Abstract

Throughout history, many philosophers have considered the topic of human nature. Their exploration of this topic not only means that human beings' cognition has changed from exploring the natural world to reflecting on their own existence, but also that it provides new basis for our choice of political beliefs and doctrines. Almost all political systems are based on some human nature theories. Many of these theories involve a debate between good or evil aspect of our nature, which philosophers have focused on since ancient times. Xun Kuang (Xunzi) and Thomas Hobbes are two famous thinkers who argued that human nature is originally evil. Both of them hoped to create an effective social order, eliminate interpersonal tension, and rely on their own methods to achieve their political ideals. Xunzi believed that sage king's propriety could transform evil human nature, thereby ending chaotic political division and conflict, ultimately achieving unification and harmony. Hobbes believed that human beings are naturally selfish, brutal, and aggressive. In his book Leviathan where he believed that human peace and security can be truly realized only when a social contract is used among people to form a powerful state.

My thesis will start with theories of human nature to compare Xunzi's and Hobbes' models for constructing an ideal society as well as their political philosophy. In particular, I will attempt to answer the question of why Xunzi and Hobbes had similar starting points but ended up relying on radically different methods for constructing society. In addition to comparing the philosophical work of their own, my thesis will also conclude by pointing out some theoretical limitations of their ideas.

My thesis focuses on Xunzi and Hobbes' political philosophy as the research topic. This is not limited to a detailed description of Xunzi and Hobbes' methods of constructing society, but touches all aspects of their philosophical thought. By identifying the theoretical contributions and limitations of their philosophical viewpoints, we can identify their intellectual role in the history of political philosophy. In an era of

globalization, China is becoming more open to the outside world, and its philosophy must help it interact with the world. Therefore, this thesis intends to start from theories of human nature to comprehensively compare Xunzi's and Hobbes' political philosophy. This approach has significant historical value and can be an important reference for studying the history of Chinese or Western political philosophy or for building an effective modern political order.

Key words: *Thomas Hobbes, Xunzi, Political Philosophy, Human nature*