree, and will not change the basic situation of a long-term total fertility rate lower than the replacement level of our country.

2.2 Whether the universal second-child policy will reduce sex ratios at birth and ease the pressure on the future marriage market of China

Sex ratio at birth is an important index to analyze and measure population structure, and the normal range of sex ratio at birth is 102–107 determined by the United Nations. Long-term deviation from the normal range will affect the sex ratio structure of adult populations, particularly populations of marriageable age, and further affect the balance of future marriage. The higher sex ratio at birth in the recent thirty years of China has caused widespread concern. In 1980, the sex ratio at birth of China was as high as 107.11, exceeding the upper limit of the normal range. It was 108.5, 111.3, 116.86 and 118.06 respectively in 1982, 1990, 2000 and 2010. In 2013 the sex ratio at birth was still up to 117.6 before the launch and implementation of the selective second-child policy. In 2010, it was pointed out in the *Social Blue Book of China's Society* launched by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences that there was a severe imbalance in the sex ratio of the population under the age of 19. In 2020, there will be 24 million more males than females of marriageable age, with 49 million males aged 24 to 28, and only 39 million females between 22 to 26, and the gap between the two will reach 10 million (Yao Meixiong, 2015). The male population of marriageable age will have difficulty in getting married, which will be a severe social problem. The long-term deviation in sex ratio at birth from the normal range will create a great deal of pressure for the population of marriageable age.

In recent years, scholars in the academic circle have different or even conflicting views on how the gradually relaxed family planning policy will affect sex ratio at birth. The mainstream view is that a more flexible family planning policy can lead to a return of sex ratio at birth to the normal range. Li Jianxin (2009) and Wang Jun (2013) believe that a moderate relaxation of family planning policy can ease the intensified condition of sex ratio at birth caused by strict birth control policy, and can bring sex ratio at birth to the normal range to a certain degree. Zhai Zhenwu and Li Long (2014) hold that a comparatively strict family planning policy leads to a higher sex ratio at birth to some extent, and adjustment of family planning policy will bring about a decline in the ratio. Empirical data have confirmed this view as well. The year 2014 was the first year after the implementation of the selective second-child policy (one-child couple can have two children)" in China. The national sex ratio at birth was 115.88, with a decrease of 1.72 than that in 2013, suggesting a significant decline in sex ratio at birth. As a pilot area of universal second-child policy, Yicheng City of Shanxi Province had a sex ratio at birth of 103 for population aged from 0 to 4 in the years of 2000 and 2010, maintaining in the normal range for a long period. It indicates that second-child policy has met the fertility desire of the families, and helped policy goal and fertility desire reach a comparatively ideal state, and weakened the fertility culture, namely Chinese preference for boys, and reduced human intervention in

childbearing behaviors. With the implementation of universal second-child policy, sex ratio at birth will return to the normal range. In the long run, it will be conductive to easing the pressure on marriage market, and reducing the adverse effect of male surplus population on social public security caused by sex ratio imbalance to a greater extent.

2.3 Whether universal second-child policy can increase labor supply and extend the harvest period of demographic dividend

A continuous supply of labor and surplus rural labor transfers have driven China's rapid economic growth in the past few decades. In 2001, China's GDP per capita was over 1,000 US dollars, and its economy broke through the poverty trap (Malthus Trap). In 2010, China's GDP per capita reached 4,382 US dollars. China joined the upper middle income group, and its large population turned into demographic dividend (China Economic Growth and Macroeconomic Stability Research Group, 2007). But in 2012, there was a decline in working-age population group from 15 to 59 for the first time, 3.45 million fewer than that of 2011 and labor force accounted for 69.2%, 0.60 percentage points lower than that of 2011. It suggests that "an inflection point" has appeared, and the labor force has started to decrease after a gradual increase over years. If the universal second-child policy is implemented, how much impact will it exert on labor supply of our country? To what extent can it extend the harvest period of demographic dividend? We will discuss the possible impact of the universal second-child policy on our future labor supply and the harvest of demographic dividend from the following aspects.

First, the universal second-child policy will produce growth effect to China's labor supply.

(1)The fertility desire of universal second-child policy families. Fertility desire is one of the core variables that predict the effect of the universal second-child policy on the actual fertility level. In 2011 the survey on fertility desire of Beijing conducted by Center for Population and Development Studies, Renmin University of China, suggested that if allowed by policy, 62.1% of the one-child couples, who had given birth to one child and were aged from 20 to 40, had the desire to have one more child, with the average ideal number of 1.81 (Jin Yongai, 2014). In 2013, the National Health and Family Planning Commission conducted a survey on fertility desire of permanent population who had given birth to one child and were aged from 20 to 44 in twenty-nine provinces, cities and areas (excluding Tibet and Xinjiang), and found out that 60.8% of the one-child couples had the desire to have one more child with the average ideal number of 1.93. The analysis of tracking data of studies on "Fertility Desire and Childbearing Behaviors" of 2010 suggested that there was no significant difference in the number of children of different policy groups. (Li Jianxin & Li Na, 2012). Therefore, if the universal second-child policy is implemented in China, the fertility desire of the target group should be basically consistent with that of the policy allowing couples to have a second child if either parent was an only child, which is approximately 60% with the average ideal number of 1.8. Moreover, the fertility rate of women of childbearing age increased from 3% twenty years ago to 12.5% in 2010, and therefore, the proportion of target group of universal second-child policy who have fertility desire and fertility ability has become 52.5% after the policy adjustment.

(2) The gap between fertility desire and actual fertility rate. The total fertility rate was merely 58% of the ideal number of children in Taiwan China from 1998 to 2008. The total fertility rate was 51% to 57% of the ideal number of children in Japan from 1992 to 2010. The average total fertility rate of 24 countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was 63.5% of the ideal number of children. The variation law

reflected in this data was consistent with that of fertility desire and childbearing behaviors in the process of fertility changes (When the fertility rate is low, the actual fertility level is often lower than the ideal number of children) proposed by John Bongaarts (2001). The total fertility rate of Taiwan, Japan and OECD is comparatively low, so the actual fertility level in these countries or regions is far below the ideal number of children. It can be calculated that the actual fertility rate of women of childbearing age is roughly equivalent to 60% of fertility desire (as an alternative variable of the ideal number of children), based on the change rules and data of fertility desire and childbearing behaviors. So it is concluded that about 31.5% of the target group, who have given birth to one child and have the desire to have one more in China, will achieve their fertility goal.

(3)The number of women of childbearing age who have given birth to one child and have the desire for a second child and the number of new-born babies under the universal second-child policy. 152 million women of childbearing age, from 15 to 49, who have only one child are ready to have a second child, and 60% of these families have the desire to have a second child. About 90 million women of childbearing age are in compliance with the universal second-child policy and are ready to have their second child. There are approximately 69 million women of childbearing age in compliance with the universal second-child policy, after a deduction of around 10 million in the target population in compliance with the selective second-child policy (both partners are from one-child family and can have two children) and more than 11 million in the target population in compliance with the selective second-child policy (only one partner is from an one-child family and can have two children). Calculated by the actual fertility rate of 31.5%, there will be an increase of approximately 21.73 million more births in the future under the universal second-child policy." Assume that the target group of universal second-child policy would gradually give birth to two babies within six years after the relaxation of the policy, and the proportion of women of childbearing age who give birth to one more baby would be 1.5, 3, 2.5, 1.5, 1.0, and 0.5, should the universal second-child policy be implemented in 2016, there would be 3.26 million, 6.52 million, 5.43 million, 3.26 million, 2.17 million, and 1.09 million newly increased population respectively from 2016 to 2021. Starting from 2031, the newly increased population under the "universal second-child policy" will gradually enter the labor force. Considering that 60% of the target population of the universal second-child policy are over 35 years of age, and 50% of the population aged from 40 to 49 have passed their golden fertility age, therefore, there would be a decrease in the actual birth population under the universal second-child policy.

At present, there is an apparent momentum toward a low birthrate① in our country. In 2010 the proportion of the population aged 0—14 was merely 16.6%, far below the world average of 27%. The implementation of the universal second-child policy is one of the most important means to adjust the future population structure and realize a reasonable supply of labor. In the short to medium term, China's labor supply is consistent with the level of the original policy, but the newly increased population under the universal second-child policy will have a positive effect, to a certain extent, from the consumer perspective on China's economic growth. In the long term, the newly increased population under the universal second-child policy will enter the labor force in 15 years. This policy will have an

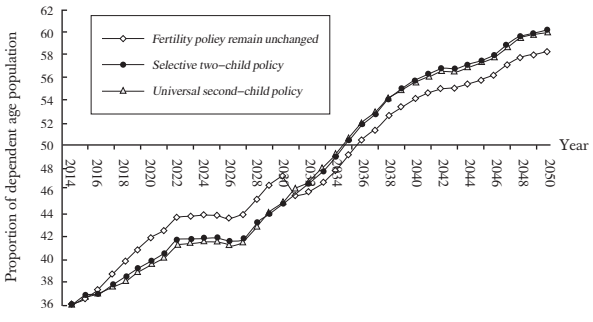
① According to demographic criteria, a society with a proportion of 15% to 18% population aged from 0 to 14 is regarded as "severely low birthrate".

influence on China's labor supply level after 2031, and will contribute approximately 2.6 percentage points to our labor force around 2037, bringing positive effects to the economic growth from both producer and consumer sides. The National Health and Family Planning Commission (2015) estimated that the policy would contribute around 0.5% to the potential economic growth rate.

Second, the universal second-child policy can extend demographic dividends to the harvest period.

The demographic dividend in the traditional sense refers to a lower rate of both child and elderly dependency, as there will be an increase in the proportion of the working-age population, thus forming a comparatively rich golden period beneficial to economic development before the elderly population reach a high level. If the total dependency rate is taken as the judging criterion, it is the demographic dividend period when the total dependency rate (subordinate-age population) is less than 50% (the sum of children under 14 and elderly people aged 65 and above divided by the working-age population aged 15 to 64).

Figure 1 Trends in the Demographic Dividend Under Three Different Fertility Policies in China



Note: ① The fifth census data (2000), the sixth census data (2010); ② it is assumed that under the policy "Couples with one partner from an only-child family can have two children," women of childbearing age gradually give birth to two children within 8 years of policy relaxation, and the proportion of women who give birth to one more baby is 1.3, 1.5, 2, 2, 1.5, 0.7, 0.5 and 0.5 respectively; ③ it is assumed that under the universal second-child policy, women of childbearing age gradually give birth to two children within 6 years of policy relaxation, and the proportion of women who give birth to one more baby is 1.5, 3, 2.5, 1.5, 1.0, and 0.5 respectively; ④ it is assumed that the females in the newly increased population under the universal second-child policy get married at the age of 20 and give birth to two babies without a fertility interval; ⑤ it is assumed that there is no mortality in the newly born population. ⑥ only the forecast data from 2014 to 2050 are listed in the figure with forecast data before 2014 omitted.

The following conclusions can be drawn from Figure 1:

First, if the fertility policy remained unchanged, the total fertility rate would decline from 1.74 in 2000 to 1.45 in 2020, and it would remain between 1.2 and 1.3 in the following years. Under the framework of this fertility policy, the demographic dividend would not stop until 2034; the total dependency coefficient would reach 50.62% and demographic dividend would end in 2035.

Second, demographic dividend period under the selective second-child policy (couples with one partner from an only-child family can have two children) will be expected to continue until 2034, which is basically consistent with the end of the demographic dividend period with the fertility policy unchanged. Before 2029, the total dependency ratio is slightly higher under the policy "couples with one partner from only-child family can have two children" than that with the unchanged fertility policy as a result of the released accumulative fertility energy. After 2029, as the newly increased population under the policy "couples with one partner from only-child family can have two children" gradually become new entrants to the labor

market, the total dependency coefficient is slightly lower than that with the unchanged fertility policy. This shows that the policy "couples with one partner from one-child family can have two children" does not have a significant impact on the demographic dividend.

Third, the demographic dividend of the universal second-child policy will continue until 2035, and there will be a one year delay in the closing of the demographic dividend window of the unchanged fertility policy and the selective two-child policy. Before 2031, as the released accumulative fertility of the universal second-child policy, the total dependency coefficient under the universal second-child policy is higher than that of the unchanged one-child policy and the selective second-child policy. After 2031, as the newly increased population under the universal second-child policy gradually become new entrants into the labor market, the total dependency coefficient is slightly lower than that of the unchanged fertility policy, and the selective second-child policy, and the annual dependency coefficient under the universal second-child policy is 1-2 percentage points lower than that of the unchanged one-child policy and the selective second-child policy.

2.4 Whether the universal second-child policy will help to alleviate the problem of the aging population, and delay the process of an aging society

The aging of the population as well as its changes in degree and speed are the most striking features of population structure changes, and have raised concerns about the demographic dividend and its disappearance (Cai Fang, 2009). The most direct impact of the aging of the population is on the formulation of social policy and future developments like pensions, social security and welfare (Hu Naijun & Yang Yansui, 2012). China entered an aging society as early as 2000.① In 2010, the elderly population at the age of 65 and above reached 119 million. At the same time, there were 178 million elderly population at the age of 60 and above. China is the only country with more than 100 million elderly population. In 2014, the elderly population at the age of 60 and above was 212 million, accounting for 15.5% of the total population and the elderly population at the age of 65 and above was 138 million, accounting for 10.1% of the total. According to the program of the United Nations Population Forecast (total dependency ratio 1.8), China's elderly population at the age of 60 and above will reach a peak of 439 million in 2050, accounting for 31.1% of the total population, and therefore, China will enter a severely aging society. Because of the accelerating elderly population, China is faced with a more prominent problem of an elderly population. In 2010, the elderly population at the age of 80 and above reached 20.63 million, accounting for 11.7% of the elderly population. In 2050, the senior elderly population will exceed 100 million in China. The coexistence of these two factors, namely aging and declining birthrates, has brought about new problems, arising in the process of an aging society with the superimposed effect of labor's entry to a reducing channel.

First, the potential support ratio② is continuing to decline because of a decrease in the working age population and a sharp increase in the elderly population. From 1950 to 2010, China's potential support ratio decreased from 7.72 to 5.54, and will fall to 1.55 in 2050. China's internal structure of labor will be aging, the size and proportion of the working age population aged 15 to 24 and

① A proportion of 10% population aged 60 and above or a proportion of 7% population aged 65 are taken as criteria of an aging country or region.
② Potential support ratio refers to ratio of one elderly person aged 60 and above to the number of working age population aged from 15 to 59.

the population aged 25 to 44 will rapidly decline before 2035, and the proportion of the working age population aged 45 to 64 will reach a peak of 46% in 2040 (Yuan Xin, 2012).

Second, the "4-2-1" family structure (4 refers to four grandparents, 2 refers to two parents and 1 refers to the only child) affects the support of the elderly population. *China Family Development Report* (2015) indicated that empty nest families in the urban and rural areas accounted for more than 50% of the total families, the elderly population living alone accounted for nearly 10% of the total elderly population, and the elderly people living only with their spouses accounted for 41.9% of the total elderly population. In 2009, 18.9% of the elderly population were disabled or semi-disabled. Our social security and pension service systems are still being constructed and improved, a series of problems like pensions, medical care, and long-term care of the elderly population are testing the intergenerational stability of our families.

Third, "getting old before getting rich" and "not ready to get old" are the basic facts and marked features of our aging society. At present, the social policy and social governance in the aspects of pensions, health care, long-term care and public resources allocation are in the above state. The *China Family Development Report of 2015* suggested that 28.9% of the urban elderly population would not have difficulty in living after retirement, while it was only 15.9% in the rural areas. A lower proportion of the elderly population accepted social pension services and they mainly relied on themselves and their family members for daily life; the allocation of health care resources was in a non-equilibrium state between regions and groups, and there is a great demand for social services.

If the selective second-child policy implemented in 2014 remains unchanged, the stock size of the one-child population of our country will continue to increase, and may reach 303.22 million in 2050. Compared with the policy "Only one child for one couple," the only-child population will decrease by 45.27 million (Yao Yinmei, Li Fen et al., 2015). After the universal second-child policy is implemented, the target group and newly increased population will be larger than that of the selective second-child policy, and the shrinking effect of the only-child population in the future will be further expanded. It means that as there are fewer and fewer only-child families, family risk and social risk derived from the "family bereft of the only child" and the "family of only one disabled child" and the "empty nest family" will be reduced to a certain extent. Such a decrease is also conductive to building a harmonious family to cope with future pension problems. The implementation of the universal second-child policy will make a certain contribution to delaying the aging process of our society. It is estimated that the aged in the population will be around 30.16% in 2050 (the newly increased population of two generations of universal second-child policy is included in the total population), 1 percentage point lower than that of the program of the United Nations Population Forecast. The newly increased population under the universal second-child policy will reduce the proportion of the elderly to a certain extent, and relieve the pressure of the future pension system in China. Without doubt, faced with a 439 million elderly population at the age above 60 including more than 100 million senior elderly people in 2050, the universal second-child policy will only finitely delay the deeply aging process of our country and will not fundamentally change this process.

3. The implementation strategies of the universal second-child policy

With the more relaxed universal second-child policy, policy support systems and fertility

governance systems of a new fertility pattern should be accelerated.

First, relevant laws and regulations and fertility policy systems should be further adjusted, to improve policy support systems and fertility governance systems of a new fertility pattern. Through revisions and improvements of *Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China*, the universal second-child policy is to be implemented according to *the Law*. In the framework of legal thinking and legal methods, theory innovation, system innovation and value innovation are required for the population policy of our country, and the fertility policy system should transform to adjustments of the structural population issues. The new and major issues affecting the structural problems of our country should be timely included in the fertility policy system, like birth interval elasticity, regional population differences, definition of reward supported target groups, neonatal defect prevention and so on, to shape the institutional advantages of population policy with Chinese characteristics. After the start-up and implementation of the universal second-child policy, policy support systems should transform from the original fewer-childbirth reward to population security. Fertility in compliance with policy will be encouraged. Care and policy support will be provided to families giving birth to two children in compliance with policy. Through hierarchical governance and multi-attribute governance, an overall solution should be provided to the effective connection, coordination and supporting measures of family inclusive policy, social assistance mechanisms and benefit guiding mechanisms for family planning. This is the important direction of the adjustment and transformation of support systems and governance systems of family planning policy in the future.

Second, the continuity of our fertility policy should be maintained in terms of fertility policy methods, and the risks derived from the fertility policy should be avoided. Based on the core value of "keeping control over population growth, improving population quality and promoting the all-round development of people," reasonable adjustments should be made to the current fertility policy, to achieve effective connections between the adjustments of the fertility policy and to maintain the seriousness and continuity of our fertility policy. To advance the modernization of our fertility governance systems and governance ability, the relevant departments should implement "the five in place" to avoid possible social risks. First, adjustment of detailed rules and regulations should be in place. After the universal second-child policy is introduced, rules and regulations for the implementation of policy should be in place as soon as possible, and the connection methods of the universal second-child policy as well as its support systems should be formulated for the convenience of policy interpretation and concrete work execution. Second, policy delivery should be in place. The accurate connotation of the universal second-child policy should be understood, namely "a relaxed policy" does not equal "ease at work." Ideas and methods of family planning should be timely adjusted to help the target group understand that the universal second-child policy is a long-term adjustment, and to avoid short-term fertility accumulation effects caused by "hurried fertility." Third, technical support should be in place. Through technology platform development, the construction of basic information databases of population should be further improved, and information sharing of marriage, fertility, household registration, population flow, etc. should be achieved. Based on large databases, the impact assessment mechanism of major social and economic policies should be established to provide basic conditions for fertility governance. Fourth,

implementation and supervision should be in place. The new connotation of the times should be given to our family planning policy, and the border and bottom line of the implementation and supervision should be clear and definite for the universal second-child policy, realizing the combination of rigid law enforcement and soft guidance. Fifth, target and responsibility should be in place. Party and government leaders at all levels should personally take overall responsibility for the universal second-child policy. The target management responsibility system should be adhered to and the responsibility of relevant departments should be implemented.

Third, birth monitoring and early warning should be strengthened, and governance mechanisms of childbearing behaviors under the universal second-child policy should be improved. Through the research on population development strategy, the monitoring and early warning for the target group and newly increased population under the universal second-child policy should be enhanced to provide guidance for families' responsibility and planned fertility in compliance with policy, and to maintain good birth order. First, the birth forecast after the implementation of the policy should be strengthened. We should get a clear picture of the basic situation, fertility desire, and expected number of babies, predict birth population by a variety of methods, and enhance dynamic tracking. Second, the birth population of families in compliance with the universal second-child policy should be managed by classification. The policy should be implemented with a priority determined by factors like age of the childbearing couple, fertility interval, etc. Older couples should be given priority to their request for two children, while the younger couples in regions of higher birth rate and boy preference should be required to keep a fertility interval, so as to increase the efficiency of the universal second-child policy. Third, birth monitoring and early warning should be implemented. A management plan for the universal second-child policy should be ready, to avoid various potential risks in the process of the implementation of the policy, and special attention should be paid to regions of higher birth rate and boy preference, to prevent rebounded population growth. The target group of the universal second-child policy should be guided to appropriately advance or delay their planned fertility, to prevent structural population fluctuations, and ensure that policy process, fertility order and fertility risks are kept under control. Fourth, target control and effect evaluation should be implemented. The health and family planning administrative departments should timely track and evaluate childbearing behaviors and fertility targets of the universal second-child policy, strengthen research of fertility effects and variation tendencies according to new problems and new phenomena after the implementation of the universal second-child policy, and make adjustments to deviations of the policy system and governance system.

Fourth, regional differences should be taken into full account, and the formulation and implementation of the universal second-child policy should be unified and flexible. In the process of the start-up and implementation of the policy, the adjustment time of fertility policy and technology roadmap should be relatively consistent. The key variables and time nodes of the policy adjustment should be grasped to provide a clear standard and route for the implementation of the universal second-child policy and to maintain social justice accordingly. Proper classification and differentiated advancement should be applied in different regions of different preferences. Regions of higher birthrate and boy preference are still the focus of monitoring in our fertility governance. Any illegal childbearing behaviors should be investigated and treated in accordance with laws and regulations by a comprehensive set of legal, administrative and

economic methods; for regions of lower birthrate and normal sex ratios at birth, fertility should be encouraged for those families in compliance with the universal second-child policy and guidance should be provided for reasonable selection of fertility time, with sound childrearing services.

Fifth, demand and supply forecasts of basic public services should be strengthened, and prospective allocations of basic public service resources should be done. In the short term, the universal second-child policy will place some pressure on medical service guarantees like delivery assistance, perinatal services and infant health care. In the medium and long term, it will put a certain pressure on public service resources like nurseries, kindergartens, and primary and secondary schools. The support for public services should be planned and provided under the policy, the allocation of public service resources should be further optimized, and public services like childbearing health, maternal and child health care, nurseries and kindergartens should be strengthened. More hospitals should be established and the potential of existing hospitals should be further explored. The medical resources of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Departments at general hospitals should be increased including emergency centers for critical pregnant and parturient women. Planning and support for educational resources like nurseries, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools should be accelerated. Experiments on small-class education should be made at primary and secondary schools with a shortage of students, educational resources should be reserved for the peak of new students. New nurseries, kindergartens and schools for compulsory education should be considered and built in the new urban areas or floating population gathering areas.

The universal second-child policy is one of the public polices with far-reaching influence on China's social and economic transformation, and this new fertility pattern will bring greater selection space for families, but planning and guidance must be considered by the main parties regarding how to guide the childbearing behaviors of the target groups to achieve policy efficiency. At present, in the framework of legal thinking and legal methods of China, this will provide a policy framework and system foundation for the start-up and implementation of the fertility pattern of the universal second-child policy, and achieve policy transformation and population security as well as governance transformation from the one-child policy to the universal second-child policy, to construct the new governance system of the new fertility pattern and advance the modernization of governance capacity. It will be conductive to the adjustments of our structural population problem, and the ultimate long-term balanced development of our population.

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The Half-industrial and Half-agricultural Working Structure in Rural China

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Abstract: The half–industrial and half–agricultural working structure in rural China is a key phenomenon supporting China's industrialization and urbanization. Based on inter–generational division of labor, the current half–industrial and half–agricultural working structure has given birth to the elderly agriculture and mainstay agriculture, the latter of which has gone out of agricultural involution and to some extent changed the management philosophy of traditional agriculture, becoming a key direction of China's agricultural development. Such a structure has also shaped the "new three–generation family" and facilitated the expansion of middle–income rural groups. While supporting long–term farmers in rural China, it also paves the way for China's urbanization. This structure plays a significant role in the economic, political and social development of rural China. Therefore, this structure is a rural economic structure which concerns farmers' income structure and livelihood patterns. Meanwhile, it is also a rural political structure, village structure and family structure. Through development and refinement, the half–industrial and half–agricultural working structure in rural China has far extended the scope of a descriptive concept. As a dominant variable, the structure, along with its derivatives, through permutation and combination, can establish logical relationships and an interpretation chain among a variety of major economic, political and social phenomena in rural China. Therefore, it can expect to be constructed into an analyticity–oriented mid–level concept.

Keywords: rural structure; half–industrial and half–agricultural; inter–generational division of labor; new three–generation family; middle–income group

* This article attempts to summarize the discussions on the rural half–industrial and half–agricultural structure by Professor He Xuefeng and the Central China School of Rural Studies.

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1. Issues raised

During China's rapid modernization and urbanization, its vast rural areas played the roles of "impounding reservoir" and "stabilizer." Unlike Western Europe or the other developing countries over the past decades, China's modernization and urbanization hasn't been accompanied with such tragedies as "sheep eats up men" or "a large number of farmers are compelled to leave their home." Besides, there is no such scenario as the drastic decline of rural area or the emergence of large slums across cities. In other words, the urbanization of the West and the other developing countries are invariably accompanied with the decline of rural areas and the end of the farmers' era. However, China proves to be an exception, which has a lot to do with its series of institutions, policies and social arrangements, such as institutional urban-rural dual structures, collective ownership of rural lands, abolishment of agricultural taxes, the policy of "strengthening agriculture and benefiting farmers," effective rural grass-roots units and rural community-based construction of a new socialist countryside. Such institutions and social arrangements have reshaped the relationships between the country and its rural society, and also adjusted and improved the relationships between the rural and urban areas. In the meantime, they have been included, internalized and reformed by the rural societies and have been embodied in the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China.

Gradually developing and stabilizing since China's Reform and Opening-up, this half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China is based on the collective ownership of rural land, the urban-rural dual structure, as well as the traditional rural family system. This half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure, primarily relying on inter-generational division of labor at present, brings about an occupational division between generations within a family. More specifically, the younger generation are away from home as migrant workers while the middle-aged and elderly members stay at home for agricultural production. In this way, a family can expect to enjoy two income sources, i.e. industrial income and agricultural income. In fact, the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure is concerning economy, society, family, as well as politics. The forming and stabilizing of such a structure has exerted a decisive impact on China's economic development and social stability. For example, it provides an endless cheap labor force to facilitate urbanization and transform rural China into a rear area for eliminating urban crises. Also, it manages to deliver a profound impact on rural China's economic development and social and political structure.

The existing academic research into the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure mainly focuses on agroeconomics, or farmers' income structure (Huang, 2006). Being stable and institutionalized, the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure is no longer an isolated existence. Instead, it frequently interacts with the other rural economic and social structures in which it is embedded. This paper attempts to conduct a preliminary analysis of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China to unveil its agroeconomical connotation and social and political significance, and tries to interpret and construct it as a mid-level concept.

2. The development, characteristics and connotation of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China

Rural China falls into two categories. One is the

resource and wealth-intensive category, exemplified by coastal and suburb rural areas. These areas have already been integrated into urban areas, with their agricultural land incorporated in the scope of urban development. The majority of farmers, no longer engaging in agricultural production, mainly rely on revenue from industrial work, business, as well as land and house rentals. However, those rural areas only account for 5% of rural China, for which their situation should not be deemed a dominant trend. The other is the agricultural production-reliant category. Featuring a low urbanization rate, this category applies to the vast rural area in central and western China. There, part of the farmers are away from home for full-time or part-time industrial work or trade (hereinafter referred to as industrial work). The rest of the farmers stay at home for agricultural production. That is how the half-industrial and half-agricultural occupational and income structures are developed. Those rural areas account for 95% of rural China and therefore should be deemed its main body. It is fair to say that the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure widely exists in most rural areas of China.

2.1 The development of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China

The origin of this structure can be traced back to the beginning of the Reform and Opening-up in the early 1980s. Back then, with the introduction of "fixing farm output quotas for each household" policy and the revival of urban markets, some farmers began to engage in other work such as trade and manual processing during the slack season. However, such a structure did not really come into being until the mid to late 1980s. Following that, it experienced two transformations in the mid to late 1990s and the 2000s. Now, this half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure can be subdivided into three categories.

2.1.1 The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on the concept of departing farming without leaving native land

In the mid to late 1980s, township enterprises sprang up like mushrooms across rural China. It was no exaggeration to say that "township enterprises could be found in almost every village and every township." Such a boom offered a large number of jobs to surplus rural laborers. In this context, finding a job nearby became a trend in rural China. While there were some young adults "leaving farmland for factory," they departed farming without leaving their native land. Some of them worked at the factory during the daytime and went home in the evening, or they stayed at the factory only during work hours and went home during the meal and breaks. Some farmers did farm work during the busy farming season and worked at the factory during the slack season. Alternatively, they could work at a nearby factory during daytime and did their farm work after returning home. In this way, a sense of "work schedule" was built among farmers. On the other hand, some farmers failed to be recruited by any factory and therefore could do nothing but rely on their farmland. Such a half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure, based on the concept of departing farming without leaving the native land, enabled a rural family to have two income sources, i.e. factory work and farm work and ensured rural family unity and soundness of rural political and social life. With a large number of young adults staying in the rural area, there was no problem in handling village-level public affairs and holding public events. In other words, villages still enjoyed a relatively sound and complete public space. In fact, such a half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure was especially popular in coastal developed regions.

2.1.2 Gender specific labor division based half-industrial and half-agricultural working structures

In the 1990s, cities gradually lifted their restrictions on the rural labor force, and a large number of rural migrant workers left home for industrial work in cities. As time went by, in the mid to late 1990s, many township enterprises declined or even closed, forcing farmers to swarm into cities. Farmers left home for industrial work in cities in the 1990s were typical first-generation migrant workers. That generation mainly comprised young male adults, along with a small number of rural single women①. Married rural women stayed at home for agricultural production with their middle-aged and elderly family members. That is half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on inter-generational division of labor. In such a structure male farmers, young adults, went to the cities for industrial work while female farmers, also young adults, stayed home to do farm work and look after their families; middle-aged and elderly family members helped with some housework. As abovementioned, such inter-generational division of labor enabled a rural family to enjoy two income sources. As women stayed at home to look after the elderly and the young, there was as yet no such terms as "left-behind seniors" or "left-behind children." But such inter-generational division of labor also had negative effects on rural China. First, with large numbers of young male adults leaving for the cities, the feminization of agriculture was on the rise, creating a heavy burden for the rural women. Second, young rural couples were forced to lead an incomplete family life, an abnormal sex life in particular. Last, living under the same roof was likely to trigger various family disputes between rural women and their middle-aged and elderly family members.

2.1.3 Half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on inter-generational division of labor

Entering the 21st century, particularly since the abolishment of agricultural taxes in 2006, the rural labor force has been further liberated. The barriers between urban and rural areas have been greatly reduced and rural customs have been significantly changed. It is no longer an embarrassment for young female adults to leave home for industrial work. Thus, it has become a norm for all rural adults at a proper age to leave home as migrant workers. In such a context, China has witnessed an unprecedented migration movement with a total of 250 million migrant workers traveling between hometown and cities per year. During this period, there was also an apparent change in the division of labor within the rural family. Young rural adults, whether married or not, leave home as migrant workers for higher pay. Middle-aged and elderly farmers stay at home, continuing their farm work to gain agricultural benefits. Thus, the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on inter-generational division of labor has gradually developed. This division of labor has its own merits. First, it helps to increase the income of migrant workers and has substantially improved the living standards of rural families. Second, working at the same place enables young rural couples to have a regular family life. Yet, such a division of labor is not without problems. The absence of young couples at home leaves their aged parents and kids uncared for, thus giving rise to the issues of "left-behind seniors" and "left-behind children." Left-behind seniors are likely to feel empty and lonely and may not be able to find anyone for help when they are sick. This is a key factor for the increased suicide attempts made by rural seniors in recent years (Yang & Fan, 2009).

2.2 Major characteristics of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working

① Female migrant workers were not approved in many rural areas until the 1990s.

structure in rural China

The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China has experienced three decades of development. Through shifts and adjustments, it has managed to develop into half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on inter-generational division of labor. The characteristics of this structure in rural China can be summarized in the following three points.

2.2.1 Long–term phenomenon

The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China is generally accepted as a compelling management system. The excessively intensive agricultural system, featuring a large agricultural population and limited arable land, cannot generate satisfactory returns, forcing many farmers to leave home for industrial work. On the other hand, the risks of being migrant workers in turn force those farmers to rely on agricultural production to hedge such risks. For Chinese farmers, this is indeed a compelling choice, which is frequently criticized for being a negative outcome of China's institutional and policy arrangements, particularly the longstanding institutional urban-rural dual structure. To tackle such a compelling issue, China should break through the barriers of this urban-rural dual structure, particularly the household registration system so that migrant workers can live and work in cities freely and enjoy equal social welfare there. The abovementioned criticism has overlooked the objective basis for the long-term existence of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China. This objective basis refers to the social environment which cannot promise migrant workers a decent urban life even if they are offered free access to cities. Currently, China has some 700 million farmers in rural areas and over 200 million migrant workers in urban areas. Given the average salary of migrant workers and current urban living standards, less than 10% of migrant workers have the chance to settle down in a city and lead a decent life. The 90% majority cannot expect to establish themselves in cities and therefore have to continue with their half-industrial and half-agricultural way of life. Most of the Chinese industries remain at the low end of the global value chain and are in the labor-intensive processing category. There is not much left when the already low profit is further distributed to migrant workers. That is why their wage level has remained fairly low for such a long time. One must realize that urbanization in China is inevitably a long-term and gradual process, during which only truly capable migrant workers have the chance to settle down in cities, while the majority have to shuttle between urban and rural area. This reality also means that the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure, covering 700 million farmers in rural China and 200 million migrant workers in urban China, is a long-term structure. The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure is not a temporary phenomenon, and it will remain unchanged in future decades, exerting a significant impact on the rural economy, politics and society.

2.2.2 Stability

At present, half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on inter-generational division of labor is conditioned by a reshuffle of the division of labor within a rural family. Through such a reshuffle, this working structure is gradually consolidated and stabilized. For farmers, agricultural work generates less income than industrial work. Even so, some farmers must stay at home for agricultural work to ensure their basic needs. From another perspective, what factories in urban area really need are young adults who can respond quickly, rather than aged adults. Under such circumstances, migrant workers beyond a certain age are forced to withdraw from the assembly line. In general, for assembly line work, migrant

workers, regardless of gender, gradually lose their competitiveness once reaching 35 and are likely to be replaced by their younger peers. Most migrant workers over 40 can only expect to find a job at a construction site or in the service sector. Migrant workers over 50 are unlikely to find employed in any urban sector. When it comes to the division of labor within a family, it is more than for a young couple to (be required to) choose work at an assembly line for higher pay, and for middle-aged and elderly family members (who are refused by such an assembly line) to engage in agricultural production, which generates less revenue. Such inter-genational division of labor within a family will remain stable in the long term and form a steady structure.

2.2.3 Reproducibility

The current gender division of labor based half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure is reproductive. This is a prerequisite for its long-term stable existence, with an endless supply of labor to support this working structure. As a young couple grow older, they will no longer be suitable for assembly line work and will subsequently be replaced by younger migrant workers. When they eventually withdraw from their urban work, they will return home to take over the agricultural work from their elders. By then, it will be their grown-up children's turn to go into the cities for industrial work. In this way, the division of labor within a family (i.e. a young couple for assembly line work and middle aged and elderly family members for agricultural work) is repeated in endless cycles. This is the reproducibility of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure based on gender division of labor.

The long–term existence, stability and reproducibility of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China will also be embodied in its subordinate rural structures, institutions and phenomena.

2.3 The basic connotation of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China

The current half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China is a general structure, not just an agricultural management system or a rural family income structure, but also a social institution (Xia, 2014). The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China bears the respective connotations of rural economic structure, social structure and political structure. This working structure shapes and reconstructs a new economic structure, social structure and political structure for rural China.

2.3.1 Economic structure

First, the economic structure concerns the rural income structure. The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure means a rural family has two income sources. One is industrial work, which contributes 60%–70% of the total family income. The other is agricultural work, which contributes about 30%–40%. For a rural family, the two income sources are indispensable, for they ensure their survival and labor force reproduction. Those elderly family members may stop doing agricultural work and only look after their grandchildren, or just lead an easy life at home. Even so, they can still save significant expenses for their family. According to such an income structure, even with an industrial income source, a rural family still must rely on agricultural income. To this end, the existing rural land system must remain unchanged in the long term. It can conduct land transfers but large-scale land transfers with deliberate intention are prohibited, for it enables capital to drive farmers away from their land and results in the loss of their agricultural income. Second, the economic structure concerns the agricultural management system. The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure determines the managing subjects of rural

land to be middle-aged and elderly farmers, and some young adults. Through a family management model, farmers maintain their management scale at "1.3 mu per capita with a maximum of 10 mu per household." This new management model has both similarities and differences with traditional "small peasant private ownership," and it is not the same as the capitalist model of farm management (Yu & Liu, 2013). Third, the economic structure also concerns the occupational structure of farmers. In the vast rural areas of central and western China, some 70% of families' occupational division of labor is based on the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure. That is to say, half-industrial and half-agricultural families account for 70% of all rural households there. This cannot give rise to much occupational differentiation, which means there is no big income gap among these farmers.

2.3.2 Social structure

Social structure includes village structure and family structure. First, the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure requires some farmers to leave home as migrant workers and the rest to stay at home for agricultural production. The two groups keep in close touch with each other. Moreover, most migrant workers are expected to return to their village sooner or later. In this sense, villages remain the farmers' final destination and still have the capacities of value creation and social discipline. Some 70% of rural families are within the half-industrial and half-agricultural working framework. There is no significant income gap among them and they fall into the middle-income group in rural China. (Chen, 2014). The limited economic differentiation among farmers indicates the existence of a vast middle-income group in rural China. This group is of vital importance to rural social stability and can prevent apparent social stratification there. Family structure refers to the fact that the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure is a labor division structure of the rural family, which forms stable and fixed inter-generational division of labor and at the same time forges a new family form, i.e. the "new three-generation family." Such a new family form is nothing like traditional big families (such as combined family and lineal family) or a Western-style core family. In this new family form, the young couple, being away from home for industrial work, still maintains a united family with their parents, who are responsible for housekeeping, taking care of the young, and saving money. Even so, the young couple and their parents are independent from each other when it comes to money management.

2.3.3 Political structure

To some extent, the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure can cause outflow of both talents and wealth from the rural areas. It is worth mentioning that young and vigorous farmers capable of finding a job in town have all left, leaving the old, the weak, the pregnant, the young, as well as the disable at home. Under such circumstances, a new problem arises. Who should take charge of rural governance? This is a question that must be answered. Due to the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure, a significant number of farmers are away from home for industrial work, leaving some farmland unused. Through spontaneous transfer of such unused land within a village, more and more land is obtained by a small group of farmers. Those people mainly rely on farmland to gain profits and focus on enhancing interpersonal relationships within their village. Caring about farmland-related interests and village-based social relationships, they are willing to participate in village governance and build relationships. Given that, this group of farmers have the potential to take charge of village governance and play a crucial role in rural political life. Neither very rich nor very poor, those farmers are of a middle-income group in the villages. The half-

industrial and half-agricultural working structure rules out the possibility of rich farmers dominating rural governance in the vast rural areas of central and western China.

3. The agricultural economic significance of the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure in rural China

Over the past decades, China has witnessed tremendous changes in agricultural management. Also, attempts have been made to tackle agricultural involution. In Huang Zongzhi's term (2010), such a reform is called "China's hidden agricultural revolution." From a microscopic perspective, the differentiation in village-level agricultural managing subjects is the direct factor that triggers revolutionary changes in Chinese agriculture. The characteristics and capacities of these agricultural managing subjects determine the amount of investment into agricultural management, corresponding labor relations, agricultural type, management models, etc. and subsequently determine the development direction and strategy of Chinese agriculture. The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure divides farmers into farmers for industrial production and farmers for agricultural production. The latter forms the principal part of agricultural management and can be subdivided into the middle-aged and elderly groups and the mainstay group. Their agricultural production activities are respectively called the "elderly agriculture" and the mainstay agriculture," which are both interconnected and different from each other.

3.1 The "elderly agriculture" in the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure

As its name suggests, elderly agriculture refers to an agricultural model which mainly relies on the engagement of middle-aged and elderly farmers. According to the inter-generational division of labor in rural China, middle-aged and elderly farmers, due to their declining physical capacity, are left home for agricultural production. Most of them fall into the age group of 50—65. They are responsible for their family's contracted farmland, which usually covers an area of 1—20 mu. Farmland larger than 20 mu is beyond their physical ability. A higher level of agricultural mechanization makes it possible for farmers to leave some heavy and tedious manual work to mechanical equipment. Thanks to that, farmers over the age of 70 can still do some farm work. Their agricultural production is of a self-employed nature and is performed based on a family unit. Usually, it involves a middle-aged or elderly couple and some auxiliary manpower. Labor employment seldom happens and as mentioned above, some manual work can be left to mechanical equipment. During the busy farming season, a few relatives and friends may come and help, which is either a pure favor or a mutual help. The purpose of their agricultural production is to realize self-sufficiency and support their family, rather than facilitate market exchange. Only extra farm production is used for market exchange, which becomes an income source for elderly agriculture's simple reproduction.

Basically, elderly agriculture can be regarded as a diversified agriculture. That is because those still capable middle-aged and elderly farmers not just do farm work, but also do some part-time work or other small businesses nearby during the slack season. Considering the opportunity cost of this diversified agriculture, elderly agriculture, though still of an intensive farming type, is far behind traditional agriculture in the degree of intensive and meticulous cultivation. In terms of per mu yield, elderly agriculture cannot compare with mainstay agriculture, but is higher than investment supported

agriculture (Yang, 2013). When reaching 60, farmers can find fewer part-time jobs and elderly agriculture is transformed into leisure agriculture. As physical demands and labor intensity keep reducing in agricultural production, the importance of management and protection is highlighted. Whenever they like, the elderly can stroll around their field, loosening clay soil, weeding, applying fertilizer, and catching insects. While killing time and enriching their life, they also keep health through such fieldwork. Thus, what elderly agriculture values is not average profit, but growth in per unit area yield. If their physical condition allows, the elderly can engage in agricultural production as they wish. Elderly agriculture enables elderly farmers to earn their own living without being at the mercy of their children or children-in-law. This helps to avoid many conflicts between the two generations. Elderly agriculture remains an indispensable income source of a rural young couple's family. To a large extent, it eases the family burden on the younger generation.

3.2 The "mainstay agriculture" in the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure

The half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure means most young male adults are away from their village, leaving part of the farmland in the charge of the middle-aged and elderly farmers and the rest to the young and middle-aged farmers who choose or who are forced to stay in the village. Moreover, as the middle-aged and elderly farmers grow even older, they gradually withdraw from agricultural production, transferring their farmland to those young and middle-aged farmers capable of managing more farmland. Young and middle-aged farmers refer to farmers falling into the age group of 30—50. They are arguably the most physically capable group in rural China. They are mainly in charge of two types of farmland. One is their own contracted land and the other is the contracted land of other villagers who are away from home for industrial work. Each of them can manage a combined area of 20–40 mu. For the most capable among them, the management capacity can reach up to 100 mu. The extra farmland is mainly transferred from relatives and friends, for which no rent or very little rent is required. Besides, there is no need to sign a transfer agreement. When the owner of the entrusted land plans to return home, and resume their agricultural trade, he or she only needs to inform the entrusted farmer half a year in advance.

In terms of cultivation scale, mainstay agriculture ranks between elderly agriculture and investment-supported agriculture. Its managing subject can be called "mainstay farmer." Mainstay agriculture is of a family farm-based cultivation pattern. Normally, a young couple, assisted by a tractor and other machinery and some hired labor in the busy farming season, can manage a total of 100 mu of farmland. Mid-level agriculture can generate a higher yield than elderly agriculture and investment supported agriculture. Mainstay agriculture combines self-employment with labor employment and is performed on a family unit basis.

Mainstay agriculture is different from elderly agriculture in terms of management scale and model. Elderly agriculture falls into the substance agriculture category. With its agricultural production linked to consumption, it pursues yields, rather than profits. By contrast, mainstay agriculture aims to bring its agricultural products to market, for which its agricultural production is market-oriented. Thus, it can be concluded that mainstay agriculture is a commercial agricultural model which focuses on seeking profits and at the same time gives consideration to meeting the farmers' own needs. While striving to increase its per unit area yield, mainstay agriculture also begins to raise average

profits. As we know, when the per unit area input of its factors such capital, labor force and technology generates the maxim yield, there is bound to be a progressive marginal benefit decrease. In that case, the managing subject no longer invests in farmland and begins to shift their investment interests to other sectors. That explains why the average scale of mid-scale agriculture restricts its farmland area within 100 mu. After all, once its scale exceeds 100 mu, the increased input of cultivation factors can bring about a decline (rather than a rise) in its average profit. Therefore, no more farmland or cultivation factors are to be added.

As a commercial agricultural model, mainstay agriculture can maintain its managing subject's passion for the use of improved varieties and the improvement of production mode on condition that the marginal benefit is above zero. Also, by sticking to intensive and meticulous cultivation, mainstay agriculture can expect higher yields and higher profits. For a young rural couple managing 40—100 mu farm land for two seasons, they can generate annual revenue of some 80,000 *yuan* to 200,000 *yuan*. Such annual revenue is at a high level in rural China.

Mainstay agriculture and elderly agriculture are interchangeable. When the practitioners of mainstay agriculture enter the elderly group, they cannot afford to manage mid-scale farmland any more, and have to gradually render part of their farmland, thus transforming their management into elderly agriculture. Their returned land is then transferred to other farmers and is expanded into a mid-scale agricultural business, thus becoming part of a mainstay agriculture operation. This is how mainstay agriculture's withdrawal mechanism and reproduction mechanism work.

3.3 Comparison between elderly agriculture and mainstay agriculture

There are both similarities and differences between elderly agriculture and mainstay agriculture (see Table 1). Elderly agriculture still maintains a traditional small-scale farming system, while mainstay agriculture is on its way to modern agriculture.

Table 1 Comparison between the elderly agriculture and the mid-level agriculture

Item	Managing subject	Business form	Land possession	Labor force	Capital source	Capital input	Organizational unit	Reproduction	Market relationship	Management philosophy	Agricultural type
The elderly agriculture	The middle-aged and elderly couples	By-business	Self-owned	Self-employed & voluntary laborers	Limited market exchange	None	Family	Simple reproduction	Self-supporting, with a small amount for market exchange	Substance agriculture, not profit-oriented	Labor-intensive
Mid-level agriculture	The young couples	Full-time agricultural production	Self-owned & land transfer	Self-employed & seasonal laborers	Market exchange	Certain capital input	Family	Expanded reproduction	Market-oriented production	Commercial agriculture, profit oriented	Labor, capital and technology-intensive

According to relevant research, elderly agriculture falls into the category of traditional labor-intensive agriculture and is not primarily profit oriented. Even so, its very existence is still a necessity. Given that the half-industrial and half-agricultural working structure will exist in the long term and that the differentiation of farmers remains far from thorough, the middle-aged and elderly farmers cannot separate themselves from agricultural production. Therefore, their family should enjoy a certain agricultural surplus. Both in terms of production efficiency and per unit area yield, mainstay agriculture performs best of all. Mainstay agriculture features mid-scale farmland and corresponding investments of labor, capital and other factors. To some extent, it still belongs

to the labor-intensive agriculture category, but it is also of a capital and technology-intensive one. Mainstay agriculture pursues average profits and is now at least half way to getting out of agricultural involution. In this sense, it is different from traditional small-scale agriculture. Thus, it can be concluded that the development motive of Chinese agricultural production originates from the (not-thorough-enough) differentiation of agricultural managing subjects, whose managing purposes, efficiency and mode are determined by their own characteristics and natural endowments. Mainstay agriculture indicates a future direction for China's agricultural transition and development. Therefore, China should encourage and support the transfer of surplus farmland to the managing subjects of minstay agriculture, and at the same time acknowledge the rationality of elderly agriculture's long-term existence.

4. The political and social significance of the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure in rural China

As an operation model, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure pattern's political and social significance to rural areas even outweigh its implications on agricultural operations. Its comprehensive and systemic implications to rural politics and societies are many.

4.1 Shaping "new three-generation families" in rural China

The traditional Chinese family patterns in rural areas are categorized into joint families, stem families, and nuclear families. Among them, the nuclear families make up the biggest share, followed by stem and joint families. The term "joint family" refers to any family composed of two or more couples from any generation. For instance, a family composed of parents, their children, and the children's spouses and offspring, or a family composed of siblings and their spouses who still live in the same residence after marriage can be identified as a joint family. As the result of lateral expansion of nuclear families of the same generations, a joint family is characterized by big family size and complicated relationships. However, its family members usually are not closely related to each other as each basic triangle has its own center. Therefore, joint families only happen under specific circumstances, which are relatively rare today. A nuclear family refers to any family composed of two generations, parents and their unmarried children. As the principal pattern of traditional families in China, nuclear families are becoming more common in modern China. A stem, or lineal, family refers to any family composed of the parents and one married child or their unmarried children. The stem families are equivalent to the "three generation families," usually including grandparents, parents, and unmarried children. There are two patterns of stem families, depending on the son, whom the parents live with—some parents would live with the family of one of their sons (mostly the youngest one) after the other sons have moved out, while some would live with the family of their only son. The three-generation families made up roughly 30% of the traditional Chinese family patterns, with no remarkable changes in percentage until the 1980s when the share of nuclear families increased dramatically. With more and more youngest and only sons moving out of their parents' houses, the share of "three-generation families" declined to 24.29% in 1982.

It is a common view in the world's industrialization processes and sociological theories that, along with industrialization, urbanization and the development of modern economies the mid-scale agricultural economies with families as their major units will be replaced by individual industrial

workers, and the traditional rural family patterns by nuclear families. However, the resilience of the three-generation family pattern is well argued in the research related to the history of economy and law by Huang Zongzhi (Huang, 2013). By leveraging the findings of Huang in the historic data and literature, I have further identified a new finding: The share of a new family pattern—or the "new three-generation families" defined in this article—which has emerged along with the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure in rural China has far outweighed the traditional "three-generation families" in statistical terms.

The traditional three-generation families are defined by parents who live with the family of one of their sons after the others have moved out or if they live with their only son. To this end, such a family pattern is of statistical significance only when the households of the gray hair are registered in the families of their offspring. Since 2000, the half-industrial and half-agricultural family structure, which is based on inter-generational work divisions, has emerged in rural China, with the young couples going out as migrant workers, and their children usually left behind and attended by their farming parents at home. The grandparents will have to take care of all their sons' families and children. In such cases, the young couples normally are not separated from their parents in the terms of family lands, properties, and social relations.① In the meantime, the outgoing migrant couples have formed individual small families who are independent financial units. To this end, the old parents remain connected separately to each small family of their sons. However, a small family in such a family is independent from the families of their siblings. In this sense, such a family is different from a traditional "three-generation family" in which parents will live with one of their sons when their other children have moved out. The small families in such a family pattern are all independent nuclear families, therefore not as closely related to each other as the ones in a traditional three-generation family (see Figure 1). In light of this, "new three-generation families" make up roughly 80% of the families in rural China.

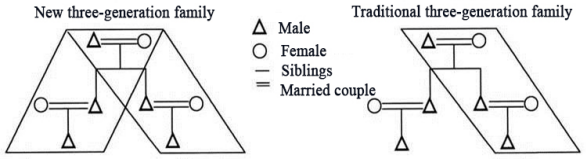

Figure 1 The "new three–generation families" and the traditional "three–generation families"

The "new three generation families" has the following features:

(1) The "new three-generation families" are a result of the "half-industrial and half-agricultural structure" family structure based on inter-generational work divisions. The structure of the "new three-generation families" is sustainable, stable, and reproducible. Therefore, it is likely to remain the dominant rural family structure for the next several decades.

(2) With its roots in the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure, the new three-generation family is an inevitably incomplete family pattern half of the family members are living in the countryside, while the other half are constantly working in the cities. It is this half-industrial and half-agricultural structure that has led to the incompleteness in both the lives and relationships of family members. The incompleteness is not only

① The survey in central China shows that the "division of relatives" custom is still preserved in many villages, namely the duties of the parents family to visit their relatives and friends are shared among the individual children's families.

the implication of such a family pattern, but also its essential and natural property–the work divisions and geographical separation between the old and the young couples are the very causes of the "inseparable family separations."

(3) Technically, each small family of the children's generation would form a "new three-generation family" with their parents. This is different from the traditional three-generation family composed of the parents and only one son. Additionally, a small family of the children's generation is independent from their siblings both in formas and social relationships.

(4) The new three-generation family is a kind of inseparable family separation in financial terms. They are de facto "separated" from the parents in financial unit terms, while neither asset division nor ceremonial "family division" has taken place. In this sense, the parents' and the children's families are financially independent.

(5) The duties of supporting their parents are shared among all the children's families, while the parents are obliged to attend, nurture and support the children's families—a pattern different from the traditional three-generation family, in which the parents only shoulder the duties and responsibilities to the son's family with whom they are living together, while assuming less obligations to the ones that have moved out.

(6) With the value of "passing the merits and fine traditions to the younger generations," the parents in a new three-generation family are closely related to each offspring's family. The parents would make selfless contributions to and place great expectations on their children's families.

(7) Being highly flexible and adaptable in the division of labor, the new three-generation families can change their divisions according to various tasks and life pressures at different times. For instance, to get through the hard times, they will increase the number of migrant workers by reducing the farming members and transferring part of their lands, thus increasing the incomes of the family. Likewise, they will reclaim or buy some lands, have more members return to the farms, and reduce the migrant members (by asking the middle and old aged male members to stop their industrial works or do part-time jobs) when the burdens have been lifted after the completion of crucial life tasks.

Given these features, the comprehensive and sustainable presence of the new three-generation families have posed new implications and changes on the social and economic lives in rural China. (1) The concerted efforts by the children's and parents' families have made the children's families more resilient to the risks inherent in the process of urbanization and the rural social competitions, helping the children's families accomplish their life and reproduction of labor powers at a "lower cost"—they will be enabled to either support their families in the cities, or lead a decent life in the countryside. (2) The new three generation family pattern mainly aims at facilitating the migrant worker couples who are faced with social competitions in the cities, instead of focusing on the social lives of their parents at home. Therefore, the rights and welfare of the old are easily neglected, resulting in the de facto "exploitation" of the parents by each child's family. (3) As the parents are included in different new three-generation families of their children, they will need to be mindful of the well-being of all the small families, which can be overwhelming because of the mental stress from the burdens of the children. They will be more mentally stressed once they are disabled from work as a result of sickness. (4) A new three-generation family is naturally an incomplete family. Therefore, it inevitably results in many social issues, such as left-behind old and children. In such cases, the old are probably unattended when they get sick or

lose mobility, some will even suffer from mental loneliness.

The new three-generation families are units of strong resilience to competitions and risks which would transfer many pressures resulting from migrant couples and socialized competitions to their parents, with the rights and welfare of the latter being less focused and guaranteed than they are deserved. The disadvantages of the new three-generation families include; the parental thoughts to reduce the burdens of their adult children, young children being left behind, elders left unattended, the sense of loneliness, among others (Yang & Ouyang, 2013). These have become the major causes of the suicides of many rural old citizens in recent years.

4.2 Developing a huge middle-income group

The first wave of rich farmers accounted for approximately 5% of all farmers in the vast rural areas in central and western China. After building their family's fortunes by starting businesses or engaging in trades, these farmers usually relocated their families to urban areas. Another 15% included the poor and the weak—including those with labor deficits (mostly the elderly, weak, sick, disabled, and the infants), the overburdened (who need to support both the seniors and the juveniles), and the people lacking land. This is the group that is unable to obtain salary by going out as migrant workers, nor can they earn extra by planting more farms. Another 10% of rural households are made up of those operating "mainstay agriculture." The remaining 70% are half-industrial and half-agricultural families who are gaining incomes from both sectors. By adding to the incomes and reducing expenditures, the half-industrial and half-agricultural income structure is enabling the farmers to have a decent surplus.

Industrial incomes account for 60%—70% of the total incomes of a half-industrial and half-agricultural family. The so-called industrial incomes here include incomes earned by working in factories, construction sites, trading in the towns, and making handcrafts. Most of the farmers are inclined to working in factories and construction sites. Statistics show that a typical young or middle-aged couple can send home 15,000 *yuan* to 30,000 *yuan* of yearly net incomes. Although couples going out together usually result in higher costs in renting and daily expenses, the couple will still have 20,000 *yuan* to 30,000 *yuan* in their pockets when they come home at the end of the year as long as they refrain from some unrealistic urban consumer goods and life styles. However, they might end up with 15,000 *yuan*. It is possible for most of them to come home with around 20,000 *yuan*.

The incomes of the elderly might vary markedly with their age and the amount of land they control. Typically, a senior farmer aged between 50 to 65 is capable of tilling 10 mu of arable lands, making roughly 10,000 *yuan* net income per year; while he will have to reduce the lands once he is over 65 as he will have neither the strength nor the energy for the same amount of work, this senior farmer will still make something between 3,000 *yuan* to 4,000 *yuan* each year until he reaches 70, after that he will only plant some vegetables and fruits on a small parcel of land. He can always choose to raise some livestock and poultry as part-time jobs, with which he will exchange for some monetary incomes. All in all, it is quite feasible for such a senior farmer to make 5,000 yuan to 15,000 *yuan* per year from agriculture.

With their industrial and agricultural incomes combined, a new three-generation family usually get their yearly income somewhere around 30,000 *yuan*, which would make them one of the middle-income families in rural China. Apart from the incomes, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure also contributes to a huge amount of savings in four aspects. First, instead of pursuing urban residency, most of the young migrant couples are striving for

a decent life at home. Therefore, they will not adopt urban lifestyles in a real sense, nor will they indulge themselves in the conspicuous consumption like the urban middle class often do. Rather, they will save most of their incomes for consumption at home, where they can buy goods at relatively low prices. By doing so, a considerable amount of savings is achieved. Second, the elderly and children in half-industrial and half-agricultural families usually live in rural areas. it is a cost-effective way for these families to support the elderly while they are alive and give a proper funeral after they pass away and reproduce the labor force—a large amount of family expenditures is saved. Third, with the elderly farming at home, a good number of expenditures are not in monetary form, including grain, vegetables, fruits, fish, and meats—all the sources of protein, fiber, and energy are planted by the old, instead of buying them with cash. For sure that the monetary expenditures will increase should they need to obtain these in cities; Fourth, all the recreation, entertainment and social activities for both the old and the juveniles are conducted within their villages, meaning their consumption activities incurs no expenditures. It is tempting to say that all these non-monetary benefits are amounting to the invisible welfare of farmers.

The half-industrial and half-agricultural income structure and division of labor not only help such a family earn more and spend less, but also maintain their overall nutrition intake and welfare consumption. The half-industrial and half-agricultural structure is making a farmer's family one of the households of middle-income and living standards. Combining the other 10% or so "mid-scale agriculture" farmers, there are surprisingly 80% of rural families in the vast central and western China that are above the bar of middle-incomes. That is a significant social phenomenon which will absolutely have its implications on the political and social lives of rural China and which cannot be underestimated.

4.2.1 Acting as a social stabilizer in rural China

Normally, China's urbanization and modernization echo with the out-flux of labor forces, incomes, and resources from the rural areas. Nonetheless, a huge group of middle-income rural families has emerged, thanks to the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure. That explains why the process has not led to declining and unstable rural areas. Despite the notable gap between the middle-incomes in rural area and the middle or high-income groups in the urban areas, the former will never put themselves in the same coordinate system with the latter in terms of their incomes and consumption. Instead, they still compare and compete with their counterparts at home. The clear majority of rural families would engage in the social competitions within their own villages—namely, getting over the bar of middle-incomes will help them win acknowledgment and approval of others, preventing them from being isolated for being too poor. Even those in underprivileged conditions for the time being would not give up the hope of prosperity as the bar of middle-income is not something unreachable. On the other hand, the middle-income level is more than sufficient to guarantee a decent life, or even a "high welfare life with low expenditures" at home (He, 2007). By winning others' approvals and living decent lives with dignity, most of the rural residents would feel satisfied with their lives. Additionally, the vast amount of rural middle-income families approve China's overall political and social environments and its policies, thanks to the merits provided by the urban-rural dual structure, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure, and the national policies to strengthen agriculture and benefit farmers. With conservative mentalities, they would rather maintain such half-industrial and half-agricultural life style than make efforts to change it. It is these mentalities,

their satisfaction and approval with the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government that are acting as the stabilizers of rural societies. A survey I made indicates that most of the farmers are not happy and are concerned with the aggressive urbanization policies and massive farmland transfers by local governments that are forcing farmers to relocate into cities, meaning they can no longer plant on the farmlands. The massive farmland transfers driven by local governments have both facilitated capital in rural China and throttled the small-scale farming economies, forcing the half-industrial and half-agricultural families to give up their farmlands. The two policies have deprived the rural families of both the explicit incomes and implicit welfare of "agriculture." As a result, their family incomes are decreasing and pure monetary spending is rising, meaning declining living standards and welfare of the family. All these policies are destabilizing the "stabilizers" in rural societies.

4.2.2 Playing their roles in the "de-stratification" of rural societies

While differentiation among farmers is witnessed by the vast rural societies in central and western China, they are not seeing distinguishable social stratum, let along isolation, repulsion, and hatred between different stratums. That can be explained by the de-stratification mechanism which is present in the region. Specifically, the presence of a huge group of middle-incomes generated by the half-industrial and half-agricultural income structure has laid the economic foundation of this de-stratification mechanism. While the income levels of most rural households are worse off than some, they are also better off than many. The consistent incomes will mirror with the similarity and convergence among farmers in many aspects, such as their rights, social relations, consumption patterns, religious beliefs, and values. Moreover, the living and consumption standards of the majority of middle-income families will constitute a reference system, which, to the underprivileged 15% of households in the same village, is not too challenging to reach—after all, they will be isolated and left out should they fail to reach that bar, meaning they will become the "lower class" in real terms. In the light of this, the likelihood of the farmers in a same village being divided into various stratums of different ideas and subjective identifications is low—the village will remain a community of shared relations and ethics.

4.3 The mainstay farmers in rural China

Hardcore farmers refer to the group of farmers who cultivate a moderate scale of farmland by acquiring their farmlands against the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure, or those who are operating "mainstay agriculture" (He, 2004). The share of mainstay farmers varies in different rural regions, ranging from 5% in some mountain villages, to 10%–15% in the Jianghan Plain. Most of the rural regions have a share of mainstay farmers around 10%. Despite their small proportions, the group's roles and implications in the rural political and social lives should not be underestimated. The roles played by the mainstay farmers are closely related to their social natures and positions in structures of the rural society (Yang, 2013). Apart from the cultivators of a moderate scale of farmlands, and the middle-incomes in the village, the group of mid-level farmers also feature the following aspects.

(1) Their interest is closely bound to the farmlands, and their social relationships are in the village. Mainstay farmers are committed to agriculture since they are cultivating farmlands of moderate scales. While they might engage in some part-time jobs nearby during slack farming seasons, the bulk of their incomes are made from the lands they cultivate. Given the scale of economic outputs delivered by the lands, it is less desirable for them to become migrant workers. Thus, their social relationships will be bound to the villages.

With their core interest closely bound to the land, mainstay farmers usually engage more actively and energetically in the construction of rural infrastructure. Likewise, with their major social relationships bound to the village, they are the main activists in the community and the main builders of social relations. Compared with migrant workers, the mainstay farmers better understand the diverse needs and concerns of villagers as they are more acquainted with the villages and the households.

(2) They have established harmonious relationships with all the groups in the villages. First, the mainstay farmer gains access to the lands transferred by other villagers as they have earned the villagers' friendship and trust in their capabilities of having the lands well-cultivated, and in their credibility that the lands will be returned when required. Second, migrant workers usually take the initiative to forge friendships with the mainstay farmers, who are staying in the villages throughout the year, and who would reach out to their left-behind old and children in need. Third, the mainstay farmers would take advantage of their ample slack farming time to make acquaintance and socialize with all the groups and households in the villages. The mainstay farmers gain authority and prestige as they actively take advantage of their ample slack time to solve problems and relieve concerns for, and conduct mutual beneficial cooperation with all the farming groups.

(3) The mainstay farmers are the beneficiaries of existing policies and regulations, including the consistent rural land system, the land transfer policies, and other preferential measures for the farmers. These policies and measures provide many advantages, such as access to lands of moderate scale, middle incomes in rural China without being migrant workers (which means they can enjoy complete family lives), ample slack farming time, and leisure times. Therefore, they are inevitably mindful of the rural land policies adopted by the Party and the Chinese government, and support the existing rural land systems and transfer policies.

The mid-level farmer group is the output of the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure. No mid-level farmer will emerge without the moderate scales of lands, which is only acquired by gaining access to the lands transferred by the migrant workers. Furthermore, it is the middle scales of lands that have granted the mid-level farmers corresponding properties and nature and specific positions in the rural social structures, which have further assigned them to corresponding roles in the rural political and social lives– the hardcore.

4.4 Shaping an urbanization path with Chinese characteristics

China has been pressing ahead with urbanization at an annual pace of 1% over the past three decades. However, it has also witnessed many issues over this exceptionally rapid course, such as the impairment of farmers' rights and interests, forced evictions and demolitions, and the "anti-moving" struggles. Despite this, China's urbanization is still progressing steadily and making remarkable achievements as we prevented the phenomena of "sheep devour men"—which had forced numerous farmers in western countries to loss their lands—and the massive slums in the modern third world. China's urbanization has not been achieved by compromising the prosperity of its vast rural areas. While successful migrant workers managed to support their families and live happy lives in urban areas, the less achieving ones are still able to live decent lives in their home villages—this is the so-called "urbanization path with Chinese characteristics" (He, 2014).

Along the path of China's urbanization, both the successful ones who have managed to acquire rural residency and the less achieving ones who are returning to their home villages are shaped by the

half-industrial and half-agricultural structure in the rural areas. The significance of such a structure lies in that it mitigates the migrant workers' pressures and burdens, while making them more resilient to the risks in the cities. There is no point in elaborating on "gaining urban residency" or "returning to home villages" under the structural limits of China's industry mix and migrant workers income levels should there be no half-industrial and half-agricultural structure.

4.4.1 The half-industrial and half-agricultural structure provides strong backing for "the migrant workers capable of gaining urban residency"

While it is a shared dream of farmers and migrant workers to gain urban residency, only 10% of them will be fortunate enough to seize the opportunity to move into cities and gain permanent urban residency. Gaining an urban residency is no easy mission. It is a prolonged and tough process for every migrant worker, over the course of which he/she will have to keep trying and constantly be subject to the half-industrial and half-agricultural divisions of works and income structures. (1) While the migrant couples are striving for their urban residency, it is of the utmost significance for them to make a proper division of labor and cooperation between generations. Most of the migrant workers achieved this objective mainly by earning and accumulating salaries, thus progressively acquiring and gathering the economic and social capital required to support their lives and family spending in urban areas. Nonetheless, what cannot be underestimated is the explicit and implicit benefits of the old farming at home, which have not only contributed to the migrant workers' efforts for their urban residency, but more importantly relieved their burdens. The middle and old-aged have created a steady "home" for the migrant workers "making efforts" in the cities by attending farmlands, taking care of their grandchildren, and supporting themselves later years. The migrant workers are thus enabled to go forward with their burdens discarded. Assume that the migrant workers must fight for urban residency while supporting the elderly and finishing labor force reproduction in the "high cost" urban areas, their efforts for keeping a foothold there would either be in vain or throttled when their energy and capital are exhausted. (2) Even after achieving what they have longed for, most of the rural households retain their half-industrial and half-agricultural structure—namely, while the young couples are living in the cities (half-industrial), their parents still live their later years and pass away in the villages (half-agricultural). Should the elderly abandon agriculture and move into the cities, the young couple would be forced to support the whole family—which could have been supported by incomes from both industry and agriculture—with the sole income from their industrial salaries. In this case, they will suffer from multiplied economic stress and declining living standards. By having the old live by themselves later years and pass away in the villages, the migrant workers' life spending will be remarkably reduced, thus helping to support their families and live decent lives in the cities.

4.4.2 The half-industrial and half-agricultural structure has provided favorable environments for those less achieving returning home migrant workers

Up to 90% of farmers will not have the luck or opportunities to gain urban residency. Their experience of being migrant workers is accompanied by multiple trips between the cities and their villages. Eventually, they will end up coming back to the rural areas. These farmers make multiple attempts to gain their urban residency. They will finally find it unrealistic after several attempts and make the decision to return to their village. In such cases, being a migrant worker has become a method, instead of a purpose, for these farmers

to acquire decent lives after they come back from cities. During this course: (1) The old are providing a crucial material basis for the homecoming migrant workers and the precondition of them working in the cities by cultivating their lands and looking after the grandchildren. The couples will be less likely to move into cities if their parents and children cannot settle down at home. (2) The efforts the middle and old aged farmers made to attend the lands, children, and social relations in the villages, is the reason why the migrant workers can still have "destinations" for their homecoming. They will have "nowhere to go" when they are forced to come back (e.g., when they are laid off by financial crisis) if their parents also moved into the cities. (3) One of the preconditions for the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure is the collective land ownership in the rural areas. The lands will become the living guarantees of the homecoming migrant workers after they have made multiple trips between the cities and the villages (or come back after being displaced). They will have life journeys featured by half-industrial and half-agricultural experiences once they have (finally) returned to agriculture—they have been industrial workers at early ages and farmers in later years. The savings from industrial works and the life guarantees provided by their lands are sufficient for them to live decent lives at home. In other words, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure in rural China has enabled the farmers to "move out" and "come back" during urbanization—they are never concerned with the risk of becoming homeless posed by a failed attempt for "urban residency."

5. The half-industrial and half-agricultural structure as a mid-level concept

As a descriptive concept, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure clearly describes and outlines a series of common micro-phenomena in today's rural areas, including the inter-generational division of labor, the industrial and agricultural incomes of rural households, the vocational differentiation of farmers, the multiple trips between cities and villages made by migrant workers, and the transfer and convergence of lands, etc. However, the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure is far more than a descriptive concept. It is also an analytic, or a relational concept which describes the prominence of the specific attributes of an object series—in a word, it evaluates whether and how much the elements are relevant to each other. A descriptive concept only provides static descriptions on all the elements of a phenomenon, instead of explaining the correlations among them. In contrast, an analytic concept provides dynamic statements on the correlations among all elements. There are macro and meso-analytic concepts. The former stands for a highly abstract philosophical concept, and the latter a mid-level concept that falls between a macro and a micro concept. Focusing on general micro-social issues and proposing feasible and practical theoretical hypothesis, a meso-analytic concept is something factual and with value orientation. In a word, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure captures the basic implications of a mid-level concept.

The half-industrial and half-agricultural structure represents the organic combination between its inherent phenomena and elements, thus constituting a stable morphology carrying its own mechanisms and logic. On one hand, the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure includes a series of phenomena it has described and outlined, namely such a structure is the abstract refinement of these micro-phenomena. On the other hand, its inherent phenomena are to some extent correlated logically with each other, which means it is possible to infer other phenomena via

the intermediate variables. Therefore, it is feasible to raise a hypothesis and establish chain relationships among phenomena, thus making arguments through the phenomena and facts. Chain relationships refer to the logical relationships among no less than three phenomena. It is possible to construct at least several pairs of chain relationships (see Figure 2).

(1) Constructing the chain relationship between the new three-generation families and the farmers for risk confrontation

The inter-generational division of labor is an inherent phenomenon of the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure in China. That the old engage in agriculture and the young couples work in cities constitutes the basic model of rural inter-generational division of labor, leaving the rural family structure in a long-term status of "inseparable family separation," which has resulted in the common "new three-generation families" in today's rural areas. Such a pattern differentiates itself from the traditional stem and joint families, nor does it resemble the nuclear family in western terms as it ensures that a farmer's family is jointly supported by the three generations–who also stand shoulder to shoulder to cope with the risks in the cities and the social competitions at home.

(2) Constructing the chain relationship between the middle incomes and the rural stabilizers. The half-industrial and half-agricultural structure families have incomes from both sectors, making most of them the middle-incomes in rural China. Being satisfied with their status quo, the conservative rural middle incomes have laid concrete foundations for the stability in rural China.

(3) Constructing the chain relationship between gray hair agriculture and the rural families' engagement in social competitions. The half-agricultural middle and old-aged, or the eldly agriculture, is an integral part of the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure. The gray hair agriculture is crucial to the half-industrial and half-agricultural families for cost-effective finish

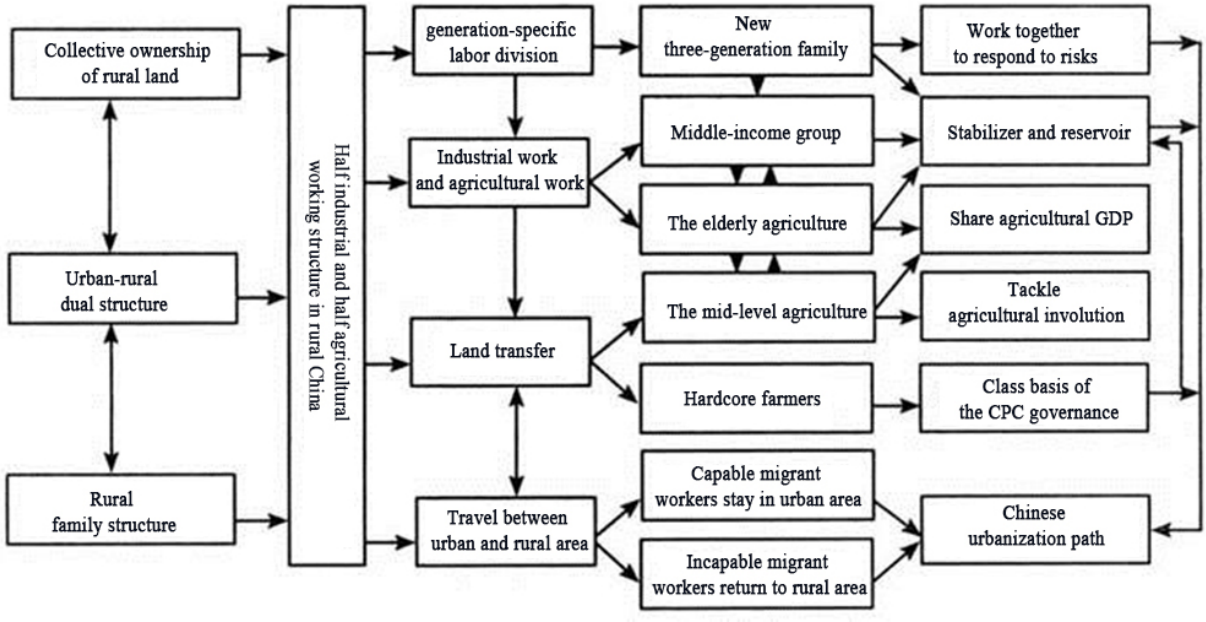

Figure 2 The half–industrial and half–agricultural structure as a mid–level concept

labor force reproduction and engagement in social competitions.

(4) Constructing the chain relationship between the features of mainstay agriculture and the de-involution process. The half-industrial nature of this structure implies that it is inevitable for some rural families to transfer their lands to others. As a result, the ones who acquired these lands will have access to lands of moderate scale, forming mainstay agriculture. With its focus on efficiency and profitability of scale, mainstay agriculture represents the tendency towards de-involution.

(5) Constructing the chain relationship between the mainstay farmers and the reliant forces and villages' political structures. As the principal part of mainstay agriculture, the hardcore farmers' social nature and their unique positions in rural social structures have made them a reliable force for the Party and Chinese government to implement their policies and regulations in the rural areas. The mainstay farmers are vigorous players in the rural political landscapes.

(6) Constructing the chain relationships between the rural land systems and China's urbanization path. The rural collective ownership system is the precondition to the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure. The farmers are enabled to go back and forth between cities and villages as long as they have lands at home.

Therefore, they would repeatedly make multiple attempts to gain urban residency, instead of giving up after one single failure. At the end of the day, only a group of farmers who are more successful will manage to settle down in the cities, while the less achieving ones will return to their lands. During this course, the half-industrial and half-agricultural structure has demonstrated notable elasticity. In other words, the farmers have the flexibility to seek industrial jobs while they can, or return to their lands. Farmers who are more capable will have access to urban residency, and those less achieving still have their access to industrial and agricultural incomes, thus living decent lives at home—that is China's unique urbanization path.

In these chain relationships, the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure could either be an intermediate variable or a primary variable, from which other intermediate variables can be derived. By doing this, the intermediate variables will bridge all the phenomena and elements in a logical manner, and form further explanation chains. Moreover, other significant political, economic, and social phenomena can be explained and set forth through the permutations and combinations of their inherent phenomena. In this sense, it makes sense to define the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure as an analytic middle range concept.

Specifically, the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure is mostly defined as a phenomenon reflecting the incomes and division of labor of rural households in the existing analysis. In-depth investigations have been conducted by leveraging this definition. As a result, few analyses have defined it as an analytic concept. This article constitutes an attempt for the analysis of the rural half-industrial and half-agricultural structure from two dimensions: On the macro dimension, it proceeds from the dissections and estimations of China's economic development in the long run, the income levels of migrant workers, and the institutional urban-rural dual structure; on the micro level, it puts the foothold on the elaboration and detailed analysis of the differentiation of rural managing subjects, the behavioral logic of farmers, and the work division strategies of rural families. By capturing all the phenomena–economic, social, political, family, individual and their chain relationships, this concept explains the diverse socioeconomic and sociopolitical phenomena well in rural China.

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Dislocated Character Affirmation

— A Case Study of Young Female Gamers' Identity in Online Games

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Abstract: What are the real intentions of young women to play online games? Can they benefit more than just entertainment? Based on a 2-year follow-up survey of a young female online gamer, this paper explores the inner experiences of a young female gamers. Findings indicate that young female Chinese gamers attach importance to the choice of characters in the world of online games and that they establish a sense of identity in virtual space through character affirmation and interactions with other gamers. For young female gamers, who are eager to temporarily escape from reality, playing online games is a positive psychological compensation and a process for building self-confidence.

Keywords: character affirmation; online games; young female gamer; identity

Online games① have not received much social recognition. There is a widely-perceived bias that online games can do harm to, or even severely damage a teenager's wholesome personality, psychological health, value concepts, as well as physical development. Due to such a stereotyped understanding, most related research has been conducted from a bystander's perspective. There are

① On November 8, 2008, *Diagnostic Code of Internet Addiction* was approved by the expert panel, officially including computer games addiction into the category of mental disorder. Experts participating in reviewing this code explained, "Internet addiction refers to a type of behavioral disorder which leads to individuals' repeatedly obsessive use of the Internet. Internet addiction can bring about multiple mental and psychological issues, such as introversion, inferiority, confrontation with family members, mood disorder and even social anxiety disorder. A recent survey shows that teenagers of the 13–17 years old age group account for the largest percentage of Internet addicts in China and that over 9% of college students are addicted to the Internet." With the inclusion of computer games addiction into mental disorder list, computer games, online games in particular, once again become a social concern. It is fair to say that the introduction of that diagnostic code is a milestone event in this field, for it prompts the society to have an in-depth understanding of online gamers, particularly young female online gamers. In other words, such a diagnostic code makes it possible to have a quantitative cognition of those gamers' mentality and psychological needs. All people, including those who are for and against it, begin to take the psychological needs of those online gamers (particularly teenage gamers) into serious consideration.

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papers that generally tend to regard online games as a wrong and harmful activity and therefore try to persuade teenagers to keep away from such an activity. However, our observations show that online games are increasing and the online gamer base is expanding. In fact, coercive persuasion of teenagers away from online games is against the Chinese government's intention of making animation and games sector as a key direction for cultural content production. Worse still, it contradicts teenagers' psychological growth and personality development.

This paper attempts to explore the impact of online games on teenage girls from their own point of view and appropriately analyze the relationships between teenage girls and the online games they choose to play. Such an approach helps to correctly grasp the nature of online games and more importantly, understand teenage girls' growth in an age of modern digital entertainment.

According to *The Research Report of the Chinese Mobile Gamers* (2012) issued by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), mobile gamers outnumbered PC-based online gamers, making cellphone the first choice for online games. In China, 57.1% of mobile gamers often played online games via cellphone, while 24% prefer a PC. No obvious gender difference has been found in console games. When it comes to mobile games, however, male gamers significantly outnumbered their female counterparts. This result is basically in line with the increase of Chinese netizens over the past decade. According to *The 19th Statistical Report on the Internet Development in China* released on January 23, 2007, of all Chinese netizens, men accounted for 58.3%, and women for 41.7%. The report also indicated that compared to 2006 there were increases in the respective proportions of female netizens, married netizens, and netizens over 35 years of age.① The rise of female netizens in the gender structure of Chinese netizens suggests an increase in female Internet gamers. Even so, female online gamers, particularly those belonging to the teenage group, remain passive, due to a relatively small choice of online games and limited space for them. The existing social and cultural traditions have placed young Chinese women in a subordinate role, restricting them from free communications at their own will. In this sense, our research, targeting young female gamers, helps to better understand their communication needs and psychological development from the perspectives of social structure and cultural significance. This paper② examines such communication needs and psychological development by conducting a case study of CICI, a teenage girl who played *Fantasy Westward Journey* from age 15 to 17.

The case study was conducted via two channels. One is the author's observation of CICI's two-year online gaming. The other is arranged interviews during the research process. Through CICI's behavior and speech, her thoughts and characters are directly observed. Though such an observation is inevitably subjective in view of observe, this paper attempts to remain true to the original figure and avoid any misgiving or concealment. Basically, the interviews were conducted in two steps. The same was also true of some questions. More specifically, the interviewee (CICI) answered questions during an interview. The next day, she would make some additional remarks if necessary. To better answer

① According to *The 19th Statistical Report on the Internet Development in China* released on January 23, 2007, there were a total of 137 million netizens in China, of which 18–24 age group accounted for the largest proportion (35.206%), followed by 25–30 age group (19.7%), under–18 age group (17.2%) and 31–35 age group (10.4%).

② *Fantasy Westward Journey* is an online game independently developed and operated by NetEase. This online game is set in Chinese historical novel *Journey to the West* and features Q–version images.

Fantasy Westward Journey

our questions, CICI made rational analyses of her "existence" and feelings in the virtual world of online games. Admittedly, feelings are difficult to grasp precisely. Still, to a large extent, her description is a true reflection of her inner world.

1. Young female gamers' choice of characters in online games

In the world of online games, each gamer is endowed with a virtual identity. In cyberspace, the gamers' permanent identity in the real world "disappears." Because of that, online gamers can freely choose one or multiple virtual characters as they like. In this way, they acquire brand new identities in cyberspace. For both gamers and others, there is a significant difference between a virtual identity and a real one. In some cases, the two types of identities are totally opposite to each other.

The possibility to exist as a variety of new characters and establish multiple complicated identities is a notable edge of online game space. Due to gender discrimination, women still receive unfair treatment, which is criticized by feminists. By contrast, for online games, a lack of permanent identity seems to have eliminated gender discrimination in the virtual world. When playing online games, gamers can choose any identity, ethnicity, occupation or even gender they wish. In some cases, gamers can even replace their initial character with a new one. Such a shift of identity is called, in their words, "reincarnation." When gamers reach a certain level and accomplish corresponding tasks, they may be allowed to re-select their character (including ethnicity, occupation and gender) and start the game all over again. For both

the designers and operators, such a "reincarnation" model is designed to retain gamers by offering them the right of repeated character selection. For gamers, this "reincarnation" model is an interesting game of identity shift. As mentioned, they can freely select and shift an identity as they wish to experience the fun of being different characters. In this virtual world, identity can be dynamic and multiple.

In *Fantasy Westward Journey*, CICI chose to play the role of Gu Jingling (bone elf) from Mowang Village. CICI's choice of character and background was based on her own will and identity presupposition in that game. In terms of character setting, Gu Jingling is described as "an elf which transformed from an immortal white bone after absorbing the essence of heaven and earth. With a slim and graceful figure, she is strong and nimble and has great curiosity about everything in the world. She excels at fighting back against attackers with her sharp claws and magic stick." The above description can be summarized into three points. First, this character is a little devil made with vital essence. Second, in terms of personality, Gu Jingling is smart and lively and has strong curiosity. Third, she has no other weapon other than her claws and stick.

CICI's choice of this character reflected her personality in real life. An elf with a strong curiosity was in line with her mentality as a teenage girl. Still, it is Gu Jingling's changeable personality that became the decisive factor of her choice.

As mentioned, Gu Jingling is described as an elf which "transformed from an immortal white bone after absorbing the essence of heaven and earth." Evidently, there is a process of transforming from a "tangible nobody" to an "intangible somebody." To put it another way, the "white bone" is a tangible object, which, though visible, does not bear any meaningful associations. Given that, there is no significance in the very existence of this tangible immortal bone. On the other hand, an elf, though as elusive as it may sound, is often associated with the image of an angel, for which it can receive endless acclaim. Somehow, it has become a symbol of life hidden behind everything.

Furthermore, Gu Jingling is supposed to be "an elf with a slim and graceful figure, nimble movements and a strong curiosity about everything in the world." This character setting creates sufficient space for its identity extension. In fact, such a description can also apply to an individual in real life. It is just that human curiosity is under the restriction of various social norms and regulations. Besides, a slim and graceful figure and nimble movements are subjected to human physiological mechanisms. Therefore, those features cannot be fully demonstrated in real life. In cyberspace, however, gamers can keep expanding their capacity by climbing to higher game levels.

CICI chose Gu Jingling as her role in this game to keep expanding her capacity by transforming from a "tangible nobody" to an "intangible somebody." Part of her wish was impossible in real life, while some other part was artificially suppressed. For example, as an underage middle school girl, CICI faced a variety of social requirements and cultural restrictions. She did not have much to say under such circumstances. When playing *Fantasy Westward Journey*, she became Gu Jingling, a role enabling her to interact and communicate with other online gamers (i.e. "others") on an equal footing. The intention of CICI's character choice was also revealed in her conversation with us, which is to be further elaborated in the latter part of this analysis.

2. Young female gamers' sense of identity in online games

A sense of identity is developed with the awakening of individual awareness. An individual's

identity is shaped by both innate factors (genetic relationships) and acquired factors (social roles). One's identity determines one's social class, rights, interests, obligation and responsibilities. Meanwhile, it also determines one's life consciousness, values and dignity. Identity, or sense of identity, is an individual's identification and classification of his or her role in society. Such a classification is conducted within the framework of certain social categories. Also, this identity, demonstrating an individual's social mentality—a sense of belonging, is an individual's confirmation of his or her consciousness of life.① According to Stuart Hall, "The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not united around a coherent 'self.' Within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identifications are continuously shifting."② In the virtual world, online gamers no longer work on "being the same outside and inside" or building a unified identity. Instead, they make full use of the online gaming platform to further explore their potential. A calm and mild person may exhibit a restless and violent side in the world of online games. This seemingly multiple personality is a manifestation of the online gaming platform's balancing effect. There are times when one's virtual and real identities fail to conform to each other, or even turn against each other. For example, some gamers, having released all their violence in virtual space, become even more peaceful in real life. That is the result of the balancing effect.

In the world of online games, CICI looked for a totally different identity experience and at the same time hoped to have her new identity affirmed through her interactions with other gamers.

…

CICI: Back then, I had no idea of (virtual space). I just felt that it might be different from the real world. Perhaps I purely looked for something new and exciting.

Researcher: Do you feel any difference between online games and console games?

CICI: Online games enable gamers to communicate with each other and offer them a variety of roles that may be totally different from their identities in the real world.

…

Researcher: Is there any difference between your interaction with online gamers and that with friends and classmates in reality?

CICI: More colloquially, you can "pretend to be someone else." You can "become" the kind of person which you cannot in real life. After all, you only communicate online. In front of you is just a screen on which you may see the image of a person. You do not actually see the real person. In a way, I think the Internet has amplified the darker side of human nature.

Researcher: The thing is, you can also pretend to be someone else on other online platforms or social media like QQ. What's so different about online gaming platforms?

CICI: In the world of online games, you can see your role, which is a replacement of yourself. However, on other online platforms and social media, you can only see words, which cannot give you the same intimacy as that of online games.

Researcher: How do you understand the darker side of human nature? Do you actually mean you do not have to follow all those rules in the real world and can do whatever you want?

…③

① Yang, Xiaohong. (2006). *Media Discourse: Presentation of Individuals through Modern Communications*. Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, pp:195–196.
② Hall & Stuart. (2000). Cultural Identity and Diaspora, quoted in Luo Gang (eds.), *Culture Studies Reader*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, pp:208–222.
③ Quotes in the first interview with online gamer CiCi.

It is hard to believe such mature and rational remarks were from a teenage girl. Her remarks indicate two facts. First, this interview was done right after her playtime, for which CICI was yet to come out of that virtual world. The role she played online was still in her mind and therefore could be traced in her remarks. In other words, there was some lag in CICI's shift of identity, which implied a significant impact of her online character on her real life. Second, CICI had both the immature and unstable mentality of a young woman and the precocious temperament unique to a new generation growing up in an age of information. Just like her peers, CICI started to use computers and the Internet when she was little. Totally used to the cyber world, she regarded the Internet as part of her life.

An eager for interpersonal communication was the primary factor that drove her to online games. For CICI, solo exploration in console games was too lonely, while online games, featuring a shift of identity, was a better channel to explore herself. She did not like online forums or QQ, for such social media only offered text message service (no video). In other words, netizens on those platforms were presented in the form of fragmented text. Under such circumstances, they could not showcase their full image as a real person. By contrast, in the world of online games, they had the chance to build a more true image of themselves. She needed such an "identity" to exhibit the other side of her and express her true self. Although attributing that need to the "darker side of human nature," CICI explicitly expressed her wish to release part of her instinct restricted by reality. From this dialogue, we can infer that CICI hoped to build a new "self" of her own free will in the world of online games. To put it another way, CICI had a strong desire to acquire an identity of her own in virtual space.

Obviously, identity acquisition merely marked CICI's start of an online gaming life. More importantly, she needed a sense of identity and wanted to realize self-fulfillment. A significant part of online gamers are young female students (like CICI), who lead a plain life and lack a sense of achievement. For them, it is easier to realize self-fulfillment in the world of online games, where they can temporarily escape from the reality and upgrade themselves by overcoming some of their inherent weakness. As CICI put it, "What is the point of exposing your weakness in real life? I have the feeling that everybody online is pretending to be someone else, or someone better than oneself. In cyberspace, you can do what you cannot in real life." CICI used the word "pretend" to refer to a shift of identity online. Basically, there are two reasons for such a shift. First, it can bring about more freedom and enable gamers to get rid of pressure or restrictions and to act as they wish. In CICI's words, "In cyberspace, you can do what you cannot in real life." Second, it helps gamers to acquire social recognition as soon as possible. With a new identity and a new way of acting, gamers can expect more favorable feedback and praise. To put it in CICI's words, "Everyone is pretending to be someone better than oneself."

Girls like CICI are forced to live in a learning environment and are only judged on their academic achievements. They do not have many chances to gain extensive recognition in today's already diversified social structure. Under such circumstances, online games' virtual space, along with its feature of identity shift, brings them an equal opportunity to compete and a pluralistic assessment system. They thus have more chances of being recognized by society and relevant communities. Although such recognition only exists in the virtual world, they can gain a general psychological compensation. For most people, things like huge wealth, achievements and fame are out of reach in the real world. However, people

may find it much easier to acquire them through online games. For example, once a gamer becomes "famous" in cyberspace, he or she can receive more trust and opportunities (recognition, experience points, game currency, etc.) than other gamers. In the world of online games, the physical absence of gamers bridges the gap between male and female gamers. Competition in online games has nothing to do with their real physical condition, age, gender or identity. Online games, featuring fast and convenient information dissemination, place all gamers at the same starting point and provide them with an equal amount of resources. American scholar Sherry Turkle agreed that in the Internet era, every individual is an integration of multiple identities. She further pointed out that one's real life only showcases one human side, just like one window opened on a computer screen. Humans now establish their true identity through a shift between the real world and virtual space, and from one "window" to another.①

3. Young female gamers' liberation of identity in online games

Regarding online games-based virtual space and identity shift, the biggest advantage lies in their deconstruction of the "subject" concept and diversification of social culture in the virtual world. The possibility to enrich identities is a key factor for online games to attract and retain young female gamers. Such a possibility is also a major benefit that they expect to get from online games. Without a "subject," every gamer becomes an equal part of the complicated and diversified network of interpersonal relationships. This deconstruction of "subject" provides young female gamers under various restrictions in real life with something they hold dearest: Freedom. Online games create a decentralized space for fragmented information production and a platform for dispersive web-like communications. In the face of so many audio, visual and emotional impacts, all that online gamers can grasp is the already opened "window," for grand narration has lost its market.

In the real world, young women are generally restricted by rules of a male-dominated society, forced to compete with their male peers on an unequal footing. Any slight negligence can be regarded as proof of their "inferiority to men." Moreover, according to the social norms, women are supposed to exhibit their "maternal instinct" and "femininity." As the "subject" gradually falls apart, the significance of online games is diversifying and the long-term restrictions on women are loosening. In the world of online games, no clear conclusion has yet been reached on correctness, wrong doing, success or failure. It all depends on individual gamers' free choice of identity. For women, this makes it no longer necessary to compete unfairly with men and enables them to choose their lifestyle based on their own conditions and advantages. Meanwhile, they do not have to care about being compared or judged by others.

It turned out that the first interview significantly aroused CICI's curiosity. After the interview, she went abroad for study and has barely played online games since. She left the following message for the researcher on QQ.

…

There is another question. Why are there so many teenagers obsessed with online games in China? This question reminds me of a saying in a Chinese film that, "This is the outcome of China's 5,000-year-long sexual repression." I am not saying that online game addicts need more sex. But nowadays, one can barely avoid

① [The UK] David Gautlett (2004). *Web Studies*, Peng Lan, etc. (trans), Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House.

such stuff when surfing the Internet.

Online games create a virtual world where people can start their own "family." It is a pity that the Chinese education is not open enough and fails to deliver due performance. Why? Just think about it. Have you seen so many teenagers obsessed with online games abroad? Absolutely not, I dare say. With more extracurricular activities, foreign students are busy developing their social competence and prefer not to waste their time on online games. In addition, foreign teenagers are much more open than their Chinese peers. Let me show you one example.

A Chinese teacher may ask a middle-school student, "What's your plan this weekend?" Do you think it possible for that student to say, "Just hang out with my boyfriend/girlfriend?" No way. But such an answer is more common for students abroad. Online games can comfort numerous lonely souls. By playing online games, you can have your negative emotion released and grapple with whoever you like to your heart's content. At the same time, you can also make online friends[①]…

Judging from the tone of this conversation, CICI was more relaxed during the second interview, expressing herself at will. This probably has a lot to do with her life experience abroad. It can also be that her detachment from online games facilitated an in-depth reflection of her past virtual life. It is noteworthy that CICI mentioned "sex" during the conversation. Considering the actual needs of her age group (networking and social activities), it is more accurate to understand her term of "sex" as "gender needs." CICI also complained the "Chinese education is not open." What CICI really criticized was the entire education system and environment facing Chinese teenage girls (including education in school, family and society). And it should not be narrowly understood as school education. This is a direct reason for teenage girls like CICI to seek a sense of identity in the world of online games.

CICI chose her preferred "lifestyle" in that virtual world to get rid of a variety of restrictions and a unified value system in the real world. Young female gamers enjoy full freedom to select game roles and design their characteristics. Such an innovative game mode creates an ideal space for the unfairly treated groups (including teenage girls) in real life. "Online games can comfort numerous lonely souls. By playing online games, you can have your negative emotion released and grapple with whoever you like to your heart's content." Evidently, CICI found her own "gender space" in the world of online games.[②] Such a space enabled her to escape from real pressures and identity restrictions and enter an environment of free competitions and fights.

In fact, relevant clues can be traced from the gender and identity description of major characters in *Fantasy Westward Journey*. Each character in the game is the mixture of a gamer's own will and the original game setting. On the one hand, as the character is an "avatar" of the gamer, its behaviors and movements are under the control of the gamer. On the other hand, the character also bears certain pre-set features which cannot be overlooked or

① Quotes in the second interview with online gamer CiCi.

② The abovementioned "gender space" is not the same gender space in feminist studies. With a narrower scope of denotation, the term in this paper is online games-based. Originally, this concept was proposed by a female computer gamer named Jane during a lecture on computer technology at Stanford University on April 15, 2003. According to her, in cyberspace human interaction is achieved via "avatar." There, some people work hard on pretending to be someone totally different from themselves; while others prefer to present their true self. In such a context, some gender plays have been developed, which can be very interesting. Jane interpreted the alienation and identification between avatars as a necessary tension. Based on that, she proposed the concept of "gender space." In real life, the word "gender" indicates an absolute either/or distinction; in the world of online games, however, "gender" is more of a structural term, rather than an absolute concept. Given that, she considered game gender to be a type of space, i.e. "gender space" (http://www.gamegirladvance.com/archives/2003/04/16/genderplay_successes_and_failures_in_character_designs_for_videogames.html).

deleted. Through sustained manipulation of an "avatar," gamers gradually become integrated with their "avatar." This somewhat illusory identity orientation can also exert a certain impact on gamers. To gain recognition from people online, gamers unconsciously adjust their behavior in accordance with those people's imagination, or anticipation. Right from the very beginning, the gender of a character has had an influence on gamers. Thus, it can be concluded that young female gamers do enjoy more choices when playing online games. In this regard, Sherry Turkle explored a series of network environments (including MUD)[①] in an ethnographic approach to study cyber identity. She discovered that some people were reluctant to have their real life exposed online, while most people were willing to showcase their true self or multiple sides there. She also concluded that the Internet is conducive to "psychological health" and can act as a complement for a person's psychological deficits in real life. She supported her argument with a real case in which a physically disabled gamer maintained her psychological health by playing a sound and complete character in a game.[②] In this case, the gamer's character in the game was not really in line with her real image, but was somehow part of her hidden ego. For young female gamers like CICI, in a way, the world of online games can be even truer than real life.

CICI was merely one of the numerous female gamers active in *Fantasy Westward Journey* and she was by no means the most special one. Through her, we can catch a glimpse of this young female gamer group. During her transition from a teenage girl to an adult woman, she lived in a relatively simple world without feeling much social pressure on her female identity. Even so, for women living in similar environments, they are bound to be affected by social pressures. It is just a matter of degree. One could detect a strong sense of rebellion against social norms in CICI. The rebellion has something to do with her female identity, as well as her age. For example, when playing online games, she sometimes tended to speak in a violent tone, or even swore, which was against the anticipated image of a woman in current society and did not conform to her image of a "well-behaved girl" in real life. In addition, when playing online games, she frequently exhibited her willful and naughty side, which was in fact a manifestation of her feminine consciousness. In real life, she had to study hard to gain recognition from others. In the world of online games, however, she felt less necessary to be so independent.

"During the process of interpersonal communications, middle school students are likely to have a series of psychological problems, including but not limited to being autistic and defensive, inferiority complexes, social phobias and ego-centricity. Due to those problems, they find it difficult to successfully connect with others, leaving their communication needs unfulfilled. While exhibiting all the features and conditions of human interactions in real life, online game-based communication also enables parties concerned to keep their true identity, age and even gender confidential. Disguised in a "virtual identity," some middle school students feel relaxed and pressure-free to communicate with others. In this way, they can get rid of all the stresses and anxieties of face-to-face communication and at the same time have their communication needs satisfied. This explains why online games are so popular among this age

① MUD is an acronym of "multiple user dimension," or "multiple user dialogue." MUD is a general term referring to all interactive environments. Although MUD can be conducted in various forms, it is mostly presented in the form of online games.

② [The UK] David Gautlett (2004). *Web Studies*, Peng Lan, etc. (trans), Beijing: Xinhua Publishing House.

group.[1] Just like many female gamers, CICI did not have much interest in raising her game level, beating monsters, or winning game currency. Instead, she wanted to get recognition, cultivate a sense of identity, make friends and have fun in her dull daily life. When playing online games, she behaved more true to herself than she did in real life, because only in that virtual space could she freely express her inner desires. For most young female gamers, or most women, being recognized and cared about remains their true wish. Affected by all the inherent biases and stereotypes in real life, they feel lonely and autistic and are unable to make more friends. In other words, they can feel the unfair social norms and competition right from their early years. Thanks to the opportunity to re-select their identity, they can reverse the adverse tide in the world of online games. Therefore, they choose to hide their true identity and rely on an identity shift to fulfill their real needs in a virtual space.

Through their role in online games, young female gamers like CICI feel recognized and establish a sense of identity. However, the world of online games can only offer a temporary shelter from reality. And it is just a matter of time for online gamers to return to the real world to tackle real challenges and dilemmas. At the age of 17, CICI went abroad for further study and stopped playing online games. She explained, "Yesterday, you asked why I stopped playing online games. I thought about your question for a while and concluded that it was mainly because none of my friends do that anymore. I think playing games is all about having fun with friends. Without those friends, online games are meaningless…It is my friends' companionship that has endowed online games with significance."[2] Through her role in online games, CICI expanded her communication space and gained recognition from her peers online. However, when she could no longer get such recognition or a sense of identity there, CICI immediately noticed the dislocation between the virtual space and the real world. Given that, returning to the real world and facing reality became an inevitable choice for her. It of course needs to be noted that the online gaming experience and identity establishment helped CICI to create a balanced mind and most important of all, build sufficient confidence in addressing challenges. This is perhaps the real significance of online games.

(Translator: Wu Lingwei; Editor: Jia Fengrong)

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① Wang Boqun.(2008). Online Games' Impact on the Psychological Health of Middle School Students. *Primary and Middle School Educational Technology*, (3).
② Quotes in the third interview with online gamer CICI.

Diversity and Innovation: Progress and Exploration of Domestic Art Movies in 2016

Lu Kan*

Abstract: One defining feature of domestic movies in 2016 is the outstanding performance made by art movies. In general, these art movies improved the overall quality of Chinese movies and the aesthetic appreciation of Chinese viewers. While highlighting the values of art and thought amid the commercial or entertainment movies, the art movies aroused public concern for domestic movies. Domestic art movies in 2016 are characterized by a close link between their art form and avant–garde style and their realist approach, affinity to the people and thought–provoking insight. Such characteristics enabled them to make new contributions to the development of realism. Some exhibited the producers' relentless exploration and pursuit of innovation, vividly demonstrating the diversity of contemporary art movies. For example, some delivered an impressive modern interpretation of traditional Chinese aesthetic philosophy– "the extraordinary lies in the ordinary;" some had a novel camera expression and unique space–time composition; some established an in–depth connection between laughter and critical thinking by combining comic and tragic elements; some rendered innovative presentations by integrating modern style with ethnic culture; and some adopted ideographic means to enhance the significance of art movies. At present, however, Chinese art movies still lack a grand spiritual vision, with their themes to be further enriched and their concepts and expressions to be better integrated. Domestic art movies need to be endowed with more profound significance.

Keywords: art movie; art form; realist approach; exploration and innovation; spiritual vision

Different from commercial movies which attach great importance to storytelling, art movies focus on spirit connotation and cinematic forms innovation. With unique artistic features, they are at the frontier of a country's movie

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industry. One defining feature of China's domestic movies in 2016 is the outstanding performance made by art movies. Compared with 2015, there were a larger number of art movies with better quality got more media attention. This indicates that aspiring movie makers enhanced their loyalty to and passion for art movies despite fierce market competition. Some of their creations, listed below, demonstrate the progress and exploration made by domestic movies.

1. The close link between "art form and avant-garde style" and "realist approach and affinity to the people"

Domestic art movies released in 2016 are characterized by a close link between their art form and avant-garde style and their realist approach, affinity to the people and thought-provoking insight. Among the attention-raising art movies, there were some with innovative art forms and impressive themes, which were close to the reality and the daily lives of ordinary people. Meanwhile, their progress in character building reflected the people-oriented principles during their pursuit of individualistic expression.

The first art movie that attracted media attention in 2016 was *Song of the Phoenix*, which depicted the challenges facing musicians who play the suona horn (Also called laba or haidi: A Chinese double-reeded horn.) and their commitment to this folk art. The movie raised public concern over the value orientation in cultural protection. The protagonist, Master Jiao, represents numerous rural artists who live on and are also committed to traditional folk arts. He was simple and unadorned, yet at the same time shrewd and narrow-minded. Also, there were a variety of characters with distinctive and sophisticated personalities. For example, Tianming, Jiao's apprentice, was an innocent, hardworking and ambitious young man who had strong passion for, and great loyalty to, art. In the context of the market economy, some members of the suona ensemble stuck to their performing cause, while others swayed. This movie unveiled folk artists' perseverance and hardships in the inheritance of ethnic and folk culture. Meanwhile, it also showcased the clashes between material indulgence and artistic ideal in an open cultural environment, and the opposite stances and attitudes of Master Jiao and his apprentices towards art, life, society, conscience and commercial interests. Tough and harsh, those are the real challenges that Chinese culture and Chinese society once faced, or are facing. Through simple and unadorned movie techniques, idealized rural artistic ecology and uncolored acting, this movie criticized money's erosion of souls in the cause of artistic inheritance. Sweating and bleeding to complete the *Song of the Phoenix* before passing away, Master Jiao thus became a symbol of artistic ideals and shed an unflattering light on contemporary society. This movie provoked viewers' reflections on artistic conscience and social problems attached to cultural development.

Song of the Phoenix

Another seemingly plain movie *Soul Mate* unveiled the positive impact of social reform on the spiritual growth of teenagers through a depiction of ordinary life. A first glance of this movie may leave the impression of a rather plain story about the growing-up of two primary-school friends,

I Am Not Madame Bovary.

Qiyue and Ansheng. As time went by, their varied family backgrounds led to their different choices of education and career, forming an objective contrast between the two lives "inside and outside the system." The story was set in a more stable and tolerant environment in the wake of the increasing opening-up of society and the decay of traditional system. Under such circumstances, teenagers could have a diversity of life choices while those seemingly firm and warm relations in traditional sense, such as friendship, kinship, love, marriage and family were without exception adversely affected with the proceeding of social reform and opening-up and the diversification of lifestyles. Their lasting friendship, originating in childhood, survived the impacts of the changing economic environment. The one leading a stable and well-off life "inside the system" began to dream of a more adventurous life; while the one struggling "outside the system" became more and more longing for a stable and cozy life "inside the system." In their own way, the two girls strove to achieve free development. However much their lives changed, the two kind-hearted girls managed to maintain their lasting friendship, which is the most touching part of this movie. The movie came with an open ending with three possibilities. First, having given birth to a daughter, Qiyue left a word to Ansheng before disappearing from the hospital. Second, having given birth to a daughter, Qiyue died from uncontrollable postpartum bleeding. Third, having given birth to a daughter, Qiyue went abroad and led a happy life. The third ending, supplemented with a pure and bright piano concerto, forged an ideal artistic conception and highlighted the value of free development. The two leading actresses, Zhou Dongyu and Ma Sichun, truthfully and vividly interpreted the inner world of their ordinary roles and their turbulent triangle relationship with the male protagonist. They managed to do so without any spectacular techniques, which is rare and commendable. What makes *Soul Mate* extraordinary is the fact that it revealed the impact of social reform on personal growth from a very plain perspective.

Equally plausible is another movie called *I Am Not Madame Bovary*. The real value of this movie lies in its profound significance and critical awareness expressed in an avant-garde approach, which is by no means common among domestic art movies. In this sense, such an approach is exactly its contribution to the cause of art movies. The movie tells a story about a rural woman named Li Xuelian, who appealed to the higher authorities for help over a small family dispute and eventually attracted the attention of both the Central Government in Beijing and local authorities. Her experience exposed certain problems in current social management and political ecology. This story, absurd as it may seem, was a miniature of society and highlighted an ordinary farmer's fight for individual dignity and civil rights. In a way, Li Xuelian became a synonym

for justice fighter. On the other hand, in dealing with Li's case, some grass-root officials, being worldly-wise, chose to "play it safe," take no action at all, or react willfully, triggering a range of absurd and funny follow-ups and incurring much criticism. Such critical significance behind a plain little story is rarely seen in art movies. Of all recently released domestic art movies, few can confront reality and uncover deep-seated social problems like this movie did. The movie managed to make breakthroughs in the profoundness of real-life reflection and the form of artistic representation. It accurately captured and exposed real issues, revealing some deep-seated problems concerning Chinese people's ever-increasing claims of rights and legal protection in a more advanced society, the relationships between governance and care, stability and reform. The story developed in an easy and fluent way. Its comic feature hidden behind a melancholy tone gradually unfolded in a true-to-reality narration.

The movie *Tharlo* may give the first impression of being plain and boring but exhibited a great pioneering spirit and a strong appeal. It reflected the impact of the Cultural Revolution on the Chinese people and depicted the pathetic life of a lower-class laggard. The movie began with a Tibetan herdsman, Tharlo, reciting *Serve the People* in front of the camera. This 5-minute close-up long-take truthfully recorded Tharlo's fluent recitation from beginning to end. Such a recitation could not be more common during the Cultural Revolution. When the camera shifted to the audience—an old policeman of today, however, it turned out that this story was not set in the past, but present. Following that, the movie revealed more about Tharlo, introducing him as a Tibetan orphan working as a herdsman and that he remained single at middle age. In a better living condition, he could wear a leather jacket and ride a motorbike. Still, his house looked quite shabby. When he was once in town for business, Tharlo met a girl working at a hair salon, through whom he got to know Karaoke and pop songs. He mistook such an encounter for true love and gave a total of over RMB 100,000 earned from selling sheep to the girl. Unexpectedly, when he woke up from a drunken stupor, the girl had already disappeared, taking away all his money. The movie ended with a scene in which Tharlo stood alone beside his motorbike at the side of the road. Tharlo's story was a little sad, which exposed a variety of real-life issues. Long takes were frequently adopted to express the slow elapse of time in Tharlo's life. There was even a water pouring shot lasting for tens of seconds. Such long takes managed to deliver an impression of underdeveloped life and reflect the imbalanced development of regional economies. Tharlo's misfortune demonstrated a clash between modern civilization and traditional Tibetan culture and indicated how culture should be inherited and absorbed. Meanwhile, it also showcased the diversity of modernity. While bringing about convenience and happiness, modernity is also accompanied with various temptations and moral issues. Most important of all, the movie provoked a reflection of Tharlo's impoverished life. Tharlo's ability to recite classic essays is key to tracing his personality development. On the one hand, such an ability was a manifestation of his simple and unadorned passion for those "classic essays." On the other hand, it also revealed the fact that extraordinary memory was almost the only thing he boasted. Over time, there was barely any improvement in his literacy and competence, as opposed to the tremendous progress in social development. The society is in progress, which requires more capable talents. It was a pity that Tharlo could only give play to his good memory in mechanical recitation. In the context of modern culture, changing moral fashion, as well as declining natural economy in a deteriorated natural environment, his simple, unadorned and traditional

mindset was insufficient to cope with real problems and protect himself. After all, one could not solely rely on a simple and unadorned character to make a living. And his only audience, the old policeman, could not give a proper explanation of his confusion. This indicates that there is an urgent need for both laborers and officials to improve their competence at this new development stage. Under such circumstances, the vulnerable group, implicated by social and historical conditions, should strive for joint progress through competence improvement. While showing profound sympathy for Tharlo, the movie exhibited the historic limitations of his personality and the humanistic concern he received at the new development stage.

For an art movie, the key to success lies in its relationship with viewers, the viewers' acceptability, which relies primarily on its artistic presentation (characteristics, profoundness and unity in spirit and form), rather than entertainment (a key performance indicator of other movie genres). A combination of novel form with a strong realistic basis is likely to make satisfactory performance and enhance viewers' acceptance. The abovementioned movies all featured a novel form and attachment to real life. Thanks to this, they managed to attract widespread attention. It is worth mentioning that these movies made a new contribution to the development of cinematic literary realism. More specially, they helped to raise the aesthetic representation of realism. Influenced by a changing era, contemporary realism is different from critical realism and socialist realism. With China transiting from the age of revolution to the age of construction, the cultural function of realism is faced with a transition from social mobilization to more diversified aesthetic representations. This requires enhancing the role of realism in aesthetic creation and cultural construction and creating more artistic images with unique features of the age. By improving our aesthetic forms, the ideology of literary works can be truly instilled into people's minds and thus realize innovative development. In this regard, there were successful cases like *Song of the Phoenix*. They managed to forge new figures in contemporary Chinese society. Through a vivid depiction of the figures' internal and external activities—a skill that the realistic approach is most known for, these movies rendered a soul-stirring aesthetic effect. Daring to confront reality, they were of thought-provoking critical significance and embodied strong humanistic pursuits. Furthermore, they exhibited an open and active attitude towards artistic expression while pioneering modern forms without abandoning realism. Without exception they made positive contributions to the enhancement of ethnic characteristics and popularity of Chinese movies. This is exactly the connotation of modern realism development.

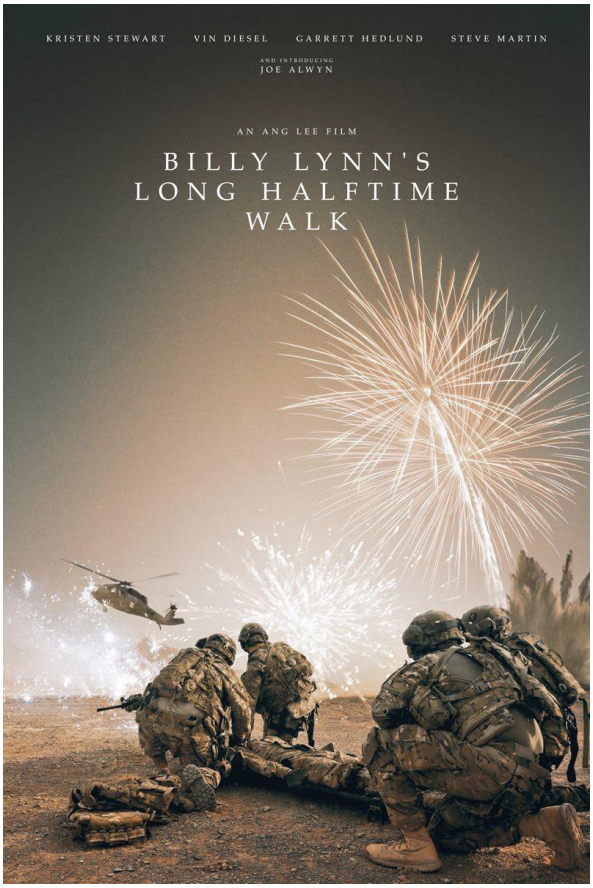
2. Persistent pursuit of reform and innovation

Pursuit of reform and innovation is the defining feature of art movies. Without new forms of artistic expression, art movies would have no chance to survive. For art movie innovations, content innovation is the most essential and is also the most extensive and difficult type. A truly great movie must have a touching plot and a profound ethos, which respectively concerns cinematic literariness and humanity. It is true that the theme of a movie is not a yardstick of its artistic value. Even so, it has become a universal rule that an art movie should endow a minor theme with much-in-little significance and fun. However, the "nobody" or marginal man in some art movies do not have "much" or "extensive" significance, for which their literary value is in doubt. There are also art movies striving to highlight their significance, only to expose the protagonist's isolation from their story. To tell a good

story of China and promote the Chinese spirit, art movie makers need to further expand the space of artistic expression, free their minds, broaden their horizons, and properly deal with the relationships between individuals and society, big and small, form and meaning, and classic and secular culture.

Form innovation is an iconic feature of art movies. A movie without an individualistic form cannot be deemed as an art movie. Form innovation must be of artistically constructive significance, which means it can bring new artistic capacity to a movie. Each innovation in technology, approach or concept is supposed to enhance cinematic representation. For art movies, the core significance of cinematic form is to facilitate aesthetic expression. Cinematic form, supported by various aesthetic carriers, should render the content and ethos of a movie and combine the two into an organic whole. Pursuing form innovation for the sake of form innovation itself should be guarded against. The movie *Gravity* won Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón the 86th Academy Award for Best Director in 2014. The 14-minute long take at the beginning of this movie received unanimous praise among both professionals and viewers. The scene started with a grain-sized bright spot, which was gradually rolled from far to near and from small to large. Eventually, the screen presented a full picture of an astronaut flying through space. Abounding in suspense, anticipation, thrill and magnificence, this long take brought cinematic content, perspective, composition and production into an organic whole.

Such a high integration could not be achieved without technological innovations. Currently, new technological innovations are coming into being in the movie industry. Thanks to the new production and viewing experience brought about by VR and AR technologies, computer-based content generation has facilitated unprecedented realms of representation, allowing for the adoption



Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk

of later-stage visual means in real shooting. Director Ang Lee's 120 FPS project *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, brought viewers a brand-new aesthetic experience and prompted movie makers to rediscover the importance of truthful cinematic representations. To cinematography, technology is not just about form, but also concerns aesthetic style, cultural visions and lofty spiritual pursuits. It helps to raise culture to a new height. Advanced cinematic technology is adopted to create spectacular scenes and build figures, images and artistic conception. In 2015, two movies, *Monster Hunt* and *The Ghouls*, brought the Chinese movie revolutionary cinematic technology and technological aesthetics. Computer-based creation generated new artistic images; and technology was perfectly combined with literariness,

modernity and nationalization. Consequently, satisfactory artistic effects were achieved. The combination of advanced technology with human wisdom can continue to enhance the capacity of movie creation.

In 2016, Chinese art movies experienced a variety of explorations and innovations. Two touching movies, *Song of the Phoenix* and *Soul Mate*, displayed aesthetic style featuring "the extraordinary in the ordinary" and "the profoundness in plainness" with concise forms. For viewers who were used to dramatic and sensational entertaining genre, such art movies were conducive to raising their aesthetic appreciation. More specifically, *Song of the Phoenix* frequently used simple and straightforward illustration to highlight a sense of reality, vividly representing real life-like rural scenes, details, characters and their inner activities. Through a range of real life-like scenes and comparisons, the movie could touch viewers deep inside. The other movie, *Soul Mate*, gave full play to the two leading actresses' simple and sincere performance, through which the protagonists' innocent teen-age years, exuberant youth and sincere friendship were vividly presented. In this way, the impact of social reform was seamlessly blended into the characters' development. For movie production, verbal description was in most cases something to be avoided. In movies like *Kaili Blues*, *Cock and Bull* and *Crosscurrent*, there were quotes from novels and poems. Among them, *Soul Mate* was arguably the only movie with natural and fluent verbal descriptions. Moreover, its same-name novel was skillfully integrated into the movie plot and story development. In other words, all the chapters of the original novel were perfectly integrated into the movie's structure. The movie used the protagonist Ansheng's voice-over of some passages in novel to drive plot development, gradually unfolding the childhood and teen-aged years of the two protagonists. The three endings echoed the "to-be-continued" call of the original novel and had the estrangement between words and screenage completely eradicated.

The movie *Kaili Blues* had a distinct awareness of reform. In a simple and unadorned approach, the movie recalled the coming-home journey of an under privileged rural man who had been away from home for years. This movie was about a farmer's nostalgia, which is quite a rare theme. There was an over 40-minute long take forming unique time-space representation as the protagonist traveled across "time stream," "emotion stream" and "life stream."Alternating between past and present, poverty and development, and truthful depiction and artist's perspective, the movie combined a poetic language with avant-garde cinematography and thus made ordinary screen age extraordinary. The movie also combined a farmer's search for emotional root with the great change taking place in rural area, creating a rare optimistic tone in the end.

Combining an avant-garde form with mainstream values, *I Am Not Madame Bovary* made a diversity of explorations to express spiritual connotations in a unique form. Its uniqueness first was the square and round shape, which once triggered extensive debates. Many movie professionals, including the director himself, have provided their own interpretations of that special composition. Some associated the "round shape" with the landscape painting album of the Song Dynasty, while others related it to the protagonist Li Xuelian's life environment. Regarding the "square," the fact that it was adopted in Beijing-based scenes, "square" in the movie probably signified "rules." The square and round-shaped composition was a daring experiment, which tried to bring significance to its cinematic form. Nevertheless, the implication of this formal composition turned out to be far less significant than expected. No inherent link between the composition and the content could be

traced. It is difficult to imagine that the round shape represented the smooth and evasive officials at the local government level. In fact, being in the center of the screen, the round shape was prone to distract viewers' attention from the movie itself. This was against a key purpose of cinematography—to fully engage viewers in the world created by a movie. To viewers, it was the full frame at the end of the movie that symbolized the protagonist's return to a normal life and her breaking away from previous entangled social circles. Full of dramatic, tragic and comic elements, the movie echoed joy, sorrow and absurdity in real life, and at the same time enhanced its critical significance through certain exaggerated depictions. For example, the orchard man (played by Fan Wei) made fun of Li Xuelian's suicide attempt, which vividly de-constructed the grief. In a seemingly ridiculous approach, the movie criticized the negative attitude towards life. Alternating between tragic and comic scenes outperformed other cinematic techniques in neutralizing the tragic tone of this movie. The music of this movie was well matched with its characters and plot development. Every time Li Xuelian appealed to the higher authorities for help, Chinese drum-based passionate percussion music rang out. When she eventually gave up her appealing attempts and began a new life, a long and sentimental cello concerto pervaded the air, well-coordinated with her helplessness. The different music genres precisely echoed Li Xuelian's emotional ups and downs.

The Donkey, combining absurd drama elements with a realistic approach, profoundly ridiculed various social evils concerning officialdom, culture and human nature. Its plot structure featured strong theatricality and criticism. Although there were only a few characters in this movie, theatrical conflicts faced almost all characters, each of whom became a classic representative of negative meanings such as ugliness, coldness and scheming. Their conflicts

The Donkey

were designed to drive plot development. There was barely any depiction of a real life-based multifaceted personality. The only exception emerged at the end of the movie, where its theme song *I Want You*, with a gentle and fluent melody, neutralized the cold tone of this movie in a detached manner. Its strong color of criticism also reflects a strong concept. In this sense, *The Donkey* can be regarded as an ideographical concept movie. In general, concept work is more capable of serving theatrical purposes. When it comes to cinematography, however, its dialogue-based form of expression inevitably deprives a movie of its primary reliance on rich images. It has been an invariable rule that ideographical expression cannot be achieved without rich images.

The movie *Tharlo* featured simple and plain screenage, one-after-another long takes, infrequent setting changes, a back-and-white documentary-like effect, as well as a still perspective. It vividly highlighted the slow pace of the protagonist, Tharlo's life and the environment in which he lived. In a slow and plain tone, the movie craftily took

advantage of various props and details to adjust its cinematic atmosphere. Examples included a little lamb, which kept Tharlo accompany, and his favorite double-bang firecracker. The little lamb kept in his satchel signified loneliness, companionship, kindheartedness and tradition; while the double-bang firecracker was associated with modernity. The sound of firecrackers at the end of the movie symbolized a released soul in a lonely world and at the same time neutralized the dull atmosphere. Quiet and slow as the movie might be, there was no lack of dynamic and lively elements and rich connotations. With all dialogues in the Tibetan language, it strove to highlight cultural clashes, reflection, protection and re-integration.

3. The integration of art movie with other commercial genres

Further integration of art movies with other commercial genres has become a new trend for the development of art movies. *Three*, *Cock and Bull* and *The Wasted Times* were among the most influential Chinese crime/gangster movies in 2016. The three movies feature an art movie-style mode of representation, which is both mass market-oriented and modern. While enhancing cinematic expressiveness, such a mode of representation can also help to better promote a commercial movie by properly integrating high culture with popular culture. Therefore, it can facilitate a successful in-depth combination of art movie and commercial movie.

The movie *Three* centered on the mental fight between the police and the criminal. Abundant psychological descriptions brought this criminal genre movie an artistic air of "fierce in calmness." In the thrilling criminal investigations, there were many psychological clashes among the police, the criminal suspect and the doctor. All those aspects, including the intense psychological activities of the three parties, the unfolding crimes, the police's dilemma between "standing to duty and abiding by law" and "going beyond the limits," the police's hunting down the suspect and the doctor's insistence on saving the injured suspect, came together to form a huge tension. And the psychological clashes became a driving force for plot development. In addition, the movie also touched upon social issues such as the doctor-patient relationship and the hardship of mainlanders in Hong Kong, which significantly enriched the plot. For example, there was a patient jumping from a building to protest a surgery failure, only to find himself cured by the suicidal attempt. This case created a black humor effect for the movie. Another example was a fierce gun-battle where there was a non-representational depiction of running doctors and nurses in slow motion. Such an approach was to showcase their desperate wish to protect patients. Due to such enrichments, there were not many gun-battle scenes. Instead, the movie was focused on social concerns, human nature depictions, and strong "rule-by-law" atmosphere. Therefore, it could flow unhurriedly like an art movie.

Though as a crime movie, *Cock and Bull* was presented in a very artistic way, full of entertaining, social and ethnic elements. Both the movie title and five subheads are culture-loaded and exhibit characteristics of Chinese novels with chapter titles, which are in stark contrast with its modern narrative structure. Revolving around a murderer-chasing suspense, the movie began with a probe into several people's life and gradually presented some clues, each of which was intermittent and overlapped with others. Based on those clues, the real murderer was eventually revealed. Such a suspense construction and deconstruction had a style of its own, characterized by intense suspense, black humor and modern thriller element. The movie managed to represent

the intensity of murderer chase, create characters wavering between the reality and imagination, and unveil the social problems and standard of values behind crimes. In doing so, it delivered a mixed effect of thrill, absurdity, comedy and serious drama. Skillfully combining cinematic structure, style, modern performance and ethnic customs into a whole, the movie became an aesthetic enlightenment to viewers. By virtue of its abovementioned merits, *Cock and Bull* was able to stand out from a number of crime movies in 2016 to become an art movie with a unique style.

The Wasted Times, combining the representation techniques of gangster movie and art movie, is a masterpiece. On the one hand, the movie unfolded a picture of local gangsters and middle-class people in Shanghai in the 1930s. On the other hand, set in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the movie depicted the suffering and revenge of individual national bourgeoisie in Shanghai. There was no lack of gripping plot and wonderful performances. Its story gradually developed at a calm yet thrilling pace. It is fair to say that this movie was a breakthrough in the "Anti-Japanese War drama" genre. This should primarily be attributed to its unique cinematic perspective. By depicting the national bourgeoisie's life in Shanghai, the movie revealed the truth that "when the nest is overturned, no egg stays unbroken" and the indomitable will of the Chinese people. With all dialogue in the Shanghai dialect, the movie created a rich, leisurely and comfortable world with characteristics unique to the Republic of China period. In this almost surreal world, artists were busy daydreaming; mob bosses remained calm and confident amid drastic social unrest; Japanese spies appeared in sweet music-pervaded places; and Japanese soldiers practiced intimidation, bribery and assassination. Those intertwined plots enabled dramatic turns in story development, provoked thrills in plain depiction, and created a mixed gangster movie genre under the guise of an art movie.

Such integration brings commercial movies

The Wasted Times

more diversified forms of artistic representation, higher-level aesthetic appreciation, more entertaining value and greater influence.

4. Creation limitations and spatial expansion

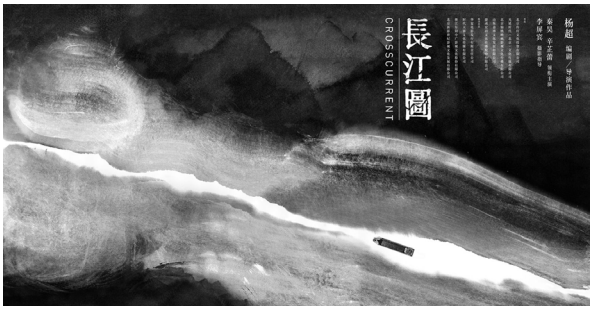
From the overall development landscape of Chinese movies in 2016, art movies have their quality improved and their aesthetic level raised, highlighting the value of arts and ideas amid numerous commercial and entertaining works, and prompting viewers to pay more attention to domestic movies. Yet, in terms of content, art and technique, Chinese art movies were faced with huge challenges from other world-class rivals. Given that, there is still room to improve and innovate.

First, the spiritual vision of Chinese art movies is still very much restricted. Art movies are supposed to be with profound connotations. Most Chinese art movies, however, still lack such a grand spiritual vision. There is no doubt that the production crew of *The Wasted Times* was experienced and skillful. Even so, they were criticized for their "tunnel vision." As the movie approached the end, there was a scene of revenge, in which a lackey, disguised as a KMT soldier, killed the underage son of the presumptuous Japanese spy right in front of him, leaving him falling apart. Such "tit for tat" revenge could not be more shocking. Focusing on gangsters' revenge without paying due attention to legal basis and the Chinese people's rescue of numerous Japanese orphans at that time, the movie, though capable of justifying itself in its character design, somehow lacked the humanistic caring supposed to be the due for art movies. The movie came to an end with Mr. Lu passing the Customs of Hong Kong, implying his going abroad. This scene further belittled the spiritual vision of this movie. Its ending was in stark contrast with that of the South Korean movie *My Way*, in which a war-ridden Korean young man chose to return good for evil, giving the last survival chance to a Japanese soldier who happened to be his former classmate and bullied him in childhood. Such an ending broadened the spiritual realm of that movie and forged a lofty image of Korean people. Moreover, in *The Wasted Times*, there was a lengthy portrayal of Japanese spies' torture of the imprisoned protagonist Xiaoliu (played by Zhang Ziyi) to increasingly faster modern music. For viewers, such a scene meant severe psychological torture. Artistic representation of human suffering requires the guidance of correct values and artistic sense. The movie *Someone to Talk* to expressed a major spiritual ideal: To find someone to talk to. This was supposed to be a touching theme and the movie was full of vivid depictions of real life. However, the fact that this movie was only based on an excerpt of the original novel significantly weakened its story plot, resulting in a failure to "copy" that vivid, typical and profound estrangement from the novel to the screen. Instead, efforts were made to depict gimmicks such as the male protagonist stalking his wife who secretly dated someone else. Because of that, the movie could not reveal the hidden reason for "no one to talk to." Its weak story plot could not afford any profound thought. The movie did not go into the very bottom of real life, but deliberately avoided real issues in a tough society. Given that, it could hardly fall into the category of realistic movie even though it targeted real life. Art movies play a crucial role in the domestic movie industry. Considering the mass commercialization and entertainment orientation in the movie market, art movies can hold their crucial position only by giving full play to their advantageous spiritual vision. Relevant professionals should strive to "extend their vision, deepen their understanding, follow the most advanced trend of all human beings, conduct in-depth exploration of our inner world, and confront the actual living

status of the Chinese people."[①] They should inject even grander spiritual visions and even more sincere artistic emotions into movie production. Only by doing so can we shoulder the great responsibility of leading the Chinese movie industry into a better future and win more viewers.

Second, the content of art movies needs to be further enriched. So far, the content and characters of art movies remain scarce and shallow. There are not many truly charming depictions of major historical events, social problems, higher bonds of union, prominent figures in history, and contemporary heroes or role models. This has a lot to do with the limited vision of Chinese movie literature, and reflects the creators' ideological and social awareness, as well as artistic pursuits. Art movies do not necessarily have to focus on "marginalized people" or "little emotional appeal." In fact, many classic art movies, such as *A Beautiful Mind* and *The King's Speech*, exhibited a grand spiritual vision and delivered a shocking impact on viewers. Directed by Ann Hui in 2014, The *Golden Era* successfully built the images of a batch of left-wing Chinese writers such as Lu Xun, Xiao Hong and Ding Ling during the Anti-Japanese War period. It showcased an art movie's ambitious exploration of heroic figures in a critical era. At a time marked by a fully developed economy, art movies should attach more importance to sincere feelings, social concerns and the pioneering spirit. Only by doing so can they expect to satisfy viewers' inner needs. In recent years, it has become more and more difficult to find truly touching fictions and documentaries. Amid all the hustle and bustle of modern society, movie makers should set higher artistic ideals and values in order to enrich representation content with profound significance.

Third, cinematic concept outweighs narration.



Crosscurrent

The relationship between spirit and narration is of great significance for art movies. It has been accepted by more and more movie makers that the production of art movie of good quality requires relentless efforts in narration, story-telling, as well as the combination of spirit with narration. The movie *Crosscurrent* received mixed echoes, which is probably due to its weak narration caused by excessive conceptual expressions. From beginning to end, the movie unfolded a boatman's experience (i.e. what he saw and what he thought) during his water trip. Its plot was primarily facilitated by the boatman's verses and poems, which contained substantial philosophical expressions. Admittedly, there were concrete depictions of the relationship between the boatman and an unknown woman, the eco-system along the Yangtze River, smuggling by water, huge navigation locks, desolate landscapes, and deserted cabins. Yet it lacked a close narrative thread to link them together, leaving symbolic meanings in doubt. Deliberately pursuing a poetic charm, there are too many conceptualized monologues in the movie. Viewers could not immediately associate what they saw with those profound philosophical implications, which virtually isolated the boatman's image from his surroundings. Full of drama, *The Donkey* successfully created an absurd and ironic comic

① From Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of the 10th Congress of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles (CFLAC) and the ninth Congress of the Chinese Writers Association (CWA) by Xi Jinping, 2016, *China Literature and Art Criticism*, 12th issue, P12.

effect. Yet at the same time, it failed to overcome some obvious conceptual problems and stage-performance characteristics, for which its cinematic expressiveness was not that satisfactory. Besides, the movie was primarily driven by combative dialogues between characters and there were not many screenage variations, which was exactly a feature of a stage play. Art movies need to be endowed with a profound spirit. Such a spirit should be based on easy and fluent narration and conveyed in a vivid and aesthetically appealing manner.

Fourth, there is certain aesthetic distance in cinematic form. Art movies tend to attach great importance to form innovation and representation of the creators' artistic individuality. While bringing about artistic novelty, such a focus can also distance art movies from viewers. For art movies, non-processed depiction of ordinary real life is often the preferred approach of representation. Such an approach advocates truthful representation of daily life and plain manifestation of the story's real meaning without highlighting any dramatic scenes or conflicts. Indeed, it is a tradition of Chinese literature to unveil human relationships and social changes through depictions of a plain and ordinary life. Views like "the extraordinary in the ordinary"① and "adding legendary flavor to a story with a plain theme from ordinary life"② commonly found in the novel comments of the Ming and Qing dynasties, are regarded as the herald of the Chinese literary belief that "real profoundness lies in plain life." Such a tradition has a far-reaching impact on novels created by renowned Chinese writers, including Lu Xun, Ba Jin and Lao She. However, such artistic plainness should be based on the artists' deliberately chosen perspective and should by no means be rendered randomly. When it comes to the representation of plain life, modern art movies are different from their traditional counterparts. Nonetheless, they still need to be invested with certain value orientations and moral significance. Failure to do so may turn such a depiction from plain to boring and trigger aesthetic fatigue. Formal representations should value the aesthetic acceptance of viewers. After all, to further popularize art movies and expand their niche market into the mainstream, we need to bridge the aesthetic distance between artistic forms and viewers.

(Translator: Wu Lingwei; Editor: Jia Fengrong)

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① From Preface to Amazing Tales, 2nd Series by Shuixiang Jushi, "Writers create distorted and sensational stories purely out of curiosity and fail to realize that the extraordinary lies in the ordinary", quoted in Selected Works on Chinese Novels of All Dynasties, published by Jiangxi People's Publishing House, in 1982, on P 259.

② From Preface to Amazing Tales by Ling Mengchu [Ming Dynasty], in Selected Works on Chinese Novels of All Dynasties, published by Jiangxi People's Publishing House, in 1982, on P 256.

Historical Starting Point, Contemporary Vision and World Insight

— New Thinking for the Study of Ancient Chinese Capitals

Xiao Zhenghong*

Abstract: The topic can be summarized in three interconnected aspects; historical starting point, contemporary vision, and world insight. The historical starting point requires the study of ancient Chinese capitals to abide by rigid academic principles and must be based on historical facts. Contemporary vision refers to the obligation to contribute to contemporary society and civilization through ancient Chinese capital research. World insight expresses our need of an integral and systematic concept to correctly assess the historical status and role of ancient Chinese capitals in the larger context to unveil the unique cultural values and historical significance of ancient capitals across China. Chengdu is an ideal case for us to explore new research approaches from the above three aspects.

Keywords: study of ancient Chinese capitals; Chengdu

It has been just over 30 years since the establishment of the Ancient Chinese Capital Research Society. As an independent subject, study of ancient Chinese capitals is still quite young, but its academic foundation is by no means shallow. It has a unique academic tradition and style. However, just like contemporary Chinese society, the study of ancient Chinese capitals is also faced with a major challenge concerning its further development in this new era. This inevitably arouses our concern and sense of responsibility. As Jia Yi in the Western Han Dynasty put it, "Peace is not developed within a day. Neither is a crisis. In fact, both peace and crisis

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are the result of gradual change, for which both must be carefully observed."[①] Jia Yi's argument also applies to the study of ancient Chinese capitals. Evidently, without crisis awareness and innovative initiative, we cannot make progress in this field. It is precisely because of this that the Ancient Chinese Capital Research Society and the Ancient Capital Research Society of Chengdu agreed to jointly host the Ancient Chinese Capital Research Summit and the Seventh Representative Conference of Ancient Chinese Capital Research Society and Academic Symposium on the Ancient Capital Culture of Chengdu. We sincerely hope through our academic discussions at this conference, we can develop a framework for our theoretical and methodological exploration, reach a consensus on how to strategically promote social progress, and propose new development concepts and planning. We need to refresh our vision and mindset in a bid to make innovative progress both in academic research and social services.

This topic can be summarized in three interconnected aspects; historical starting point, contemporary vision, and world insight. The historical starting point requires the study of ancient Chinese capitals to abide by rigid academic principles and must be based on (rather than go against) historical facts. Contemporary vision refers to the obligation to contribute to contemporary society and human civilization through ancient Chinese capital research. World insight expresses our need of an integral and systematic concept to correctly assess the historical status and role of ancient Chinese capitals in the larger context to unveil the unique cultural values and historical significance of ancient capitals across China. In this regard, Chengdu is an ideal case for us to explore new research approaches from the above three aspects.

In the history of ancient Chinese capitals, Chengdu is apparently quite a special sample. We acknowledge the fact that tremendous achievements have been made in previous studies in this field. Still, we must be aware that due to our predecessors' classic definitions and classification criteria, relevant researches have mainly focused on capitals in the Central Plains, or have been conducted studies from the standpoint of dynastic systems. Such an academic tradition, though of great significance, may overlook other aspects and issues concerning the study of ancient Chinese capitals.

As far as we are concerned, there are some noteworthy points.

First, more attention should be paid to the origin and diversified development of ancient Chinese capitals. We should understand and interpret the development of ancient Chinese cities and capitals within an integrated framework. The community of the Chinese nation was formed and developed in a vast space. Due to different geographical conditions, urban origins vary from city to city and the forms and connotations of urban development are subsequently diversified. In fact, the definition of China itself has been in constant evolution. When it comes to the community and spiritual home of the Chinese nation, formation and development are fundamentally based on the evolving definition of China. How was the integration in multi-integration embodied in the early days of the Chinese civilization? In the understanding and interpretation of multi-integration, special attention needs to be given to the connections among different components, whose inherent correlations and essential characteristics can be proved by archaeology and documents. The formation and development of China has been a long-term process,

① It is quoted from *Biography of Jia Yi*,Vol. 48, *Book of Han*.

and our discussion today must be based on the historical facts of a particular space in a particular era. The time-and-space intertwining complicates relevant research. The degree of interregional connection varies from era to era; and there are no clear boundaries between such variations, for they are all part of a gradual process of spatial change. For this reason, there may be different understandings of the concepts of center and periphery.

Our research of ancient Chinese capitals mainly relies on existing historical records, supplemented by archaeological findings. Such a research method helps to build a basic system and a cognitive framework regarding the development of ancient Chinese capitals. Yet, there were times when we marveled at the accidental discover of an ancient Chinese capital not mentioned in any historical record. The latest example is the Shimao Site. It is now understood that the Shimao Site is the largest known townsite between the late Longshan Period and the early Xia Dynasty. It is located on the hillside to the north of the Tuwei River in Shimao Village, Gaojiabao Town, Shenmu County, Yulin City, Shaanxi Province. It belongs to the north margin of the Loess Plateau in northern Shaanxi and is a magnificent stone-built townsite. Although we are still deepening our understanding of the Shimao Site, researchers of ancient cities, particularly ancient capitals, are amazed by this stone-built townsite. To some extent, this discovery overthrows our traditional approach which traces the origin of ancient cities to the Central Plains and follows the dynastic systems prescribed by official historical records. The discovery of the Shimao Site is arguably an accidental event, but its inevitability lies in the fact that it is an objective existence, which might not have been known to people over a long period of time. The same is also true of the Sanxingdui culture. How can we objectively interpret the ancient Shu Kingdom and recognize the historical status of Chengdu without taking Sanxingdui into account? Please note that the examples of the Shimao Site and the Sanxingdui Site are only a part of a bigger picture. There will probably be similar ancient townsites discovered in the future. Typical cases like the Shimao Site and the Sanxingdui Site, which are respectively located in the north and south, indicate a necessity to value their variety and diversified development. In terms of urban development, modern cities are not that different from their ancient counterparts. Restricting our research practice to a single urban development path may group many diverse ancient Chinese cities into an oversimplified interpretive model. Because of this, we may consider traditional Chinese culture, with the city as the key manifestation, to be a single structure and connotation, and replace or cover other traditional cultural forms and types with a mainstream or dominant one, which is definitely not an appropriate academic mindset.

Moreover, during our research, we must pay close attention to the development process of ancient Chinese capitals. This ancient study is undoubtedly of modern significance, for it can offer important references to modern urban construction and social progress. However, the research object confines this field within the realm of historical studies. When historical concepts are applied to explain ancient Chinese capital research, it is inevitably attached with two primary meanings. First, historical concepts indicate the fact that ancient Chinese cities belong to a particular era, for which they take on corresponding epochal characteristics. Second, it also means those ancient Chinese cities are always in a developmental process and therefore, instead of being static and invariable, are the outcome of a dynamic process. Given that, when exploring ancient Chinese cities, including ancient capitals, we should examine their whole development process, from origin, through development to decline and fall,

and evaluate their status and role from a historical perspective. A truly great historical city may have contributed significantly and even played an indispensable role during a specific period in human history. It may be the very spatial base of a modern city, or may be nothing but its shadow. In the eyes of some modern people, it is like an ancient legend. Indeed, a city is fortunate to fall into the category of the former. The existence of the latter one, however, is no obstacle to our full affirmation of its previous glory, either. For this reason, we should expand our research into a variety of cities in different historical periods. There are ancient cities only witnessing temporary prosperity in history or that are far away from the Central Plains–a traditional core area of China's imperial regime. If they have played an important role in the social development of a particular region at a certain historical stage, they deserve our attention and require us to make a correct and objective assessment of their value as a historical and cultural inheritance from the perspective of regional development. Even if they no longer offer any spatial or material support to today's urban development, they still represent an unforgettable tradition and therefore should be deemed an important part of modern civilization and urban spirit.

Third, during our study of ancient Chinese capitals, special attention needs to be given to the theory of relationships. The so-called theory of relationships opposes the isolated evaluation of a city's origin, evolution, function and role. The development of modern cities relies on their surrounding environments, which is nothing new to us all. How did cities in ancient times develop? In fact, their development track was like that of modern cities. In a traditional self-sufficient society, social components tended to remain isolated from each other. Still, interactions were almost everywhere. Isolation and interaction are just two different sides of the same process. Therefore, for the study of ancient cities, special attention should be paid to both their natural and social environmental systems where those cities were based and given full play to. That is to say, when we study an ancient capital, we need to place it in a broader view. The theory of relationships enables us to attach equal importance to a city's external relations, as well as its internal functions and structures. Different from narrow-minded intra-regional relationships, such external relationships are expected to be open and integrated. For example, an analysis of an ancient capital in an alternative-capital system cannot be made without mentioning the role of the other capital, for the two capitals were interdependent. Also, when evaluating Zhangye, an ancient city along the Silk Road during the Sui and Tang dynasties, we must consider the faraway capital Chang'an (currently Xi'an), for Zhangye's status and function was closely associated with Chang'an. Likewise, when evaluating other ancient cities in remote areas, we should not only focus on their unfavorable geographical conditions, but also consider the entire system, which may concern their relationships with core areas of the imperial regimes in power at the time. In some cases, we may also need to evaluate ancient cities without regards to the borders of modern countries by looking at the big picture of international politics and cultural development. Our studies of ancient Chinese capitals must avoid becoming isolated and restricted to the scope of ancient China, and thus develop into a prominent international study. Special attention should be paid to the rational utilization of comparative research methods. Such comparisons need to include ancient cities both at home and abroad, not just among ancient Chinese capitals. Due to the existence of different civilization systems and various developmental environments unique to their corresponding regions, there has been a diversity of development paths and models. Such a diversity

is bound to be embodied in the urban development system, form, and function. We hope that through comparative research we can determine the unique value of each city, instead of simply highlighting the historical significance of some and overlooking, or even denying, that of others. Different ancient cities require different research methods, and we must resist hastily rating them as being advanced or backward.

Fourth, we should always pursue the integration of an ancient capital's inner spirit with its external manifestation. For an ancient capital, factors like urban size and duration of existence count. However, any failure to examine its era-specific ethos may result in a one-sided view. We believe all city construction must be based on a unique philosophy. There is a soul in every city. For truly great cities, what really matters is not their urban scale, but their urban philosophy and spirit. Essentially, great cities over all times, without exception, embody the great philosophy and spirit of their era. It is noteworthy that in terms of urban inclusiveness, initiative, innovation, benevolence, moral integrity, literary and military ideals, religious beliefs, ethnic identities, humanistic environments and harmony between man and nature there are identifiable differences among ancient Chinese cities and capitals. The unique ethos of an ancient capital, developed over time, has formed its cultural tradition and become an indispensable part of the urban structure. Even today, this ethos exerts its impact on a city's image and development. Today, when identifying the spirit of a city, we rely heavily on analyzing and summarizing its time-honored ethos. In this sense, contemporary study of ancient Chinese capitals must seek an integration of its inner spirit with its external manifestations.

By modifying our research focus and methods we expect to significantly extend our academic scope. We hope our case study of the famous historic city of Chengdu can become the example for relevant research. Chengdu is of special significance in the history of ancient Chinese capitals and it is not feasible to have a simple view of Chengdu or other similar ancient Chinese cities merely by drawing on the successful experience of previous ancient capital studies. It seems that researchers in this field tend to highlight the significance of ancient cities in the core area of the imperial regime and overlook peripheral cities. In fact, "periphery" is relative to "core area." An adjustment in our perspective of spatial dimensions can definitely bring about a different approach. Such an adjustment mainly concerns two aspects. First, it requires a holistic view of China. Second, it means placing China and its components into a global view. Through this adjustment, we will be able to evaluate different ancient capitals more objectively and avoid applying a single model to evaluate all ancient cities and their historical status.

We sincerely hope our research and evaluation of Chengdu can generate a positive response, provoke critical thinking, and set up an example to advance the Ancient Chinese Capital Research Society's future research. For this summit, Chengdu is not just a host city, but also an ancient capital with symbolic significance. It has the potential to become an "academic metaphor" broadening our mind and advancing our research.

The last part of this speech concerns my academic view of Chengdu's historical status as a major ancient Chinese capital.

As abovementioned, when it comes to Chengdu's historical status as a major ancient Chinese capital, there are a range of conceptual issues, such as the origin of local civilization, the relationships between different regions (particularly between peripheral regions and the Central Plains) and regional influence. In this regard, we need to innovate existing theories, push the limit of outdated concepts and establish a new thinking within a

multi-integrated framework.

The view that Chengdu is a special sample in the history of ancient Chinese capitals is on solid academic ground. Indeed, Chengdu's remarkable development path is unique. At its early development stage, there were civilizations like Sanxingdui and Jinsha, whose origins and development paths were distinctly different from those in the Central Plains. Their profound connotations and forms of expression represent a special type of civilization in early human history. The exquisite unearthed relics (such as the bronze sacred trees and gold foil masks at Sanxingdui, and the bronze head sculpture and solar divine bird at Jinsha) demonstrate the brilliant culture of the ancient Shu Kingdom over 3,000 years ago. Following the eras of the Sanxingdui and Jinsha civilizations, Chengdu has made plausible achievements in urban construction and cultural development at almost every stage of Chinese history. Looking back, we have every reason to believe Chengdu has shaped its own style in terms of geo-relationships, political status, approach and level of economic development, form of culture, city ethos, ethnic composition complexity and integration, social structure, and more importantly its external relationships with Southwest Asia. It is an important representative, if not the only representative, of a typical pattern in the history of ancient Chinese capitals. Such uniqueness relies on comprehension and cognition, for it is a comprehensive expression involving both analytical research and integrated interpretation. Just like many other cities, Chengdu is rich in prominent symbolic expressions. But this does not mean its special historical status can be decomposed to individual symbols. Instead, it must be understood as an integral whole of cultural, ethical and material development.

Chengdu is undoubtedly a renowned ancient Chinese capital. Currently, scholars are divided in their view concerning the definition of major ancient capital, which is not surprising. There are two reasons for this division of opinion. One is the

Sanxingdui

criteria of a major ancient capital, which is overt. The other is cultural attitude, which is covert. So far, cultural attitude has not yet been given adequate attention, as opposed to this field's unanimous dwelling on the criteria. In most cases, whether a city can be included in the list of ancient Chinese capitals triggers few disputes. When it does trigger certain disputes, it is probably because of its short existence as a capital or its exclusion from the orthodox Chinese dynastic system. When it comes to the evaluation of a major ancient capital, however, the situation is quite different. Basically, the criteria of a major ancient capital should remain objective. Usually, the public is curious about whether an ancient capital is really big enough to be identified as a major ancient capital from an objective point of view. Regarding this, it is necessary to re-examine the criteria of a major ancient capital. How big is big enough? What does major really refer to? Initially, major ancient capital was only a vague term, whose clear definition, as usual, came much later. The term major ancient capital first emerged during the first half of the 20th century, or rather, the Republic of China era. A review of its academic history can give us a clear picture of its formation, development and evolution. When discussing the criteria of a major ancient capital, most scholars now tend to condense the views of previous eminent scholars into a few salient points. They hope to form a pattern based on their predecessors' common view of typical capitals and use this pattern to compare relevant cities. Such a comparative research method identifies those patterned components as its evaluation criteria. Thus, scholars tend to abandon the systematic and integral research approach highlighting the individuality and integral architecture of a research object, and apply a comparative approach which ignores the connections among cities and isolates relevant factors.

In the field of historical studies, such an academic paradigm is used worldwide. Yet, its defect lies in its being prone to overlook cultural relativity. For the study of ancient Chinese capitals, the previous criteria mainly highlighted external characteristics, i.e. urban scale, duration of existence, sphere of influence, status in the dynastic system, and its role as a core political, economic and cultural center. There are two factors likely to trigger disputes. One is whether an ancient capital enjoys a favorable geographical location and landscape. The other is its relationship with modern cities. Geographical location is the environmental basis of urban construction. Whether a geographical location is favorable is a matter of relativity and is era-specific. Did Chang'an in the Han and Tang dynasties enjoy favorable geographical conditions? Judging from the political and military strategies on the establishment of a capital there, Chang'an of course enjoyed favorable geographical conditions then. However, when it comes to the potential of economic growth and urban development, this city had no shortage of challenges. Later, the capital moved eastwards, which is precisely because its defects of being the capital became more and more prominent as time went by. As for the relationship between an ancient capital and its modern counterpart, considerations should be given to the progress and setbacks of historical development and its significance in a specific era, which will not be covered in this speech.

As for the understanding of major in major ancient Chinese capitals, it seems that almost all previous definitions of major have attached excessive importance to the external characteristics of those ancient capitals without paying due attention to their inner spirit and cultural ethos. On one hand, external characteristics are of great importance to a city. On the other hand, the spirit and cultural ethos also matter. When evaluating an ancient capital, we need to carefully think about a few questions as

follows. Can it represent an era or the greater region it belongs to? Has it played a vital role in regional development and marked a great presence in its time? Has it exhibited extraordinary sustainability? In this regard, Chengdu can serve as an outstanding example. In terms of city's spirit, cultural ethos and sustainability, Chengdu is not inferior to other major ancient capitals and even arguably ranks among the best. After all, not all major ancient capitals can deliver impressive performance in the abovementioned aspects.

A city's development relies heavily on factors such as environment, developmental path and positioning. Some of those factors fall into the category of objective condition; while others belong to subjective choice. Whether it is from an objective or subjective perspective, no ancient city or capital can entirely copy the developmental route of another. Admittedly, common features or similar formal representations can be found among some capitals in history. Concerning that, some may argue that all capitals have drawn on the experience of their predecessors. Their view is entirely based on the similar formal representations of different capitals. Focusing on the time series of capitals with similar formal representations, this view fails to unveil the essence that those capitals did not blindly copy others, but only shared some basic concept, philosophy and system with others. They simply share similar concepts. Basically, the construction principles of ancient Chinese cities fall into two categories, special principle and general principle. The special principle serves for specific purposes and the general principle serves for rites and ritual-centered philosophy such as ancestral shrine sacrifices, political rulings, function divisions and cultural symbolizations. Given that, the analysis and evaluation of any city, including Chengdu, must not be limited to comparing its form with those of its counterparts in the Central Plains and other so-called central cities. More importantly, this analysis and evaluation should unveil its unique representation and expression of the city's basic philosophy. In this sense, Chengdu is of special significance to such research objectives. In a way, the so-called sample significance lies exactly in its being outside the Central Plains and at the same time being a central city in China. Should Chengdu also be in the Central Plains, it would probably have been a mere repetition of a same development model there. However, as a central city in a major region of China, Chengdu outweighs many other central cities in terms of city position and role in the spatial system it belongs to. It manages to extend its influence beyond the spatial range of China. Among those so-called major ancient Chinese capitals, there are some renowned cities which in fact do not enjoy such a huge regional impact as Chengdu and this should be regarded as their limitation.

The word major in the term major ancient Chinese capital can also be interpreted as being great. Judging from its external manifestations and inner spirit, Chengdu is arguably a major ancient capital of China. A city cannot expect to be great without corresponding spatial and material bases and external manifestations. Meanwhile, being great also means outstanding city spirit and cultural ethos. For both ancient and modern cities, the combination of external manifestations with internal ethos should form the basis of our primary judgment of their historical status.

(Translator: Wu Lingwei; Editor: Yan Yuting)

CSS News: Symposium with the Deans of the Colleges of Foreign Languages Held at SASS

During the afternoon of April 27, 2017, a symposium attended by the editorial department of the journal *Contemporary Social Sciences* and the deans of the colleges of foreign languages of universities in Sichuan was held at the Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences (SASS). The theme of the symposium was, "Giving play to the advantages of foreign language schools, integrating resources and improving editing." The symposium was presided over by Li Mingquan, professor and Vice President of SASS. Hou Shuiping, professor and President of SASS attended and addressed the meeting. Present at the symposium were deans and experts of foreign language schools from the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, Southwest Jiaotong University, Xihua Univeristy, Chengdu University of Information Technology, and the School of Public Administration of Sichuan University, as well as experts from SASS.

President Hou Shuiping expressed welcome and thanks to the foreign language experts and scholars at the meeting, and noted that the symposium had two primary purposes. One was to seek advice on how to run an English language journal and run it well. The other was about seeking help in two areas, the quality of the English translations and journal editing. It was hoped that the foreign language schools could rely on their advantages and provide help for *Contemporary Social Sciences* in terms of sources of contributions, translating and proofreading, and generally improving the quality of the English language articles published in the journal. Also, the foreign language experts might provide some suggestions or assistance regarding the publishing and promotion of the journal.

Fu Chun, director of the editorial department and associate professor, briefed the experts on the establishing course of the journal, philosophy and goals of the publication, and the current situation of producing *Contemporary Social Sciences*. She expressed the hope that the foreign language schools could offer some assistance or suggestions in developing an excellent translators/editors team and nurturing a team of foreign proofreading experts.

Li Chengjian, Dean of the School of Foreign Languages, Southwest Jiaotong University, pointed out in her speech that English journals are essential for sharing China's academic research and culture with the international community. She said Southwest Jiaotong University can help improve the editorial quality, promotion and distribution of the

English language version of the journal, and is willing to take advantage of existing resources—the regional national research centers and translation centers—to provide assistance.

Chen Da, Dean of the School of Foreign Languages, Xihua University (XHU), expressed his willingness to provide substantial support, in the form of sources of contributions, translating, proofreading and revising. He also shared XHU's experience in translation work, and suggested that special columns with prominent local characteristics be created.

Associate Professor Qin Yonghong of Sichuan University (SCU) introduced the international exchange experience of SCU in her presentation, discussing the education and training of foreign students in SCU. She proposed that the journal could be promoted through cooperation with foreign think tanks, overseas Chinese, and Confucius Institutes, thereby increasing its international influence.

Huang Chi, dean of the School of Foreign Languages of Chengdu University of Information Technology, shared information regarding the school's attempts to disseminate China's distinctive culture overseas, like the research on Xue Tao—a prominent female poet in the Tang dynasty, and Pengzu—a deity of longevity in Chinese myths, as well as cultural studies and their overseas promotion programs. Dean Huang also said that the college can contribute some articles to the journal. She also recommended that retired foreign language experts of the college who are translation enthusiasts could be both translators and proofreaders for the journal.

Feng Wenkun, Dean of the School of Foreign Languages, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China (UESTC), pointed out that as Chinese scholars mainly publish their foreign language papers or dissertations through foreign journals, it is of great importance to develop a foreign language publishing channel of our own. Dean Feng also pointed out improvements to the journal that are yet to be made. He said the overseas issuing of the English version must be based on the Internet, an online journal, and that the big data platform of UESTC could help promote the journal.

Chen Jie, Mou Wenfu, Fang Yun, Yue Chaomin, experts at SASS, made suggestions from the perspectives of setting special columns, improving promotion and distribution modes and channels, developing cooperation platforms and aligning with international standards in stylistic rules and layouts.

Vice President Li Mingquan, in his concluding remarks, introduced the requirements of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television for the English language version of Contemporary Social Sciences, "Adhering to the correct orientation in running the publication, publishing outstanding research results in China's social sciences as well as research results about west China development and China's reform and opening-up from overseas, promoting the international reach of China's academic research achievements, and improving Chinese social sciences' internationalized." Mr. Li noted that running an English language journal has its way, and a number of improvements should be made in running Contemporary Social Sciences. He expressed thanks to the deans and experts present for their precious suggestions and offering to share their substantial resources. He expressed his hope that the advantages and resources of the foreign language schools could be effectively integrated with the efforts of the SASS staff to make the English language version of Contemporary Social Sciences supremely suited to the mission of Chinese philosophical and social sciences going global.

Requirements for contribution

Contributions via email are welcome and the work email address of the editorial department is as below:

1. Please indicate the contributed column or direction of manuscript. Printed hard contributions to editorial department are welcome as well, and please remember to send soft contributions at the same time.

2. Please provide the Chinese name and abstract of the paper (200–300 characters or so), key words(3–6); name, date of birth, work unit, position and title, degree, specific postal address (including postcode) and phone number of the author.

3. Should any supporting fund be provided for the paper, please indicate name of fund project (including code).

4. Papers contributed to multiple periodicals will be declined. Contributions will not be returned and please keep a copy the manuscript for your records. Should there be no notice for acceptance within three months after receipt of manuscripts, the author has the right to handle it and no further notice will be sent by the editorial department. We reserve the right to make corrections or deletions to manuscripts. If the author does not agree with such corrections or deletions, please state so clearly in the contribution.

5. Please secure copyright independence of the contributions, and ensure there is no academic misconduct like plagiarism, no dispute about the order of author names, and be responsible for the content of manuscripts.

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A Brief Introduction to the English Periodical of Contemporary Social Sciences and a Notice Inviting Contributions

The English periodical of Contemporary Social Sciences is an English bimonthly periodical founded by Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences and approved by the State Press and Publication Administration of Radio, Film and Television in March, 2016. As the first English periodical sponsored by a local Academy of Social Sciences, it fills the lack of English periodicals by local Academies of Social Sciences nationwide. In accordance with the requirements of the State Press and Publication Administration of Radio, Film and Television, this periodical will "adhere to correct direction of operation, publish outstanding research achievements in the field of social sciences of China, reflect the excellent research achievements in the development of Western China and China's opening up by overseas media, promote the academic achievements in order to 'go global' and enhance China's international discourse right in the field of social sciences."

Contemporary Social Sciences mainly invites well-known scholars at home and abroad for their contributions for cutting-edge and open academic discussions. It focuses on new research achievements about China by foreign sinologists and responds to concerns about Chinese issues from foreign scholars; adheres to problem orientation and attaches importance to interdisciplines and seeks real academic issues and new growth points of disciplines; puts high value on research of the basic theories of philosophy and social sciences and research of the heritage and spreading of Chinese traditional cultures and concentrates on presenting the latest research results of Chinese topics to the international community like "the Belt and Road", "Southern Silk Road", "Excellent Chinese Traditional Cultures", "Ecological Environmental Protection", and "China's Western Development", to build an academic platform for exchanges of philosophy and social sciences between China and the rest of the world.

Contemporary Social Sciences engages famous experts to join the editorial board. Some of them are from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, local Academy of Social Sciences and universities and Party schools nationwide, and some are outstanding sinologists from Harvard University, Cambridge University, and Oxford University. It engages foreign experts with good English and Chinese proficiency as professional reviewers.

The inaugural issue of Contemporary Social Sciences will be published in October, 2016 and the second issue will be published in December. Starting from 2017, it will have normal bimonthly publication according to the requirements of the State Press and Publication Administration of Radio, Film and Television and there are totally 6 issues per year.

Here Contemporary Social Sciences sends invitations for manuscripts to scholars around the country and the world. Papers include published essays in Chinese periodicals of high academic values, at higher level and with representative and targeted characteristics in the social sciences research field of China. Once adopted, the papers will be translated into English and promoted to the major overseas universities, libraries and research institutes (papers written in English are preferred). Original English papers written by authors with a good master of the English language and high level of discipline are welcome.