

Abstract

Fan Zhongyan (989—1052 A.D) was a famous reformist during the Northern Song Dynasty . The reforms that he introduced (i.e. the Qingli Reforms) had brought great impact upon Song history .

Fan Zhongyan lived in an era that was full of crises . During that period , the policy of centralization implemented by the Song Emperors had successfully prevented the outbreak of wars and conflicts which frequently occurred during the Five Dynasties . Nevertheless , by adhering strictly to this principle and tradition of centralization without making any changes or adjustments , the Song Dynasty had been much weakened politically , economically and militarily .

Consequently , various problems such as corruption , misuse of power and defects in the bureaucratic system had become increasingly serious during the Song Dynasty . It can be said that on the whole , the defects within the bureaucratic system were the major reason for the failure of most reforms in Chinese history . The Qingli Reform proposed by Fan Zhongyan was not only merely just one of the political reforms of the Song Dynasty , it can be considered as the first political reform that attempted to bring about changes and adjustments to improve the imperial system of government during the Tang and

Song era .

This thesis is divided into six chapters . The first chapter introduces the political background of the Song dynasty . On the whole , it can be said that Song society in the early years appeared to be developing well , with the population growing steadily from year to year . However , behind the apparent peace and prosperity were hidden various problems and crises that became increasingly serious . The problem of the “ Three Superflous ” (namely , superflous officials , superflous soldiers and superflous expenditures) had indirectly jeopardized the Song economy and this had worsened the crisis faced by the dynasty .

Chapter two relates the personal background of Fan Zhongyan and his views concerning the motherland and the “ men of ability ” . His view that “ one should first be anxious about the nation’ s problems before one should enjoy himself ” truly reflected the noble character and traditional values of old and his personal ideals , which also depicted the high moral standing and idealistic spirit of the intellectuals of his day . The idealism reflected by his words and behaviour was actually aimed at establishing a stable society for the Song . It should be noted that rulers of later dynasties had given great honor to Fan for his noble ideals . In fact , Fan Zhongyan ’ s viewpoints and thoughts had continued to inspire many officials until today . According to Fan , ministers and officials who

sincerely served the people should in fact be regarded as loyal to the emperor. However, under the imperial system that stressed solely on the supreme authority of the emperor, Fan's noble ideals could not be realized. Furthermore, many who intended to carry out their ideals for the benefit of the people and nation frequently met with disaster. Fan Zhongyan was no exception.

Chapter Three examines Fan Zhongyan's thoughts on the military system and defence. During the early years of the Northern Song, the government placed much emphasis on the military because the founder of the dynasty (i.e. Zhao Kuangyin) depended on his army generals to consolidate his political power. However, after attaining stability, the Song government then implemented policies that placed predominant role on the civil officials and deliberately reduced the positions of the army generals. This was predominantly so during Song Tai Zong's reign, when the emperor greatly emphasized the importance of civil officials and values. Such a culture continued since then. Consequently, it caused the decline of the Song Dynasty in terms of military might and defence and led to the problem of foreign threat caused by nomadic invasions. Though Fan Zhongyan was a civil official, he also played an important role in the military field and had even led Song troops in defending the country. In fact he had contributed much in the area of border defence.

Chapter Four depicts the political thought of Fan Zhongyan and the

background of the Qingli reform . Historians believe that one obvious factor that led to the reform is that Fan Zhongyan truly understood the need of the time and Emperor Ren Zong 's desire to overcome the political crisis during his reign . Fan utilized this golden opportunity to propose his reform ideas in the political , socio-economic , military and educational areas . Fan hoped that the reforms could be implemented in the various fields so as to consolidate the nation .

The Fifth chapter is related to the failure of the Qingli reform . Actually Fan Zhongyan had great desire to revive and revitalize the Northern Song , but unfortunately , the conservative spirit and culture prevalent in Song society had shattered much of his dream . Due to the dominant conservative spirit in court , Fan was incapable of restructuring the overall Chinese social structure that adhered to conservatism . In addition to that , it is noted that the ultimate decision of the ruling power would decide the success or failure of the reform , and in most cases , the ruling authorities seldom sacrificed their personal interests for the sake of changing the traditional system of the court . So in case of disagreement between the ruling powers and the reformers , the interest of the reformists would automatically be sacrificed .

Chapter Six analyses the impact of the Qingli reform . If we take a closer look , we would notice that the Qingli reform had greatly enhanced the right to voice out their opinions among the scholar-officials . Nevertheless , the

right to speak up had been used as an instrument for attacking others in the power struggles between the reformists and their opponents. The whole political scenario had become chaotic and ministers hurled accusations at one another, using the term “factions” to attack their political foes. The prevalence of “factions” eventually led to much disintegration among the scholar-officials. In addition, the moral values of sincerity, loyalty, excellence in character and other highly exalted values promoted by Fan Zhongyan during the Qingli reform had brought about a turning point in Song culture. One effect of this new culture can be seen in the rise in moral standards and the willingness to sacrifice for the country. A good example can be seen in the fact that many scholar-officials were willing to sacrifice their lives in fighting the Jin and the Mongols later. Such a noble spirit even survived until today.

Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter. If we were to look very carefully, we would notice that Fan Zhongyan also had his weaknesses. For example, in the political and military arena, his position was not comparable to that of Han Qi; in the field of literature, his accomplishment in essay-writing was not comparable to that of his friend Ouyang Xiu; while in the impact of his reform, it was not as far-reaching as that of Wang Anshi's. Even though Fan's accomplishment may not be as outstanding as some other historical figures, nevertheless, his noble ideals and good moral values such as frugality, honesty and courage in speaking up for the people had brought him much respect from

among the historians of later days . Furthermore , the noble principle that “ one should first be anxious about the nation ’ s problem before one should enjoy himself ” upheld by Fan had brought him much honour from among the scholars of later generations .

Abstrak

Fan Zhongyan (989—1052), merupakan reformis yang terkenal pada zaman dinasti Song Utara . Dasar pembaharuan yang diperkenalkan oleh beliau (iaitu dasar pembaharuan Qingli) telah membawa kesan yang mendalam terhadap sejarah Song .

Fan Zhongyan hidup dalam suatu zaman yang penuh dengan krisis . Dasar pemusatan yang dijalankan oleh maharaja-maharaja Song berjaya menghalang peperangan dan pertempuran yang sentiasa berlaku pada zaman Lima Dinasti dahulu , namun dasar yang terlalu mengikut tradisi dan peraturan lama tanpa perubahan ini telah menjadikan dinasti Song lemah dari segi politik , ekonomi dan ketenteraan .

Gejala korupsi , penyelewengan kuasa dan kepincangan dalam sistem birokrasi telah menjadi permasalahan politik yang serius pada zaman dinasti Song . Boleh dikatakan bahawa pada keseluruhannya kepincangan dalam sistem birokrasi merupakan sebab utama kegagalan dasar pembaharuan dalam sejarah China . Dasar pembaharuan Qingli yang diperkenalkan oleh Fan Zhongyan bukan sahaja merupakan suatu pembaharuan politik pada dinasti Song semata-mata , malah ianya merupakan pembaharuan politik yang pertama sekali cuba mengubahsuai dan menyempurnakan sistem pemerintahan imperial sejak zaman Tang dan Song .

Tesis ini dibahagikan kepada tujuh bab. Bab yang pertama memperkenalkan latarbelakang politik dinasti Song. Secara keseluruhannya, masyarakat pada awal dinasti Song masih berada dalam suasana membangun di mana pertambahan penduduk terus meningkat tahun demi tahun. Walau bagaimanapun, disebalik keadaan yang seakan-akan “aman-damai” ini tersembunyi pula masalah-masalah dan krisis yang membimbangkan. Masalah “tiga berlebihan” (iaitu bilangan pegawai yang berlebihan, bilangan askar yang berlebihan dan perbelanjaan yang berlebihan) secara tidak langsung menjejaskan bidang ekonomi dinasti Song dan ini telah menambahkan krisis dinasti Song.

Bab yang kedua menerangkan latarbelakang Fan Zhongyan dan pandangan beliau terhadap “tanahair” dan “orang-orang yang berkebolehan”. Pandangan beliau iaitu “risaulah terlebih dahulu dan bergembiralah pada hari kemudian” sebenarnya merangkumi perangai dan sifat baik tradisi nenek moyang serta ideal Fan sendiri dan menggambarkan semangat tinggi para intelek yang terunggul pada zaman itu. Percakapan dan tingkahlaku Fan yang idealistik sebenarnya bertujuan untuk mengekalkan kestabilan masyarakat dinasti Song. Harus diingat bahawa pemerintah-pemerintah pada zaman kemudiannya telah memberi penghormatan yang tinggi terhadap Fan kerana cita-citanya yang begitu mulia. Sesungguhnya pandangan dan pemikiran Fan Zhongyan menjadi teladan kepada ramai pegawai-pegawai kerajaan sejak masa dahulu sehingga ke zaman kini. Fan Zhongyan berpendapat bahawa menteri-menteri yang bersikap jujur dan pegawai-

pegawai berrmaruah tinggi yang berkhidmat untuk rakyat jelata sebenarnya menunjukkan sifat taat setia terhadap maharaja . Walau bagaimanapun , di bawah sistem kerajaan imperial yang hanya mengutamakan kuasa maharaja , ideal-ideal Fan yang mulia itu sesungguhnya tidak mudah dicapai . Malah ramai daripada mereka yang ingin menggerakkan pembaharuan untuk kepentingan rakyat dan negara telah mengalami kegagalan yang teruk . Fan Zhongyan juga tidak terkecuali dalam perkara ini .

Bab yang ketiga meneliti pemikiran ketenteraan serta pertahanan negara yang dikemukakan oleh Fan Zhongyan . Pada awal pembinaan dinasti Song , pemerintah telah mementingkan pasukan tentera negara kerana pengasas dinasti Song (iaitu Zhao Kuangyin) adalah bergantung kepada jeneral-jeneral tentera untuk memperkukuhkan kedudukan politik beliau . Selepas kestabilan dicapai pada awal pemerintahan , pemerintah dinasti Song telah melaksanakan dasar yang mementingkan pegawai-pegawai awam dan sengaja mengabaikan kedudukan jeneral-jeneral tentera . Khususnya pada zaman pemerintahan Song Tai Zong , baginda amat mementingkan pegawai-pegawai awam dan budaya ini telah semakin menonjol sejak masa tersebut . Ini telah menyebabkan kelemahan Song dalam bidang ketenteraan dan pertahanan dan menimbulkan masalah ancaman luar dari kaum-kaum nomad . Walaupun Fan Zhongyan adalah seorang pegawai awam , tetapi beliau juga memainkan peranan yang penting dalam bidang ketenteraan dan telah memimpin pasukan Song mempertahankan negara . Beliau telah banyak

menyumbang jasanya dalam pertahanan sempadan Song .

Bab yang keempat menggambarkan pemikiran politik Fan Zhongyan dan latarbelakang pembaharuan Qingli . Sejarahwan berpendapat bahawa satu faktor yang mendorong pelaksanaan pembaharuan Qingli ialah Fan Zhongyan benar-benar memahami keperluan masa dan keinginan maharaja Ren Zong untuk mengatasi krisis politik pada masa pemerintahannya . Fan telah menggunakan peluang keemasan ini untuk bercadang menjalankan pembaharuan dalam bidang politik , sosio-ekonomi , ketenteraan , pendidikan dan peperiksaan awam kerajaan . Fan mengharapkan pembaharuan diadakan secara keseluruhannya dalam berbagai bidang . Dalam petisyen “ Laporan mengenai Sepuluh Perkara ” , Fan telah mengemukakan satu sistem yang lebih lengkap dan menyeluruh dengan tujuan memperkukuhkan negara .

Bab yang kelima mengisahkan kegagalan dasar pembaharuan Qingli . Sesungguhnya Fan Zhongyan bercita-cita tinggi dan berhasrat membangunkan semula dinasti Song , namun semangat dan budaya konservatif yang tertanam dalam masyarakat Song telah memusnahkan impian Fan Zhongyan . Fan tidak mampu mengubah seluruh struktur masyarakat China yang bersifat konservatif dan tidak ingin menerima perubahan . Tambahan lagi , didapati bahawa keputusan terakhir pemerintah merupakan punca kejayaan atau kegagalan dasar pembaharuan

dan biasanya , pemerintah-pemerintah jarang mengorbankan kepentingan sendiri demi mengubah sistem tradisi di istana . Di sini dapat disimpulkan bahawa apabila berlaku percanggahan yang tidak dapat diselesai di antara kehendak reformis dengan pihak pemerintah , maka kepentingan golongan reformis- reformis secara otomatisnya dikorbankan .

Bab yang keenam menganalisis kesan dasar pembaharuan Qingli . Jika dilihat secara teliti , didapati bahawa dasar pembaharuan Qingli telah menyebabkan hak bersuara pegawai-pegawai kerajaan mencapai satu tahap yang amat tinggi sekali . Hak bersuara secara lebih bebas telah dijadikan sebagai satu alat untuk menyerang pihak yang lain dalam perebutan kuasa politik di antara penyokong-penyokong reformis dan pihak pembangkang . Seluruh suasana politik menjadi tidak aman dan setiap menteri ghairah mengkritik musuh mereka sebagai ' pakatan ' . Gejala ' pakatan ' mewujudkan budaya perpecahan pada akhirnya . Dari sudut yang lain , didapati bahawa dasar pembaharuan Qingli telah memberi satu teladan yang bernilai kepada Wang Anshi . Di samping itu , sifat ikhlas , taat-setia dan kelakuan peribadi dan lain-lain nilai yang tinggi yang dikemukakan oleh Fan semasa pembaharuan Qingli telah menjadi titik perubahan corak kebudayaan dinasti Song . Corak kebudayaan yang baru ini telah membina satu bangsa Han yang bermaruah tinggi dan sudi berkorban . Malah ramai daripada sarjana-sarjana pentadbir sanggup berkorban semasa menentang pihak Jin dan Mongol . Semangat yang tinggi ini diteruskan sehingga kini .

Bab yang ketujuh ialah kesimpulan . Jika dilihat secara teliti , didapati bahawa Fan Zhongyan memang mempunyai kelemahannya sendiri . Misalnya dalam bidang politik dan ketenteraan , kedudukan Fan tidak setinggi Han Qi ; dalam bidang kesusasteraan pula , gaya bahasa dalam esei Fan tidak sebaik kawannya Ouyang Xiu ; manakala kesan pembaharuan yang dibawa oleh Fan pula tidak sedalam reformis kemudiannya iaitu Wang Anshi . Walaupun keupayaan Fan tidak sehandal tokoh-tokoh sejarah yang lain , namun cita-citanya yang begitu mulia serta sifat-sifat baik beliau seperti berjimat-cermat , berani meluahkan suara rakyat jelata dan sikapnya yang jujur telah diberi penghormatan oleh sejarahwan pada masa kemudiannya . Malah prinsip mulia beliau yang “ risau dahulu dan bergembira hati kemudiannya ” telah diberi sanjungan yang tinggi oleh sarjana-sarjana pada generasi-generasi yang seterusnya .