

A Reading Report on “Culture, Power and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942”

Shangzi Teng^{1, a}

¹Department of Public Administration, Nanjing Normal University, China

^a3487619198@qq.com

Abstract

"Culture, Power and State: Rural North China, 1900-1942" describes the phenomenon of "involution" in the construction of modern state power in China since the late Qing Dynasty. Duzanqi holds that the state power in the process of modernization in the late Qing Dynasty was not blindly strengthened, on the contrary, it was weakened in many aspects. The collapse of the regime in the late Qing Dynasty was not the result of blindly refusing to modernize, but the evil result of "brokerage" and "involution" caused by the expansion of the regime. After reading this book, I am particularly interested in the two issues mentioned in the book: the cultural network and the involution of the state power. By analyzing the power structure of the rural areas in North China at that time, I critically look at the power structure of the rural areas in North China at that time, hoping to inspire the current construction of the state power in China.

Keywords

Involvement; Cultural Network; State Power Construction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Du zanqi's "culture, power and the state - rural north china 1900-1942" excavates a main line from detailed historical data and data that can clarify the rural areas of modern china. With the cultural network of power as the core concept, around the typical symbols of various cultural networks in the countryside, such as clans and religions, and the structure of power, including state power and rural power itself. The evolution of mutual relations, the involution of state power in the process of the construction of state power and various problems faced in the process, especially reflected in the interaction between the state and the countryside, can in turn clarify the changes and essence of the countryside in the historical period from the late Qing Dynasty to the national government. as he said in his postscript, some of the core terms mentioned above are to reconcile the opposites and conflicts in some studies, such as synchronic analysis and narrative of persistent contradictions and conflicts. These new concepts put the countryside into a larger historical context, namely, a series of measures that the state has implemented in the countryside for the construction of political power, such as the regularization of rural institutions. Bureaucracy of rural staff strengthens the control of rural society through tax finance and personnel administration, but the result may not be as good as expected, because in this process, the traditional cultural network has been eroded or even eliminated, the basis of authority and legitimacy has been lost, and the new way can not keep up with the pace of national modernization, so in a country. There is bound to be a break between home and countryside. How to extract resources from the traditional cultural network in rural areas through effective means to lay a stable foundation for national construction is very important. In terms of the operation of rural governance and its impact on the modernization of the country in the interactive relationship between the state and society, such

as the state's economic behavior of collecting taxes and assessing contributions to the countryside, as well as the political control of the village units, and the political, economic and cultural activities of the countryside itself. As duzanzi pointed out, "to understand the change of village power structure, we must examine a wider range of historical changes, that is, the change of state power, and then return to the countryside. With a broader historical background knowledge, we will have a deeper understanding of rural society." From the whole article, we can see that the two are closely related. In fact, he discussed the relationship between the state power and the countryside, especially the pressure and challenges faced by the countryside in the process of building such a state power, and the responses and changes made by the rural elite and the people on the typical issues of cultural network of clan, religion and other powers, taking time as the line and centering on the continuous penetration of state power into the countryside.

2. STRUTURE OF THE BOOKS

In the early 20th century, in the political arena of china, both in the central and local governments, the regime has changed dramatically. But in north china, an important aspect of the expansion of the state power - to go deep into the grass-roots units and to absorb the financial resources of the lower strata - has remained basically unchanged throughout this period. All central and local governments attempt to extend state power to the grass-roots level of society. Whatever their purpose, they believe that these newly extended regimes are the most effective means of controlling rural society. The first chapter of the book focuses on the cultural network of power, giving a typical example of the marriage circle, illustrating the influence of traditional ideas. Chapter two talks about the rule of brokers in rural society at the end of Qing Dynasty, including for-profit brokers and protective brokers. These two kinds of brokers have similar characteristics with the later mentioned middlemen. The third chapter is about the modernization of the local regimes in north china. through the comparison between Hebei and Shandong provinces, the main points are: the reorganization and expansion of the local regimes, the establishment of "zones" as tax-extracting institutions; this chapter first mentions the expansion and involution of the state regime. Chapter four and chapter five are about rural religion, introducing the relationship between clan leaders and government forces, thus demonstrating the internal structure of cultural network; pointing out two ideal types of villages, clan type and religion type; describing four types of rural religion; and finally giving an example of emperor Guan to illustrate the important role of religious belief. Chapter six talks about the structure of the rural regime and its leaders. Wealth is the key to entering the rural leadership. Protecting people and intermediaries is the authority structure of customary law. The seventh chapter talks about the reorganization of the state and rural society. It talks about the contribution, the view of the youth, the village boundary and the rural community. At the same time, it points out that the rural areas of north china are not a community, and many changes have taken place. Chapter eight talks about the modernization of the state power and local leadership, mainly through the cleaning up of finance: calligraphers and land measurement, regime construction and commercial tax collection.

3. HISTORICAL CHANGE OF RURAL GOVERNANCE IN NORTH CHINA

Until the end of the 19th century, not only local governments, but also the central government relied heavily on cultural networks, thus establishing their own authority in the rural areas of north china. in the 20th century, attempts to abandon or even destroy cultural networks to penetrate rural society were doomed to failure. The following will introduce the historical changes of rural governance in north china from the governance background, Governance mode, governance subject, governance region, governance means and governance effect.

3.1. Governance Background

During the period of 1900-1942, the whole of China is in a changing historical period. Great changes have taken place both inside and outside. It is particularly noticeable that a country must become a modern country if it wants to become self-reliant. For this reason, from the New Deal in the late Qing Dynasty, the Reform Reform, the 1911 Revolution and the various measures taken by the National Government are all foolish and trying to implement them at the national and social levels. The construction of state power involves the formalization and bureaucracy of administrative organs at the national and local levels, and the financial funds urgently needed to support the increase of political functions and the expansion of institutions. These sources of income are from commercial taxes, taxes on farmland in rural areas and various assessments. The above contents are fundamentally to try to regard the rural areas as the most basic units of the government and strengthen the rural areas as an administrative unit to stabilize the national tax sources. In this process, many problems inevitably arise at the national and social levels, which also triggers the state to try to find a way out.

3.2. Governance Model

Under the above background, there has been a change from protective state brokerage to profit-making state brokerage. National brokerage itself is an expedient measure to reconcile the relationship between the state and society, but in the process of development, the original broker's protective nature of his own representative area has disappeared, and tends to be a vicious profit-making type. The more specific point is the predatory brokerage model, in which the traditional gentry and other strata retreat from the governance of rural affairs, while the new society. Strength, those local tyrants and evil gentry who usurp rural power by the chance of social turbulence make use of the demand for rural control in the construction of state power. In the fish and meat villages, the change of such a mode is very clear in taxation. The rural elite in the original protective state brokerage acts as the intermediary between the state and the villagers for their own interests and can benefit the people from it. However, because the protective system is created by the rural social leaders and endowed with their collective values, it is very vulnerable to the manipulation of profit-making brokerage. In this sense, the protective brokerage organization is a variable factor in the cultural network, which represents the inclined relationship between legitimacy and illegality. Therefore, in the process of deepening the modernization of the country, rural elites are unwilling or unable to advance money for the people, even if it is difficult to recover from the villagers, so they either move to towns or escape from village administration, which will inevitably play a weakening role for the state and social forces.

3.3. Subject of Governance

This is due to the transformation of the above governance model. Rural leaders originally relied on consanguinity and economic conditions. Now, because the country went deep into the countryside and exploited resources politically and economically from the countryside, those rural leaders found that their income was far less than their expenditure, and they no longer played the role of protector and intermediary. On the contrary, they no longer played the role of protector and intermediary. Gradually, village administration was withdrawn. In contrast, the new forces, such as local tyrants, bullies and evil gentry, developed in the turbulent times, oppress the people in all aspects in order to meet the needs of the country. Although they may increase the tax revenue and other aspects of the country in the short term, they are slowly eroding the legitimacy of the country in the rural areas in the long run. Basically, relations between the state and society are also deteriorating.

3.4. Governance Area

During this period, the countryside as an administrative division is constantly changing. Generally speaking, it can be divided into three periods: from 1900 to 1929 when the Kuomintang government restored its neighborhood system; the neighborhood system in the Kuomintang government; and the townships system in Japan during the Anti-Japanese War. During the three periods mentioned above, as a first-level administrative organization, the role of the countryside is quite different from that of the state. Especially with the erosion of the state power to the rural society, especially the nationalization of the countryside in politics, administration and economy, during the period of resistance to Japan, the "big townships" system promoted by Japan has made the political status of the village-level organizations insignificant, because the townships are the "big townships". As the most grass-roots administrative unit, direct dialogue with the state, the social forces embodied in the original village no longer exist.

In Chapter 6 of *Culture, Power and the State*, Duzanzi analyses that some village leaders intentionally use cross-space relations to gain prestige and support. "Village leaders are often associated with two or three vertical organizations to establish their status and authority, such as Liu Zixin and Xiao Huisheng. Some village leaders have also transformed their relations in the counties into political capital and brought them into the elite politics of rural society. Including the brokerage system, they are all related to the cross-regional spatial relationship, especially the brokerage system. Without the relationship between urban communities, they can not get their status. In the 1930s and 1940s, after the implementation of the big-town system, some bullies used their interpersonal relationships in urban space to squeeze the status of rural elites and squeeze them out of the leadership. Of course, in the materials Duzanzi analyzed, the fluidity of the age is still very small. But limited liquidity does not mean that the force is small, on the contrary, if used properly, its force is very astonishing. In our time, we can clearly see the tremendous social impact of mobility.

3.5. Means of Governance

At the end of the Qing Dynasty, the construction of power in rural society was basically realized through clans and religions in the cultural network. For example, as for the worship of Emperor Guan by Chinese villagers, although there are different interpretations and intentions between the official and local governments, they can still live in harmony under the universal view of the unity of heaven and man embodied by Emperor Guan and get what they need. After the 20th century, as a symbol of religion and clan, the brokerage system has no place to stand in the construction of the state power, because the state attempts to reform the "brokerage system" through two ways: one is to bureaucratize the lower administrative staff, including the districts and countryside, but the "bureaucratization" is very slow until the Japanese invasion. Secondly, the state regime transferred some tax revenue and government functions to village leaders in an attempt to get rid of its dependence on the brokerage system. In this way, the old effective means have been banned, while the new measures are obviously unable to meet their own needs. The burden transferred to the countryside will inevitably lead to the breakdown of their relationship with the people, and the construction of the country will be difficult.

3.6. Governance Effect

The change of the above five points will lead to unsatisfactory effect of rural governance. On the one hand, the countryside itself is burdened with heavy burdens and unable to achieve development, and all aspects of rural undertakings are in a state of decadence. On the other hand, due to the regularization of the village regime, its disconnection from the rural social and cultural network, and the pressure from the involution of the regime, the village regime falls into the hands of those "politicians" who seek fame and wealth. Gradually lost part of the ability

to use its authority, the good intentions of the country were broken, and the regeneration and extension of the profit-making brokerage system accompanied by the deepening of the national regime greatly damaged the legitimate status of the regime in people's minds.

4. RURAL CULTURAL NETWORK OPERATION IN NORTH CHINA

In "culture, power and the state - rural north china 1900-1942", duzanzi uses the "cultural network of power" to analyze the power or operational reality before 1900. "generally speaking, he will analyse the power relationship in the countryside by examining the organization and connection between families and villages. This power relationship is collectively referred to as the "cultural network of power". This cultural network includes hierarchical organizations and informal interconnections that are constantly interacting with each other. In duzanzi's view, the market, neighborhood relations, religious organizations, water conservancy organizations and regional networks are the social basis for the operation of power and authority. If we can't analyze it well, we can't perceive the connotation of the real operation of power.

The term "culture" refers to "symbols and norms rooted in these organizations and recognized by their members. These norms include religious beliefs, inner love and hatred, intimacy and hatred, etc. They are interwoven and maintained by the system and network in the cultural network. These organizations cling to various symbolic values, thus endowing cultural networks with certain authority, enabling them to become a manifestation site of legitimacy of leadership in local society. Through the "cultural network of power" and constantly renewing and establishing new network relations, power can be justified on the basis of smooth operation of power.

In "culture, power and the state - rural north china, 1900-1942", duzanzi first criticized the theory of shijianya's market system and then put forward that besides the market system, there are more tenacious and lasting principles which support the basic order of rural society when the market system does not work. They are more effective and grassroots than market principles. This is what duzanzi calls the "cultural network". Through the analysis of water conservancy organizations and the image of emperor guan, the process and details of the function of "power cultural network" are well illustrated.

The study of water conservancy organizations in xingtai area of hebei province can explain how the cultural network integrates the state power and local society into an authoritative system. The most noticeable unit of the water conservancy organization system is the "sluice", each of which has its own worship of the dragon king temple and its own dragon king. The annual sacrificial activities make the organization of the gate hallowed, which gives the organization greater authority and public recognition. Among the different gates, there is also a common worship of the dragon temple, which is the sacrificial center of the gates. It makes the gates compete with each other and take some cooperative strategies for the need of common survival. In duzanzi's view, "the sacrificial system is a common form of authority built by chinese people outside the imperial administrative system, and it is a microcosm of the celestial bureaucracy similar to the human governing body in popular religion. Using the superstitious hierarchical system, the feudal state extended its authority to the rural society through the medium of sacrifice. From this, we can see that integration into a symbolic system, that is to say, entering a cultural network is the inevitable stage of gaining benefits. In this process, the state authority entered the rural society through feudal superstition, while in the rural society, through the transformation of symbolic activities and systems, the connotation and extension of symbols are constantly updated to maximize their own interests. In another example, it's about the image of feathers. Guan yu is the most worshipped god in north china. His interpretation varies in different times and even in different areas of the same era, and the government acquiesces in different interpretations. The government also tried to make the

symbolic meaning of the image of emperor guan under its own control. The confucianism of the image of emperor guan in the qing dynasty is an example. On the one hand, by participating in activities concerning the emperor, the rural elites made the emperor more and more divorced from the image of community god, thus becoming the orthodox image of the country; on the other hand, in this process, the village leaders tried to keep themselves in line with the confucian culture, which made them different from the general public and manifested their different beliefs in the emperor. We can say that the interpretation and maintenance of the image of emperor guan itself is a kind of power. And how to explain and explain everything reflects the difference of power. In the meantime, the authority of the state and the authority of the rural leaders can be integrated, thus providing a legitimate basis for the exercise of elite power in rural society. The common people's belief in guandi, regardless of the difference between its content and community elite, can provide certain shelter for themselves and provide considerable legitimacy and legitimacy for their actions. The contest between the people and the community elite directly reflects the process of power variation and the infiltration of higher power.

5. THE INVOLUTION OF STATE POWER CAUSED BY THE CHANGE OF RURAL GOVERNANCE

The state tries to strengthen its control over rural society, but there is an involution of state power. It means that state institutions expand their administrative functions by copying or expanding the old state-society relations, such as the old profit-making brokerage system in China, instead of increasing the income of old or new institutions. This is reflected in the financial aspect. Every increase in state finance is accompanied by non-profit. Income increases in formal institutions, which the state lacks control over. As a result, the involuted state regime is incapable of establishing effective bureaucracies to combat corruption and satiety in informal institutions.

The main characteristics of the involution of the state power in the Republic of China are reflected in the contributions. The brokerage system was extended to districts and villages. These districts and villages "brokers" played their part in the collection and settlement of various assessments and other taxes in order to satisfy their own pockets. Although the brokerage system is a necessary stage for the transformation from the former bureaucracy or hereditary bureaucracy to the rationalized bureaucracy, it is not easy to complete the transformation through this stage, because in the new regime, the brokerage system tends to self-expansion rather than extinction. Duzanqi pointed out from a historical perspective that the failure of the Kuomintang government lies in not dealing with the above-mentioned focus issues. The Communist Party correctly grasped the interests in the countryside during the revolution. By effectively solving the focus of farmers' attention, such as assessed contributions and taxation, it not only eliminated the harsh taxes and miscellaneous taxes that have harmed farmers, but also provided abundant fiscal revenue for itself.

Duzanzi's scholars also view "the involution of state power" from a comparative perspective. Based on George Dolby's research in France, he believes that the complete bureaucratization of European autocratic regimes has gone through two stages. The first stage is to strengthen the control of autocratic monarchy over feudal aristocracies through the implementation of a profit-making economic system and the sale of officials and nobles in tax collection. Although taxpayers and purchasers may have absorbed some state taxes, the substantial increase in fiscal revenue has enabled the state to establish a strong military and bureaucratic system. We can call this process "preliminary bureaucratic accumulation". Tired. In a certain period of time, these new state regimes can not only completely destroy the feudal structure, but also destroy the profit-making brokerage class that hinders the further expansion of the state regime, but

not all autocratic monarchy will succeed in this process (the second stage). If the above research is in line with the historical reality, then we can draw the following conclusion: the brokerage system is a necessary stage for the transformation of the former bureaucracy or hereditary bureaucracy to the rationalized bureaucracy, but it is not easy to complete the transformation through this stage.

The model of state regime involution shows that in the new regime, the economic system tends not to die out, but to self-expansion. The involution of state power not only tends to rebuild the past class relations in society, but also regenerates itself by establishing a framework of mutually beneficial relations between the regime and the upper strata of the society. From this we can see not only the stubbornness of the brokerage system, but also the characteristics of the brokerage layer in this way to adjust their own and social interests. Changing this system will be hindered by the elite at all levels of society.

6. PROBLEMS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL NETWORK

6.1. Problems in the Construction of Cultural Network

In the third chapter, the author points out that the protective economic system can not eradicate the drawbacks of tax evasion and middle insurance. By analyzing the financial situation of Hebei and Shandong provinces, it is concluded that temporary assessments will soon become the most onerous burden on farmers, and can not be monitored and restricted. For the government, it has become a more important source of funds than other taxes. In the process of national efforts to strengthen social control, the main causes of involution are the pressure and conflicts of different interest groups.

6.2. A Vegetarian Meal for Village Leaders

In Chapter Six, among the village leaders, wealth is the key to entering the village leadership. There is a question of whether they are qualified or not. Not being educated does not prevent them from holding "public office". Many village leaders and village leaders are illiterate. The role of economic powers in the rural regime, let's see to what extent the national regime attracts the traditional rural leaders to join the new rural regime.

6.3. Abuse of Power by Intermediaries

First of all, the profit-making nature of a profit-making broker determines his uncertainty in execution. Chapter VI refers to the protection of persons and intermediaries: authoritative bodies in customary law. From the practical effect, face is actually a useful tool. Secondly, the face of the middle person can bring social pressure to the trading side (often the more powerful side). It is extremely dangerous to study the relationship between economic authority and political leaders in rural society to serve as middle-ranking people under the extremely unstable situation of villagers'economy. Naturally, when a borrower goes bankrupt, such a guarantor is often unable to pay back, and eventually a lawsuit is instituted. Obviously, the prefecture often favors the lender and the guarantor and releases them. The organization that best reflects the influence of state power on rural communities is the Youth Miao Association. Seeing youth is the main body of village activities which have nothing to do with the market system. Its importance lies not in its autumn protection function, but in its role in village finance. The organizational structure of the Youth and Miao Society made it an ideal tool for the collection of assessments by the state in the early 20th century. But the volatility of tax revenue in villages can easily lead to disputes.

7. THE REFERENCE OF NORTH CHINA RURAL CULTURAL NETWORK TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHINA'S NATIONAL POLITICAL POWER

The process of state power construction is also the process of power extending to rural society. At the same time, it can be seen as the process of local social space being broken, rationalized, disciplined and explicit. In the traditional Chinese society, in duzanqi's analysis, we can see how the influence of space is transformed into symbolic effect and exerts its amazing power in the local society.

Not only in the cultural network, but also in the concept of "the involvement of state power", it also emphasizes a contradiction: in the same regime structure, there are not only the expansion of power, but also the disintegration and weakening of power. Etiquette and religion make communities seem both open and closed. In water clubs, the scope of sacrificial organizations is scalable according to the number of households, and there is both cooperation and competition between them for water use. In spite of the different ways of expression, the myths about emperor guan also contain duality: within the framework of the common belief of guan di, different social groups have different or even opposing understandings of emperor guan, and they pursue their own interests under the protection of guan di. In the above cases, duality is not an accidental phenomenon in irrational popular culture, it has an important social role, it provides a place for the social expression of the orthodox authority.

What role did the issue of agriculture, countryside and farmers play in history? This is a question we should think about at present. Simply speaking, when the problems of agriculture, countryside and farmers are solved well, the country will be civilized and prosperous, and the society will be stable and harmonious; when the problems of agriculture, countryside and farmers are solved poorly, the country will have abuses and political problems, and the society will be turbulent and unstable. Of course, the formulation of the issue of agriculture, countryside and farmers is something that happened after the reform and opening up, but the essence of the problem is the same. Through a profound dissection of the rural areas of north china from 1900 to 1942, the author analyses the coping situations and problems of the rural people of all strata in the process of the construction of the state power going deep into the rural areas, especially the dichotomy of "protective brokerage" and "profit brokerage", which reflects the importance of policy implementers for rural development.

"Protective brokerage" is more prominent in the development of rural areas, while "profit brokerage" is more prominent in its predatory nature outside the policy. With the disorderly plundering of rural areas by the state, rural financial resources are declining, and "protective brokerage" is helplessly fading out of the front stage, while "profit brokerage" is increasingly moving towards the front stage. As a result, the rural economy has suffered unprecedented disasters, most of which are becoming increasingly depressed. Of course, the ultimate cause of the depression is still the unrestrained excessive taxes and miscellaneous taxes imposed by the state on the countryside. History is a mirror, which often brings contemplation to reality. At present, we are vigorously building a new socialist countryside and a harmonious society, which is a good policy orientation, it shows that the leaders of the country attach great importance to rural issues and social harmony. However, in view of the complexity of the issues concerning agriculture, rural areas and farmers, good policies are not enough, and the role of policy implementers is also crucial. This may be an important reference left to us by the book culture, power and the state.

REFERENCES

- [1] Changes in Rural Governance: Rural North China, 1900-1942: Reading Du Zanqi's Culture, Power and State: Rural North China, 1900-1942, Fudan University, Sun Peijun.

- [2] Where to Seek the Legitimacy of Power Operation--Comments on Du Zhanqi's Culture, Power and the State, Liu Yonghua, East China Normal University.
- [3] Wallerstey: The Modern World System, 29-30, 138-139.
- [4] Du Zhanqi, Culture, Power and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942. Conclusion, 216
- [5] Culture, Power and the State: Enlightenment and Reflection, Strengthening, Hebei Academy of Social Sciences.