

The Change of Rural Leadership in China

Soleilmavis Liu

Sponsor Activist of Peacepink

Yantai, Shandong Province, China

The book, *The Struggles of an Ordinary Man - The Turbulent History of China Through a Farmer's Eyes from 1930 to 2000*, which is the true record of seventy years of modern history in rural areas of the Eastern Shandong Peninsula from 1930 to 2000, talks not only one but a group of grass-root level leaders in rural China, who have been struggling hard during the turbulent modern history of china, and searching for the appropriate leadership to lead common rural people to develop a better country. By studying the rural political systems and leaderships, which are described in the book, we would learn that the best political system and rural leadership should conform to the productive forces level of development, and meet the needs of traditional culture.

Abstract

China had a long history of thousands of years of ancient civilization. During the long history, the Chinese political system evolved from the Feudalism System and Patriarchal Clan System in the Zhou Dynasty into Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System in the Qin and Han dynasties, and lasted for more than 2,000 years. The Feudalism System, based on a small-scale peasant economy, and Patriarchal Clan culture, the most important part of Han Culture, were two important aspects to influence the political system and rural leadership in ancient China. The Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System were destroyed after the Republic of China. Since the People's Republic of China was set up, the government tried hard to search for the best political system and rural leadership, but it had paid a high price for making some costly mistakes. By studying the history and past mistakes, we would learn that the best political system and rural leadership should conform to the productive forces level of development, and meet the needs of traditional culture.

Keywords: Patriarchal Clan culture, Feudalism System, Monarchical Centralism System, Han Culture, Leadership, Rural China.

Introduction

China had a long history of thousands of years of ancient civilization. During the long history, the Chinese political system evolved from the Feudalism System and Patriarchal Clan System in the Zhou Dynasty into Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System in the Qin and Han dynasties, and lasted for more than 2,000 years.

This article briefly introduces the political systems and rural leadership of the Zhou, Qin, Han, Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties, analyzes the small-scale peasant economy, Patriarchal Clan culture, and their influences on the political systems and rural leaderships, and talks briefly the political systems and rural leadership of the People's Republic of China. By studying the history and past mistakes, we would learn that the best political system and rural leadership should conform to the productive forces level of development, and meet the needs of traditional culture.

Chinese Ancient Civilization

China had a long history of thousands of years of ancient civilization. Chinese Culture originated from Dong-Yi Culture and its successor, The Hundred Schools of Thought, inheriting and carrying forward by the Han Dynasty (202BCE-220CE) to become the Han Culture.

Dong-Yi Culture, which was born in the Shandong Peninsula and later spread to the lower reaches of the Yellow and Huairivers in the Neolithic Age, greatly influenced ancient China, and had the leading role in making the Yellow River Valley Culture, the root of Chinese civilization.

The Hundred Schools of Thought were philosophers and schools that flourished in the Shandong Peninsula and eastern Henan area from 770BCE to 221BCE, an era of great cultural and intellectual expansion in China.

Even though this period - known in its earlier part as the Spring and Autumn period (about 770BCE-476BCE) and the Warring States period (about 476BCE-221BCE) - in its latter part was fraught with chaos and bloody battles, it is also known as the Golden Age of Chinese philosophy because a broad range of thoughts and ideas were developed and discussed freely.

Founders of most of The Hundred Schools of Thought were from the states of Lu, Qi, or Song, as well as other states located round today's Shandong Province or near the Shandong Peninsula. It could be said that the Shandong Peninsula, where Dong-Yi Culture was born, was the birthplace of the Hundred Schools of Thought, including Confucianism, Legalism, Taoism, and others.

The Hundred Schools of Thought was the root of Han Culture. After Liu Bang built the Han Dynasty (220BCE-202CE), the Han emperors inherited and carried forward the essence of The Hundred Schools of Thought. During the Han Dynasty especially since Emperor Wu of Han (156BCE-87BCE), who emphasized Confucianism after accepted suggestions from the great Confucian leader Dong Zhongshu (179BCE-104BCE), the most practical elements of Confucianism and Legalism were taken and synthesized, marking the creation of a new form of government that would remain largely intact until the late nineteenth century. Han Culture started from the Han Dynasty, was inherited and carried forward by the Tang Dynasty (618-907CE), and lasted in China for more than 2,000 years.

Evolution of Chinese Political System and Rural Leadership

The Zhou Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Patriarchal Clan System) and Rural Leadership

When the Zhou Dynasty (about 1046BCE-256BCE) was established, the conquered land was divided into hereditary fiefs, pieces of land that eventually became powerful in their own right. The main officers of the Zhou Dynasty were hereditary. In matters of inheritance, the Zhou Dynasty recognized only patrilineal primogeniture as legal. Meanwhile, the Zhou Dynasty built a detailed Ceremony and Ritual System to make it a well ordered state. The Zhou Dynasty had four-level local administrations: Guo (capital of the state and fief), Dou (big city), Yi (small city) and Ye or Bi (the place outside a city). An area, which was about one hundred li, or fifty kilometers, away from a city, was called a suburb. The area within a suburb was named Xiang, or township; the area beyond a suburb was named Shui, or countryside. The Zhou Dynasty had six Xiangs and six Shuis; a big fief state had three Xiangs and three Shuis. The people who lived in cities or Xiangs were called Guo Ren, or state people; the people who lived in Shuis were called Ye Ren, or common people. A settlement with 12,500 families was called Xiang; a settlement with 500 families was called Dang. People who lived in the same Dang were often of brotherhoods. Xiangs and Dangs were commune organizations outside cities. [1]

The main source of Ye Ren, or common people, was from conquered lands. The common people had no political rights, no rights to join the army, and no rights to build a school or study in a school. They bore more taxes and corvee or labor than the state people. At the end of the Western Zhou Dynasty, the discrimination of the state and common people began to fade, and disappeared quickly in the Spring and Autumn Period.

After the Zhou Dynasty conquered large areas of the east, it did not destroy those existing commune organizations. The Zhou's emperors let those existing aristocrats owe allegiance to the Zhou Dynasty instead of replacing them.

The Qin Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System) and Rural Leadership

During the warring states period, the political reform movement with Shang Yang as the representative began in Qin, totally ruining the noblemen hierarchical system.

The Qin Dynasty (221BCE-207BCE) implemented the political system of the central government vertically managing local governments, replacing aristocratic politics with monarchical centralism. The central government implemented food provisions as an official's salary instead of giving them hereditary fiefs.

The central government set up three councilors and nine ministers, and set up Jun (Commandery or Prefecture) and Xian (County) in its jurisdiction. In rural areas, the Qin Dynasty set up Xiang (township), Ting and Li (a big village or several small villages). One Xiang had ten Tings; a Ting had jurisdiction over a rural area about five kilometers across. The government appointed three officials for a Xiang, including a Sanlao, who was in charge of enlightenment; a Youzhi (for a Xiang which had more than 5,000 persons), or a Sefu (for a Xiang which had less than 5,000 persons), who was in charge of litigation and collecting taxes; and a Youjiao, who was in charge of patrol and manhunt. [2]

The Han Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System) and Rural Leadership

The Han Dynasty's political system and rural leadership were nearly the same with the Qin Dynasty. However, the Han emperors abandoned the Qin's legalism's primacy, inherited and carried forward the essence of The Hundred Schools of Thought, and took and synthesized the most practical elements of Confucianism and Legalism, marking the creation of a new form of government that would remain largely intact until the late nineteenth century. The idea of the combination of Confucianism and Legalism led to the rise of Han Culture, which was inherited and carried forward by the Tang Dynasty (618-907CE), and lasted in China for more than 2,000 years.

The Tang Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System) and Rural Leadership

The Tang Dynasty's political system was similar to the Han Dynasty (202BCE-220CE), but the central government set up three departments of Chancellery and six boards under the Chancellery. The prime ministerial power was divided into three to maintain a balanced force among the ministers, ensuring the monarchical power's primacy. The government set up Zhou (Commandery or Prefecture) and Xian (County) in its jurisdiction.

However, in rural areas, the political system of Xiang, Ting and Li began to evolve to Xiang, Li and Village. The village was formally incorporated into the state political system as a lowest level of administrative rank. The village was given the significance of a social system, and greatly influenced the political system of the following dynasties.

The government appointed a male adult without scholarly honor and official rank to be the head of a village. The official rank of the village head was lower than the Li head. The village head's main duty was to check illicit and illegal offenses, and also help the Li head in collecting taxes and corvee-labors.

The Song Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System) and Rural Leadership

The early Song Dynasty (960-1279) adopted a governance approach of stressing cultural cultivation but despising military accomplishments to avoid opposition to the division and eunuchs corrupting the government.

The central government implemented a two-division system, including Zhongshuyuan (Chancery or executive secretariat), which was in charge of administrative affairs, and Shumiyuan, which was in charge of military affairs, and chose civil officials to be heads of military departments while military officials could only be vice-heads. The government set up Zhou (Commandery or Prefecture) and Xian (County) in its jurisdiction.

However, the Song Dynasty also faced serious armed conflicts from the minorities. The Song Dynasty strengthened the country's military departments, and set up four departments responsible for the management of military-related affairs. The power of the military was

decentralized to four departments, and the emperor centralized all power in his own hands. The four departments were Shumiyuan, in charge of military orders, transfers and dismissal of senior military officers; Sanya, which commanded the country's Jinjun (the imperial guard troops); the war department, in charge of logistics affairs and managing regional Xiangjun (the regional troops); and the Personnel department, in charge of selecting military officials.

In rural areas, Wang Anshi (1021-1086) promoted Bao-jia system, a military management system in rural areas for the purpose of conscription. Ten households formed one Bao; ten baos formed one big bao; ten big baos formed one chief bao.

The Ming Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System) and Rural Leadership

The Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) wanted to totally destroy the Han Culture, but the Han Culture survived. The founder of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Zhu Yuanzhang (1328-1398), set up the political system with separation of the three powers – military power, including Zhongshusheng, Chancery or executive secretariat, with six boards under it, which was in charge of administrative affairs; Da Dudufu, headquarters of the military governor, who was in charge of military affairs; and Yutaishi, censorate, who was in charge of supervisory affairs. Later, Zhu Yuanzhang replaced Zhongshusheng with a cabinet, and allowed the six boards to be directly responsible to the emperor, but the cabinet was only an emperor's consultant organization, and the six boards' power was weak. This political system lasted through two emperors, Hongwu (ruling from 1368 to 1398) and Yongle (ruling from 1403 to 1424). After Renxuan (1424-1435), the idea of governing the country relied heavily on civil officials and grew stronger. The administrative power of the country was transferred to the cabinet and six boards. Meanwhile, the central government set up supervisory organizations and spy agencies for surveillance of officials and common people. The government set up three divisions for local governments, including: ChengxuanBuzheng for administrative affairs, TixingAncha for supervisory affairs, and Duzhihui for military affairs. The three divisions had well-defined power and responsibility.

The early Ming Dynasty implemented the Li-jia system in rural areas. One-hundred-and-ten households formed one Li; the top ten of these households, who had paid the highest grain taxes, rotated as the head of Li. The other one hundred households were divided into ten Jia(s); each household rotated as the head of Jia. Zhu Yuanzhang also set up the elder system in 1394. Each Jia selected three, five, or ten moral elders, who were above fifty, to be in charge of resolving local disputes, supervising people, and persuading people to do good.

During the later stage of the Ming Dynasty, the central government changed the Li-jia system to the Bao-jia system.

The Qing Dynasty's Political System (Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System) and Rural Leadership

The Qing Dynasty's political system was similar to the Hongwu and Yongle of the Ming Dynasty. The Qing Dynasty (1636-1912) was set up by Manchus. It emphasized the status of Manchu to be a priority, and inhibited the initiative of the official who was a Han Nationality.

The Qing Dynasty's political system in rural areas had undergone transformations from the Bao-jia system to the Li-jia system, and again the Bao-jia system. [3] The heads of Bao and Jia were not government officials, but undertook the administrative duties. They also handled all the basic level word processing and archives work required by the government. [4]

The Republic of China's Political System (Bourgeois Democratic Republicanism) and Rural Leadership

The Republic of China (1912-1949) was formally set up as bourgeois democratic republicanism. The government set up Province and County in its jurisdiction. The government administrative system had four levels under the county level, including county level, district level, township level, and village level. Each administrative level had government administrative offices, except the village. The government appointed a village's head under the guidance of the township office. Most of the villages' heads were heads of the family clans or leading elders.

The government implemented the Bao-jia system in rural areas. Ten households formed a Jia; ten Jia(a) formed a Bao. The government appointed the head of Jia, and the head of Bao.

The small-scale peasant economy and its influence on the political system and rural leadership

In 2,000 years of Chinese feudal society, the small-scale peasant economy under the landlord land ownership was the main production force in the agricultural production sector.

Karl Marx named the small-scale peasant economy with individual small production in which the producer had ownership and possession of working conditions, and called the small-scale peasant the "small producer who owns working conditions."

The common definition of the small-scale peasant economy is an individual small production in the agricultural field associated with simple hand tools, based on small private ownership of a direct small producer. It conducts work with an individual family as a unit, and has the feature of an isolated nature of labor. The small-scale peasant economy is the unification of small production and small private ownership on the basis of individual families in the agricultural field.

The scale of operation of the small-scale peasant economy is small. The production of the small-scale peasant economy aims at basically satisfying self-consumption. The small-scale peasant economy, combined with cottage craft, is subject to the relations of production, which hold a leading post in society, and attached to the landlord, clan, and country at different degrees.

Most scholars agree that the small-scale peasant economy under the landlord land ownership includes the owner-peasant economy, sharecropper economy, and klero-land peasant economy. Scholars have different views about when the small-scale peasant economy formed in ancient China, but agree that the feudal landlord system of China was formed in the period of the Warring States. The various features of the small-scale peasant economy under the landlord land ownership gradually appeared after the Warring States.

One of the most important features of the small-scale peasant economy emphasized the family as a social unit. The household was the basic unit of the social production and people's living.

Through history, all prosperous dynasties commendably adhered to the features of the small-scale peasant economy to set up the political system in rural areas. The Zhou's emperors did not destroy those existing commune organizations in conquered areas, and let those existing aristocrats owe allegiance to the Zhou Dynasty instead of replacing them. The Shui was formed with the family as a social unit in the old commune organizations.

The Xiang, Ting, and Li political system in the Qin and Han dynasties, the Xiang, Ting and Village political system in the Tang Dynasty, and the Bao-jia and Li-jia systems in the Song, Ming and Qing dynasties were all formed based on the family as a social unit. The Xiang, Ting and Li system was the source of the Bao-jia system. The only difference is that the Bao-jia system grouped people by the number of households, but the Xiang-li system grouped people by regions.

The patriarchal clan culture and its influence on the political system and rural leadership

Traditional Chinese culture has deep patriarchal clan familial perceptions. The Patriarchal clan culture greatly influenced the rural political system and leadership in China.

Yijing records that hexagrams of Qian and Kun are two fundamental hexagrams, "the Qian is the symbol of heavens, is sovereign; the Kun is the symbol of earth, is humility." The Qian is the creative, it creates all creatures; the Kun is the receptive, all creatures get life through its vitality. The Kun attunes with the Qian meekly, and runs reliance on the rule of the Qian absolutely. Yijing also says, "the Qian is the man, the Kun is the woman."

The ancient Chinese philosophy of Yijing had already laid the road map for patriarchal clan familial perception. The woman, the Kun, gives lives, and the man, the Qian, is the creator of these lives.

Zhouyi: Hexagram Xu, one of the most important Confucian Classics, says, "First, there was heaven and earth, then there were all creatures on earth, then there were males and females, then there were husbands and wives, then there were fathers and sons, then there were monarchs and ministers, then there were superiors and subordinates, then there were ceremonies and rituals."

The Book of Rites says, "Thus the principle of being a moral man is to be close to his family members, therefore honor his ancestors; therefore respect his clan; therefore gather clansmen together; therefore set up a strict ancestral temple system; therefore revere the nation; therefore love common people."

Confucianism, which was created by Confucius, developed its philosophy around the concept of benevolence (Ren), and attached the most importance to blood kin and the ethics and morality of human relations.

Mencius, one of the most important ancient Confucian philosophers, said, "There are three ways of being an unfilial son; the most serious is to have no heir." The heir refers to male heir. As a result, most children adopt their father's not their mother's surname. The family clan and genealogy are built in accordance with the basic clue of male reproduction.

Wang Yongbin (1792-1869), the most famous Confucian in the Qing Dynasty, said in his book the Fireside Chats, “filial piety is the most important of all virtues.”

The Book of Filial Piety, an important ethics book of Confucianism, says, “Thus filial piety starts with serving one’s parents, progresses with serving one’s lord, and ends with establishing oneself.” This shows that for Confucius, filial piety is not merely blind loyalty to one’s parents. It is a display of benevolence that is ideally applied in one’s dealings with all elders, and loyalty to one’s lord.

It can be said that the loyalty and filial piety culture is the base of the patriarchal clan culture. The most important manifestations of the loyalty and filial piety culture are that the man is struggling hard for success for glorifying and illuminating his clan and ancestors. Filial piety is the foundation of the patriarchal clan culture. The Confucianists consolidate a family, a clan, and a country with filial piety and loyalty, educate them with Confucian benevolence, righteousness and other moralities, and manage them within the framework of the patriarchal clan culture.

In the patriarchal clan culture, each clan compiled very detailed and rigorous books of genealogy, built ancestral shrines, formulated strict regulations, and formulated detailed family etiquettes. After the Song Dynasty, most family etiquettes came into compliance with Family Ritual, written by the great Confucian leader of the Song Dynasty, Zhu Xi (1130-1200). The family clan also selected the patriarch and elders to form a leading group to manage all people of the clan.

Family law and state law coexisted to form a dual structure in ancient China. Chinese traditional family-clan judicature, as an important part of Chinese law culture, played a crucial role in adjudicating disputes according to family law, including ancestral guidance and family regulation, punishing crime clansman, and maintaining family stability and order.

During the long time of feudal imperial China, the central government ruled the rural areas mainly by the forces of the clan.

The national politics and the patriarchal clan culture were merged into one by the Confucian political theory. The patriarchal clan culture was brought into the monarchy ruling system. The Zhou’s Shui, Qin and Han’s Xiang-ting-li, Tang’s Xiang-ting-village, Song, Ming, Qing and Republic of China’s Bao-jia or Li-jia, all these rural political systems were formed with the family as a social unit, and emphasized Confucianism.

The Political System and Rural Leadership in China after 1949

The political system of the People’s Republic of China

At the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the government pursued an essentially soviet-style approach to the economic system, which was characterized by the undivided power of the Marxist-Leninist Party, the dominant position of state ownership, and a preponderance of bureaucratic coordination through central planning (Kornai, 1992).

The socialist system led by the working class and based on the alliance of the workers and farmers is the fundamental system of the People’s Republic of China. Meanwhile, the people’s

Congress system is China's fundamental political system; The system of ethnic regional autonomy is a basic political system of China; Multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC constitute the basic party system in China. In order to solve the problems of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, Deng Xiaoping put forward the policy of "one country, two systems" on June 26, 1983. Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan will maintain the capitalist system. The policy of "one country, two systems" is an important component of the socialism with Chinese characteristics.

The rural political system and leadership of the People's Republic of China

After 1949, the government administrative system had four levels under the county level, including county level, district level, township level, and village level. Villages did not have government offices, but the government assigned a village head. Most village heads were leaders of the Party branches in rural areas.

The Communist Party attached great importance to the construction of the Party Branch in rural areas since it began. As of 1949, most villages had already set up the Party village branch. Meanwhile, the Party also set up many branches of mass organizations. The China Communist Youth League, China Women's Federation, and China Militia were the three most important mass organizations, which helped the work of the Party Branch.

Since 1950, the government strengthened on building the rural branches of the CPC, and most villages set up the Party village committee, which had a leading body with a Party village secretary, a commissary in charge of organization, and a commissary in charge of publicity. In 1956, the rural government remained at three levels, the county, township, and village levels, but revoked the district level in the rural political system.

Following the liberation of China in 1949, the central government of the People's Republic of China published a Land Reform Law on June 30, 1950. The law abrogated ownership of land by landlords and introduced peasant landownership. During the winter of 1950-51, land was confiscated from former landlords and redistributed to landless peasants and owners of small plots, as well as to the landlords themselves, who now had to till the land to earn a living.

Since 1952, a collective organization of the Primary Farm Cooperative was promoted in rural areas of China. Under the principle of voluntary participation and mutual benefit, peasants managed and used with unification the main means of production, such as private land, livestock, and big agriculture tools respectively in their Primary Farm Cooperatives. Peasants were allocated with dividend on land shares according to the quantity and quality of the land; and got reward from other means of production they brought in the Farm Cooperative.

The Primary Farm Cooperative was a collective rural economic organization with half socialist nature. It was the form of transition of China rural economy from Individual Economy to Socialist Collective Economy.

On July 31, 1955, Chairman Mao Zedong made a speech of On the Issue of Agricultural Cooperatives in the meeting of the CPC Central Committee for Party Secretaries of provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions. The Primary Farm Cooperatives began to consolidate

into Advanced Farm Cooperatives. Several former Primary Farm Cooperatives in one village consolidated into one Advanced Farm Cooperative in one village. It set up the Farm Cooperative Committee to manage agricultural production. All land belonged to the collective; livestock and big farm tools went to the collective after evaluating; dividend on land shares was abolished.

In order to provide amenities for the villagers, and satisfy daily needs, five percent of per capita land in the Advanced Farm Cooperative was allocated to villagers. Villagers were allowed to operate household sideline production. Production form was based on production groups, and implemented responsibility system of three contracting (contracting work to workers, contracting production to workers, and contracting costs to workers,) and one bonus. Bonuses would be paid if quotas would be exceeded, and penalty would be collected if quotas would be shortage.

The way of distribution was according to work. Year-end total incomes were allocated by work-points after deducting agricultural taxes, production costs and public savings. A certain percentage of grain was allocated to villagers after deducting state purchase quotas, seed grain and reserve grain.

In August 1958, a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee (enlarged) took place and was presided over by Mao Zedong, and passed the Resolution on the Question of Setting up People's Communes in the Countryside. The People's Commune featured a three-level system of ownership with the Production Brigade as the basic form and the integration of government administration with commune management. The commune was responsible for the profits and losses; the Production Brigade was only the basic unit, which organized production labor.

On March 3, 1959, the CPC Central Committee issued the Provisions of the People's Commune Management System (Draft), put forward that the Basic Accounting Unit of the People's Commune was a management area, or Production Brigade, which was akin to that of a former Advanced Farm Cooperative, or a Production Brigade. On November 3, 1960, the CPC Central Committee issued the Urgent Instruction Letter of Current Policy Issues of the People's Commune in Rural Area, which said that the basic system of the People's Commune was "owned by three levels and based on Production Brigade" with the Production Brigade as the basic accounting unit. On February 13, 1962, the CPC Central Committee issued the Instruction about Issues of Changing the Basic Accounting Unit of the People's Commune in Rural Area, which said that the People's Commune should use the Production Brigade as the basic accounting unit, and implemented three-level collective ownerships with the Production Brigade as the basis.

From 1949 to 1956, the main leaders in rural areas all had experienced the long-term revolutionary struggle before liberation, and had very strong working abilities in dealing with farmers. The grass-root leadership in rural China was very strong and capable of leading the masses. Unfortunately, the central government started launching a movement of Rectification in 1957, which wrongly criticized many good grass-root leaders, and labeled them as rightists with some ridiculous reasons, such as just saying, "One-hundred-and-eighty kilograms rations per

person per year are not enough,” or “Donkeys become thinner after joining the cooperative society.” The government encouraged everyone to snitch on and disclose each other.

The Rectification movement lasted for only one year, but hurt everyone’s feelings badly. The movement brought about suspicion and mistrust. Everyone was under high ideological pressures. After the movement, people were constantly wary of each other, and had only class feelings, no more personal feelings. People dared not be truthful, and even dared not speak freely.

Even more unfortunate was that the central government continuously launched many movements after that, including the Great Leap Forward Movement in 1958, followed by three years disasters from 1960 to 1962, which caused many deaths from hunger, and the Great Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, which led to a long-term paralysis and abnormal conditions to all Party and government bodies at all levels, and the destruction of the rural grass-root leadership. Almost all rural leaders had been wrongly criticized and even persecuted. Common people and many leaders lost their trust and faith in the Communist Party.

The Great Cultural Revolution also totally destroyed Chinese traditional culture and moral standards. After suffering for a long time from many movements, people in rural areas had been thwarted from being ideologically serious. It was hard to mobilize them in agriculturally productive activities. In order to stimulate the enthusiasm of peasants, the new rural reform was imperative after the Great Cultural Revolution.

The rural household contract responsibility system of agriculture production had conducted tests at selected points from 1979, and was promoted throughout China since early 1983. In 1984, China revoked the People’s communes and restored the township government.

After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee in 1978, many old grass-root leaders stood again in the leadership position in rural areas. Many of them, who used to have strong beliefs and a sense of mission to build a better China, felt sick about the past mistakes, and willingly worked hard to help the country correct mistakes and struggle for a new future. With their hard work, they led all rural masses to walk out of the turbulence, and move forward in a reforming and developing way.

However, due to the long-time movements from 1957 to 1976 that had utterly devastated people’s beliefs, traditional culture and moral standards, there were many unhealthy tendencies within society. While China’s government sought the best rural political system and leadership, it was very important to rebuild the excellent culture and moral standards, which would deeply impact all aspects of people’s lives and thought, and let them root in the hearts of everyone. The best political system and rural leadership should conform to the modern productive forces level of development, and meet the needs of traditional culture. [6]

Conclusion

During the long history of Feudalism China, the political systems of China were the Feudalism System and Monarchical Centralism System, while in rural areas, the patriarchal clan culture, which was the most important base of Chinese traditional culture, had become the main force to influence the rural leadership. By studying the history and past mistakes, we would learn that the

best political system and rural leadership should conform to the productive forces level of development, and meet the needs of traditional culture.

References

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