

Different Paths, the Past and Outlook

Different Paths, the Past and Outlook:

*When F. Fukuyama's Universal
Theory Faces China and the West*

By

Biao Ni

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PREFACE

Francis Fukuyama is a famous scholar who, following Samuel P. Huntington, has had a significant influence on the field of political science with his achievements in theoretical research. His two most recent books, *The Origins of Political Order* (called *Origins* below) and *Political Order and Political Decay* (called *Decay* below), have presented his most recent research results with extensive narratives covering world history, different cultures and various regions.

Origins traced back and analyzed the origin, path and development of the political order of four parallel civilizations: East (China), West (Europe including America), India and the Muslim world. *Decay* further investigated and analyzed various prevalent political orders in different regions, especially the political orders of the East and West and their emergence, development, inevitable decay and problems. Fukuyama put forward a universal model of political order with three institutional components, namely the state, the rule of law, and government accountability (Fukuyama, 2015, p.23), and explained the importance of the coexistence of the components as well as the sequence of formation of the different components. From a political science point of view, he cited actual historical and religious cases and associated them with knowledge covering political economics and anthropology, to interpret the social behavior of human beings as well as the political systems of human society and relating institutions, rules, and ideas, together with their emergences and evolutions. He then used them to verify the universal suitability of his model. Such a strategy has made his descriptions and analyses relatively consistent and compatible.

This book does not try to give a comprehensive commentary on what these two books covered and their achievements or inadequacies, but to comb the discussions and conclusions that Fukuyama obtained from his research on the contrasting political orders of China and Europe (including North America), then probe its limitations and missing parts, and further provide a separate exploration of the two different systems and an analysis of how they compete and entangle in today's world, thereby offering other theories, commentaries, and a forward-looking outlook. These are quite different from what Fukuyama gives in his books.

I.

DISCUSSIONS BY FUKUYAMA

CHAPTER 1

THE MODEL OF POLITICAL ORDER; ITS DEVELOPMENT, DECAY, AND OUTLOOK

The three components of the model of political order

Fukuyama continued research that had been initiated by Huntington, and completed further investigations on political order and its evolution. Based on all the research done by his predecessor and himself, he provided a model of political order that included three institutional components, which are the state, the rule of law, and government accountability. In Fukuyama's opinion, any political order with good performances must have these three critical components (Fukuyama, 2015, p.540). He pointed out that the liberal democratic system, when compared to other systems that put the state ahead of the people, has performed better in terms of serving the people.

The origins of the three components of the model of political order

Starting from this universal model, Fukuyama, in his book *Origins*, traced back the origins for each of the three components. His conclusions are: (1) China, during the time of the Qin (秦) and Han (汉) Dynasties, first established a “nonpatrimonial, modern” state (Fukuyama, 2015, p.10). Here Fukuyama applied Max Weber's definitions of two different types of state, “patrimonial” and “impersonal”. “Impersonal” means that the state uses competence as the only criterion for selecting and appointing officials, and never considers personal relationships or kinship links. Because of this, “modern” is used to distinguish this type of state from all types of political entities in previous times (Fukuyama, 2015, p.10); (2) The concept of the “rule of law” was deeply rooted and institutionalized in western Europe, due to the role of the Roman Catholic Church (Fukuyama, 2015, p.11). Fukuyama emphasized that the concept

of the rule of law originated from religion (Fukuyama, 2015, p.72), so similar phenomena existed in India as well as in the Muslim world (this book does not delve into matters relating to these two regions); and (3) An “accountable” government first appeared in England (Fukuyama, 2012, p.420).

The occurrence, sequence, and various routes of the components relating to the formation and development of political order

In addition to searching for the origins of the institutional components, Fukuyama, in his books *Origins* and *Decay*, combed the trajectories of the establishment and development of corresponding political orders in different civilizations. The east (China) and west (Europe including North America) systems were among them. He figured out that the sequencing of the emergence of each of the three components brought about quite different results in performance later on (Fukuyama, 2015, p.30).

Fukuyama reviewed the period of the Chinese history that encompassed the unified Qin (秦), Former Han (西汉), Later Han (东汉), Wei (魏), Jin (晋), Sui (隋) and Tang (唐) eras (Fukuyama, 2012, pp.97-150, p.420), and concluded that the Chinese state held a dominant position in relation to its society, which consisted of scattered populations (Fukuyama, 2012, p.148), but lacked what he defined as one of the key components of political order, namely the rule of law (Fukuyama, 2015, p.75). Written procedures of accountability were also never formed in the system, as instead only the emperor’s own moral sense existed at the personal level (Fukuyama, 2012, p.133). Germany (Prussia in 18th and 19th centuries) was also a strong state that imposed the ruler’s will from the top down, but the dominant royal power governed through a bureaucratic system and made the behavior of the government transparent. It also maintained pre-existing customary laws such as the strict protection of private property, and evolved into a situation where the power was under the constraint of the law (Fukuyama, 2015, p.72), even though the outcome could not be considered as the equivalent to England after the Glorious Revolution (1688-1689) or the founding of the United States rooted in its Constitution.

In England after the Norman Conquest, the king provided impartial justice to ordinary people with the Common Law through a circuit court (Fukuyama, 2012, p.257, p.272), and gradually substituted

various regional customary laws with the Common Law and made it the legal foundation of the unified state in England (Fukuyama, 2012, pp.260-261). This was followed by the Magna Carta (1215) first putting restrictions in writing and by the rise of the Parliament which, starting from the thirteenth century, consisted of representatives from all regions (Fukuyama, 2012, p.406). Through the English Civil War (1642-1651) and the Glorious Revolution, the royal family eventually conceded that its ruling was conditional upon the Parliament's consent, and that it was to be held accountable (Fukuyama, 2012, p.403).

The pioneers of North America's colonies brought with them Tudor-era practices from England, such as the concept of both the ruler and the ruled being under the same law, the strong influence of courts on governance, as well as a tradition of local autonomy. All these helped the U.S. to build a state based on the separation of powers instead of pursuing a centralized state power (Fukuyama, 2015, p.135). The request to have government accountability was another thing carried over from the Glorious Revolution (Fukuyama, 2015, p.137). Because of the need to encourage and promote political participation (reflected in voting), the elite politics in the early days of the states gradually evolved into a clientelist partisan politics which featured the exchange of goods and services for political support (Fukuyama, 2015, p.138).

In Europe, Greece and Italy took quite different routes from the ones taken by Germany or England. After Greece obtained its independence from the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century, Otto, prince of the Bavarian Wittelsbach family, was put on the Greek throne through the Conference of London (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.100-101). Because of circumstances like this, the state was always seen by Greek people as a foreign concept that did not belong to them. Historically, Greece was good at trade and commerce, but in modern times it didn't go through the same process of industrial revolution as Western Europe. It therefore lacked the variety of opportunities which were provided by industrialized societies, and its social stratification never went through a reorganization caused by the division of labor. Therefore, the political relationship within society was still based on regions and clans. In addition, it implemented its all-male election system early on. Greek society had evolved from a patron-client relation to clientelist relation, which featured, in democratic systems, the use of ballots in exchange for public sector positions and other reciprocal exchanges (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.101-102). It encouraged people to seek profitable positions in the government due to a lack of opportunities in private sectors. Southern Italy had a similar experience to that of Greece, and was long governed by

foreign authorities and missed the opportunity of reorganizing its society through industrialization (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.110-112, pp.116-117). After the unification of northern and southern Italy, the southern part maintained its traditional ties and provided unconditional support to the majority party no matter which side took dominance in the Parliament (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.112-113). People who held these ties made themselves wealthy and powerful through the guarantee of certain number of votes in exchange for the outsourcing of public investments (Fukuyama, 2015, p.118). Trust in the unified state and its government was missing in this society, and the people still sought cooperation through personal, clan-related or regional ties.

The most important event for Denmark coming out of the medieval period was the Protestant Reformation. The reformist churches promoted the elimination of illiteracy (Fukuyama, 2012, p.432) in order for the believers to be able to communicate with their God directly. Education led to great improvements in labor quality which helped to push forward the economic development and social mobility of the country. As new ideas from the Enlightenment became popular, the Danish royal family gradually gave up the form of serfdom known as the *Stavnsbånd* and weakened the strong landed aristocrats who were always a threat to the royalty through the direct draft of peasants by the king's army; notably these peasants were freemen who owned their lands after the monarch gave up the old form of serfdom (Fukuyama, 2012, p.433). It strengthened the unified state while the parliamentary system that had been adopted in place of traditional feudal autonomy continued to act as a check and balance to the royalty.

Regarding the different routes taken to establish a state, especially the dissimilar paths of England and Denmark, Fukuyama raised the question of "getting to Denmark" (Fukuyama, 2012, p.431). England's model is Fukuyama's favorite; however Denmark reached a similar destination despite going through a completely different path. In Fukuyama's opinion, Denmark's route was filled with historical accidents and random occurrences, so it was not able to be replicated. However, its success convinced people that a path which was not like those of England and America did exist in order to reach the goal of establishing a favorable political order (Fukuyama, 2012, p.434).

The dimensions of modern political development

The principle that royal power governed with the consent of Parliament (consisting of representatives of the ruled) was established after

the Glorious Revolution. Thus, the government took its accountability in this sense (Fukuyama, 2012, p.417). The Declaration of Independence, for which Thomas Jefferson was its master pen, declared that “All men are created equal”, and further assured the principle of “popular sovereignty”. Later on, these became the foundations of the Constitution of the United States (Fukuyama, 2015, p.14). The French Revolution asserted equality and universal human rights through the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (Fukuyama, 2015, p.15). Fukuyama cited the Glorious Revolution, the American Revolution (independence and the ratification of the Constitution), and the French Revolution as the historically significant events which marked the entry points for the world to enter the modern era (Fukuyama, 2015, p.15). The nondiscriminatory, impersonal concept was accepted in the pursuance of equality in a society, and no longer (at least from the point of view that more and more people accepted this new idea) were people differentiated based only on their status or lineage ties.

In the book *Decay*, Fukuyama proposed a six-dimensional frame to explain the process of political development in modern society. In addition to the three components of the political order, it also included economic growth, which provided the base for all the components to be built upon, social mobilization, and the idea of legitimacy (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.42-43). Fukuyama showed that economic growth caused social mobility through the division of labor, and how social mobility impacted the organization of new social groups who strived for their self-interest and spread new ideas (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.43-47, p.402). He also emphasized how in many places changes in ideas played a critically important role in political development or abrupt bursts of a revolution (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.41-42, p.156, p.162).

Political decay

In *Decay*, Fukuyama put the following under the label “political decay” – the inaction and inefficiency of the administration, the rigidity of existing institutions, the regression from the non-discriminatory criterion of competence back to connections via private ties, and the repatrimonialization pursued by interest groups (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.31-35). This was his painful recognition about the drawbacks of liberal democracy and he listed eight mechanisms that adequately represented such a system (Fukuyama, 2015, p.428). Citing views from the fields of sociology and psychology regarding kin selection and reciprocal altruism as natural tendencies of human behavior (Fukuyama, 2015, p.8), Fukuyama believed that the impersonal criterion which was enforced by the modern state on social

relations went against human nature, and thus it was continuously at risk of erosion as people tended to regress back to the default mode just mentioned (Fukuyama, 2015, p.208). The rigidity and indifference of procedures in the administration of a large-scale state, and even worse the worshipful attitude toward written procedures, made the timely reform of various situations impossible (Fukuyama, 2015, p.59, p.543). The setting of checks and balances on power led to deadlocks or a “vetocracy”, as the veto points hidden everywhere in the process of decision-making caused administrative inaction (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.482-493). In the meantime, well organized interest groups utilized legal ways to take advantage of partisan politics in seeking their own interests, leading to decisions on the long-term interests of the whole society being postponed or even ignored (Fukuyama, 2015, p.35, p.208, p.485, p.533). The number of lobby groups rapidly increased (Fukuyama, 2015, p.479) and pushed to produce different kinds of mandates, which were sometimes contradictory to each other (Fukuyama, 2015, p.470). The public were badly in need of safeguarding their broad interests, but lacked effective organizations (Fukuyama, 2015, p.481), plus the ordinary people in general were not able to have the qualifications and necessary background knowledge to make decisions on complicated public affairs (Fukuyama, 2015, p.534). The contrasts between the condition of the public and the interest groups further showed the severity of the problem. These problems, under Fukuyama’s focus, were almost all the reflection of the current conditions of the U.S. and less likely related to European countries. However, Fukuyama did not extend his writing on what he described as the most serious challenge that all democratic countries including the U.S. and European countries were facing, which was the problem of the unsustainable promises of the welfare state (Fukuyama, 2015, p.489).

Future outlook

Fukuyama dedicated part of the last chapter of *Decay* to a discussion of the possible options for future models of the political order. He considered that the Chinese practice was looking like it could be a serious challenge to the current European-American liberal democratic system which was accepted as the universal model of modern political development (Fukuyama, 2015, p.544). China has accumulated enough experience to run a centralized state for more than two thousand years. It successfully formed a large-scale state but had never generated locally the concept of the rule of law. Instead, it called on the ruler to adopt the Confucius doctrine of moral sense as a restraint on the power instead of

written rules and procedures. The core issue for the current rulers of China was that the system faced its own decay, i.e., the system was gradually losing its capacity to fulfill the will of these rulers. China was already a middle-income level country and has continued to move forward to join the club of the high-income level countries. Its development has brought with it a huge environmental deficit which must be paid back. It was unclear whether or not its education system could provide enough talented people with technical expertise who would be capable of continuously increasing productivity. The in-depth question was whether genuine innovations could be supported given that individual freedom was lacking. Based on a series of detailed analyses, Fukuyama raised his critical question, namely whether the rulers of China would let the society move towards a system where more economic competition was encouraged, a less restricted flow of information was allowed, and more freedoms were tolerated. He also believed that the critical test for these changes would come from the kinds of actions taken by the middle-class of China (Fukuyama, 2015, p.545).

After revealing the flaws of the Europe-America system and making comparisons with other possible options, Fukuyama reiterated that he did not believe there was a systemic defect in the current democratic system regarding its “crisis of governability” (Fukuyama, 2015, p.546), and used the examples of the recoveries that came after the crises of the 1920s and 1960s to support his conclusion. If there was, is, or will be a singular issue for all the democratic countries, it will be concentrated on how they had tried but failed to provide security, on the fair sharing of the results of economic growth, and on quality public services (Fukuyama, 2015, p.546). While Fukuyama felt the scarce supply of high-quality democratic governments was regrettable, he had noticed the strong demand for governmental services by various social groups from numerous societies (Fukuyama, 2015, p.548).

II.

SOME CRITIQUES OF THE THREE- COMPONENT MODEL

CHAPTER 2

A FEW INCOMPLETE OR MISSING POINTS IN FUKUYAMA'S VIEW ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STATE AND ITS FORMATION AND GOVERNANCE

Fukuyama covered the emergence and establishment of the state to the greatest extent with regard to the three components of the model of political order. He frequently used “state building” to describe the process of forming a state in both *Origins* and *Decay*. Generally speaking, state is used to describe the political entity which allows all social groups to live together. It consists of a variety of social groups (along with the geographic regions where they live) and follows certain rules and principles for its composition; the maintenance and governance of the political entity require an administrative structure (i.e., hierarchical bureaucratic system), personnel selecting examination and appointment mechanisms, and legislative rulemaking. After setting up the software (talented people to govern) and the hardware (institutions and mechanisms), an operating (administrating) system is needed for the smooth running of the political entity. Rules and principles used for the formation of the state are directly related to the nature and attributes of the state, the personnel selecting examination mechanisms and institutional settings are related to the structure of the state that is in turn determined by the characteristics of state nature, and the operating system is related to the state's administrative and executing capabilities. A related understanding about “government” is that it is the entire set of installed institutions that deal with legislation, law enforcement, and administration within a bounded territory (country or region). These can correspond to either the structure of the state or its administration capabilities. The narrow definition of “government” means only the running and execution of governing procedures or administrative operations.

“Public” or “modern”, which one is better to distinguish the present from the past

Fukuyama cited Weber's distinction between different types of states, as mentioned previously; that is, “patrimonial” versus “impersonal”. For the latter, which takes only competence into account as the selection and appointment criterion for its personnel, Weber added “modern” as an additional attribute. Thus, it should be a “modern state”, as Fukuyama called it, if the relationship between the state and each and every of its subordinates was the same with no difference (i.e., impersonal). So, Fukuyama considered the state body of the Qin Dynasty (221 BC - 206 BC), which was the beginning of China's unified system, as a state that “had many if not all of the characteristics that Max Weber defined as modern” (Fukuyama, 2012, pp.125-126). (Just for the convenience of discussion, China's unified dynastic system with centralized power which started with the Qin era was quite different from what the Western world usually called a “state”, which was formed after the Peace of Westphalia.) It was certainly an extraordinary progress for a society which was accustomed to status, inherited privilege, and the division of classes, to shift to treating all people with no difference. However, it seems to be a bit of a surface judgment to use “modern” to distinguish the present era from all of the previous historical time periods.

The declaration and promotion of human rights affirmed such rights, which are justified with birth, are inalienable. The true fundamental change that the modern times brought about is that political power is no longer a property to be held or transferred privately by a family, a clan, or a group; all members of society are able to participate in the governance of the state and individual rights are undisputedly protected. Of course, countries like Britain, the U.S., France and Germany, through progressive steps not sudden jumps, all gradually handed over the right of participation to more groups, like women and minorities, until it reached all adult members of the society. The direction and the scope of the progress is undoubtedly pointing to “public”, i.e., participation in governance by all people. To further probe whether a certain political order has made a meaningful progressive effect in the history, we should focus on whether it answers the challenge raised by the historical progress, i.e., whether it is able to provide security, order and the expectation of stable development without uncertainty. If so, it fits in with new and more efficient methods of production to provide even more products and services for society. Modern society with the character of “public”, in this sense, meets exactly the requirements of the market system, so it has demonstrated its historical

progress. This important association between political formation and the nature of historical progress is not seen clearly by Fukuyama; at least, he did not spend much time investigating it. For this reason, he stopped only to cite the symbol “impersonal” as the mark of the modern era and its progress. In fact, “public participation” is actually the truest description of the modern state. Perhaps Fukuyama wanted to prove his other point of view, that is, the historical progress of political order was reflected in the turn from patrimonial states to modern states, where the latter took the equal treatment of everyone, before all the progress made inevitably decayed into re-patrimonial states. This was evidenced by public power being captured by elites or interest groups for their own interests. However, the progresses that those modern states from Europe and America made were characteristic of participation with equality, which fulfilled the needs of the market system in encouraging competition and innovation, and thus promoted sustained prosperity and economic growth. In contrast, the progress made by the Qin-type state, which was also considered by Fukuyama a modern one, was a then brand-new answer to the historical problem of long-lasting wars. The settings and measures implemented by the Qin-type state, which relied on strong suppressive force to maintain order and safeguard the vested interests of the ruler, were effective, but completely choked society by eliminating any tolerance and possibility of innovation. These were the prices to be paid by the society as a whole. Regarding the word “impersonal”, which Fukuyama chose to describe the modern era, it fails to explain and distinguish the two completely different results provided separately by the West and East. It seems better, theoretically or practically, to use the ownership nature of the political entity or state, namely whether it is “public” or not, rather than less meaningful definitions such as “modern” to make the distinction between the present era and previous historical time periods.

The state-building and the administration of its government

While talking about the state-building, Fukuyama seemed to take a position of not making a clear distinction between the “state” and the “government”, but using them interchangeably in several places. Indeed, regarding the building of a state and the administration of its government, the former is similar to the broadly defined meaning of government, while the latter matches the narrower meaning of government. If the question of whether it is public or not is directly related to the ownership nature of the state, then the setup and completion of the bureaucratic system and the

buildup of administrating mechanisms are related to state-building. As Fukuyama discussed, Britain's Trevelyan-Northcote Report (Fukuyama, 2015, p.129) and the implementation of its policy recommendations, America's Pendleton Act (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.151-153) and its passage and putting into practice, and the establishment of the Interstate Commerce Commission (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.165-168) and the United States Forest Service (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.180-183), can all be put into the category of state-building. But the operation of these commissions and services, and related personnel and governing arrangements, should merely belong to the scope of administration. It blurs the clarity of the discussion when he puts all these under one umbrella with the name of state-building, and it is especially not beneficial to his later discussions on the decay of the liberal democratic system. The establishment of personnel selecting examination mechanisms and the setting of administrative facilities are fundamental elements of long-term institutions, but the routine operation of such administrative facilities, which usually involves exercising particular rules or procedures, is different from the establishment of long-term institutions. In particular, given that each and every administration has a limited term, the executives of the operation are only the appointed personnel of each successive administration. It will be difficult to find a way to cure the ills of political decay, if we are unable to first make the clear distinction between the institution's long-term establishment and its operation by term.

Whether the three-component model is the only one of its kind

If the political order can be understood as a set of institutions and rules with the attributes of a coexisting political entity which includes all members of society, as well as the entity's origins, structures and operating functions, then the coexisting political entity is a state in our present time. The state's formation depends on each country's different regions, history, ethnic groups, and culture. The rule of law can be considered as a commonly accepted form of rule based on the consensus that the same laws impose identical restrictions on everyone (Fukuyama, 2015, pp.23-24). Here governance is a two-sided process: ruling by holding the "authority" to rule and obtaining "obedience" from the ruled through their consent. It is called "authority" because the ruling is not defied by the people, and thus stability and order are maintained and justice is held; it is called "obedience" because of the acceptance of the ruled and because justice is supported by the consensus of everyone being under the same rule, thus rendering legitimacy to those who hold power.

Apparently, it only exists under the condition that all members of society reach a common agreement on the rules. If the accountability of the government is derived from the premise of first authorizing and then putting limitations on the public power, surely the authorization and restrictions can only be realized upon (progressive) all-member participation. Now, combined with the previously discussed issue of whether the attribute of the coexisting entity is “public” or not, it is quite clear that only a political entity with public participation as its attribute can possess these two features, namely the rule of law and accountability of government, out of the three-component model. The model certainly cannot describe other types of political orders or even try to summarize and put them all in itself. Here the argument is not to debate whether the three-component model is the typical form or whether it represents the universal evolving direction of history, it merely tries to point out the richness and complexity of history. Instead of putting such a diverse world with rich historical and current contents into one model, which is largely derived from certain views of the political science field, and elaborating everything only within those boundaries, it is better to go further by starting with the economy, a fundamental layer that both generates the need for and puts restrictions on the politics or affairs of the public sphere in terms of basic survival. We should then explore the layer of human thought and behavioral habits which relate to accustomed co-living, to look into the details how these two layers restrict and influence a variety of the political settings among people who live together. We can then contrast the different models and consider the evolving direction of history. In this way the investigations will be clear and more practical.

CHAPTER 3

THE FORMATION PROCESS; A FOCUS OF THE HISTORIC POLITICAL SYSTEM OF CHINA AND MISINTERPRETATIONS OF THE SYSTEM

Fukuyama did not hide his pride regarding the discovery of the fact that the ancient China first established a “modern” state. That discovery has finally broken through the limitations and biases of his Western colleagues in the field of political science. He has repeatedly stated his own findings in various works (Fukuyama, 2012, p.150, p.178, p.459; Fukuyama, 2015, p.10, p.200).

Fukuyama’s view about the Chinese state and its ahead-of-time modernity, incomplete development, and unsolvable problem

The state of historical China since the Qin Dynasty possessed the characteristics of holding centralized power and being capable of directly connecting all the individuals to the state; in other words, it rooted out the obsolete social forms that were similar to those that continued throughout the medieval period in Europe. The Han Dynasty continued the unified county system – a system unique to ancient China – under centralized administration from the Qin Dynasty. The tenure of officials at all levels no longer followed the customary rules of inheritance from father to son, which included the position, title, and attached stakes, such as land and the population and outputs associated with the land. Except for the nominal title “enfeoffment” to appease a small number of royal families and meritorious officials, the system changed to a top-down appointment of officials to these positions along with paid pensions and salaries. Under Fukuyama’s observation, these characteristics were coincident to the definitions given by Max Weber for modern bureaucracy (Fukuyama, 2012, p.134). Meanwhile, the selection examination using competence as the only criterion to recruit qualified people first emerged in the Han

Dynasty and gradually improved through the following Sui, Tang, and Song Dynasties to become the official Imperial Examination process. Compared to the civil service system, which was an important part of modern state-building adopted by European countries and the U.S., the Chinese one was put into practice more than one thousand years earlier.

Although historically China had completed the task of forming the state at an early stage, in Fukuyama's view, pre-modern China's political order was underdeveloped in certain important categories, because Fukuyama believed that the concept of the rule of law never emerged as a native idea there (Fukuyama, 2012, p.313). He came to his conclusion that the "rule of law" was originated and rooted in religion after observing Europe and other civilizations. Therefore, the reason for China to miss such a vital component (Fukuyama, 2012, p.160; Fukuyama, 2015, pp.357-358, p.526), was that the society lacked or failed to develop a mature religion from its beginning.

Other than this underdevelopment, historical China's system also had an outstanding issue called the "bad emperor" problem (Fukuyama, 2012, p.315, p.483). It meant that there was never any restraint on the holder of the top ruling position. This happened to correspond to the component of accountability in Fukuyama's model, and thus historical China lacked two critical components of the three-component model. Nevertheless, Fukuyama noticed that the structure of Chinese bureaucracy had certain influences on the governing which was under the name of the emperor's power (Fukuyama, 2015, p.383), plus Confucian thought emphasized that the emperor at the top position should have self-discipline in the moral sense (Fukuyama, 2012, p.133).

Fukuyama scrutinized the details of historical China's system with his model as a mirror. Following Western theories about social organizations, he also examined the various scale levels for Chinese society which went through numerous steps such as lineage groups, clans, tribes, local entities, parallel regional states, and up to a unified large state. He particularly pointed out that the state not only collapsed after unification from the Qin through to the Han Dynasties for more than two hundred years, but also suffered from the divided rule of many ambitious warlords as well as repeated barbaric invasions from outside. Still, whenever the situation became suitable such as entering the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the entire country reunified again. It was completely different from the case of Roman Empire which had no chance to rise again once it collapsed. These two parts of historical China's evolutionary progress, where the first was similar to what other societies generally went through by moving from kinship tribes to local entities and separated regional

states, and the second was a unique case running from unity to split and then back to reunification, were both adopted by Fukuyama and put into the process of institutional progress on which he has continued and extended from Max Weber, i.e., the theoretical framework about the transition of a coexisting social mechanism that was characterized as going from patrimonial to impersonal before decaying back to “repatrimonial” (Fukuyama, 2012, p.140; Fukuyama, 2015, p.28) after reaching its maturity.

Thus, historical China’s system demonstrated itself as a “modern” state far ahead of Europe for almost two thousand years, but was inexplicably underdeveloped through the absence of the rule of law and missed accountability on the government or the ruler, as was shown through the unique unsolved issue of the “bad emperor”. Why was it like that? Fukuyama stopped short of exploring further, and did not try to provide any answer. Perhaps he felt it was enough for historical China’s system to be treated as an imperfect case in order to serve as a foil for the typical European-American path in his universal model; or maybe he just stopped there for the reason that he was not familiar with the first-hand historical data and literature about China, and was unable to employ the language tools, such as ancient Chinese, especially the classic written Chinese?

The formation of historical China’s political system

To clarify whether or not the facts about historical China’s system were actually as Fukuyama described in his books, and whether or not it’s advanced modernity as well as its imperfections were exactly as he revealed, may need another book to cover all the details. But if we briefly straighten the existing evidences chronologically in Chinese history with visions not limited to the regular views of political science, but integrating angles from economics, behavioral science, and gaming theory, we can see, in the following, a historical long scroll that Fukuyama was unable to discover.

◆ Climate, produces, population, and geographic conditions related to the early centripetal merging

At the stage of low-level production based on semi-farming and semi-hunting, like in Europe and other regions, the human communities living in the area of the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, or the Central Plains, initially adopted a way of living by sticking together with their lineage groups in which the bonds were through biological links.

Such a format of coexistence was favorable to any group as a whole for its self-defense as well as for their genes passing on to the next generation. The soil of the Central Plains was fertile and easy to cultivate, and the rainy season happened to match the growing and harvest cycle of cultivated crops like rice, millet, and glutinous millet, so the conditions were very suitable for agricultural productions. Prehistoric inhabitants naturally selected farming with a stable habitat as their way for surviving, producing and living. The cooperation in production and the habit of settling down with lineage groups strengthened the institutionalization of the large families with multiple generations and branches. Favorable climate and soil conditions allowed for a relatively high level of crop production which supported a larger population. The increased population brought in frequent exchanges and blends, and also increased the fights for territory and resources. It so happened that there was no impassable geographical barrier within and around the Central Plains. So, it was not difficult to reach almost all places by traveling on foot or wheels and horses with the technology of that time. The possibility of large-scale blending – mainly through wars, and secondly through trade and cultural exchanges – increasingly became a true fact given these conditions. Various lineage groups limited by scarce resources or geographical localities melted into clans, tribes, and local entities by struggling through conquests or being conquered, and thus formed the “wan guo” (万国) (Sima, 2001, p.2, p.9a) which means the “ten thousand states” of the legendary era that lasted from Yao (尧) to Yu (禹). The convergence of codes of conduct and values orientation due to the blending, made the leaders of local states which had coexisted freely feel it necessary to pay their respects (Sima, 2001, p.9b, p.10) to a “common headman”, namely an elected or commonly recommended leader, in order to maintain the loose order surrounding a somewhat radiated center and to deal with possible arbitrations over quarrels. These legends as well as some written evidences for the times of the Xia (夏) and Shang (商) Dynasties confirmed such a natively generated order existed with impressive territorial scale and population size. The scattered self-ruling political entities continued to strive for their own safety and survival through wars, but the actual number of existing states drastically reduced from tens of thousands to hundreds (Sima, 2001, p.16), and the scale for each entity that survived continued to become larger than ever before.