
Colonizing and Decolonizing Works in Chinese Universities

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This article first proposed the four traps of academic studies , which shows the potential misunderstanding in the discussion of discourse. Then the author describes the introduction and invades of the Eurocentrism's discourse to China, and also the decolonizing Works in Chinese Universities. Finally, the author explains the possible ways to decolonize through the cases of the courses and the publications he is undertaking.

1. Four Traps in Academic Studies

Philip C. Huang, a famous Chinese-American historian professor in UCLA , once said: "The application of the theory will be a tough trip, which is full filled with not only exciting possibilities and repay, but also pitfalls and danger."In one of his essays (1998), he summarized the four traps in the academic theory and study of modern Chinese history. I will refer to and also elucidate the discussion of these four traps as the framework for this article's discussion of the misunderstanding in universities's academic researches.

In summary, there are four traps of academic research:

1.1 The uncritical use of theory

An academic research is full of theoretical temptations, so the users often unknowingly entered a pitfall of expand the applied fields and concepts of theory without the empirical bases.

It should be noted that academic theory is first used to explain the reality first, and only after a theory can properly simulate the reality, can only the theory be carefully used to transform reality. Therefore, in the face of many

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theoretical traditions, first of all, we need to know the real operating conditions, then can we select from them to explain or illustrate. Only after the empirical and factual test can it be used to transform reality.

In China, Marxism and Leninism, Maoism(Zedong Thought s) and the proposed theory of current leaders and so on, are viewed as the "universal" truth to some extent. In the same way, the self-interest centered theory achieves the similar status in China ever since it began the process of the general adoption of the market from 1978. The neoliberals get the status which even the Maxims have never achieved. In fact, China has truly stepped the process of rationalization and utilitarianism。 Only in just 30 years, these theories which haven't got tested and criticized get very popular in both China and many non-Western countries. It is really contrary to the history and practical facts of every state.

1.2 The ideological Use of theory

It is true that purely academic neutrality does not exist, especially in social science research, which simply cannot get rid of ideological influence. During the use of three kind of powers (the mandatory power of politics, the contractual power of economics and the osmosis power of culture) , the development of the cultural media, makes the forms of ideology constantly evolving. But it is also need to recognize that we have once lived in a world full of ideology, such as the fighting of the two camps of capitalism and socialism after World War II and each other's a system of propaganda machine. The end of the Cold War does not mean the termination of ideological fighting. Now we are still living in a world full of ideology, even though they are attached as "post-communist "and "depoliticized politics". Every social activity, as well as the academic activities, is also under the control and influence of ideology. Dated back to the cold-war, the influence of ideology is far beyond the political propaganda, but permeates into the discourse of news media, especially in academic research and daily life. For example, the popular vocabulary in Red China such as "comrades "(Tongzhi), "unit"(Danwei)," liberation "(Jiefang), "Women "(Funv),"Little Japanese"(Xiaoriben) and many others, are still widely used in Chinese. In academic field, the academic theory did not distinguish between the state ideology at that era, so these two got converged and intertwined. It is impossible and also unconscious for Academic theory to be an autonomous area. Academic theory is taken for granted to serve the ideology. There was such a slogan at that time "politics in command"(Zhengzhi Guanshuai).

After the market-oriented reforms in China from 1978, under the influence of contemporary American and European thoughts, the Chinese academic theory began to enjoy more and more freedom from the official ideology , which makes the knowledge environment in Chinese universities closer to diversification. But it does not mean academic theory can get away and independent from ideology. In fact, many ideologies have got more influence under the disguise of academic. If there is difference between Academic research in America and China, it is only a difference in degree but not quality. In the United States, the link of academic theory and political ideology are more subtle , which needs more careful distinguish. In China, the link between the two is always intimate. As soon as one foreigner came China , it's quite easy for him to feel the close relationship between the two. As a matter of fact, most Chinese scholars know the "tension line". so there are default rule such as "non academic restriction but do classroom discipline, "(Xueshu Wu Jinqu, Ketang You Jilv)"non academic restriction but do instructing discipline " (Xueshu Wu Jinqu, Xuanchuan You Jilv).

30 years ago, there is only one social science paradigm in china , named Marxism. The classes struggle is the emphasis of daily life. and the whole society was simply divided into two module—the ruling classes and the be-ruling classes. However, after 30 years of market-oriented reforms, moving rapidly to another extreme, the vulgar economics, which is opposed by the Marxism. It contains the Market Doctrine, developmentalism and the scientism. Besides, there are also ever-prosperous nationalism and statism. The former is described as anti-imperialism and pursuit national liberation and cultural nationalism. The latter focuses on patriotism, national prosperity and rising, as well as National centralism.

It does not mean to get rid of ideology for us to recognizing the existence of ideological trap. The fact is, no one can get rid of it. The meaning of it is that we can be conscious to avoid falling into academic research driven by the ideology of the trap , if not all.

1.3 Western-centrism

The Western-centrism includes Eurocentrism, and Eurocentrism is also the main form of it. For example, the common expression as "Near East", " Middle East", "Far East " , just come from the Eurocentrism especially the west-European in geographical dimension, Said's "Orientalism"(Said, 1978), has just focused on the explanation to this phenomenon of Eurocentrism.

There is no denying that the modern ideology and academic theory are dominated by the Western world as Western Europe and the United States. In academic theory, the concept of both mainstream and non-mainstream

concepts is derived from the West. For example, the modernization theory comes from the Western capitalist system and abstracts the West's historical experience to a universal model. Besides, a major critic to the Western capitalist system, Marxism, also grows up from the West. To the teaching and research field of mine, both the main agricultural model and non-mainstream agriculture also rooted the West. For non-Western world, the emergence of collective aphasia is very common, just because the local ideology and theory from the local cultural traditions, receives less and less attention and inevitably get increasingly declining. At last, the outward-colonial becomes the self-colonial, leaving the non-Western countries increasingly becoming an "otherness"(The Other), and even the "other" status is getting lost, just be a curtain on the stage of the Western-centrism.

For China, just as Huang (1998) described: In the most Western theoretical literature, whether it is to maintain the existing system or about the revolution, China has never been the theme, but only just a "the other". Western Research on China is more of a foil other than China itself. No matter who is the researcher, Marx, Weber, or a number of recent theorists, China has often been used as a tool to theoretical explanation: using China as a negative control to get to their conclusion. For example, for Marx, China is a country dominated by the "Asiatic mode of production", which is different from the usual developing paths of Western world from feudalism to capitalism (Marx, 1968).

For more far-reaching modernization theory, the "impact-response" model is widely used among the countries suffered colonization, which lead to two studies of Western-centrism. One is "Traditional" and "Modern" dualism advocated by classical writers of Western modernization theory. And the other is "modernization" monism, which claims that non-Western countries have prepared for modernization in different historical periods to varying degrees. Without outside impacts, they will modernize spontaneously. In fact, both of them fall into the trap of "modernization discourse", because "modernization", which is summarized on the basis of western experience, has become the only ending of non-Western countries, just like Francis Fukuyama claimed "the end of history"

1.4 Culture Centralism

Under the influences of nationalism and statism, the localization research, which is opposite to western centralism, is easy to go to the other extreme, which is ethnocentricity. In China, it is expressed as Chinese

centralism; in Africa, it may be Afro-centralism; in Latin America, it may be Latin American centralism, and so on.

Because of their cultural nationalism, ideological nationalist and self-centrism, many critics of localization studies almost completely abandoned all the existing social scientific theories. Since almost all of social sciences come from the West, all western theories inevitably have their boundaries, and are inevitably connected with greater and imperialist-intertwined discourse. Therefore, in addition to the abandoning "deconstruction", "critical", any kind of reference is doubted. Any discussion about modernization, development and democracy will be regarded as collusion with the imperialist dominated plan. For example, Said, the author of *Orientalism*, no longer adopted the nineteenth and twentieth century Western academic, since all these stuffs were reprimanded as part of "Orientalism" discourse by him. That is why we can't talk about these topics seriously, even though they are closely connected to our course.

2. Eurocentrism in China: History and Present

2.1 the 150 years to accept Western Social Science

After two Sino-British Opium Wars (1840-1842; 1856-1860), Chinese Emperors decided to introduce European system, first in military, and together with industrial system, then the whole system, like science, culture and education etc.

The first attempting is *Yangwu Yundong* (Westernization Campaign), in the year 1860s-1890s. The Yangwu Pai (people who support westernization) began to introduce the western system. The so-called "Yangwu" means all the foreign relationship and stuff, such as dealing with foreign affairs, signing treaties, sending students abroad, as well as training military according with "foreign approach", learning western science, using machines, mining, setting up factories and so on. The symbol saying is "Shiyi zhi Changji Yi Zhiyi" (Learn from the advanced technologies in the West in order to resist the invasion of the Western powers). Wei Yuan understood and promoted learning of the West Advanced Technology in 1840-1850. He also clearly defined there aspects of "Advanced Technology", that is, ship, firearms and the approach of maintaining and training armies. Wei Yuan also claimed that "those beneficial to the civilian" should also be introduced.

The westernization campaign was followed by Wuxu Bianfa (the Hundred Days Reform) in 1898, New Democratic Revolution and New Culture

Movement, which evolved into a new landmark- May Fourth Movement in 1919. In the May Fourth Movement, western democracy and science was advocated, traditional Chinese culture, whose representative was Confucianism, was criticized. A representative slogan then was “beating down Confucianism”(Dadao Kongjadian). After that, Western social science and social systems further took root in China.

In 1949, Marxism from Germany, Leninism and Stalinism from Soviet Union established the mainstream status of orthodox western-centrism. After 1978, market-led development thoughts and utilitarian culture gradually establish their status as the mainstream.

Since then, China's mainstream ideology was colonized by western-centrism.

2.2 Colonising Chinese Universiteis in recent 30 Years

Since 1978, along with the market reforms which was represented by reform and opening, market-oriented utilitarianism has replaced Marxism as social mainstream ideology. Western trend collided with China's own revolution trend, the traditional trend, and dominated academic mainstream. The author tried to illustrate the great changes coming with 30-year market reforms through colonization of academic evaluation criteria.

In Chinese universities, academic evaluation criteria are more and more quantitative and westernized. Scientific evaluation system gradually adopted Western standards. The outstanding hallmark was evaluation power was gradually handed over to Western journals in 1990s, that is, evaluation power of natural science to the SCI, evaluation power of social science to SSCI. Since 1997, the Ministry of Education has adopted CSSCI (Chinese Social Science Citation Index,) Program, which was put forward and promoted by Nanjing University.

Natural science could share common evaluation criteria as research objects are homogeneous. However, it is problematic to take SSCI as evaluation criteria of China's humanities and social sciences' researches, which leads to the "tendency to self-colonization" in language, problem, and perspectives of China's academic. Dang Shengcui, editor of China Social Sciences magazine, once said,“ It is like cutting feet to adapt to shoes to take SSCI as the highest evaluation standards of Chinese Humanities and Social science researches. As a result, the feet are not complete, and the shoes still don't fit. ”

CSSCI, which imitated SSCI, was a major R & D projects approved by Education Department, and undertook by Nanjing University and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. In March 2001, Education Department convened a meeting to evaluate CSSCI and consult on evaluation of social science researches. In the meeting, experts claimed that in order to make CSSCI a research evaluation system which is consistent with international standards and norms, well accepted by Chinese scholars, we must achieve three “beyond”: first, we must go beyond Nanjing University, then go beyond Jiangsu Province, and at last go beyond the university system. Only in this way can CSSCI be recognized by the “Big Five System” of social science research (college system, the CASS system, Party College system, the Party and government departments system, and the military system), and be a scientific and rational academic evaluation system. Since 2000, CSSCI was widely used as key indicators of academic evaluation in Chinese universities. In Taiwan, TSSCI has become the most important index of evaluation of social science research, which shows the commonality of cultural colonization.

The transfer of academic evaluation criteria launched a competition of publication number. In addition to simply quantizing academic levels of different universities, which are actually difficult to compare, for university rankings, SCI has also penetrated into the fund evaluation, project reporting, and evaluation of scientific research personnel, job promotion, and bonus of paper publication, almost every corner of university research field. SCI almost replaced all other standards. Papers in SCI are like incantations, whose winner takes all, such as fund, project, titles, and so on.

Universities can also get more funding and support through articles in SCI. Therefore, the site of annual publication of SCI ranking is more like the “arena”, in which research institutes fight with their scientific research achievements. And a widely quoted figure shows that China’s SCI articles have increased by 2,000% in more than 20 years. The media compared this as “paper ‘Great Leap Forward’ of the whole research field. Therefore, SCI was dubbed as the “Stupid Chinese Idea”, which is a joke or complaints. In fact, SCI itself is not the problem, and the problem is the abuse of it by academic institutions in China. Yi Zhongtian, a Chinese popular public intelligence said in 2009, “Since the Education Ministry launched the reform of universities, that is, quantitative management; all China’s universities become chicken farms. Teachers are so busy with laying eggs that they have no time to teach students and do researches. If you want to be promoted from a instructor to an associate professor, how many eggs you should lay; If you want to be promoted from an associate professor to professor, how many eggs you should lay. And the place of laying eggs, such as authoritative publications, and core journals, are also proscribed. Just recently, they told you,” Hey, you should lay more ‘innovative’ eggs.”

3. Efforts to Decolonizing from Eurocentrism

With the deepening of the academic colonization, the efforts of decolonization become deeper and deeper. Now taking de-colonization in utterance and college classes as the example to explain.

3.1 Decolonization in utterance

During the 1980s, the western vocabularies such as democracy, freedom, science, progress and development, have the words correctness undoubtedly. By 2000, many researches based on Chinese local experience are going out of Europe centrality constantly. Taking the political field as example, there are conclusion of "administration absorb politics", " depoliticized politics " to differ from western politics. And in the economic area, scholars pay more and more attention on the empirical researches, although new liberalism is still the only choice in college textbooks. In the rural developing area which the author teaches and researches, the "three rural issues" concluded through the practice in China, rather than agricultural problem with a single angle, is to try to de-colonize and construct in utterance.

3.2 Decolonization in college classes

The empirical research such as under stratum narration, oral history research, fieldwork, etc, was introduced into the college classes in constant, and as a university lecture, these local experiences have become the most popular parts in lectures, although it could not overthrow the mainstream position of western centralism in the textbook system.

4.Cases Introduction of Decolonization in Our University

4.1 Three Lessons to Decolonize our School

The university where the author to the undergraduate and graduate courses are taught, there are three courses used the obvious out of the Eurocentric way of thinking.

I undertake a course called "Introduction to Rural Development" program, which involves many theoretical schools on the development of rural developments. During the class, I will introduce description of different theories based on the practical examples throughout China, intended to guide students out of the current marketism, Marxism in ideology and developmentism. One example is the identification to the nature of the small-

scale farming. In the liberal economist, small-scale farming are treated as an entrepreneurial family production units, making rational economic pursuit of profit (to Schultz's theory of representative); in Marxist political economy system, small-scale farming are viewed as backward mode of production as the representative of Asia. There, farmers are characterized mainly from the class nature (in China of Mao Zedong had done a very detailed class divisions, and also taken advantage of their political specialty to do revolutionary mobilization) ; But Chayanov (1925)'s perspective to small-scale farming as a combined on production and consumption, J. Scott (1976)'s discussion to small-scale farming in Southeast Asia t, as well as Geertz, Pierre Bourdieu and others' research to meaning systems of farmers, rural field, habitués and capital, we should also pay attention equivalently. And also, they should undergo the test of different areas in China. Through this explanation, the students gradually establish a conscious sense on how to view theory and how to use the concept. It has very positive effect on set the students free from the two mainstreams in China: Marxism and the marketism.

In another course I get taken, "China Studies", I also try to help the students to set up a sense of equivalence. This class gives a systematic introduction of China's politics, economy, history, society, culture, ecological environment, and also make international comparisons. Through this, I want to guide the students build up the concept of equivalence of areas, which is neither the timid Western-centrism, nor the arrogant Chinese centrism. A large number of international comparisons play an important role. By comparisons to United States, Russia, India and other major countries , developed and developing countries in areas of resources environment, history culture, political system and economic characteristics, the students can better set multidisciplinary, diverse perspectives to observe China and the world.

I also take part in a class called "Analysis of China's development experience", led by Professor Wen Tiejun. It is general education courses and international exchange programs facing the whole students in the university. These class mainly discusses the China's development experience, social movements in developing countries , verification of the world system in developing countries, the Chinese labor migration and urbanization, the anti-poverty in China and the world, the global change in agriculture and food system, sustainable use of rural area resources, the grass-root democracy in rural areas and so on. There are nearly ten professors involved in this class. But all of them give attention to alternative interpretation of local experience in developing countries, to help students step out of the four traps mentioned before, and establish the awareness to problem and international perspective.

4.2 One Book to Recitation the Nature of Development

Out of the reflection of Western-centrism, which is dominated by envelopments, I wrote a book, *Polarized Development*, whose name was changed for several times. The book was published in November, 2010. This book, in which scientism, marketism, and developmentism are analyzed as three hegemonic discourse of progressivism, is dedicated to break doctrine superstition. And I used changes of agriculture and food system, which is my research focus, to illustrate that developmentism can lead to an end, and its destructive influences to world civilization system.

It is not easy to re-interpret "development" discourse under the system of Western-centrism. I am trying my best, and I am looking forward to making progress with colleagues at present. Thank you!