

Cultural Hegemony from the Perspective of Post Colonialism

-- Taking the Study of Comprador Public Intellectuals as an Example

Zhetian Yu

School of Chinese Literature, Zhengzhou University, Zhengzhou, Henan, 450001, China

Abstract

Using the theoretical thought of postcolonial literary theory, this paper introduces the theory of power and discourse by Foucault, Gramsci's cultural hegemony theory and Said's Orientalism theory into the study of the mechanism of cultural hegemony, and analyzes the process of cultural colonization dominated by transnational financial capital and the subject of comprador public intellectuals. From a new perspective, this paper focuses on class differentiation, the statement of theorist and the causes of actuality in China's current cultural field.

Keywords

Public Intellectual; Post Colonialism; Power Discourse; Cultural Hegemony; Orientalism.

1. Introduction

In the process of modernization transformation, China will inevitably accept transnational financial capital and Western culture. In fact, there is an economic colonization in the process of Westerners participating in China's modernization through economic means, which leads to the unequal status of different cultures and mother cultures. It caused cultural mixing. Colonized people began to repeatedly simulate colonial discourse, in China, forming organic intellectuals representing the interests of transnational capital groups. This change is the inevitable result of the influence of Western capitalist cultural hegemony and transnational capital flow in the context of globalization. These intellectuals have entered China's public intellectual group and become comprador intellectuals who do not represent their own national interests and the interests of the people. Meanwhile, Not only as an eloquent speaker, but also as a builder, organizer and persistent persuader [1], they have a great influence on part of the superstructure system affecting society, the civil society. The statement of comprador public intellectuals have not only affected the academic cultural field, but also impacted the political decisions of daily life, education, business circles and even grass-roots governments. Therefore, this paper will explore the function form and structure of cultural hegemony, and locate the comprador public intellectuals as the main body for in-depth analysis.

2. Power Discourse and Cultural Hegemony

Under the conditions of modern society, by Foucault's theory, the mode of knowledge power controlled by transnational financial capital is changing from "punishment" to "discipline". Foucault said that the transformation from the era of torture to the era of flexible punishment "is not so much to make prisoners aware of their mistakes as to better create a subject that can be identified and treated as prisoners." [2] At present, when capitalist ideology, as a capital personification, invades another independent country, it no longer relies on the assistance of violent means as in the previous era, but completely carries out independent movement in the field of ideology. The use of naked invasion to change the culture of a nation-state is easy to

arouse too fierce resistance, which makes it difficult to bear the cost of maintenance and rule. Therefore, through "the deterrence and intervention of power lead to people's self-restraint and self-punishment", pushing the people voluntarily to be shackled by the "democracy and freedom" endorsed by transnational capital group and spontaneously exclude dissidents are the optimum way to pay the lowest and produce the best. The whole cultural discipline, explained by Gramsci's theory, is the process of cultural hegemony acting in the civil class by cultivating comprador public intellectuals, and finally influencing and shaping the public's world outlook with the help of cultural means to make it subject to the existing political and social order [3].

Gramsci called the leadership of a social group in culture, thought, morality and ideology cultural hegemony. However, this kind of cultural hegemony is not obtained through simple means of repression and coercion. On this view, Tony Bennett proposed that "in order to obtain dominance, the ruling class must negotiate with opposing social groups, classes and their values... In other words, hegemony is not maintained by cutting off the opposite, but by taking the interests of the opposite party into itself." This negotiation process, according to Gramsci's distinction of superstructure, takes place in the civil society that is in the opposition of the political society ruled by the machinery of state violence. Political society affects the public's ideology field through churches, news agencies, schools, civil society and other means. The subject of action in this field is the comprador intellectuals we want to study.

3. Comprador Public Intellectuals in China

At the first, quoting the national - people culture pattern declared by Gramsci in his book "Selections from the Prison Notebooks", I can define the so called comprador public intellectuals. According to this pattern, excellent culture should be based on the common sense of the nation and be accepted by the most extensive people(not only for the high class). The cultural viewpoint put forward by comprador public intellectuals, in the national dimension, is to guide the invasion of foreign cultures holding and maintaining any form of colonial rule by suppressing their own national culture, and in the people dimension, to maintain exploitation by establishing a completely anti people viewpoint and propagating capitalism.

In China, transnational capital has penetrated into education, commercial newspapers, new media communication platforms and even traditional television and film fields for 30 years. In the 1990s, all sub parts of these Chinese civil society were completely shocked by this economic foundation in the face of the "eloquent" economic spectacle of transnational capital, its accumulated huge amount of capital and the huge scale of productivity it controlled. The leaders and controllers of all these sub parts began to doubt their own knowledge because of the obvious fact gap between the strength of the economic power. In fact, the process of the patient's active doubt is the process of the passive expansion of the knowledge power of transnational capital. In addition, this power began to carry out comprehensive means such as economic benefit transmission, academic status commitment and political compilation on the personality entities of all sub parts of civil society, resulting in the active expansion and output of large-scale capitalist knowledge: these personality entities are China's comprador intellectuals. They preach the nobility of Western civilization, mistakenly invert the relationship between cause and effect, and fail to understand that the advocates of the universal values upheld by western transnational capital group are apologists and defenders of their exploitation of foreign nation-states and of their own proletariat. More worse, they may fully understand the fact but still offer to help it expand. In China's civil society, comprador intellectuals, as the spokesman of transnational capital groups, use the theory of universal values and national freedom to "create social and cultural concepts and meaning rules" in China. This purpose is to transfer and constantly tear apart the combination of China's national

interests and that of the Chinese people, destroying China's complete national state identity and socialist identity in the field of civil society and culture, so as to provide ideological support and social space for transnational capitalists to exploit China's national interests and for transnational capitalists and Chinese native comprador capitalists to jointly exploit the Chinese people. And comprador intellectuals themselves, either as part of the native comprador capital, exploit their own people. Or they will be completely incorporated into transnational capital and become a part of it. In more detail, they may change its nationality or obtain the right of permanent residence so as to completely avoid the negative crowding-out effect, caused by the exploitation of their nation (Chinese nation as a unity)-state, on itself.

4. Orientalism and Cultural Barriers

At present, the reason why the West still stand on their old Orientalist perspective to explain the causes of modern China, can be comprehended from the origin of Orientalist. The deep-rooted internal contradictions of capitalism lead to irreparable antagonistic contradictions within the society. The evil and dirty in the whole process of capital operation are completely "on stage", which is contrary to the ideology representing universal values, for example, rationality, democracy and science. Therefore, it is still necessary for the west to build an image of the Other to establish and sustain its own subjectivity. "The poverty and weakness of the East is only a tool to verify the strong myth of the West. The setting of the oriental cultural perspective being opposite to that of the west is a product of cultural hegemony and a supplement to the Western rational culture." [4] Various forms of colonial behavior and colonial intention facing China have not been abandoned by the West until today. All exports by the west in the cultural field are to enhance their own cultural superiority. On the one hand, they give western capital the moral correctness to exploit China by holding the so called orthodoxy of human civilization. On the other hand, they try to cultivate and disintegrate China culturally, so as to reduce the economical ruling cost.

In the 16th century, the western discourse on blacks was based on race and color, and was theoretically constructed through baseless Bible stories and backward medieval medicine, which had already been falsified by modern evidence-based medicine. The narrative of modern China, with China's eloquent facts in modern history to break the physical humiliation of the "sick man of East Asia" and the practical confirmation of the national spirit and the time spirit, the West had to focus on the attack on the political system. The socialist system and communist ideal began to become synonymous with autocracy and authoritarianism. A large amount of social public opinion guided by western literary works, films and media poured into China. This kind of attack has affected the field of socialist culture. What the West instilled in China, is that they believe China and the authorities are evil fundamentalism socialist believer and is controlled by the spirit of tyrant and autocratic government. The culture based on this is political will and the product of "ideology". The spirit of patriotism and collectivism of the Chinese people is foolish loyalty and blind obedience under political violence. Speakers who master the western theory of democracy and freedom have the obligation to "rescue" China and are qualified to break the cultural foundation of Chinese socialism, so as to fundamentally destroy the existing state system. In fact, the Chinese cultural "depression" constructed by western discourse is not reliable in fact or in historical materialism, but they never need and don't want to use scientific social science tools to discover real China and understand Chinese culture. They only need to continue to build the Chinese colonial logic of "evil socialist empire", just as they did to blacks and Indians a hundred years ago.

5. Conclusion

The whole process of cultural hegemony and colonization is complex, and the comprador public intellectuals have the dual attributes of anti-nation and anti-people. Therefore, if they hide one of their attributes, they are more likely to be misunderstood by people. In conclusion, by microcosmically displaying and analyzing the causes, class attributes and indoctrinated discourse sources of comprador public intellectuals, we can recognize the macro process of cultural hegemony and colonization, and deal with this phenomenon scientifically in the future.

References

- [1] Gramsci Antonio. Selections from Prison Notebooks [M]. People's Publishing House, 1983.
- [2] Danaher. Understanding Foucault [M]. Baihua Literature and Art Publishing House, 2002.
- [3] Li Zhen. Gramsci's theory of Cultural Hegemony [J]. Academia Bimestrie,2004(03):55-62.
- [4] Wang Yuechuan. Post Colonialism and New Historicism Literary theory [M]. Shandong Education Press, 1999.