The Importance of Religion in Completing and Improving Society Administration—The Necessity of Management of Religious Affair Based on the Rule of Law

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Abstract. Modernization of national administrative system and abilities are a major objective of China’s full and deepened reform. Materialized and non-materialized administrations are two basic approaches on social administration. Religion as an existing, non-materialized social structure has undeniable value in social administration. The thesis analyses the challenge and goal of China’s social administrative layout in the New Era, from the perspective of basic social administration, compares material and non-material administrative methods, through the effect of religion on maintaining social moral order, the need for China’s cultural soft power to combine with the wisdom and positive force of religion, and religion benefits building social trust and preventing social crisis, in order to elaborate on the importance of religion on improving society administrative system.

The development of a society is fundamentally based on whether it has qualified motivational and balance mechanisms or not. In order to have sustainable development and ordered operation, Socialism with Chinese feature must coordinate motivational and balance mechanisms. Without motivational mechanism, socialism with Chinese features would lack of inner motivation necessary for making progress; while without balance mechanism the development loses harmony, stability and sustainability.

The current major conflict of Chinese society has transformed from “a conflict between people’s growing material, cultural need and fall-behind social productivity” into “a conflict between people’s growing quality life need and uneven, incomplete development.” [1] The demands on improving democracy, legal management, fairness, justice, safety and environment are high. In order to respond to these needs and solve new social conflicts, the society management has to become strengthened and more creative while the abilities to manage the society has to increase in order to keep the society orderly and harmoniously.

1. The Rule of Law and Professionalism, Civilization and High Efficiency: the Challenge and Mission of Society Administration of New Era

Society administration targets social problems in a nation to perform as a diverse force in order to maintain quality life, remove social conflicts and improve the development of social fairness. It is a form of management between government and social organizations, enterprises, communities and other social forces. “Society administration is a science”, “Administration and management have small differences but administration implies to manage systematically, rule with law, administer from source and compositied policy-making.”[2]

With China’s rapid development comes with transformational changes on economic structures, interest structures, ideology and sociology. The rapidness of circumstantial social changes, the importance of social stabilities, the challenges and risks have given society administration new requirements. “The new situations of the world pattern, domestic development, social changes,
scientific revolutions, and people’s demand have brought new challenges and standard for China’s society administration.” [3] On world pattern, regional conflicts, protectionism, terrorism and separatism, excessive populism, are all giving China’s society administration impacts and influences. Domestically, the economic growth has transformed from rapid development to high quality development, and is at the key stage of economic structure transformation; the country is in dire need of society administration stability and improved legal measures to ensure stability in rapid economic growth. On social changes, rapid urbanization, transformation of labor supply and demand, and drastic income differences still call for the help of higher society administrative abilities. On scientific revolution, internet has become a crucial field of proper society administration, as internet opinions are increasingly affecting social opinions. Lastly, people are increasingly demanding a better life quality, which doesn’t only include material and culture, but also democracy, social justice, fairness and safety issues that puts higher requirement on the improvement of administration on socialism with Chinese features.

Innovative social administrating is to maintain vigor of society while keeping harmony, a system that maintains the social stability and also allows people to enjoy peace and wellbeing, as well as ruling of law and professionalism. It is a new system that is civilized and highly efficient.

2. The Importance of Religion on Improving Society Administration, from the Perspective of Basic Approaches of Society Administration.

Currently China is on the uprising period of developmental quality, a tough period of full reform, a compiling period of different strategic objectives, and an opportunity period of diplomacy. Politics, economy, and culture are going through massive changes. Full reform has strongly affected the existing interest groups which lead to conflicts. Huge income differences, employment, education and healthcare issues are very apparent.

2.1 The Comparison Between Material and Non-Material Administration—the Two Basic Approaches of Society Administration

China’s great reform and development have proven that the China module is very effective on economic growth and material development. While continue to deepen reform and maintain development, it is necessary to explore new ways on administration, which is a revival of both material and spiritual, a new society administration model that’s material and non-material.

Material and non-material administration are two basic approaches on society administration. From the perspective of overload theory, in a basic theoretical system of society administration, human, material, time, space, monetary and mental resources are the six forms of public resources [4]. Material resource meets people’s material needs, while material administration focuses on whether people’s material needs are met. [5] I believe that non material approach, in contrary to material approach, using non-material means such as political, legal, moral, psychological and religious resources to satisfy people’s all around need.

Material administration is focused on solving basic survival need while non-material administration is focused on developing and overtaking growth needs. Maslow believes that there are two different types of needs in human value system: One is the lower need based on instinct which declines as human evolve, such as physiological and safety needs, while the other appears as human evolve more, which is called higher and growth need, such as social, respect and self-realization needs. Maslow and other behavioral psychologists believe that in a nation, majority population’s multi layers of needs is closely related to this nation’s economical and scientific development levels and people’s educational level. Maslow’s demand theory doesn’t have a best conceived theory but it has a fundamental impact on our value formation, understanding and realizing society administration.

The modernization of administrative system and ability is a major objective for China’s all out reform. The concept of non-material administration works well with traditional Chinese administrating values, such as forming great ethnical characters and maintaining good traditions. On matter of improving people’s spiritual quality, on restraining people's desire to material, a spiritual
freedom and tranquility based value is promoted. Modern studies such as psychology does research on specific social individual and groups’ psychological state, motivation of behaviors and interaction, in order to push forward diversity’s participation in society administration and multi interest group’s positive interaction in order to prevent or solve social conflicts. Religion, in the procedure of non-material administration, has space for more action as well as necessity of existence.

2.2 The Importance of Religion in Improving Society Administration System—from the Non-Material Social Administrative Perspective

Religion is a form of social consciousness, a very complex social and cultural phenomenon, it affects the society with invisible force, not only it functions as mental comfort, value guide, moral discipline and socialization for individuals, it also complies social functions while affects politics, economics and culture. Studying China’s religion is not only important for functionalities of society administration, but also the individual’s spirituality realization and establishment of value.

2.2.1 Advantages of Non-Material Administration

In comparison to material administration, non-material administration doesn’t confine to material resources and relies very little on material consumption. Non-material administration affects a person’s behavior through affecting his mind, moral value, way of thinking and emotion, it tends to suppress and adjust the lower material needs with higher needs; non-material administration makes up for what material administration cannot fulfill, such as the idea of immortality; non material administration makes up for what material administration cannot fulfill, such as the idea of immortality; non-material administration uses very low society administration and human resource, it is an implicit, self-conducted administration; non-material administration is less combative in comparison to material administration and has less potential threat to social stability.

2.2.2 The Functions of Religion in Maintaining Social Ethical Order

Positively guiding religion to be adaptive with the development of socialism society with Chinese feature of the new era is a very important theory and practice in Chinese society. “Based on the history of reality, religion will exist in the long term and perform its functionalities. Religion along with economy, politics and culture could cause big impact on social development and stability; we must guide religion to work with socialism society. [7]

Changes of social relation and interest format signify people’s value and behavior on the perspectives of personalization, diversity and differentiation. Political law and moral paradigms are the main social paradigms of social relationship adjustment; however the practical importance of religious paradigm cannot be overlooked. In social living, legally adjusted social/individual relationship and individual/individual relationship don’t exist in isolation—they are deeply connected with other social means to function together. Religion as part of social cultural resource, works in non-negligible way in maintaining social order.

Religions help society administration in terms of the long existing acknowledgement, standardization and adjustment functions. Religious and spiritual objectives such as Sakyamuni and Jesus Christ are offered certain moral properties and characters in believers’ social life; they have strong charisma among the believers, work as example and guide in peoples’ disciplinary behaviors. Major religions in the world, though have different rules and rituals, but they are all mostly based on peace and harmonious values. Religious rules usually have similar contents to social value and standards such as Buddhism’s 5 precepts (no killing, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no lying and no intoxicants), The ten virtues, The Brahma-Vihara (kindness, compassion, empathy and equanimity), The Six Paramita (generosity, discipline, patience, energy, contemplation and wisdom), and also examples such as The Ten commandments in Christianity. These rules overlap with social livings moral and behavioral standards to help the citizens to obey law, befriend others, to maintain social order, compile social value, build social standards and peoples’ self-improvement and social harmony. Ethics is mostly a self-disciplinary standard, which works while rely on public opinions and personal conscience. Religions strengthen personal conscience to convert the ethics into a natural pursuit through a force similar to punishment, encouragement or comfort. Such property of religion, under the circumstances of time, space, environment and regional culture, could be more
effective than other social standards in terms of stability and persistence. In the procedure of perfecting social administrative system, religions have unique social value advantage; its influence on individuals is implicit, self-motivated and not forced. It subtly affects value and behavior. Afterward people apply this value on social practice, therefore such transcendence is stable and persistent. On recognizing the relationship of religion and society administration, we must abandon the out-dated singular mindset of “either black or white “mentality, and correctly guide religion to work with socialism with Chinese features, think and practice the important value of social system construction and social administrative creation with a much bigger and wider view. We must go deep into the harmonious values of religion and activate the positive influence of religion in politics, to help improve economics and social development and harmony.

2.2.3 The Construction of Chinese Cultural Soft Power Needs to Gain Wisdom and Positive Force from Religious Culture

The rich experiences of society administration of all nations inspire us: it is not most effective to rely on politics, economy and military means for society administration; properly using non-negligible force such as religion for society administration would be greatly beneficial to the stability of politics and harmony of society.

A nation’s combined power includes hard and soft powers. Hard power means economic, military and technologies while soft power is cultural value and social system. Prosperous cultural development brings strength to a nation and its people. Culture is the core of a nation, is the spiritual power that motivates the social development. The revival of a nation needs material force as well as spiritual force. In order to adapt to the construction of modern culture of socialism with Chinese features of the new era, one must go deep into the wisdom and positivity inside religions and pay attention to the value of religion. The handling of religious issues is about the national development strategies, cultural soft power development strategies and sustainable social development. China’s soft power structure cannot exist without religion and culture contents. The inspiration, influence and comfort religions have, cannot be replaced by any other cultural elements. Religions are not just belief systems, but a cultural phenomenon. In the development of human civilization, religions played very important roles. China’s religion is a very important part of Chinese culture, is an important faction of Chinese traditional culture which affects the characteristics and features of Chinese culture. China’s religions promote Chinese cultural characteristics and wisdom, using deep and essential philosophies and universal and empathetic religions sentiments to provide spiritual support and emotional care in the peaceful development concept of Chinese culture. All of these has given Chinese culture value in the building of harmonious society and push forward the structure of human unified destiny, it increases china’s cultural soft power and international competitiveness and influence, and further more motivates economy and sustainable development of the society.

2.2.4 Religions can Increase Social Belongingness and Agreement, Helps with Building the Trust System, Social Stability and Prevention and Diffusion of Social Crisis

Humans are highly sociable animals and societies are created through intertwining complex, relationships. Religions can be used to achieve agreement, realize socialization, reformat conflicts, adjust interests and utilize social structure, and then to promote social stability and development. Many rules of religions promote altruism and indicate humane, empathetic value that emphasize unified harmony, spirituality above materialism, self-restraint, forgiving and tolerating philosophy, which has positive impact on coordinating relations, comforting people, soothing the shock of rapid social changes and stress, and also preventing social crisis. Social identity theory tells us, that the trust among inner social group members is significantly higher than outer group members. Positive and lawful religion practice is helpful at extending group socializing, weakening social borders, breaking through the limits of time, space, regions and economy. Using religious value to unify, inspire and rally people, increasing mutual trust to form a sense of belongingness to the social community, to ultimately reach agreement.
References


