A New Discussion on the Outbreak of the British North American War of Independence

Abstract: The traditional view holds that the main reason for the outbreak of the war of independence in North America is the British oppression and exploitation of the North American colonies. Since the 21st century, with the use of new materials and the introduction of new western ideas, traditional ideas have been challenged. This paper attempts to reveal the main reasons for the outbreak of the British North American war from a new perspective by combining ethology, psychology and history. The main reason is that the North American colonies gradually lost their sense of national identity to their home country, Britain. Through the analysis of the American War of independence, people hope that it can be used for reference to the reality.

Keywords: British North America, the war of independence, new discussion, historical method, practical significance.

INTRODUCTION

Thirteen colonies of British North America were the most important and main colonies in the first British Empire. They carried the hopes and aspirations of the early British immigrants, and played a crucial role in the rise and development of the early British Empire. In the late 18th century, the loss of colonies in North America had a great impact on Britain. George III, then king of England, believed that "Britain can no longer recover from this failure and will become a negligible country in Europe" (Marshall, P. J. 2018). The huge frustration even made him intend to abdicate. The British government quickly and timely adjusted its policies and actively promoted the transformation of the country to the Second Empire. In economy, Britain has changed from mercantilism to liberalism. In politics, Britain has changed from tangible control to invisible control, and the whole empire has also changed into a system of ruling non-European nations to a large extent. These changes soon liberated Britain from the mire of failure and continued the development of the British Empire. Britain's strength continued for another 150 years. In addition, after independence, the American colonies established a unified federal state, the United States. In the later history, the United States rose and expanded, which changed the pattern of the whole world. From that point of view, the North American War of independence is a major event with profound influence on the world. For the cause of this incident, there has been a quite consistent view in the domestic academic circles, that is, because of the constant oppression and exploitation of Britain, the colonists in North America were forced to fight for freedom and equality. So far, most of the domestic textbooks define the North American War of independence as the war of national liberation. In fact, as early as the middle of the 20th century, American scholars began to focus on analyzing the reasons from the internal changes of the colonies and the attitudes, ideas and activities of the residents. The new domestic view arose in the 21st century, and there were new views and breakthroughs on the causes, nature and characteristics of the North American Independence War (Jianning, L. 2002). However, these studies are mainly from the perspective of North American colonies, and mainly based on the analysis of political and economic factors. Other angles and factors need to be further explored. Figure 1 shows 13 colonies of British North America. Figure 2 shows King George III of England.
Figure 1 shows 13 colonies of British North America.

**ANALYSIS**

**The origin of the problem**

British North America was the first thirteen colonies established and gradually developed by the British Puritans in North America. According to the type of colony, it belongs to a typical colonization colony or immigrant colony. The so-called colonization colony refers to the colony established from the residents of one country to the area without sovereign entity (Jianming, L. 2002a). Different from the other two colonies, they have the color of alien domination. The founders and main residents of the colonies are British. Therefore, from the beginning of its establishment, all of them have inextricably linked with their home country, Britain. The British who came to the new continent also transplanted their home country's politics, economy and culture to the new continent to the maximum extent.

The language they used was mostly English, the 13 colonies were not subordinate to each other and independent of each other, but they belonged to the United Kingdom, and the regional management organizations they established also had a strong British color. The residents of the North American colonies enjoy the same civil rights as the British residents according to law, such as the right to vote, the right to be elected and the right to property, etc. Before independence, the North American colonies seemed to be a copy and continuation of Britain, with too many similarities with Britain. Even radical anti-British James Otis had to admit "Our rights as human beings and born free British subjects are enough to make all colonists seem to live a very happy life compared with those under any other monarchy" (Otis, J. 1967). In addition, according to statistics, before the independence war, the per capita tax level of the colonies was only 20% - 30% of that of ordinary British residents. Even before the revolution, in order to maintain the expenditure of the colonies, the increase in taxes in the colonies was negligible. Even compared with the present, more than half of the world's population has a very low income.

The average income of the countries where they live is lower than that of the American freemen more than 200 years ago (Gary, M., & Walton, H. R. 2011). The North American colonies showed more prosperity and prosperity. According to the description of the people at that time, "this colony of America is full of pretty good cities, rich villages and wide fields", and it is a "land of milk and honey" (Anonymous-American Husbandry. 1996). It can be seen that North American immigrants are not second-class citizens ruled by different nationalities politically. Economically, North American immigrants have not been squeezed or exploited from their home countries. Why did the people of the North American colonies have to fight against Britain in the war of independence? Where does this national centrifugal force come from? There is another way of saying that the colony broke away from its mother state. It is said that the economic development of the mother state has declined, which has led to the decline of the comprehensive national strength of the mother state and gradually lost its control over all aspects of the colony. Before the independence war in North America, the situation of Britain was just the opposite. Militarily, Britain won the British French war in the foreign colonial war.

This means that Britain has eliminated the last enemy on the road of foreign colonial expansion. Since then, the British colonies have spread all over the world, and become the real "empire of the sun". Economically, Britain has successively completed the agricultural revolution and carried out the enclosure movement, becoming the first country in the world to carry out the industrial revolution. All kinds of new technologies and machines emerge in endlessly, which greatly promote the development of productivity, thus opening the door of world modernization. In politics, the constitutional monarchy system has been further developed and consolidated after the glorious revolution. For example, with the formation of the responsible cabinet system, the power of the house of...
Commons is gradually strengthened. Although King George III strengthened his kingship through various contradictions at that time, the basic principles of king under the law had been established and formed a common consensus in England. George III wanted to strengthen the king's power by strengthening the control of Parliament. The king's rights were still very limited in jurisprudence. To sum up, before the independence war, Britain was in a period of prosperity and growing national strength, and it was impossible to lose control of the North American colonies. The root cause of the outbreak of the war of independence in North America is neither the British oppression and exploitation of the colony, nor the decline of British national power and the loss of control over the colony. With the rapid change of society, this is the result of the gradual loss of the sense of national identity of the North American colony to the British home country. Figure 3 shows the American War of independence.

![Figure 3](image)

**Figure 3** shows the American War.

**The lack of national identity**

National identity belongs to the category of cultural anthropology. Its key lies in the formation and maintenance of "identity", and the key lies in "identity". Freud was the first to use the word "identity", which refers to the process of emotional and psychological convergence between individuals and others, groups or imitators (Guoqiang, C. 1990).

From the perspective of psychological anthropology, identity is mainly composed of three elements. That is to say, "people's sense belongs to their culture, nationality and country, in this process, emotional attachment and psychological convergence are produced". National identity is a dynamic process, which will change in quantity and quality with the changes inside and outside the nation. Qualitative change is the fundamental change of national identity structure and reconstruction.

The changes in the quality and quantity of national identity have a direct relationship with the communication and interaction between different nationalities, which develops in the interaction between different nationalities. Therefore, the continuous development of modern society, changes in social history and changes in external environment (such as changes in national policies, ecological environment, livelihood mode, inter ethnic communication, national development and interest demands) will cause changes in national identity (Jing, L. 2018). According to the above theoretical understanding of national identity, the North American War of independence obviously belongs to qualitative change. Most of the colonists belong to the British. They have the same sense of national identity as the British natives. They don't need to cultivate, learn and infiltrate each other. North American residents are in a new environment which is different from that of Britain, and they are also in a period of rapid change of British society. It will inevitably lead to drastic quantitative and qualitative changes in the sense of British national identity. The key to the problem is to find out how the North American colonists lost their sense of British national identity. Thus, it promotes the formation and strengthening of a new national identity, that is, the American national identity. The key to national identity lies in the cultural assimilation of any two groups. If two groups are alienated, the separation between them will be deepened, That is to say, the colonists in North America produced different cultures from the original nations in the new region and in the process of continuous development. As a result, the differences between the two groups in the same ethnic group have been highlighted, the new national identity has begun to appear and be strengthened, and it is inevitable for the colony to break away from its mother state. This kind of centrifugal force had been hidden in all aspects of the North American colonies before the North American Independence War. Although the early British immigrants almost completely transplanted the British political system to the North American colonies, even the inhabitants of North American colonies enjoyed more political rights in North America than in the United Kingdom. However, the British government adopted a relatively loose political policy towards the
North American colonies, which was entirely based on the consideration of the British local interests. It's not about protecting the human rights of the free people in the colonies.

Because Britain is very far away from the North American colonies, it is not easy to directly strengthen the control, but it will also strengthen the human, material and financial expenditure of Britain to the North American colonies, which is contrary to the motivation of British colonization. Because of its small size and small population, it is difficult to realize the direct occupation of the colonies, so the British government gives the colonies great autonomy. In this way, the colony can be controlled effectively, and the unimpeded foreign trade of Britain can also be protected. Because the early British had little control over the North American colonies, which was in line with the interests of the British mainland. The political unequal relationship between Britain and North America is not particularly obvious. With the end of the seven-year war between Britain and France, Britain spent a lot of wealth in the war, and its fiscal deficit increased sharply. According to statistics, in 1763, Britain's national debt reached 135000000 pounds. In addition, North America's defense spent on 400000 pounds every year (Jianning, L. 2002b). In order to raise taxes to maintain defense spending in North America and alleviate the financial crisis at home, the British government increased measures to levy taxes on the colonies. By the strong resistance of the North American colonies, they even put forward the idea of "no representation, no tax payment". That is to say, the North American colonies have no seats and representatives of the North American colonies in the British Parliament, so they have no obligation to pay taxes to the UK. On the surface, the contradiction between the two sides is whether to increase taxes. In fact, from the perspective of Britain, the tax increase in the North American colonies, they even put forward the idea of "no representation, no tax payment". That is to say, the North American colonies have no seats and representatives of the North American colonies in the British Parliament, so they have no obligation to pay taxes to the UK. On the surface, the contradiction between the two sides is whether to increase taxes. In fact, from the perspective of Britain, the tax increase in the North American colonies has undergone qualitative changes. The collection of stamp tax shows that the original scope of Taxation has been extended from foreign trade to internal taxation in North America. Therefore, the purpose of UK tax increase is not only to increase tax revenue, but also to strengthen the authority and enforcement of British laws to control the North American colonies. From the perspective of the North American colonies, the increased tax is still lower than that of the British mainland. The increased tax is also much higher than the capacity of the free people in North America, that is to say, in the face of the increased tax, the people in North America are not unable to pay, but do not want to pay. Because the residents of the North American colonies realized that it was a struggle of control and anti control, and they also realized the unequal political status between the North American colonies and their home countries. The long-term political autonomy has cultivated the unprecedented national self-confidence of North American people and the concept of equal coexistence with their home country, which can be clearly reflected in the relatively equal relationship between the central and local governments established by the constitution of 1787 after the establishment of the United States. In reality, the obvious political disparity is unacceptable to the new North American residents. In this situation, the residents of North America can only be separated from their mother state and truly independent. In this way, North American residents can talk to Britain equally again. Therefore, there is a centrifugal force of national identity in politics. This kind of centrifugal force is most obvious in economy. It is different from the North American colonies in politics. It has full freedom and autonomy. From the beginning, Britain imposed many restrictions and influences on the North American colonies in economy. The reason for this political and economic imbalance is to ensure the primitive accumulation of capital for the industrial revolution. Before the independence war, Britain carried out the mercantilism policy in economy, that is to reduce the outflow of national capital and ensure the maximization of capital inflow by encouraging exports and restricting imports. In order to achieve this goal, it is decided that the economic development policy of Britain to the North American colonies is inconsistent. It is based on the interests of Britain. This starting point is to maintain and seek the monopoly position of British foreign trade. The basic principle is to maintain the economic dependence of the North American colonies. This will promote the complementarity between the colonial economy of North America and the British economy. George Mason said: "we provide raw materials to our home country and then exchange them for manufactured goods. This is the real chain connected our colonies with our home country, if we don't interrupt under high pressure, we must connect us for a long time by maintaining a regular reciprocity of interests " (Thad, W. T. 1962). This bond will not last long, at this time, the British government actively encourages industrial production, which requires a lot of raw materials, and the land and labor resources in the UK are very limited. Therefore, African slaves were transported to North America for reclamation, and the plantation economy in North America was greatly developed. To a certain extent, this promoted the development and prosperity of the North American colonial economy, on the other hand, it restricted the development of the colonial manufacturing industry. When the colonial agricultural economy developed to a certain extent, if they wanted to obtain further development of the colonial economy, the North American colonies would try to break through the British restrictions on the North American manufacturing industry. At the same time, the North American colonies became the commodity market of Britain and bought a lot of British goods, which made the currency outflow and debt of the North American colonies soar. In 1757, the residents of Chesapeake area owed 1 million Pound to British businessmen, and in 1776, their debts increased to more than 2 million Pound (Allan, K. 1986). In addition, the British government also restricted the countries and scope of
foreign trade in the North American colonies through various decrees and measures. In 1661, the navigation regulations was promulgated. The North American colonies had abundant resources, which protected the North American economy from the impact of France, the Netherlands and other countries in the early stage, and made the shipbuilding industry in the colonies flourish and develop. The growing manufacturing industry is threatening the home country's economy. In order to maintain the foreign trade advantage of the home country, Britain will inevitably pay attention to strengthen control and curb its development. With the development and prosperity of the North American colonial economy, the discontent of the North American colonists with the British authorities is increasing. Therefore, the fuse of the North American War of independence started from the economic field, and tea trade became the earliest export of the discontent of the North American people. In addition, there are obvious discrimination and inequality in the attitude of the British residents towards the colonial people in North America. Two groups of people will inevitably have a conflict in concept and cognition. There is inequality in social status. The national estrangement has been produced continuously, which eventually leads to the qualitative change of national identity. First of all, the British believe that the colony is the subject of the home country, and the residents of the colony should always focus on the interests of the home country rather than the interests of the North American colonies (John C. M. 1959). For the people of the North American colonies, their home country is far away from the ocean, and only the North American colonies are their real homes, of course, the interests of the North American colonies should be the most important, which is especially obvious after the birth of the second and third generations of residents. The British decision on the colonial maritime trial in 1696 deprived the North American residents of the right of jury in maritime cases, with obvious regional discrimination. Second, although the North American liberalism are not "second-class citizens" ruled by foreigners in politics, in the concept of British native residents, even the Scots who belong to the same island with England are inevitably regarded as second-class citizens of the whole British Empire. As English people, they always have a sense of superiority. These arrogance and prejudice are common in newspapers and other media. It is also common in the interaction process of residents in the two regions, and it is difficult for foreign whites to integrate into English society (By Linda Collie. 2017). Born in a North American colony, Washington suffered similar injustice before the war of independence. When the British French war broke out, in order to win the support of the rich colonists in North America, Britain promised to give 200000 acres of land to the rich who participated in the anti-French war.

Washington took an active part in the war and made outstanding achievements in the war. However, after the war, the British government declared that the land in the West was private property of the royal family, which made Washington lose more than 30000 acres of land. Finally, Washington lost its dependence and trust on its home country and embarked on the struggle to lead the North American people to resist its home country (Washington, O. 2016). Figure 4 shows the slaves of America. Figure 5 shows the president of the United States, Washington.
CONCLUSIONS

Based on the above review, the lack of national identity of North American colonists is the root cause of their departure from their home country. At the same time, it is also a new national identity different from that of the home country. It is the premise and foundation of American national identity. The regional culture of the north American colonies originated from the culture of their home country for many reasons.

At that time, Britain was in a period of great change and development from an agricultural society to an industrial society. Dramatic changes have taken place in social structure, mode of production and social concept. It had a joint and several influence on the North American colonies, and it was also determined by the geographical location and geomorphic characteristics of the North American colonies, which were different from those of their home countries. It is also related to the complexity of the colonial community and the constant adjustment of the British government’s policies here. In addition, the enlightenment in the field of thought provided a theoretical basis to directly promote the war of independence. Therefore, the war of independence in North America is not a passive war of national liberation against oppression, but a war of active development to adapt to the times and regions. National identity plays an important role in it.

REFERENCE: