**The Difference Between New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism**

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[Abstract] In English political literature, New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism represent two schools of thought with completely different propositions and demands, and they originally belong to two different disciplinary contexts, political philosophy and economics. “New liberalism” mainly refers to modern liberalism founded by Mill, Green, and Hobhouse and we know that Keynes, Rawls and Dworkin are usually regarded as the spokespersons of new liberalism in the 20th century their suggestions have led to Roosevelt’s New Deal and Keynesian policies. Compared with classical liberalism, it is a “new type” of liberalism. On the other hand “Neo-liberalism”, which mainly refers to the new liberalism (neo-classical liberalism) founded by Hayek, Friedman, and others has become dominant revival trend after end of 1970s.

[Keywords] liberalism, classical liberalism, neoliberalism, neoclassical liberalism

Over the past year or so, various newspapers and periodicals in mainland China have published a large number of articles and works criticizing neoliberalism. As for articles, a search for "neoliberalism" conducted by the author using the CNKI digital library at the end of April this year showed that among the various critical articles publicly published in mainland China from 2003 to 2004, there were 117 articles with the title "neoliberalism", of which 92 were published in 2004; there were 97 articles discussing "neoliberalism" as a keyword, of which 62 were published in 2004. During this period, critical works published included "A Review of Neoliberalism" (Social Literature Publishing House, 2004), "New Liberal Thought" (Higher Education Press, 2004), and "Globalization and Neoliberalism" (Guangxi Normal University Press, 2003). Precisely because of this, some scholars call 2004 the "year of criticism of neoliberalism" in mainland China.

The coordinated criticism of "neoliberalism" by authoritative experts and the media has left a deep impression on many people. However, when we criticize our own understanding of neoliberalism, many people do not seem to have given much thought to the other meaning of the Chinese word "neoliberalism". Because New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism (also spelled as Neoliberalism) in English are often translated as "neoliberalism" [1-p53], but in fact these two "isms" happen to refer to two different schools of thought with opposite demands that coexisted and contended in Western society in the 20th century. What's more, some studies are completely based on the Chinese translation, and are not clear about the distinction between New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism, so that the neoliberalism in the sense of Neoliberalism that they criticize is labeled "New Liberalism" [2-p11]1.

In addition, when using the term "neoliberalism", related articles previously published in the authoritative domestic philosophy journals "Philosophical Research" and "Philosophical Dynamics" did not pay much attention to the subdivision and difference between the two.

They listed Rawls and Dworkin, who originally belonged to the New Liberalism trend, and Hayek, Friedman, Nozick, etc., who belonged to the Neo-Liberalism trend, as neoliberalism without any subdivision [3-p40-43] [4-p42-44] [5-p75, p81].

In order to enable readers to have a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the content implied by "neoliberalism", this article attempts to avoid the comments on the many criticisms mentioned above as much as possible, and instead makes some necessary explanations and clarifications from the professional field of the history of Western political philosophy, in order to let more readers know that the "neoliberalism" (Neo-Liberalism) that we are currently criticizing is actually a "hijacking" of another kind of neoliberalism (New Liberalism) that has long existed in the history of Western political philosophy.

1. This “Neo Liberalism” is not the same as that “New Liberalism”

In the Western academic world, New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism are two schools of thought with different and even diametrically opposed claims and demands. The differences between them are manifested in many aspects.

This difference is of course first manifested in the word form and pronunciation of the English names used by each. There is an obvious difference in spelling between New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism, and there is also a subtle difference in pronunciation, which is called "similar pronunciation but different characters" in Chinese. 4

While for Western liberalism, New Liberalism precedes Neo-Liberalism both logically and in time, and the latter is to a large extent a criticism and negation of the former. Today, when Chinese scholars criticize "neoliberalism", they should understand that there is a difference between New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism.

Secondly, we can also see the difference between "New Liberalism" and "'Neo' Liberalism" from the definitions of New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism by Western scholars. Here I would like to take the explanation of "Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia" as an example:

**New Liberalism**

New liberalism (also known as "modern liberalism" or "social liberalism") is a political and economic position that advocates extensive government management and partial intervention in the economy; however, this position of new liberalism is much less regulated and interfered with than the social democrats. The ideological basis of new liberalism is that although society has no right to morally educate its citizens, it is the task of society to ensure that every citizen has equal opportunities.

New liberalism is a response of early 20th century liberals to 19th century classical liberalism. New liberals pay more attention to and emphasize positive (affirmative) freedom and are committed to improving the freedom of disadvantaged groups and poor members of society.

Neoliberalism should not be confused with "neo" liberalism. The latter emerged in the late 20th century (1970s) and advocates a global economic system and the establishment of a free market cooperative organization. Since "new" liberalism is very disgusted with neoliberals or the meaning of "new" and "social" contained in the latter, special attention should be paid to the distinction between the two. [EB/03]

Neo liberalism:

"Neo" liberalism is often used to describe a political-economic philosophy that emerged in the 1970s and became dominant in the 1980s. "Neo" liberalism disdains or opposes direct government intervention in the economy, and instead emphasizes progress and social justice through encouraging free markets and reducing restrictions on business operations and economic "development". The leaders of "neo" liberalism argue that under free trade, free markets and capitalism, the net social benefits will always exceed its costs. [EB/04]

This recent Neo liberalism is not the new liberalism in the sense of John Dewey, Woodrow Wilson, John M. Keynes, Franklin Roosevelt, or the British Labour Party, but a contemporary version of "classical liberalism" as understood by people in the 19th century. [EB/05]

Third, the difference between New liberalism and Neo-liberalism is more reflected in their inheritance relationship with classical liberalism. New liberalism is a negation of classical liberalism by expanding and changing the "negative" meaning of traditional freedom, while "neo" liberalism is a further negation of new liberalism by "reviving" and "returning" to the "negative freedom" of classical liberalism. Therefore, they are two streams of thought that flow and converge when thinkers of different periods treat traditional liberalism with different attitudes.

In order to more clearly illustrate the complex relationship of negation and negation of negation between them, it is necessary for us to make a very brief outline and review of the evolution and development of Western liberalism.

2. The logical evolution of liberalism: a)classical liberalism – b)new liberalism – c) “neo” liberalism

1. Classical Liberalism

The classical liberal thought of the West can be traced back to the writings of Locke, Montesquieu, Adam Smith, Bentham, Mill and other thinkers. In the writings of many Western political philosophers, Locke is regarded as the first person of liberalism. In his The Second Treatise of Government, Locke, by inheriting the natural rights theory of his predecessors, proposed that individuals are born with the "right to life, liberty, and property" that cannot be deprived or infringed by others, thus laying the foundation for the two most basic freedom concepts of liberalism: economic freedom and freedom of belief. At the same time, Locke logically determined the negative status of the state (government) by deriving the social contract theory from the natural state: its power is originally granted by the people, and its power should be used by the people. Therefore, the main function of the government is to serve and protect the personal and property safety of members of society, and the legitimacy of the government lies in not violating the will of members of society and not plundering and embezzling the personal property of citizens. The political freedom and economic freedom founded and established by Locke were soon developed by Montesquieu in France and Adam Smith and Bentham in Britain. Following Locke's separation of powers idea, Montesquieu designed the political law of separation and mutual restraint of legislative, executive and judicial powers, believing that there is no freedom without separation of powers, and that abuse of power is inevitable without restraint of power. [10-p185] The theory of separation and restraint of powers effectively limits the infringement of the government's public power on citizens' personal rights and private property from the perspective of institutional design, effectively eliminating citizens' fear and worry about the government, allowing them to do what they should do in accordance with the law without much fear.

On the other hand, classical economists such as Adam Smith developed Locke's economic freedom ideas by advocating "laissez faire". Laissez faire (French) literally means "let them do it as they desire".

Laissez faire advocates a free economic society and believes that in a society composed of rational economic people who enjoy full freedom, the free market automatically regulates and allocates various resources through an "invisible hand" in a reasonable and effective manner, so that social resources will be used in their proper places and efficiency will be maximized; here, the government does not have much room. The government should only be a passive executor of social and legal rules and a loyal "night watchman" of capitalism; "Agriculture, industry and commerce make the same request to the government as Diogenes made to Alexander the Great for five years: please do not block my sunlight." [11- p72]

Laissez-faire combines the egoism of pursuing one's own interests with the altruism centered on equality, thus solving a major problem in political philosophy. However, classical liberalism, which seems perfect in theory, has caused many specific social problems. For most members of society, the "negative freedom" advocated by classical liberals cannot change their poor and difficult living conditions; laissez-faire with imperfect rules has led to economic monopoly, polarization of the rich and the poor in society, and deterioration of working conditions for hired workers, causing social crises and turmoil. In this situation, following the fierce criticism of classical liberalism by anarchism and socialism, liberalism has undergone a "modern" transformation from within, appearing in a new posture advocating "positive (affirmative) freedom" and the welfare state, which has been New Liberalism.

2. New Liberalism

New liberalism, along with socialism and anarchism, was born in the second half of the 19th century. It is a revision and transformation of traditional liberalism by British philosophers such as Mill, Green, and Hobhouse. While Mill emphasized freedom, Mill also attached importance to fair distribution. Mill "agreed to regard socialism as the ultimate goal of human progress", opening up the neoliberal trend of social liberalism and "shifting from individualism to society-oriented free thought". [12-p219]

Green and others were further dissatisfied with the narrow understanding and negative interpretation of freedom by classical liberalism, believing that "freedom is not just (negative) freedom without coercion", and freedom should also include positive freedom related to "realizing oneself", expressing and developing personal talents and abilities. "Positive freedom includes all the factors of a happy and beautiful life" [13-p674]: having enough food and clothing, receiving the most basic compulsory education, enjoying the rights to housing, medical care, leisure, and entertainment, etc.; and having the conditions to possess and enjoy the necessary social resources and opportunities to realize the above rights, "in order to develop and realize individual talents and abilities". [14-p67]

To this end, new liberals advocated "positive" freedom and responsible government, and advocate that the state intervene in the economy and regulate the market through taxation, restrict slave contracts through legal means, prohibit the use of child labor, set minimum wage standards, and redistribute social wealth. They believe that the state has an obligation to "create such economic conditions that normal people with no physical or mental defects can, through useful labor, provide themselves and their families with food, shelter and clothing." [15-p80]

Because the above-mentioned claims of new liberalism were relatively close to the demands of socialism, it is sometimes referred to as “liberal socialism” (as distinct from the Soviet-style “anti-liberal socialism”)[15-p83], and has become one of the important theoretical sources of the platforms of the social democratic parties in many countries.

Keynes, Rawls and Dworkin are usually regarded as the spokespersons of new liberalism in the 20th century. 5

Keynes' neoliberal attributes are reflected in at least the following three aspects. First, Keynes is skeptical of laissez-faire. Keynes devalued the "chivalry" advocated by classical liberals as "animal spirits", and believed that the real world is not as transparent as they say, but full of risks and uncertainties. On this basis, he proposed the concepts of "managed currency" and "socialized investment" in monetary theory, and enhanced the role of fiscal policy in the economy, thereby announcing the "end of laissez-faire". Secondly, Keynes suggested using the way of state intervention in economic life to solve the problems of unemployment and crisis, that is, when the unemployment rate remains high and the normal consumption of society decreases, the weak market can be stimulated by increasing government spending and investment to keep the total GDP unchanged; specifically, it is to compensate for the decrease in consumption by increasing the public part of G (government spending) and I (investment) in the formula of GDP=C+G+I+XM.

In addition, Keynes advocated that the state should implement social welfare policies to ensure a certain degree of social justice. Therefore, his thought is essentially "in line with the neoliberalism represented by Green". [1-p53] Keynes's intervention theory began to prevail in many developed capitalist countries after Roosevelt entered the White House; after World War II, "almost all Western countries adopted the policies Keynes had recommended to varying degrees". [16-p30]

After Keynes, later Rawls and Dworkin once again raised the banner of "justice", continuing to "follow Mill's view of emphasizing fair distribution and tending to defend the Western welfare state" [12-p219-220] and made a relatively systematic explanation of the positive freedom, compulsory government and welfare state theories advocated by neoliberals since the late 19th century from the perspectives of political philosophy and legal philosophy respectively.

Rawls designed two principles of justice to regulate the design of national institutions and social organization arrangements:

A. Everyone has the right to enjoy the greatest possible degree of basic liberty, which does not conflict with the same liberty enjoyed by others.

B. To allow social and economic inequality to exist, the following two conditions must be preconditions: (I) those who are in the worst social situation must benefit the most from such inequality; (II) all public offices and positions must be open to all under the conditions of fair and equal opportunity. [17-p60]

In these two principles, A always takes precedence over B, and (II) in principle B always takes precedence over (I). In other words, consideration of equal political freedom rights always takes precedence over economic considerations, and equality of participation opportunities takes precedence over differences in competition results. Social and economic growth or compensation cannot be exchanged at the expense of citizens' political freedom. These two principles are above the state and before the constitution. The design of the social framework, the formulation of the constitution, and the promulgation of specific laws should all be guided by them. [17-p196] It stipulates the welfare nature of the state and the government's obligations in maintaining equality and providing social welfare from the starting point.

Dworkin further developed the "equality" thought and welfare proposition in Rawls' principle of justice. Starting from requiring the government to take citizens' rights seriously, he expounded the neoliberal proposition with "equality of rights" as the core. In his view, justice requires the government and its staff to "treat rights equally" and give equal care and respect to the people it governs. What Dworkin calls "care" means that the government should understand that people "are beings who will suffer and be frustrated", and the government should try its best to prevent people from suffering and frustration; "respect" means that the government should maintain a neutral attitude on the ethical issue of what is a good life. The main task of the government is not to educate the people, but to provide people with a platform for them to freely build and pursue their ideal life; the responsibility of the state is to ensure that all members of society are provided with an opportunity to participate in social competition and seek development in a fair and equal manner.

New liberalism advocates the intervention of the state in social and economic life, which, to a certain extent, has both alleviated the negative effects of free capitalism and avoided many of the drawbacks of the command economy of Soviet-style socialism. However, the state's intervention in the economy hides the danger of democratic politics "moving toward totalitarianism" and "leading to slavery", and the egalitarian tendency implicit in the welfare society has, to a certain extent, encouraged laziness and affected the efficiency of social development.

3. Neo liberalism

As for "neo" liberalism, people can analyze it from two perspectives: social policy and political philosophy. From the perspective of social policy, as many domestic and foreign researchers have said, the "neo" liberal "movement" began in the second half of the 1970s, reached its peak and achieved glory in the 1980s when Thatcher was in power in Britain and Reagan was in power in the White House. Since the 1990s, along with the rise of economic globalization, it has begun to spread to all parts of the world.

Domestic academic circles have done a lot of analysis and criticism of "neo-liberalism" in this sense. Take the "Neo-liberalism Research" written by the "Neo-liberalism Research" research team of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences as an example. The research team summarized and generalized the main viewpoints of "neo-liberalism" into the following three points: in economic theory, it vigorously advocates the "three transformations" (liberalization, privatization, and marketization); in political theory, it particularly emphasizes and insists on the "three negations" (negation of public ownership, negation of socialism, and negation of state intervention); in terms of strategy and policy, it "strongly advocates the integration of global economy, global politics, and global culture led by superpowers, that is, global capitalism." [18-p18-19]

Newspaper Guangming Daily also published relevant articles, reports and interviews [19][EB/06], warning people of the consequences and adverse effects of the rampant "neo-liberalism" in China. Objectively speaking, their analysis and criticism are a bit biased. While reserving my opinion on these analyses and criticisms, I will try to make some corrections and logical analysis of the research on "neo-liberalism" from the perspective of political philosophy.

From a theoretical perspective, “neo” liberalism was born, to a large extent, from the anxiety of some thinkers in the 1920s and 1930s about the “totalitarianism” caused by the large-scale control of the economy by the state after the rise of socialism, and from their concerns and reflections on various new problems caused by the establishment of the welfare state.

Out of this worry and anxiety, Austrian thinkers represented by Mises and Hayek embarked on the road of “returning” to classical liberalism, correcting the mistakes of classical liberalism with neoliberalism. Hayek is recognized as one of the main representatives of “neo” liberalism. 6

His 70-year academic career basically gathered and condensed the “essence” of today’s “neo” liberalism.

Hayek inherited the tradition of classical liberalism and reiterated the concept of "negative" freedom, regarding "freedom" as the highest value goal. Hayek understood and used the word freedom in its original sense, believing that "freedom is independence from the arbitrary will of others".[20-p5]

Hayek tried his best to pull the "positive" freedom or "new freedom" of new liberalism back to the "negative" and "original" level. In Hayek's view, freedom is usually equated or confused with the "affirmative freedom" advocated by new liberals, political freedom, national freedom, freedom of will and other "freedom rights". But for Hayek this is a great threat and harm to individual "freedom" in the original sense: the political freedom of choosing a government, voting or concluding a contract may very likely cause people to give up their freedom in the original sense and put themselves in a state of slavery, that is, "the road to new freedom (promised by socialism) and equal distribution of power and wealth is actually the fast road to slavery (the Road to Freedom was in fact the High Road to Servitude); [21-p20]

Hayek wrote: "The pursuit of national freedom sometimes leads people to tend to choose a despotic monarch of their own nation"; the inner freedom of will is inevitably a "slave to emotions"; the freedom in the sense of having the ability or power to do something is developed by socialists to "support measures that destroy personal freedom." [20-p8-10] People's acquisition of the above freedoms is not a manifestation of freedom, but a manifestation of unfreedom, because "only when they are missing, the 'freedom rights' will stand out." (Hayek)

While restoring traditional freedom, Hayek pointed out the possible consequences of state intervention in the economy. Hayek called state interventionism and monopoly capitalism, national socialism and fascism, socialism and communism, etc., all as totalitarian. Hayek believed that their similarities were that they used organizational means controlled by the subjective judgment of a few privileged people to distribute social benefits, thereby achieving all-round control over individual members of society. Therefore, they were all roads to slavery.

Hayek's criticism of totalitarianism was most focused on socialism. Hayek believed that the century from 1848 to 1948, when socialism prevailed in Europe, would be regarded by historians as the "European Century of Socialism." During this century, the socialist movement nationalized "the means of production, distribution and exchange" and guided all economic activities according to a certain fictitious overall plan of social justice ideals. 7

This socialist-style production organization is a brutal interference and destruction of the "spontaneity" of the market, resulting in "production not being higher than that of private enterprises, but, on the contrary, far lower". Socialism does not lead to greater social justice, but "a new arbitrary and more inescapable hierarchical order", "not only has it failed to deliver on its promise of greater freedom, but it has meant the emergence of a new dictatorship." [22-p5-6] Therefore, although the goals and plans of socialism are ethically and morally desirable, "they are not feasible either in fact or logic", and its creed is a complete fallacy. [23-p7]

Social justice and the welfare state were once among the many goals pursued by neoliberalism.

However, Hayek, based on the principle of the spontaneity of freedom, questioned "social justice", denounced it as a "regressive phenomenon" of mankind, and listed the various drawbacks that may arise after the realization of the welfare state: the state becomes a family-style state, a "parent" who controls most of the income of society, and distributes wealth according to the number and variety of needs that he believes the members of society need or should meet. 8

Trade unions are first alienated into privileged organizations that transcend the law, and then degenerate into new coercion and violence; social security is reduced to compulsory redistribution of income; free medical care is more about alleviating the pain and prolonging the lives of the elderly and terminally ill patients, rather than quickly treating non-dangerous temporary injuries and illnesses for people with full working ability; compulsory education has become a tool for the government to control people's minds and achieve egalitarianism... 9

In order to avoid and overcome the above problems, Hayek advocated the establishment of a sound modern state to provide a legal system, replacing the "rule of man" and "rule of specific regulations" in specific societies and situations with the "rule of law" that follows universal principles.

Hayek's academic vision spans multiple fields such as economics, political philosophy and legal philosophy. In fact, the "new" liberalism represented by Hayek is rich in content, has many scholars and schools, and cannot be fully covered in one article or one book. However, through the above points, I have been able to see the logical relationship and huge differences between "new" liberalism and the above two types of liberalism. This difference does not allow us to use "neo-liberalism" in a general and ambiguous way.

In my opinion, as I have partially used in the previous parts of this article, New Liberalism, which denies classical liberalism and gives the original "negative (negative)" freedom a "positive (affirmative)" content, should still be translated as "new liberalism"; Neo-Liberalism, which denies New Liberalism and advocates returning to the original freedom and classical liberalism, should be translated as "new classical liberalism" which is generally accepted and used in the current political philosophy field, or translated as "'neo' liberalism" based on full consideration of the previous translation methods in the economics community. The reason is that the "classical" flavor of Neo-Liberalism is stronger than its "new" flavor.

To further support my approach, I would like to quote the definition of Neo-Liberalism given by American leftist Chomsky, which is often cited by most domestic researchers, at the end of this article, in order to promote normal cross-disciplinary exchanges and in-depth multidisciplinary research on liberalism in China, and to break and end the monopoly of economics on the study of "neoliberalism" as soon as possible:

“Neoliberalism”, as the name implies, is a new theoretical system built on the basis of classical liberal thought. This system reveres Adam Smith as its patron saint. This theoretical system is also known as the “Washington Consensus”, which advocates a global order. … In fact, “neo” liberalism is not new. Its basic ideas come from those that have been maintaining and nourishing the liberal tradition since the Enlightenment. [27-p19]

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【Electronic Documents】

[EB/01]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Confucianism

[EB/02]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\_Confucianism

[EB/03]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\_liberalism

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[EB/06]http://www.gmw.cn/content/2004-11/09/content\_129066.htm

【Notes】

1 This book’s understanding and definition of “neoliberalism” is mainly taken from Chomsky’s Neoliberalism and Global Order, the original title of which is Neoliberalism and Global Order, not New Liberalism and Global Order. For details, see Chomsky, Neoliberalism and Global Order (New York: Severn Stories Press, 1999).

2 This title is borrowed from Mr. Qin Hui’s article “The Triumvirate of Nozick, Rawls and Bourdieu”, and I would like to express my gratitude!

3 For the convenience of writing and readers' understanding, the author temporarily makes the following distinction between the Chinese translations of New Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism: new liberalism is directly translated into "new liberalism", and neo-liberalism is described as "'new' liberalism", that is, neo-liberalism with the word "new" in quotation marks.

4 Due to the limitations of word processing systems, their exact pronunciation cannot be indicated here; however, general English dictionaries can confirm this.

5 The basis for classifying Keynes, Rawls, Green, Hobhouse, etc. as new liberalism is as follows: There is an organization called The Liberal Democrat History Group in the UK, which clearly classifies the works of the above people as new liberalism on its website. The basis for classifying Dworkin as new liberalism can be found in the explanations of New or Social Liberalism on your encyclopedia and Speakers Corner Liberal Social. For details, see: http://www.liberalhistory.org.uk ...mp;image+philosophy;http://www.yourencyclopedia.net/Liberalism.html; http://blog.liberal-social.org/2004/09/liberalismo-social.html

6 Other major representatives include Friedman, Nozick, etc. However, Hayek himself does not admit that he is a neoliberal.

7 The socialist movement which Hayek refers to refers to socialism in a broad sense, that is, in addition to traditional Soviet and Eastern European socialism, it also includes new liberalism and various social democracies or democratic socialisms in Europe. See Hayek, The Principles of the Order of Liberty (Part 2), translated by Deng Zhenglai, Sanlian Bookstore, 1997, p. 7, etc.; He Xinquan, A Study of Hayek's Theory of Liberty, Peking University Press, 2004, p. 219.

8 Due to the limited length of this article, this article will not expand on this topic. For details, please refer to Hayek: Economics, Science and Politics, translated by Feng Keli, Jiangsu People's Publishing House, 2003 edition, pages 289-309.

9 Hayek’s criticism of the welfare state can be found in Chapters 17, 19, 20, 22, and 24 of The Principles of a Liberal Society. Due to the length of this article, I will not mention them one by one here.

10 For details on Hayek’s legal philosophy, see his Law, Legislation and Liberty; for details on the difference between “rule of law” and “rule of law”, see page 261 of the Chinese translation of his The Principles of the Order of Liberty and page 206 of the English version.