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# **Cultural Factors in International Relations**

*Chinese Philosophical Studies, XXI*

Edited by  
*Yu Xintian*

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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## Introduction

*George F. McLean and Robert Magolia*

This study concerns the new role of culture in international relations. It was developed by the Shanghai Institute of International Studies and follows upon its work, *Cultural Impact on International Relations: Chinese Philosophical Studies XX* published by The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy. That volume traced the revolution from the opening of China and Deng Xiaoping's classical concern with non interference to the contemporary conviction that only by working in terms of cooperative relations can a country be successful in the present global context. The Shanghai Institute under its Director Yu Xintian who edited that volume has provided world leadership in this regard.

The present volume takes up the challenge this entails, namely, the role of cultures which undergird a nation's identity and outlook, and hence limit or promote its engagement in the new interdependent global context.

Culture, of course, was always there and set the patterns of meaning by which we identify and interrelate the various dimensions of our life, of values by which we weigh and set orders of preference, and of virtues which are the abilities to exercise the values and shape life in their terms. These are the terms in which we were raised and raise our children—the basis of the term "culture" as cultivation of the soul. Indeed, this has ever been so present that, like air, it passed unnoticed.

If always present, however, how could it have been unconscious or even excluded from consideration and how can it now be a new, even central factor in international relations? Two reasons come to mind. The first is that modernity was introduced as an intentional rupture in Western thought. Bacon, Locke and Descartes are typical of their time in their efforts to smash the prior wisdom which they interpreted as idols, to reduce the mind to a blank tablet, or to put all under doubt. This was a radical ground clearing effort to prepare for the building of a totally new rationalist construct reduced to that over which man could have full control. All else was considered irrational and was to be either avoided or taken at most as a kind of practical knowledge useful only in avoiding physical harm. We find now that life in these terms is self destructive and that we need to retrieve more of the cultural heritage and apply it in new ways.

A second reason for the oblivion of cultures was the separation of peoples by political borders or natural barriers of mountains or oceans. This distanced them from other cultures and left them unaware of the role played by their own culture in their own life. This was reinforced by the theory of states as perfect societies, each self-sufficient in providing for all needs: educational, economic, political and defence. The principles here were sovereignty and non interference; relation to other cultures was an external matter under "foreign" affairs.

This has changed most notably as life now is lived in terms which transcend national borders. In information one is no longer isolated. Images pour into the home from all parts of the world in a flood which no person, family or nation can control. Families negotiate daily between cultures, just as a United Nations is required to mediate between nations. In commerce trade agreements between countries and regions shape national regulations, which in turn transform cultural traditions. International standards for human rights and political participation reshape human expectations and aspirations.

In particular international relations now depend not only upon economic and military power, but more deeply upon the cultures by which peoples perceive, interpret and respond to others. It

becomes necessary therefore to understand the dynamics by which cultures are shaped and shape others, and how they can promote or impede cooperation between peoples.

This suggests the tripartite division of this study: Part I concerns the general theory of the nature and operation of cultures and their role in international relations; Part II focuses upon the impact of modern Western cultures upon other cultures and relations between nations; Part III studies the impact of global interchange upon Eastern cultures and their potential for contributing to an improvement of international relation in a global age.

Part I "Culture and International Relations". Chapter I, by Yu Xintian, "Combining Research on Cultural Theory and International Relations," first reviews the history of International Relations as a discipline, assessing the contributions and defects of realism, liberalism, and 'critical theory', and, more recently, of Huntington's 'clash of civilizations', Nye's 'soft power', and Wendt's 'constructivism'. Yu proposes a new field of International Culturology which better integrates political, economic, religious, and other salient factors so that they have more equal weight and a real 'wholeness' can appear.

Chapter II, by George F. McLean, "Cultural Impact on International Relations," proposes a 'hermeneutics for the global age' requiring a true dialectic of horizons, of mutual 'question and answer'. Nicholas of Cusa's organic unity of *explicatio* (unfolding of the perfection of being) and *complicatio* (folding together of various levels into the whole) presents a marvelous model in this regard. Each culture becomes necessary in its own right for the success of the whole, and conversely, each culture's service to the whole helps that very culture better realize its own uniqueness.

Chapter III, by Li Mintao, "Explaining International Institutions from the Cultural Perspective," examines Theory of International Institutions, a new sub-field of International Relations. After reviewing 'structural realist', 'liberal', and 'constructivist' interpretations, Li affirms Michael Mann's notion that institutional efficacy depends on 'faith-in-common' among the parties. Faith-in-common here means a secular faith in the sincerity and workability of institutions like the U.N. and the U.N. Charter.

Chapter IV, by Sun Suyuan, "Collective Identity and International Politics: A Cultural Perspective," favors a constructivist interpretation of culture wherein cultural ideas build institutions which in turn determine policy. Comparing Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian models of culture, Sun tends towards a more Kantian and altruistic foreign policy based on a strengthening of collective identity over and against private interest.

Chapter V, by Hua Jian, "Some Cases of Cultural Conflict and Convergence in the Current International Political Pattern," expounds John Hall's thesis that 'cultural strength' is a compound ability including innovation of contents and materialized productivity. Hua Jian takes Japan as a model of 'cultural strength' and the European Union as a model for a regional cooperation which musters 'cultural strength' through a combination of 'mainstreaming' and 'indigenization'

Part II "Western Cultures and International Relations". Chapter VI, by Wang Xiaode, "A Cultural Analysis of American Diplomatic Traditions," carefully reviews—from their cultural roots in Anglo-Saxon Protestantism up to the present time—the idealist and pragmatist currents in the U.S.A.'s foreign policy. Wang shows that the subtext of American *Realpolitik* is a modern permutation of Calvin's 'material success of the elect', and its *Idealpolitik* a permutation of America's 'Christian mission to save the world'. The result, according to Wang, is an unfortunate

unilateralism whereby the U.S.A. believes it has the unique right to teach and judge other peoples, other cultures.

Chapter VII, by Zhu Majie, "American Culture: Features and Mechanism of Role in Diplomatic Behavior," regards American culture as the product of (1) a sense of racial superiority, (2) individualism, (3) liberalism (freedom of speech, conscience, etc.), (4) utilitarianism, and (5) expansionism. Zhu outlines five tactics of American expansionism: (1) use of 'human rights diplomacy' as a tool, (2) hegemony over international organizations, (3) neo-interventionism disguised as 'humanitarian intervention', (4) 'soft power', and (5) financial allurements of talented youth away from their home countries.

Chapter VIII, by Pitman B. Potter, "Rethinking Efficiency and Institutional Capacity: Globalization and Selective Adaptation," explains selective adaptation in terms of 'perception', 'complementarity', and 'legitimacy'. Potter shows how the established normative regimes regulating and measuring efficiency derive from American and European elites, so problems of organizational acceptance and implementation vary according to regional and local culture. Throughout, Potter supplies very complete and useful references to the associated literature.

Chapter IX, by Zhuang Xichang, "Conflict and Assimilation among Different Civilizations: On S. P. Huntington's Views," disagrees with Huntington's claim as to the founding nature of culture, and advances many arguments showing instead that political and economic causes are more fundamental. Zhuang concurs that the West's "universalist pretensions" have brought it and bring it to international conflict (colonialism, imperialism), but the West's underlying motives are clearly materialist, not spiritual or cultural. Zhuang rejects Huntington's implication that Chinese Confucianism necessarily challenges the West, since Confucianism is gentle and affirms "the Great Harmony of the World."

Part III "Eastern Cultures and International Relations". Chapter X, by Mohamed Noman Galal, "Cultural Misunderstanding and the Need to Promote Consensus in International Relations: An Arab Perspective," argues that interdependence rather than globalization should be the controlling principle of International Relations, since the former encourages interaction and dialogue whereas the latter encourages standardization and thus the threat of hegemony. Galal analyzes issues such as liberation movements, terrorism, human rights, ecology, the refugee crisis, the drug problem, and the burden of debt crushing third world countries.

Chapter XI, by Ye Qing, "Influence of Islamic Culture on Foreign Policies of Islamic Countries," studies Islamic culture and its vital relation to Islamic foreign policy. Founded on a religion of Unity and Social Justice, Islamic culture is characterized by 'practicality' (Islam is "oriented towards this life"), 'retrospectivity' (Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets), and 'expressivity' (public language and behavior are crucially important). Ye stresses (1) how ideology often is *the* decisive factor (e.g., Iran rejects Israel although materially the two countries are so situated as to help each substantially), (2) how a strong and charismatic leader appeals to the masses, and (3) how the Islamic sense of Justice is gravely offended by the West's ongoing oppression, exploitation, and dishonor of Islamic peoples.

Chapter XII, by Wu Yongnian, "Characteristics and Values of Indian Culture," noting Indian President Abdul Kalam's stress on the strategic role of Indian cultural value at the present time, undertakes to show how Indian culture differs from both Chinese and Western cultures. Wu explains Indian (1) religiosity, (2) diversity, (3) inclusivism, and (4) regionalism (i.e., how geography influences culture); and analyzes what are, in the opinion of the author, the weaknesses

and strengths of such Hindu tenets as 'renunciation', 'perseverance in truth', and 'abstention from killing'.

Chapter XIII, by Yaqing Qin, "National Identity, Strategic Culture and Security Interests: Three Hypotheses on the Interaction Between China and International Society," relates the three processes named in its title to the four periods of the PRC's history: 1949-1969, 1969-1982, 1982-1996, and 1996-. Qin names three possible forms of state orientation to the international community, (1) coerced identification, (2) interest identification, and (3) ideational identification. He argues the PRC's orientation at present is a combination of interest and ideational identification.

## **Part I**

### **Cultures and International Relations**



# 1.

## **Combining Research on Cultural Theory and International Relations**

*Yu Xintian\**

With the new technological revolution and the economic globalization, the intensity of contacts among countries in the world has been enhanced in an unprecedented way. The end of the Cold War has terminated the hostility between the two camps and promoted a new way of connection among countries. In recent decades, the theory of international relations has become the most flourishing, most charming and fastest-changing discipline, which is logical. Western mainstream 'international relations' theory has developed swiftly from ignoring cultural roles to paying attention to cultural research and even setting forward the proposition of culture constructing international relations. But this is only the first step. This paper will discuss how to deepen absorption of findings in cultural theoretic research and combine them with research on international relations so as to enrich and develop international relations theory and construct the framework of international 'culturology'.

### **Western International Relations Theory: From Cultural Lack to Cultural Center**

Since the founding of the Western discipline of 'international relations' in 1919, there has been an immense collection of theoretical works. After World War II, the U.S.A. has controlled the "mainstream" of the Western international relations research. Debates among the three main schools of realism, liberalism and "critical theory" have had frequent high tides and are in the ascendant. As is known to all, in the early debate between idealism and realism, the focus of international relations research was power, interest, security, strategy, hegemony and order. At the stalemate between neo-realism and neo-liberalism which followed, new contents such as economic interdependence, conflict and cooperation, national interests and global issues were added. Though scholars also used terms containing rich cultural factors such as "morale," "ideal," "humanity," and "ideology," they were marginal words, subordinate to power and interest and of no consequence. With economic dimension increasingly prominent besides military and political dimensions, research on international relations has become richer. The mainstream international relations theory has numerous significant achievements and far-reaching influence, but ignorance of cultural research has become its fatal weakness.

After the 1980s, critical theory (including postmodernism, feminism de-constructivism and constructivism) arose and especially after the Cold War in the 1990s tended to flourish. Culture began to enter the center of research on international relations. From the beginning, critical theory aimed its spearhead directly at the crux of the traditional theories, that is, the whole Western thought was based on core concepts. Its task was to "liberate" the originally forgotten and constrained issues. The traditional theories maintained that knowledge was free from the influence of power. But postmodernism pointed out that power created knowledge: there was interconnection between them and the field of knowledge, to a certain extent, served power. Ashley pointed out that a modern state's knowledge is modern man's knowledge. Man provides knowledge and makes explanations of the history. Bartelson pointed out that if there were no proper knowledge form for explaining sovereignty in clear terms, sovereignty would not exist and

the ability to organize the political reality would be lost. Likewise, if there were no proper 'sovereignty form', knowledge would lose the ability to organize the fields of exploration and set truth standards. Without political and historical background and without time and space, knowledge cannot be summarized. Therefore, in research on international relations, there exists no dominant perspective but rather competitive perspectives.<sup>1</sup> The critical theory broke the fixed mode of thought of the mainstream theory and promoted new consideration by bringing to light the latter's defect of ignoring social and cultural factors. But it is hard to shape its own international political theory by discussing abstractly around "super-theory".

Challenged by critical theory and especially assaulted by the drastic changes in post-Cold War international reality, the mainstream international relations theory began to divert its attention to civilization and culture. There appeared three most prominent theories, that is, "clash of civilizations" theory, "soft power" theory and constructivism theory. Huntington's "clash of civilizations" theory has aroused one comment after another all over the world, which is unfinished by now. But, without really understanding Huntington's theory, the criticism in some comments has failed to strike home. Huntington is very keen in some aspects and has revealed the crux of the matter. First, he holds that in the post-Cold War world, global politics has become multi-polar and multi-cultural for the first time in the history. Western civilization is unique, but not universal. The world with cultural pluralism is unavoidable, because it is impossible to build a global empire. Safeguarding world security needs accepting global cultural diversity.<sup>2</sup> Second, nation states are and will be the most important factor in the world affairs, but their interests, alliance and conflict are increasingly influenced by factors of culture and civilization. However, fundamentally, he has not shaken off the Cold War mentality. In his terms, regional politics is racial politics, global politics is civilization politics and clash of civilizations replaces competition between superpowers. In essence, clash of civilizations is struggle between the unified Western civilization and other civilizations. It seems more important that such a traditional thought has had to recognize world cultural diversity and the tremendous role of culture.

Joseph Nye's "soft power" theory is also arousing popular interest. He defines value standards, market economy and Western civilization as factors of soft power so as to be relative to hard power of military strength. Interdependence is an intangible power. Knowledge is more of power. First, he pointed out that economic and cultural factors play an increasingly great role in international relations and the nature of soft power cannot be explained and assessed by geopolitics. Second, soft power becomes inevitable, making all the countries either fully follow or feel forced to follow. Its effectiveness is, to a certain extent, more than hard power.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, soft power and hard power are complementary rather than incompatible. The soft power theory has promoted understanding of cultural role and become a new growth point in research on international relations. But it is yet premature and seems feeble. Besides, it may be too simple to regard soft power only as "cooperative power".

Constructivism is the most important development in Western international relations theory, represented by Alexander Wendt's book *Social Theory of International Politics*. First, he recognizes that states, states' systems and other social structures are objectively existing things and collective social phenomena, which, as far as individuals are concerned, cannot be turned into subjective concepts. But societies and the world are built through people's practices. Second, common social concepts have constructed the structure of the international system and entrusted driving force to it. Neo-realism and neo-liberalism stress the point that power and interest are the driving force of international politics while concepts are of little importance. But Wendt holds that the most important role of concepts is constructional rather than causal; the significance and role

of power and interest result from concepts. The gap in power between Germany and Denmark has not changed, but in 1940 Germany invaded and occupied Denmark, and in 2000 the two countries coexisted. It is because Germany has changed its concepts of its own interests, power and relations with other countries. Third, neo-realism considers that the world anarchy has the single logic, that is, states are forms of 'self-help' and compete with each other. Wendt disagrees. He sets forward at least three anarchic cultures. In Hobbesian culture, the mutual orientation between states is enemy. In Lockean culture, the mutual orientation is rival. In Kantian culture, the orientation is friend. Different concepts and cultures can construct different kinds of anarchy. Lastly, though changes in common concepts may lead to different international relations, it does not mean that changes are easy, because it is difficult for one country or even some countries to change the system culture. Therefore, national policy makers have a grave responsibility, with not only possibility of choice but also moral responsibility. Major powers have strength and are less restrained by the existing standardized environment, so they have more ability to innovate culture.<sup>4</sup> These views are of "revolutionary" significance. Wendt's work was considered the most developed version of constructivist theory in international relations in the 20th century. Critics hold that Wendt's constructivism has not shaken off "ideal elements" and lacks the sense of history and system, which is reasonable. But from the perspective of cultural research in international relations, constructivism has just begun.

Sorting out the trains of thought in Western international relations theory, we have found that the importance of culture has been increasingly enhanced. The critical theory has overturned the ignorance of traditional theories about culture. The "clash of civilizations" theory maintains that differences among civilizations will be the source of international conflict. The "soft power" theory sets forward the point that the intangible attraction of culture and ideology is superior to military compulsion. And constructivism holds that belief, norm, concept and other cultural contents construct the basic structure of international politics. The changes in trends of thought in the past ten years are astonishing and have rapidly reflected the realistic changes in post-Cold War international relations. The fact that culture has turned from being of little importance to holding the balance has made even those who insist on the traditional theory of international relations to respond to theoretic queries and re-explain their own viewpoints.

However, constructivism has just laid a foundation and set a starting point for how culture plays a role in international relations, but a complete system has not yet been constructed. It has enriched the theory of international relations by using for reference theories of philosophy, sociology and culturology. It is vital to further use for reference the theory of culturology to develop the cultural research in international relations.

### **The Significance of the Theory of Culturology**

Many international phenomena remain unexplainable only by making use of geopolitical and geo-economic viewpoints. It shows that a kind of theory is in reality similar to an ideology and can reveal some truths and also screen some truths. Creating cultural research in international relations requires another set of terms, concepts, thoughts and theories as well as new explanations of realistic issues in international relations to deepen people's realization. Introduction of the theory of culturology will be conducive to understanding the complexity of development within culture and cross-cultural relations.

## *Orientation of Cultural Values*

Judgment of cultural values has been involved more and more frequently in international relations. Hubert Vedrine, French Foreign Minister, wrote an article saying that one of the main tasks of French foreign policy is to make contribution to strengthening the democratic system of the world. When undemocratic states repress the common people, threatening regional stability, France will not only condemn them, but also take actions and even armed interference.<sup>5</sup> Western countries generally hold similar viewpoints, linking aid with human rights. The U.S.A. in particular exerts itself to the utmost to forcibly spread values such as democracy and human rights. Research in cultural anthropology tells us that, only by judging in terms of the whole cultural background rather than some abstract and absolute standard, can we understand the accustomed way of behavior and belief. Any society is only one of the many previous and present social formations and each custom is meaningful only in the inherent logic of a particular society. The standard of behavior has its subjectivity, relativity and lastingness. Marinovski said that culture first of all must guarantee the human subsistence. The people's living environment is their source of resources. They realize the resources through culture and utilize resources by inventing technology. The achievements of different crowds don't result from the covert biological force but from culture. Such a realization has a strong function of education and can overcome the racist prejudice.

On the other hand, the orientation of cultural values also has its objectivity, absoluteness and simultaneousness. Though all societies are in some historical span of their own development, they coexist in the world system and make concerted efforts to resolve the issues facing them. Therefore, simultaneousness has appeared. Modernization, peace and development are the objectives all the societies pursue. Modernization includes cultural modernization, that is, a process of cultural development from low grade to high grade. Under these circumstances, cultures are comparable in development stage and have the objectivity of comparison. Development from low grade to high grade is absolute. In the process of development, cultures are upgraded through modernization and spread to the whole world and can also contribute their unique cultural values to mankind, shaping the human shared values gradually. Now only Western culture has completed this process. However, it doesn't mean that other cultures have no ability to do so. We can expect their achievements. The reason why the world paid so much attention to East Asian cultural values when exploring its miracles lies in this.

In the colonialist and imperialist era, vulgar evolutionism boosted Western centralism and preyed on Asian, African and Latin American ethnic groups by either assimilating or destroying their cultures. Only in the post-colonialism world, can cultural pluralism be possible. As American scholar Gerrit W. Gong said, the contemporary international society remains multicultural (as opposed to completely cosmopolitan). The politics of culture have been too long overlooked and underestimated.<sup>6</sup> Only on the basis of recognizing all cultural values, can we spur the people to voluntarily achieve cultural modernization, take the initiative to learn and use for reference fine factors of external cultures and create their own new ethnic cultures. Also only under these circumstances, is it possible to criticize and discard dregs of culture. Western countries regard Western cultural values as universal values, which they impose on others. This will not work and also runs counter to the desire of others.

### *Cultural Cognition*

In the "global village," the exchanges between personnel of all the countries in the world and flow of funds, materials and information in an endless stream allow those who have never gone abroad to feel the pulse of the world. International relations must be based on mutual understanding among ethnic groups while cultural cognition is the key to the secret. The common phenomenon in the current international relations is "lack of mutual trust". Among many reasons for suspicions and doubts, misunderstanding is the fundamental one. That one country considers another country's goodwill malice is often the mistake of cultural misunderstanding.

The position of human intelligence is culture. Culture determines which languages, manners and proprieties are normal and moral. Culture is the norm of interrelations between people and is the treasury extinction. In any case, culture guarantees normal social life, order and some predictability.<sup>7</sup>

Research into religion in the theory of culturology is profound and full of insight. Today, religion has also become a factor which cannot be neglected in international relations. Though the tide of secularization is rising, religion remains the general attribute of culture. Murphy correctly pointed out that nature and supernature are defined according to culture. Therefore, when Westerners move closer to religions of other societies with their own scope, there is indeed the danger of imposing external scope on others' beliefs and behaviors.<sup>8</sup> From the perspective of history, the development of monotheism was coincident with the emergence of centralized state power and religion added mysterious support to social composition. Religion, in the transcendental form, allows people to consider and exchange dim consciousness and life process, to express indescribable things and to substantiate abstract things. Religious voice always arises where ordinary methods of understanding and exchange fail. Reverence, encouragement and joy come from participation of groups and religious activities are assembly of believers or denominations. Marx revealed that religion is feeling of the merciless world and plays a role of consolation; religion tends to support the established system and morale. Max Weber pointed out that a new religion always has revolutionary force. Regardless of religious or secular illusion and ideology, it is often they that receive the conservative backing of order. As far as the extent of people believing in their own existence and adjusting their own behavior to adapt to belief is concerned, belief has social truthfulness. Religion manifests cultural truth, because it symbolizes social relations and reflects the human anxiety and hope.

### *Cultural Contacts*

The earlier cultural research laid stress on cultural stability or unchanged aspects of culture. It was more suitable to small, isolated and less-developed ethnic groups. Among others, values, the crux of culture, are the most difficult to change. However, the current cultural research pays more attention to cultural changes, considering change unavoidable. Change is an eternal phenomenon in all cultures and social systems. For this reason, we especially differentiate traditional culture from cultural tradition. The former means cultural books and records and customs in some historical period, while the latter refers to changed culture and living tradition up to the present date. Research on cultural change has achieved considerable results, because anthropologists and other social scientists have attached more and more importance to the issues facing the peoples of developing countries in the process of their modernization.

Innovation is the basis of cultural change. The change in cultural internal development always results from discovery or invention, while the change in cultural external development comes from dissemination and borrowing, which are the most universal form of innovation. Most elements in the connotations of culture are borrowed.<sup>9</sup> Dissemination and borrowing have become the main driving force of social progress. In the unprecedented contacts among ethnic groups caused by economic globalization, this theoretic finding is of more realistic significance. Borrowing is selective. People don't completely accept all things provided by the cultures they touch, but decide whether to accept or to repel according to effectiveness, adaptability and meaning for their own culture. The speed of accepting the innovation of another culture depends on its relative superiority, adaptability, complexity, feasibility and identifiability over the receiving culture. In an "unbalanced" system, borrowing is easier. There is no perfectly integrated society and in a society grievance and imbalance always exist. If problems deteriorated to the level of affecting numerous people, they might challenge the status quo. Such a society is easier to change than a satisfactory society. People all recognize that some parts in the connotations of culture are more solid and more difficult to change than other parts, but there exist different views on which part is more solid. Anthropology strongly holds that change in behavior is prior to change in belief. But the viewpoint of sociology is ideological system is more fundamental and can restrain or promote change. For example, Max Weber's 'Protestant ethic' led to development of capitalism. But psychologists consider that the earlier things are learned, the more difficult they are to change.

Anthropology calls cultural change caused by contacts between societies "acculturation". The process of acculturation begins when two or more societies have direct and sustained contact with each other. It is not limited to a few groups, but is a universal phenomenon, that is, cultural dissemination in a large scope. Generally speaking, cultural "net flow" is always from the strong to the weak, but it is not a one-way flow.<sup>10</sup> When Europeans came to America, they compelled Indians to accept the European mode of production and lifestyle, but they also reaped no little benefit by introducing tobacco, potato, corn, tomato and other crops tamed by Indians. In this process of contact, the two societies both change, in varying degrees. This research and the extension of coverage of anthropology diverted attention from primitive society to complicated ones. The focus of research also turned from acculturation to impacts of modernization on countries: how to maintain personal values during drastic changes in tradition; how to give play to superiority of different cultures when industrialization creates more similarities among societies.

Acculturation also may often bring about destruction and pressure to the culture of the receiving party, because changes in some elements or some small system within the cultural system can spread to the whole system, leading to instability. The receiving party may deal with destruction and pressure with a response movement, trying to restore the meaning and contents of its lifestyle. Anthropologists call it "renaissance", that is, prudent, organized and conscious efforts of social members to create a more satisfactory and more meaningful culture. Renaissance can be categorized as follows: Nativist movement with characteristics of eliminating external thoughts, goods and foreigners; revival movement featured by reestablishing lost or fading thoughts and customs; religious renaissance characterized by stressing transformation of the world into an idealized one by supernatural means. This has made us have a deeper understanding of the response of the weak under the assaults of economic globalization.

## *Cultural Toleration*

The proposal of a cultural concept is of revolutionary significance. It marks an important step towards social objectification and demystification. In the past people used the holy or mystery symbolism to describe some society, while now they use scientific language to describe and analyze it. Things are no longer unchangeable for ages. Some reverential supernatural forces have become the targets of criticism. Once we understand the strength of culture, we can tolerate and control it. People can consciously guide changes and promote dissemination and even acculturation. Renaissance is one of the responses to cultural acculturation and has its rationality and also negative aspects. Realization of the strength of culture is helpful in eliminating ethnic and cultural prejudice. Cultural misunderstanding because of distance; difference in measures of ethic, morale and value; divergence in social and political concepts; difference in customs and habits; divergence caused in the process of cultural dissemination and error in judgment among cultural receivers;—these have all facilitated ethnic and cultural prejudice. But more severe is the evil propaganda of cultural and ethnic centralism. Now that the human culture has its diversity and uniformity and it can make progress only by learning from each other and coming together for emulation, there is no need for doubting toleration of cultures. Guiding or directing cultural change will be one of the main tasks of governments and leaders of countries in the world.

## **Creating a Framework for International Culturology**

The aim of combining more closely the theory of international relations with the cultural theory is to create the third subdivision of research on international relations, 'international culturology', besides international politics and international economics. This author wrote an article in 1999 and put forward this tentative idea. Using the term of international culture rather than world culture is to avoid some misunderstanding that there seems to be a unified world culture. International culturology is the abbreviation of cultural research in international relations.<sup>11</sup> To fulfill this task, the first issue is whether it is necessary to establish such a discipline. For instance, Wendt's constructivism puts a lot of stress on the role of culture, maintaining that international structure is not a social rather than material phenomenon. Since the basis of sociality is shared knowledge, it leads to an idealist view of structure as a "distribution of knowledge" or "ideas all the way down" (or almost anyway).<sup>12</sup> His natural conclusion is culture is not a sector or sphere of society distinct from the economy or polity, but present wherever shared knowledge is found. If economy and polity are institutionally distinct spheres in a society, as in capitalism, it is only because culture constitutes them as such.<sup>13</sup> This author disagrees with him.

In his address to the UNESCO General Conference in 1980, Pope John Paul II said that just because of culture mankind has really lived a decent life. Culture is a special way of life and existence of mankind. Mankind always lives on the basis of its peculiar culture; conversely, culture creates a kind of interrelation peculiar to mankind, which determines the interpersonal features of human life. While culture as a special way of existence of the mankind has its uniformity, there is cultural diversity. It is in such diversity that mankind lives—Culture is the basis for why mankind has become mankind and it has made mankind more perfect or increasingly perfect.<sup>14</sup> This reflects a cultural concept in a broad sense. On the other hand, there is a cultural concept in a narrow sense, that is, culture being the synthesis of knowledge, belief, morale and norm. It not only exists but also appears in the form of ideology, academic finding, literature and art and spreads through various forms of media. Human recognition of and research on this phenomenon can be traced

back to thousands of years ago. Culture has its uniqueness and independent character. Even in research fields of social sciences, full attention has been paid to its uniqueness and thus cultural studies have been set up. Negating culture's uniqueness and independent character by reason of extensive permeability of culture in the cultural concept in a broad sense will obviously damage our insight into everything including international relations. It is of more significance to put stress on culture today when its impacts on international relations are increasing.

Since culture has its uniqueness and independent character, its impacts on international relations also have uniqueness. Separating cultural research from others, we can observe and analyze various phenomena in a more detailed and deep-going way and summarize their unique law. Becoming independent disciplines, world politics and world economics have made great progress. Schools have showed off their different viewpoints, spurring more researchers and more results on making us better understand the political and economic fields in international relations. However, the inherent theories in world politics and world economics cannot explain many phenomena. For example, why are nuclear and chemical weapons defined as "weapons of mass destruction"? Can't conventional weapons inflict heavy casualties? In reality, persons killed in the conventional wars after WWII are more than those killed in WWII. It is related to the definition of 'morality' of the world community. Again, why does the U.S.A. not regard the U.K.'s nuclear weapons as a threat and feel threatened by China's nuclear weapons? The U.S. regards the present era as "market and democracy" era, while China defines the present era as "peace and development" era. What impacts will these differing summarizations exert on their respective foreign policies and interrelations? More importantly, by establishing a relatively independent discipline to explore cultural impacts on states' domestic and foreign policies as well as contacts, judgment and understanding among states and their cultural roles in constructing international organizations and institutions, we can direct behaviors of states and their peoples to push forward the international community in the direction of peace, democracy, justice, civilization and prosperity.

In research of social sciences, besides analysis, there are many methods such as synthesis and comparison. When world politics and world economics developed independently to a rather mature level, but people didn't rest content with observing separately and wanted to explore more deeply their common roles and the interaction of politics and economy, political economy in international relations was established. Similarly, when international culturology develops to a certain level, cross-disciplines and new disciplines may emerge. The issue of relations between cultural values and economic development heatedly debated in the international academia may expedite the birth of international economic culturology.<sup>15</sup> International political culturology should be given more concerns. The birth of cross-disciplines and new disciplines is related to the full development of original disciplines and also has a bearing on new issues and demands emerging in reality. This shows from the perspective of development that international culturology is ready to emerge. Only after its formation, can other new disciplines be further opened up.

The aim of international culturology is to recognize culture as an important variable in international relations and make research into cultural status, role and impacts in international relations. Previous demonstrations of global system or global order in fact centered on Western developed countries; in the cultural building in the modern world system there was almost no role for Islamic, Indian or Chinese culture. This was in sharp contrast to the reality. The expansion of the world system in the political and economic sense has not made the expansion of world culture reach a corresponding level. All the players on the world scene don't have the same prerequisites. Therefore, explanation of the universal presence of main states in the modern world cannot be

linked only to capitalist development and expansion, but also must be made in the light of global political culture in finished form. States not only will handle internal affairs but also will resolve the "identity issue" and create "high culture". If they cannot enter this process of creation, it is impossible to be built into modern states. In this sense, development of a modern state also needs "nationalization of culture". On the one hand, any country is linked to the global system and the importance of linkage is increasing. On the other hand, how it is linked to the rest of the world and how it defines its status and interests in the world have spurred domestic debates, resulting in various political, ideological and religious movements. As American sociologist Roland Robertson said, international politics is cultural and we are in the period of cultural politics of global scope.<sup>16</sup>

The contents of research in international culturology are rich and extensive. In sum, first, it will explain how culture determines foreign policy and the attitude of international players. There are many kinds of players in the world community, of which the 'state' is the most fundamental and most important one. Meanwhile, transnational corporations, international organizations and NGOs also play an increasing role as players. States' domestic and foreign policies depend on popular will, contention between interest groups and operation of system, which are finally determined by political culture and cultural values. The policies and attitudes of transnational corporations, international organizations and NGOs as players in the international community cannot be separated from a certain context of cultural values too. The crux of the matter is to explore how cultural values exert impact on the attitude towards the outside world of the populace and elite and the foreign policy-making. The attitude to culture is a very subjective factor, but research in social sciences tries to find standards for objective judgment. For instance, it tries to grasp the tendency through a number of questionnaires and inquiry. In the complex process an important reason is that people can only understand other cultures through their own ethnic culture. In this sense, cultural misreading is almost unavoidable. Cultural understanding is just attained in the process of continuously overcoming cultural misunderstanding, sometimes scoring a lucky hit, sometimes acting in a way defeating the original purpose and sometimes "gaining on the roundabouts what one loses on the swings." Cultural innovation is of vital importance. It can direct people's realization to collective consensus. The formation of cultural collective consensus may greatly promote development of international relations. On the other hand, if suspicions and doubts were grave, international relations would be beset with difficulties. Trust has become a kind of soft capital in international relations and now complaints over lacking in trust are made everywhere. But trust-building is inseparable with cultural understanding and identity. The role of the media is irreplaceable, which can portray the cultural image of state, ethnic group and organization. However, as for cultural partiality of the media, there is no need for reticence. Generally speaking, the media of the strong cultures extend all over the world, which are hard for the weak cultures to resist.

Lastly, how culture plays a role in systemization of international relations. International relations have shaped a series of laws, organizations and mechanisms, which are referred to as international order. Though international relations always consider the world is anarchic, the world is not in chaos, but in an established order, system and mechanism. Any behavior of any state must give consideration to the response of the international community. Behavior severely destroying the order, system and mechanism will certainly be condemned, sanctioned and even interfered with by the world community. Issues such as how laws, organizations, mechanisms and order are formed, and their cultural reasons, and how to transform and construct them, all involve an extensive and profound cultural background. Initially, international law, international organizations and mechanisms were almost all born in the context of European culture. After

WWII, they were marked obviously by American culture and the cultural participation of many newly emerged countries was added to them. Strengthening the systemization capability of culture is bound to be what every country yearns for. But research into this aspect is very weak.

To sum up, the contents for research of international culturology are rich and challenging. There are numerous difficulties in creating a new discipline. The biggest is how to combine cultural diversity with cultural uniformity. The world is plural. The value orientation of cultural diversity should be the axis of a world pluralism developing to the full, no matter whether the diversity is beneficial to itself, others or the world. The diversity also includes various essential factors of global common culture. Through these factors, a minimum understanding can be promoted between entities. But obviously, cultural diversity has not yet been universally recognized in the world. An expert panel of UNESCO pointed out that real uniformity cannot be mentioned in the same breath with unanimity. Only in the mutually beneficial integration on equal terms of all factors in the whole system can uniformity appear. Real uniformity can only supplement rather than damage diversity. Uniformity at the global level doesn't need a weakening of diversity at the ethnic, sub-ethnic and regional levels. Conversely, diversity at the ethnic, local and regional levels is the enduring prerequisite of integration at the global level. Mankind needs diversity and also uniformity. To build the world into 'one', with both uniformity and diversity, is a challenge to mankind and its culture.<sup>17</sup> This is precisely our object of research. We shoulder heavy responsibilities.

## Notes

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1 See Ni Shixiong, etc., *Contemporary Western International Relations Theories* (2001), pp. 200-219.

2 Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (Xinhua Press, 1998), pp. 5, 368.

3 Joseph Nye, *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (Military Translation Press, 1992), p. 25.

4 Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2000), pp. 39-43.

5 Hubert Vedrine, "Diplomacy Serves Democracy", *Die Welt*, February 22, 2001.

6 Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of 'Civilization' in International Society* (Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 244.

7 Robert F. Murphy, *Culture and Introduction of Social Anthropology* (Commercial Press, 1994), pp. 52-55.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 206.

9 Clyde M. Woods, *Cultural Change* (Hebei People's Publishing House, 1988), pp. 3, 23-26.

10 "Net flow" means flow minus that in the opposite direction.

11 See this author, "Outline of Research in International Culture", *Academic Quarterly* (Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, 1999), No. 1.

12 Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2000), pp. 23, 181.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Quoted from Zhang Hongyan, *Ethnic and Cultural Prejudice: New Views on Comparison between Chinese and Western Cultures* (Liaoning Education Publishing House, 1993), p. 21.

15 See Samuel Huntington et al, ed., *Important Role of Culture: How Values Influence Human Progress* (Xinhua Press, 2000).

16 Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2000), p. 7.

17 *Multicultural Celestial Body: Report of Expert Panel of UNESCO* (Social Sciences Literature Press, 2001), pp. 2-3, 232.



## **Cultural Impact on International Relations**

*George F. McLean*<sup>1</sup>

It is a sad fact of history that relations between nations have long been characterized rather by conflict than by cooperation. It has been characteristic to look upon others as objects with which we are confronted, as competitors for land and resources, and too often to experience them as domineering and exploitive. In this the terms of reference have been especially quantitative, trapping us in a zero sum game in which one can gain only at the expense of the other.

It has been a characteristic of the last half century or more that this objective sense has been increasingly complemented by a new awareness of human subjectivity. This in turn has made it possible to take account of the values and virtues which constitute the culture of a people. In these terms great strides have been made in hermeneutics on the method for interpreting other cultures and building fusions of horizons in which deep principles and commitments to cooperation can be formed.

At the same time economic, political and informatic advances have opened an era rightly called not only international, but global in character. In this light it seems helpful to look more closely at the opening of this new dimension of human subjectivity from which cultures emerge, to consider the possibilities of their interaction, and perhaps especially the new sense of relations between peoples made possible when whole cultures begin to think in global terms.

### **The Emergence of Subjectivity**

In the context of the many crises with which we have been greeted in entering upon the new millennia it is dangerous to raise the question of the role of philosophy. For if, with Aristotle, philosophy is something to be taken up when the basic needs of the times are cared for, then philosophy is in danger of being shelved for many generations to come. On the other hand, philosophy may have to do with our nature and dignity—with what we are, and with what we are after—and hence with the terms in which we live as person and peoples. If so, then philosophy may be not the last but the first consideration or at least the most determinative for life in our trying circumstances.

During the last century human knowledge of the physical universe was totally transformed by breaking into the atom and discovering its structure. The effect was not only scientific advance but the joint threat of the atomic bomb and the great promise of atomic energy. It is the contention here that similarly philosophical understanding today has shifted from being a work of deduction by specialists working in abstraction from the process of human life, to deep engagement at the center of human concerns under the pressures of life's challenges. From external objective observation life is now lived in terms also of internal self-awareness where human freedom with its cultural creativity and responsibility become central. The playing field has shifted, the challenges have risen geometrically and with them the potential not only for death but of life. To understand this we need to review the steps, negative and positive, by which this breakthrough from mere objectivity to subjectivity has occurred.

## *The Crisis of Objective Reason*

These pressures force us to cross a new divide as we enter into the new millennium. To see this we need to review the history of reason in this epoch. The first millennium is justly seen as one in which human attention was focused upon God. It was the time of Christ and the Prophet; much of humanity was fully absorbed in the assimilation of their messages.

The second millennium is generally seen as shifting to human beings. The first 500 years focused upon the reintegration of Aristotelian reason by such figures as Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd and Thomas Aquinas. The second half of the millennium, from 1500, was marked by a radicalization of reason. Whereas from its beginning human reason always had attempted to draw upon the fullness of human experience, to reflect the highest human and religious aspirations, and to build upon the accomplishments of the predecessors—philosophers sensed themselves as standing on the shoulders of earlier philosophers—a certain Promethean hope now emerged. As with Milton's *Paradise Lost*, it was claimed that humankind would save itself, indeed that each person would do so by his or her power of reason.

For this, Francis Bacon<sup>2</sup> directed that the idols which bore the content of the cultural tradition be smashed; John Locke<sup>3</sup> would erase all prior content of the mind in order to reduce it to a blank tablet; René Descartes<sup>4</sup> would put all under doubt. What was sought was a body of clear and distinct ideas, strictly united on a mathematical model. It was true that Descartes intended later to reintroduce the various levels of human knowledge on a more certain basis. But what he restored was not the rich content of the breadth of human experience, but only what could be had with the requisite clarity and distinctness. Thus, of the content of the senses which had been bracketed by doubt in the first Meditation, in the sixth Meditation only the quantitative or measurable was allowed back into his system. All the rest was considered simply provisory and employed pragmatically and only to the degree that it proved useful in so navigating as to avoid physical harm in the world.

In this light the goal of knowledge and of properly human life was radically curtailed. For Aristotle,<sup>5</sup> and no less for Christianity and Islam in the first 1500 years of this era, this had been contemplation of the magnificence and munificence of the highest being, God. By the Enlightenment, this was reduced to control over nature in the utilitarian service of humankind. And as the goals of human life were reduced to the material order, the service of humankind really became the service of machines in the exploitation of physical nature. This was the real enslavement of human freedom.

### *Subjectivity: The New Agenda*

To read this history negatively, as we have been doing, is, however, only part of the truth. It depicts a simple and total collapse of technical reason acting alone and as self-sufficient. But there may be more to human consciousness and hence to philosophy. If so in analogy to the replacement of a tooth in childhood, the more important phenomenon is not the weakness of the old tooth that is falling out, but the strength of the new tooth that is replacing it. A few philosophers did point to this other dimension of human awareness. Shortly after Descartes Pascal's assertion "Que la raison a des raisons, que la raison ne comprend pas" would remain famous if unheeded, as would Vico's prediction that the new reason would give birth to a generation of brutes—intellectual brutes, but brutes nonetheless. Later Kierkegaard would follow Hegel with a similar warning. None of these voices would have strong impact while the race was on to "conquer" the world by a supposed

omni-sufficient scientific reason. But as human problems mounted the adequacy of reason to handle the deepest problems of human dignity and transcendent purpose came under sustained questioning and more attention was given to additional dimensions of human capabilities.

One might well ask which comes first, the public sense of human challenge or the corresponding philosophical reflection. My own sense is that they are in fact one, with philosophical insight providing the reflective dimension of the human concern. In any case, one finds a striking parallel between social experience and philosophy in this century. After the extreme totalitarian repression by the ideologies of the 1930s there followed the progressive liberation from fascism in World War II, from colonial exploitation in the 1950s and 1960s, of minorities in the 1970s and from closed societies in the 1980s. Throughout, like the new tooth the emergence of the person has been consistent and persistent.

Thus, Wittgenstein began by writing his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*<sup>6</sup> on the Lockean supposition that significant knowledge consisted in constructing a mental map corresponding point to point to the external world as perceived by sense experience. In such a project the spiritual element of understanding, i.e., the grasp of the relations between the points on this mental map and the external world was relegated to the margin as simply "unutterable". Later experience in teaching children, however, led Wittgenstein to the conclusion that this empirical mental mapping was simply not what was going on in human knowledge. In his *Blue and Brown Books*<sup>7</sup> and in his subsequent *Philosophical Investigations*<sup>8</sup> Wittgenstein shifted the human consciousness or intentionality, which previously he had relegated to the periphery, to the very center of concern. The focus of his philosophy was no longer the supposedly objective replication of the external world, but the human construction of language and of worlds of meaning.<sup>9</sup>

A similar process was underway on the continent in the Kantian camp. There Husserl's attempt to bracket all elements, in order to isolate pure essences for scientific knowledge, forced attention to intentionality and to the limitations of a pure essentialism. This opened the way for his understudy, Martin Heidegger, to rediscover the existential and historical dimensions of reality in his *Being and Time*.<sup>10</sup> The religious implications of this new sensitivity would be articulated by Karl Rahner in his work, *Spirit in the World*, and by the Second Vatican Council in its Constitution, *The Church in the World*.<sup>11</sup>

For Heidegger the meaning of being and of life was unveiled and emerged—the two processes were identical—in conscious human life (*Dasein*) lived through time and therefore through history. Thus human consciousness became the new focus of attention. The uncovering or bringing into light (the etymology of the term "phenomenology") of the unfolding patterns and interrelations of subjectivity would open a new era of human awareness. Epistemology and metaphysics would develop—and merge—in the very work of tracking the nature and direction of this process.

For Heidegger's successor, Hans-Georg Gadamer,<sup>12</sup> the task becomes the uncovering of how human persons, emerging as family, neighborhood and people, by exercising their creative freedom weave their cultural tradition. This is not history as a mere compilation of whatever humankind does or makes, but culture as the fabric of the human consciousness and symbols by which a human group unveils being in its time.

The result is a dramatic inversion: where before all began from above and flowed downward—whether in structures of political power or of abstract reasoning—at the turn of the new millennium attention focuses rather upon the emerging upward exercise of the creative freedom of people in and as civil society as a new and responsible partner with government and business in the continuing effort toward the realization of the common good.

## Cultural Traditions and Civilizations

This achievement of modern hermeneutics in enabling the interpretation of human consciousness from within has made it newly possible to comprehend the nature of culture as constituted progressively of the development of values and virtues.

### *Values and Virtues*

The drama of free self-determination, and hence the development of persons and of civil society, is most fundamentally a matter of being as the affirmation or definitive stance against non-being elaborated at the very beginning of Western philosophy in the work of Parmenides, the first Greek metaphysician. This is identically the relation to the good in search of which we live, survive and thrive. The good is manifest in experience as the object of desire, namely, as that which is sought when absent. Basically, it is what completes life; it is the "per-fect", understood in its etymological sense as that which is completed or realized through and through. Hence, once achieved, it is no longer desired or sought, but enjoyed. This is reflected in the manner in which each thing, even a stone, retains the being or reality it has and resists reduction to non-being or nothing. The most that we can do is to change or transform a thing into something else; we cannot annihilate it. Similarly, a plant or tree, given the right conditions, grows to full stature and fruition. Finally, an animal protects its life—fiercely, if necessary—and seeks out the food needed for its strength. Food, in turn, as capable of contributing to an animal's sustenance and perfection, is for the animal an auxiliary good or means.

In this manner, things as good, that is, as actually realizing some degree of perfection and able to contribute to the well-being of others, are the bases for an interlocking set of relations. As these relations are based upon both the actual perfection things possess and the potential perfection to which they are thereby directed, the good is perfection both as attracting when it has not yet been attained and as constituting one's fulfillment upon its achievement. Hence, goods are not arbitrary or simply a matter of wishful thinking; they are rather the full development of things and all that contributes thereto. In this ontological or objective sense, all beings are good to the extent that they exist and can contribute to the perfection of others.<sup>13</sup>

The moral good is a narrower field, for it concerns only one's free and responsible actions. This has the objective reality of the ontological good noted above, for it concerns real actions which stand in distinctive relation to one's own perfection and to that of others—and, indeed, to the physical universe and to God as well. Hence, many possible patterns of actions could be objectively right because they promote the good of those involved, while others, precisely as inconsistent with the real good of persons or things, are objectively disordered or misordered. This constitutes the objective basis for what is ethically good or bad.

Nevertheless, because the realm of objective relations is almost numberless, whereas our actions are single, it is necessary not only to choose in general between the good and the bad, but in each case to choose which of the often innumerable possibilities one will render concrete.

However broad or limited the options, as responsible and moral an act is essentially dependent upon its being willed by a subject. Therefore, in order to follow the emergence of the field of concrete moral action, it is not sufficient to examine only the objective aspect, namely, the nature of the things involved. In addition, one must consider the action in relation to the subject, namely, to the person who, in the context of his/her society and culture, appreciates and values the good of this action, chooses it over its alternatives, and eventually wills its actualization.

The term "value" here is of special note. It was derived from the economic sphere where it meant the amount of a commodity sufficient to attain a certain worth. This is reflected also in the term "axiology" whose root means "weighing as much" or "worth as much." It requires an objective content -- the good must truly "weigh in" and make a real difference; but the term "value" expresses this good especially as related to wills which actually acknowledge it as a good and as desirable.<sup>14</sup> Thus, different individuals or groups of persons and at different periods have distinct sets of values. A people or community is sensitive to, and prizes, a distinct set of goods or, more likely, it establishes a distinctive ranking in the degree to which it prizes various goods. By so doing, it delineates among limitless objective goods a certain pattern of values which in a more stable fashion mirrors the corporate free choices of that people.

When this is exercised or lived, patterns of action develop which are habitual in the sense of being repeated. These are the modes of activity with which one is familiar; in their exercise, along with the coordinated natural dynamisms they require, one is practiced; and with practice comes facility and spontaneity. Such patterns constitute the basic, continuing and pervasive shaping influence of one's life. For this reason, they have been considered classically to be the basic indicators of what one's life as a whole will add up to, or, as is often said, "amount to". Since Socrates, the technical term for these especially developed capabilities has been "virtues" or special strengths.

### *Cultural Traditions*

Together, these values and virtues of a people set the pattern of social life through which freedom is developed and exercised. This is called a "culture". On the one hand, the term is derived from the Latin word for tilling or cultivating the land. Cicero and other Latin authors used it for the cultivation of the soul or mind (*cultura animi*), for just as good land, when left without cultivation, will produce only disordered vegetation of little value, so the human spirit will not achieve its proper results unless trained or educated.<sup>15</sup> This sense of culture corresponds most closely to the Greek term for education (*paideia*) as the development of character, taste and judgment, and to the German term "formation" (*Bildung*).<sup>16</sup>

Here, the focus is upon the creative capacity of the spirit of a people and their ability to work as artists, not only in the restricted sense of producing purely aesthetic objects, but in the more involved sense of shaping all dimensions of life, material and spiritual, economic and political into a fulfilling. The result is a whole life, characterized by unity and truth, goodness and beauty, and, thereby, sharing deeply in meaning and value. The capacity for this cannot be taught, although it may be enhanced by education; more recent phenomenological and hermeneutic inquiries suggest that, at its base, culture is a renewal, a reliving of origins in an attitude of profound appreciation.<sup>17</sup> This leads us beyond self and other, beyond identity and diversity, in order to comprehend both.

This constitutes the basic topology of a culture; as repeatedly reaffirmed through time, it builds a tradition or heritage about which we shall speak below. It constitutes, as well, the prime pattern and gradation of goods or values which persons experience from their earliest years and in terms of which they interpret their developing relations. Young persons peer out at the world through lenses formed, as it were, by their family and culture and configured according to the pattern of choices made by that community throughout its history—often in its most trying circumstances. Like a pair of glasses values do not create the object; but focus attention upon certain goods rather than upon others. This becomes the basic orienting factor for the affective and emotional life described by the Scotts, Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith, as the heart of civil

society. In time, it encourages and reinforces certain patterns of action which, in turn, reinforce the pattern of values.

Through this process a group constitutes the concerns in terms of which it struggles to advance or at least to endure, mourns its failures, and celebrates its successes. This is a person's or people's world of hopes and fears in terms of which, as Plato wrote in the *Laches*, their lives have moral meaning.<sup>18</sup> It is varied according to the many concerns and the groups which coalesce around them. As these are interlocking and interdependent a pattern of social goals and concerns develops which guides action. In turn, corresponding capacities for action or virtues are developed.

This sense of tradition is vivid in premodern and village communities, but would appear to be much less so in modern urban centers. Undoubtedly this is in part due to the difficulty in forming active community life in large urban centers. However, the cumulative process of transmitting, adjusting and applying the values of a culture through time is not only heritage or what is received, but new creation as this is passed on in new ways and in response to emerging challenges. Attending to tradition, taken in this active sense, allows us not only to uncover the permanent and universal truths which Socrates sought, but to perceive the importance of values we receive from the tradition and to mobilize our own life project actively toward the future. This diachronic sense of culture will be treated more below.

But because tradition has sometimes been interpreted as a threat to the personal and social freedom essential to a democracy, it is important here to note that a cultural tradition is generated by the free and responsible life of the members of a concerned community or civil society and enables succeeding generations to realize their life with freedom and creativity.

In fact, the process of trial and error, of continual correction and addition in relation to a people's evolving sense of human dignity and purpose, constitutes a type of learning and testing laboratory for successive generations. In this laboratory of history, the strengths of various insights and behavior patterns can be identified and reinforced, while deficiencies are progressively corrected or eliminated. Horizontally, we learn from experience what promotes and what destroys life and, accordingly, make pragmatic adjustments.

But even this language remains too abstract, too limited to method or technique, too unidimensional. While tradition can be described in general and at a distance in terms of feed-back mechanisms and might seem merely to concern how to cope in daily life, what is being spoken about are free acts that are expressive of passionate human commitment and personal sacrifice in responding to concrete danger, building and rebuilding family alliances and constructing and defending one's nation. Moreover, this wisdom is not a matter of mere tactical adjustments to temporary concerns; it concerns rather the meaning we are able to envision for life and which we desire to achieve through all such adjustments over a period of generations, i.e., what is truly worth striving for and the pattern of social interaction in which this lived richly can be. The result of this extended process of learning and commitment constitutes our awareness of the bases for the decisions of which history is constituted.

This points us beyond the horizontal plane of the various ages of history; it directs our attention vertically to its ground and, hence, to the bases of the values which humankind in its varied circumstances seeks to realize.<sup>19</sup> It is here that one searches for the absolute ground of meaning and value of which Iqbal wrote. Without that all is ultimately relative to only an interlocking network of consumption, then of dissatisfaction and finally of anomie and ennui.

The impact of the convergence of cumulative experience and reflection is heightened by its gradual elaboration in ritual and music, and its imaginative configuration in such great epics as the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. All conspire to constitute a culture which, like a giant telecommunications

dish, shapes, intensifies and extends the range and penetration of our personal sensitivity, free decision and mutual concern.

Tradition, then, is not, as is history, simply everything that ever happened, whether good or bad. It is rather what appears significant for human life: it is what has been seen through time and human experience to be deeply true and necessary for human life. It contains the values to which our forebears first freely gave their passionate commitment in specific historical circumstances and then constantly reviewed, rectified and progressively passed on generation after generation. The content of a tradition, expressed in works of literature and all the many facets of a culture, emerges progressively as something upon which personal character and society can be built. It constitutes a rich source from which multiple themes can be drawn, provided it be accepted and embraced, affirmed and cultivated.

Hence, it is not because of personal inertia on our part or arbitrary will on the part of our forbears that our culture provides a model and exemplar. On the contrary, the importance of tradition derives from both the cooperative character of the learning by which wisdom is drawn from experience and the cumulative free acts of commitment and sacrifice which have defined, defended and passed on through time the corporate life of the community as civil society.<sup>20</sup>

Ultimately, tradition bridges from ancient philosophy to civil society today. It bears the divine gifts of life, meaning and love, uncovered in facing the challenges of civil life through the ages. It provides both the way back to their origin in the *arché* as the personal, free and responsible exercise of existence and even of its divine source, and the way forward to their goal; it is the way, that is, both to their Alpha and their Omega.

### *Civilizations*

On entering into the new millennium we stand at a point not only of numerical change to the series 2000 or even of a change within a system as with a substitution of political parties, but at a point of revision of the very nature of world ordering itself. Earlier the issue was one of the possession of territory under the leadership of great Emperors or of the physical resources and the military-industrial power that entailed. More recently we have seen the world divided by ideologies into great spheres. Since the end of the Cold War, however, it is suggested famously in the work of Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*,<sup>21</sup> that the world order is being remade on the basis of the pattern of civilizations. The tragic events of 9/11 show how violent this remaking can be.

This reflects a deep transformation in interests and epistemology. Before attention was oriented objectively, that is, to things as standing over against (*ob*-against; *ject*-thrown) the knowing subject. In this perspective their quantitative characteristics, according to the classical definition of quantity as parts divided against parts; were particularly salient and were given major importance.

In this century the subject and its intentional life—or subjectivity and values—have come to the fore and phenomenological methods have been developed for their identification and interpretation. Whether it was philosophers who brought this realm of subjectivity into central awareness or whether it was attention to subjectivity which evoked the development of the corresponding philosophical methodologies can be disputed. Probably the philosophical methods provided the reflective dimension and control over the new self-awareness of human consciousness. In any case, it is suggested that the new world order will be based not on the resources we have, but on the civilizations we are: not on having but on being.

According to Huntington the notion of civilization seems to have developed in the 18th century as a term to distinguish cultivated peoples from the barbarian or native populations being encountered in the process of colonization. In this sense it was a universal term used in the singular. It implied a single elite standard of urbanization, literacy and the like for the admission of a people into the world order. When the standard was met the people was "civilized"; all the rest were simply "uncivilized".

In the 19th century a distinction was made between civilization as characterized by its material and technological capabilities and that characterized by a more elaborate political and cultural development in terms of the values and moral qualities of a people. The two terms tend to merge in expressing an overall way of life, with civilization being the broader term. Where culture focuses on the understanding of perfection and fulfillment; civilization is more the total working out of life in these terms. Hence civilization is culture, as it were, writ large.

This appears in a number of descriptions of civilization where culture is always a central element: for F. Braudel civilization is "a cultural arena",<sup>22</sup> a collection of cultural characteristics and phenomena; for C. Dawson: the product of "a particular original process of cultural activity which is the work of a particular people";<sup>23</sup> for J. Wallerstein it is "a particular concatenation of worldview, customs, structures, and culture (both material culture and high cultures) which form some kind of historical whole."<sup>24</sup>

Taken as a matter of identity it can be said that a civilization is the largest and most perduring unit or whole—the largest "we".<sup>25</sup> The elements included are blood, language, religion and way of life. Among these religion is "the central defining characteristic of civilizations",<sup>26</sup> as it is the point of a person's or peoples deepest and most intensive commitment, the foundation on which the great civilizations rest.<sup>27</sup> Hence the major religions (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Confucianism) are each associated with a civilization, the exception being Buddhism which came as a reform movement, and was uprooted from its native India and lives only in diaspora among other nations.

Civilizations endure over long periods of time. While empires come and go, civilizations "survive political, social, economic even ideological upheavals."<sup>28</sup> International history rightly documents the thesis that political systems are transient expedients on the surface of civilization, and that the destiny of each linguistically and morally unified community depends ultimately upon the survival of certain primary structuring ideas around which successive generations have coalesced and which then symbolize the society's continuity.<sup>29</sup>

But this does not mean that they are static. On the contrary it is characteristic of a civilization to evolve and the theories of such evolution are attempts to achieve some understanding of the process, not only of the sequence of human events but more deeply of the transformation of human self understanding itself. Famously, Toynbee theorizes that civilizations are responses to human challenges; that they evolve in terms of establishing increasing control over the related factors, especially by creative minorities; that in the face of troubles there emerges a strong effort at integration followed by disintegration. Such theories vary somewhat in the order of stages but generally move from a preparatory period, to the major development of the strengths of a culture or civilization, and then toward atrophication. In any case these imply extend cycles extend over very large periods.

It is significant that in the end, however, Huntington is not able to give any clear definition or distinction of civilizations. Whereas Descartes would require just such characteristics for scientific knowledge, Huntington notes that civilizations generally somewhat overlap, and that while no clear concept can be delineated, civilizations are nonetheless important. Civilizations have no

clear-cut boundaries and no precise beginnings and endings. People can and do redefine their identities and, as a result, the composition and shapes of civilizations change over time. The cultures of peoples interact and overlap. The extent to which the cultures of civilizations resemble or differ from each other also varies considerably. Civilizations are nonetheless meaningful entities, and while the lines between them are seldom sharp, they are real.<sup>30</sup>

In this light it can be seen that a shift of world order to a pattern not of empires or commercial blocks, but of civilizations bespeaks a great development in human consciousness, beyond the external, objective and physical, to the internal and subjective, the spiritual and indeed the religious. In contrast to Descartes it appears that what is most significant in the relations between peoples, indeed what defines them as peoples, is a matter not accessible by scientific definition, but for more inclusive aesthetic appreciation. It is in these terms that one's life commitments, personal relations, and interactions between peoples are realized.

We have seen now the nature of cultural traditions and of civilizations as constituted by freedom as it forms values, virtues and cultures. We must look next into hermeneutics as the method whereby these can be interpreted and applied in a mutually cooperative manner for a global age.

## **Hermeneutic Interpretation and Application of One's Cultural Tradition**

### *Dialectic of Whole and Part*

First of all it is necessary to note that only a unity of meaning, that is, an identity, is intelligible.<sup>31</sup> Just as it is not possible to understand a number three if we include but two units, no act of understanding is possible unless it is directed to an identity or whole of meaning. This brings us directly to the classic issue in the field of hermeneutics, described above as the hermeneutic circle, namely, knowledge of the whole depends upon knowledge of the parts, and vice versa. How can we make this work for, rather than against us in the effort to live our cultural tradition in our global days?

Reflection on the experience of reading a text might prove help. As we read we construe the meaning of a sentence before grasping all its individual parts. What we construe is dependent upon our expectation of the meaning of the sentence, which we derived from its first words, the prior context, or more likely a combination of the two. In turn, our expectation or construal of the meaning of the text is adjusted according to the requirements of its various parts. As we proceed to read through the sentence, the paragraph, etc., we reassess continually the whole in terms of the parts and the parts in terms of the whole. This basically circular movement continues until all appear to fit and be expressive.

One set of problems regarding a hermeneutics of tradition concerns not its content but rather its relation to the present, for if our present life is simply a deadening repetition of what has already been known, then life loses its challenge, progress is rejected in principle, and hope dies. Let us turn then from tradition as a whole to its hermeneutic application in our days.

### *Novelty*

To understand this we must, first of all, take time seriously, that is, we must recognize that reality includes authentic novelty. This contrasts to the perspective of Plato for whom the real is idea or form which transcends matter and time, while these, in turn, are real only to the degree that

they imitate or mirror the ideal. It also goes beyond the perspective of rationalism in its search for simple natures which are clear, distinct and eternal in themselves and in their relations. *A fortiori*, it goes beyond simply following a method as such without attention to content.

In contrast to all these, to recognize novelty – especially the novelty of other cultural traditions and even civilizations—implies that tradition with its authority (or *nomos*) achieves its perfection not in opposition to, but in the very temporal unfolding of, reality. For the human person is both determined by, and determinative of, his changing physical and social universe. Hence, to appreciate moral values one must attend to human action: to the striving of persons to realize their lives, and to the formation of this striving into a fixed attitude (*hexis*). In distinction from physics then, ethos as the application of tradition consists neither of law nor of lawlessness, but concerns human institutions and attitudes which change. Ethical rules do not determine, but they do regulate action by providing certain broad guidelines for historical practice.<sup>32</sup>

What is important here is to protect the concrete and unique reality of human life—its novelty—and hence the historicity of one's encounter with others. As our response to the good is made only in concrete circumstances, the general principles of ethics as a philosophic science must be neither purely theoretical knowledge nor a simple historical accounting from the past, but must provide help toward moral consciousness in concrete circumstances.

#### *Application and Prudence: Ethics vs Techné*

In this an important distinction must be made between *technè* and ethics. In *technè* action is governed by an idea as an exemplary cause which is fully determined and known by objective theoretical knowledge (*epistème*). Skill consists in knowing how to act according to a well-understood idea or plan. When this cannot be carried out some parts of it are simply omitted in the execution. In ethics the situation, though similar in being an application of a practical guide to a particular task, differs in important ways. First, in moral action the subject makes oneself as much as one makes the object: the agent is differentiated by the action itself. Hence, moral knowledge as an understanding of the appropriateness of one's actions is not fully determined independently of the situation.

Secondly, the adaptations by the moral agent in applying the law or traditions found in the various cultures do not diminish them, but rather correct and perfect them. In themselves laws and traditions are imperfect for, inasmuch as they relate to a world which is less ordered, they cannot contain in any explicit manner the response to the concrete possibilities which arise in history. It is precisely here that man's freedom and creativity are located. This does not consist in the response being arbitrary, for Kant is right that freedom without law or some traditional guiding *nomos* has no meaning. Nor does it consist in a simply automatic response determined by the historical situation, for relativism too would undermine the notion of human freedom. Human freedom consists rather in shaping the present according to a sense of what is just and good and in a way which manifests and indeed create for the first time more of what justice and goodness means.

That laws and tradition are perfected by their application in the circumstances appears also from the way they are not diminished, but perfected by epoch and equity. Without these, by simple mechanical replication the law would work injustice rather than justice. Ethics, therefore, is not only knowledge of what is right in general but the search for what is right in the situation. This is a question, not of mere expediency, but of the perfection of the law and tradition; it completes moral knowledge.<sup>33</sup>

The question of what the situation is asking of us is answered, of course, not by sense knowledge which simply registers a set of concrete facts. It is answered rather in the light of what is right, that is, in the light of what has been discovered about appropriate human action and exists normatively in the tradition. Only in these terms can moral consciousness go about its major job of choosing means which are truly appropriate to the circumstances. This is properly the work of intellect (*nous*) with the virtue of prudence (*phronesis*), that is, thoughtful reflection which enables one to discover the appropriate means in the circumstances. These now include more than the multiple components living one's own cultural tradition; they include as well the other participants of a pluralist civilization. Indeed in the new global context they include all civilizations with all existent difference.

In sum, application is not a subsequent or accidental part of understanding, but rather codetermines this understanding from the beginning. Moral consciousness must seek to understand the good, not as an ideal to be known and then applied, but rather by and in relating this to oneself as sharing the concerns of others. In this light our sense of unity with others begins to appear as a condition for applying our tradition, that is, for enabling it to live in these global times.

There is then a way out of the hermeneutic circle. It is not by ignoring or denying our horizons and prejudices, but by recognizing them as inevitable and making them work for us. To do so we must direct our attention to the objective meaning of the text in order to draw out, not only its meaning for the author, but its application for the present. Through this process of application one serves as midwife for the historicity of tradition or culture, and enables it to give birth to the future.<sup>34</sup>

### **Hermeneutic Interpretation of Other Cultural Traditions**

We must now see how hermeneutics can help toward a better understanding of the structure of communication between peoples, what dynamisms separate us, make sagacity (*sunesis*) difficult, impede our judgment and thus inhibit living our tradition in a pluralistic context?<sup>35</sup>

Thus far we have treated, first, the character and importance of tradition as the bearer of long human experience interacting with the world, with other men and with God. It is constituted not only of chronological facts, but of insights regarding human perfection and values and virtues which over time have been forged into cultures and civilizations in man's concrete striving to live with dignity, e.g. the Indian ideal of peace, the Greek notion of democracy, the enlightenment notions of equality and freedom. By their internal value each stands as normative in relation to the aspirations of those who live within that culture.

Secondly, we have seen the implications for the content of tradition of the continually unfolding circumstances of historical development. These do not merely extend or repeat what went before, but constitute an emerging manifestation of the dynamic character of the classical vision articulated in epics, in law and in political movements. It remains now to look at how conscious of our own traditions we can live faithfully and fruitfully with others in a time of intensifying intercultural engagement.

In brief the glorious character of a cultural tradition has its down side. For the greater be that tradition and the more beautiful, successful and satisfying the life it engenders, the more one is liable to remain therein in a process of mere repetition. Innovation and creativity shrivel and the response to new challenges is less vigorous, innovative and successful. If we hear only the same stories, fables and proverbs we remain locked into one mind set or horizon. The way out requires access to new stories which reflect the life experience and creative responses of other peoples.

Their effect is not so much to add from without to our culture from without elements that are alien and incongruous, but to enable us to look afresh at our own cultural tradition and to draw out in a creative manner new responses to the new challenges we face.

### *Dialectic of Horizons*

In encountering other cultural traditions we begin to look more consciously into our own tradition and come to a prior conception of its content. This anticipation of meaning is not simply of the tradition as an objective or fixed content to over against us. It is rather what we reproduce uniquely in our hearts and minds as we participate in the evolution of the tradition, thereby further determining ourselves as a community of believers. This is a creative stance reflecting the content, not only of the past, but of the time in which I stand and of the overall life project in which I am engaged. In some traditions it is a creative unveiling of its content as this comes progressively and historically into the present and, through the present, passes into the future.<sup>36</sup>

In this light time is not a barrier, a separation or an abyss, but rather a bridge and an opportunity for the process of understanding; it is a fertile ground filled with experience, custom and tradition. The importance of the historical distance it provides is not that it enables the subjective reality of persons to disappear so that the objectivity of the situation can emerge. On the contrary, it makes possible a more appreciative meaning of our own and other cultural traditions, not only by removing falsifying factors, but by opening new sources of self and inter-subjective understanding and new perspectives. These reveal in the traditions unsuspected implications and even new dimensions of meaning of which heretofore we were unaware.<sup>37</sup>

Of course, not all our acts of understandings are correct, whether they be about the meaning of another culture, its set of goals or a plan for future action. Hence, it becomes particularly important that our understandings not be adhered to fixedly, but be put at risk in dialogue with others.

In this the basic elements of meaning remain the substances which Aristotle described in terms of their autonomy or of standing in their own right, and, by implication, of their identity. Hermeneutics would expand this to reflect as well the historical and hermeneutic situation of each person or cultural tradition in the dialogue, that is, their horizon or particular possibility for understanding. A horizon is all that can be seen from one's vantage point(s). In reading a text or in a dialogue with other cultural traditions it is necessary to be aware of our horizon as well as that of our partners. When our initial projection of the meaning of another's words, the content of a tradition or a sacred text will not bear up in the progress of the reading or the dialogue, our desire to hear our interlocutor in the conversation drives us to make needed adjustments in our projection of their meaning.

The assessment of what is truly appropriate requires also the virtue of sagacity (*sunesis*), that is, of understanding or concern for the other. One can assess the situation adequately only inasmuch as one in a sense undergoes the situation with the affected parties. Aristotle rightly describes as truly terrible the one who can make the most of the situation, but without orientation towards moral ends or concern for the good of others in this situation. Hence, there is need for knowledge which takes account of agent as united with the others in mutual interest or love.

This enables us to adjust not only our prior understanding of the horizon of the other with whom we are in dialogue, but especially our own horizon. One need not fear being trapped in the horizons of our own cultural tradition or religion. They are vantage points of a mind which in principle is open and mobile, capable of being aware of its own horizon and of reaching out to the

other's experience which constitutes their horizons. Our horizons are not limitations, but mountain tops from which we look in awe at the vast panorama all of humankind and indeed all of creation. It is in making us aware of this expansion of horizons that hermeneutic awareness accomplishes our liberation.<sup>38</sup>

In this process it is important that we remain alert to the new implications of our cultural tradition. We must not simply follow through with our previous ideas until a change is forced upon us, but must remain sensitive to new meanings in true openness. This is neither neutrality as regards the meaning of our tradition, nor an extinction of passionate concerns regarding action towards the future. Rather, being aware of our own biases or prejudices and adjusting them in dialogue with the other implies rejecting what impedes our understanding of our own tradition and that of others. Our attitude in approaching dialogue must be one of willingness continually to revise, renew and enrich our initial projection or expectation of meaning.

### *Dialectic of Question and Answer*

The effort to draw upon a text or a tradition and in dialogue to discover its meaning for the present supposes authentic openness. The logical structure of this openness is to be found in the exchange of question and answer. The question is required in order to determine just what issue we are engaging—whether it is this issue or that—in order to give direction to our attention. Without this no meaningful answer can be given or received. As a question, however, it requires that the answer not be settled or determined. In sum, progress or discovery requires an openness which is not simply indeterminacy, but a question which gives specific direction to our attention and enables us to consider significant evidence. (Note that we can proceed not only by means of positive evidence in favor of one of two possible responses, but also through dissolving counter arguments).

If discovery depends upon the question, then the art of discovery is the art of questioning. Consequently, whether working alone or in conjunction with others, our effort to find the answer should be directed less towards suppressing, the position of another culture and the questions it raises, than toward reinforcing and unfolding these questions. To the degree that their probabilities are built up and intensified they can serve as a searchlight. This is the opposite of both opinion which tends to suppress questions and arguing which searches out the weakness in the other's argument. Instead, in conversation as dialogue with other cultures and civilizations one enters upon a mutual search to maximize the possibilities of the question, even by speaking at cross-purposes. By mutually eliminating errors and working out a common meaning, we discover truth.<sup>39</sup>

Further, it should not be presupposed that a text or tradition holds the answer to but one question or horizon which must be identified by the reader. On the contrary, the full horizon and above all its transcendent source are never available to the reader. Nor can it be expected that there is but one question to which the global text or its multiple traditions hold an answer. The sense of any text, a fortiori the global text, reaches beyond what any human author intended.

Because of the dynamic character of being as it emerges in time, the horizon is never fixed but is continually opening. This constitutes the effective historical element in understanding. At each step new dimensions of the potentialities of the tradition opens to understanding. Especially, the meaning of a text or tradition lives with the consciousness—and hence the horizons—not of its author, but of the many readers living with others through time and history. It is the broadening of their horizons, resulting from their fusion with the horizon of a text or a partner in dialogue, that makes it possible to receive answers which are ever new.<sup>40</sup>

In this the personal attitudes and interests of the various cultures are, once again, highly important. If the interest in developing new horizons were simply the promotion of one's own understanding then one culture could be interested solely in achieving knowledge for the purpose of domination over others. But this would lock one into an absoluteness of one's prejudices; being fixed or closed in the past or in oneself they would disallow new life in the present. In this manner powerful new insights become with time deadening pre-judgments which suppress freedom.

In contrast, an attitude of authentic openness appreciates the nature of one's own finiteness. On this basis it both respects the past and the multiple cultural traditions and is open to discerning the future. Such openness is a matter, not merely of new information, but of recognizing the historical nature of man. It enables one to escape from limitations which had limited vision thus far, and enables one to learn from new experiences. It is recognition of the limitations of our finite projects which enables us to see that the future is still open.<sup>41</sup>

This suggests that openness does not consist so much in surveying others objectively or obeying them in a slavish and unquestioning manner, but is directed primarily to ourselves. It is an extension of our ability to listen to others and other cultures, and to assimilate the implications of their answers for changes in our own positions. In other words, it is an acknowledgement that our cultural heritage has something new to say to us. The characteristic hermeneutic attitude of effective historical consciousness is then not methodological sureness, but devout listening and a readiness for experience.<sup>42</sup> Seen in these terms our cultural heritage is not closed, but the basis for a life that is ever new, more inclusive and more rich.

## **Hermeneutics for a Global Age**

Today we are challenged not only to draw upon our past or to live with others in a pluralistic community. We are newly challenged by economics, politics and especially informatics to live in a context in which our lives are impacted by the entire global context all at once. This requires an expansion of hermeneutics as the fusion of horizons becomes a meeting not only with another cultural tradition, but with all as parts of a larger whole. For this it becomes necessary to think in terms of the whole. In this some brief notes on the thought of Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) who analyses what it meant to think in terms of the whole at the juncture of the medieval and Renaissance thought could prove helpful.

The thought of Cusa retains a mark of the ancient tradition with its focus upon unity of which Cusa notes four types: (1) that of the single, individual entity, (2) that of a collection of such individuals, (3) that of the whole of which the individuals are parts, and (4) that of the one divine Absolute from which all come and to which all are directed.

### *Diversity as Contraction*

The situation is delicate however, for in attending to the whole it is imperative to avoid the kind of abstractive thinking described above in which personal uniqueness is dismissed and only the universal remains.<sup>43</sup> Cusa's solution is found in the notion of contraction, that is, to begin from the significance of the whole and to recognize it in the very reality of every individual, so that the individual shares in something of the ultimate or definitive reality of the whole of being. One is not then an insignificant speck, as would be the case were I to be measured quantitatively and contrasted to the broad expanse of the globe. Rather I have the importance of the whole as it exists in and as me—and the same is true of other persons and of the parts of nature.

The importance of this can be seen through comparison with other attempts to state this participation of the part in the whole. For Plato this was a repetition or imaging by each of that type of the one ideal form. Aristotle soon ceased to employ the term participation as image (*mimesis*) because of the danger it entailed of reducing the individual to but a shadow of what was truly real. Cusa too rejected the separately existing ideas or ideal forms. Instead what had been developed in the Christian cultures was a positive notion of existence as act<sup>44</sup> whereby each participant in being was made to be or exist in itself. This is retained by Nicholas of Cusa.

But he would emphasize that the being in which each person or thing participates is the whole of being.<sup>45</sup> This does not mean that in a being there is anything alien to its own identity, but that the reality of each being has precisely the meaning of the whole as contracted to this unique instance. To be then is not simply to fall in some minimal way on this side of nothingness, but rather to partake of the totality of being and the meaning of the whole of being, and indeed to be a realization of the whole in this unique contraction or instance. Things retain their identity, but do so in and of the whole. De Leonardis formulates this in two principles:

- The principle of Individuality: Each individual contraction uniquely imparts to each entity an inherent value which marks it as indispensable to the whole.
- The principle of Community: The contraction of being makes each thing to be everything in a contracted sense. This creates a community of beings interrelating all entities on an ontological level.<sup>46</sup>

### *Hierarchy of the Internally Related*

After the manner of the Medieval Cusa saw the plurality of beings of the universe as constituting a hierarchy of being. Each being was equal in that it constituted a contraction of the whole, but not all were equally contracted. Thus an inorganic being was more contracted than a living organism, and a conscious being was less contracted than either of them. This constituted a hierarchy or gradation of beings. By thinking globally or in terms of the whole, Cusa was able to appreciate the diversity of being in a way that heightened this ordered sense of unity in which relationships are not externally juxtaposed, but internal to the very makeup of the individuals.

This internal relationship is made possible precisely by a global sense of the whole.<sup>47</sup> For this Cusa may have drawn more directly from the Trinity, but this in turn is conceived through analogy to the family of which individuals are contractions. This, in turn, is lived in the interpersonal relations in a culture grounded in such a theology and especially now in the global reality constituted of economics and politics information and relations between civilizations. The philosopher can look here and find special manifestation of being. Indeed, hermeneutics<sup>48</sup> would suggest that this constitutes not only a *locus philosophicus* whence insight can be drawn, but the prejudgments of philosophers which constitute the basic philosophical insights themselves. The critical scientific interchange of philosophy is a process of controlled adjustment and perfection of these insights.

In a family all the persons are fully members and in that sense fully of the same nature. But the father generates the son while the son proceeds from the father. Hence, while mutually constituted by the same relation of one to the other, the father and son are distinct precisely as generator and generated. Life and all that the father is and has is given from the father to the son. Correspondingly, all that the son is and has is received from the father. As giver and receiver the

two are distinguished in the family precisely as the different terms of the one relation. Hence each shares in the very definition of the other: the father is father only by the son, and vice versa.

Further, generation is not a negative relation of exclusion or opposition; just the opposite—it is a positive relation of love, generosity and sharing. Hence, the unity or identity of each is via relation (the second unity), rather than opposition or negation as was the case in the first level of unity. In this way the whole that is the family is included in the definition of the father and of the son, each of whom is particular contractions of the whole.

### *Explicatio-Complicatio*

Cusa speaks of this as an *explicatio* or unfolding of the perfection of being, to which the converse corresponds, namely, folding together (*complicatio*) the various levels of being constitute the perfection of the whole. Hence Cusa's hierarchy of being has special richness when taken in the light of his sense of a global unity. The classical hierarchy was a sequence of distinct levels of beings, each external to the other. The great gap between the multiple physical or material beings and the absolute One was filled in by an order of spiritual or angelic beings. As limited these were not the absolute, yet as spiritual they were not physical or material. This left the material or physical dimension of being out of the point of integration.

In contrast, Cusa, while continuing the overall graduation, sees it in terms of mutual inclusion, rather than of exclusion. Thus inorganic material beings do not contain the perfection of animate or conscious being, but plants include the perfections of the material as well as life. Animals are not self-conscious, but they integrate material, animate and conscious perfection. Humans include all four: inorganic, animate, conscious and spiritual life.

In this light, the relation to all others through the contraction of being is intensified as beings include more levels of being in their nature. On this scale humans as material and as alive on all three levels of life: plant, animal and spirit, play a uniquely unitive and comprehensive role in the hierarchy of being. If the issue is not simple individuality by negative and exclusive contrast to others (the first level of unity), but uniqueness by positive and inclusive relation to others, then human persons and the human community are truly the nucleus of a unity that is global. This line of reasoning Cusa carries to its epitome in his theology of Christ as both man and God.

### **Global Dynamism**

Thus far we have been speaking especially in terms of existence and formal causality by which the various beings within the global reality are to specific degrees contractions of the whole. To this, however, should be added efficient and final causality by which the ordered universe of reality takes on a dynamic and even developmental character. This has a number of implications: directedness, dynamism, cohesion, complementarity and harmony.<sup>49</sup> Cusa's global vision is of a uniquely active universe of being.

Direction to the Perfection of the Global Whole: As contractions of the whole, finite beings are not merely products ejected by and from the universe of being; rather they are limited expressions of the whole. Their entire reality is a limited image of the whole, from which they derive their being, without which they cannot exist and in which they find their true end or purpose. As changing, developing, living and moving they are integral to the universe in which they find their perfection or realization, and to the perfection of which they contribute by the full actuality and activity of their reality.

This cannot be simply random or chaotic, oriented equally to being and its destruction, for then nothing would survive. Rather there is in being a directedness to its realization and perfection, rather than to its contrary. A rock resists annihilation; a plant will grow if given water and nutrition; an animal will seek these out and defend itself vigorously when necessary. All this when brought into cooperative causal interaction has a direction, namely, to the perfection of the whole.

Dynamic Unfolding of the Global Whole: As an unfolding (*explicatio*) of the whole, the diverse beings (the second type of unity) are opposed neither to the whole (the third type of unity) nor to the absolute One (the fourth type of unity). Rather, after the Platonic insight, all unfolds from the One and returns thereto.

To this Cusa makes an important addition. In his global vision this is not merely a matter of individual forms; beings are directed to the One as a whole, that is, by interacting with others (unity three). Further, this is not a matter only of external interaction between aliens. Seen in the light of reality as a whole, each being is a unique and indispensable contraction of the whole. Hence finite realities interact not merely as a multiplicity, but as an internally related and constituted community with shared and interdependent goals and powers.

Cohesion and Complementarity in a Global Unity: Every being is then related to every other in this grand community almost as parts of one body. Each depends upon the other in order to survive and by each the whole realizes its goal. But a global vision, such as that of Cusa, takes a step further, for if each part is a contraction of the whole then, as with the DNA for the individual cell, "in order for anything to be what it is it must also be in a certain sense everything which exists."<sup>50</sup> The other is not alien, but part of my own definition.

From this it follows that the realization of each is required for the realization of the whole, just as each team member must perform well for the success of the whole. But in Cusa's global view the reverse is also true, namely, it is by acting with others and indeed in the service of others or for their good that one reaches one's full realization. This again is not far from the experience of the family and civil society, but tends to be lost sight of in other human and commercial relations. It is by interacting with, and for, others that one activates one's creative possibilities and most approximates the full realization of being. Thus, "the goal of each is to become harmoniously integrated into the whole of being and thereby to achieve the fullest development of its own unique nature."<sup>51</sup>

## Notes

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- 18 *Laches*, 198-201.
- 19 H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method, translated from the 2nd German edition, 1965, by G. Barden and J. Cumming* (New York: Seabury, 1975), pp. 245-253.
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### 3.

## **Explaining International Institutions from the Cultural Perspective**

*Li Mintao*<sup>1</sup>

### **The Cultural Meaning of the Explosion in the Number of International Institutions since the Second Half of the 20th Century**

Reviewing the history of human development in the 20th century, there is one phenomenon drawing the attention of a large number of observers. That is, the number of international institutions has expanded at an astonishing speed after World War II. Robert O. Keohane called it an "explosion in numbers" of international institutions. As far as systems in written form are concerned, nearly 2000 volumes of United Nations Treaties Collection include about 35,000 treaties, which are not the total of treaties. The majority of these treaties were signed after the 1950s. The number of international organizations as carriers of international institutions has also developed at an astonishing speed. According to the *Yearbook of International Organization*, *Oxford World Political Handbook* and other compilers of statistics, by the 1990s, there had been nearly 30,000 international organizations of various kinds in the world, of which 90% were established after WWII. These international institutions and organizations cover almost all the important fields relating to human life such as politics, economy, science, technology, culture, security and environment. Faced with this phenomenon, Keohane pointed out in his book *After Hegemony* that from the theoretical perspective, international institutions can be regarded as intermediate factors or intervening variables in the basic features of world politics.<sup>2</sup> Later, he pointed out in his article in 1998 that to analyze world politics in the 1990s is to discuss international institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, international institutions have shaped a global, multifaceted and multilevel huge network, in which states, non-state organizations and individuals contact with each other, coexist and develop. The swift expansion of the numbers of international institutions has aroused perplexity in some observers, but this fact at least proves that the human social life puts tremendous demands upon international institutions. Researchers have tried to explain this phenomenon from different angles and thus formed many theoretical schools for explaining international institutions.

The theory of international institutions has become one of the most vigorous subdivisions of the theory of international relations. Among others, the principal theoretical schools are structural realism or hegemonic stability theory, neo-liberal institutionalism and constructivism. Neo-liberal institutionalism represented by Robert Keohane is the mainstream school of analyzing international institutions. Constructivism represented by Wendt becomes more and more influential. These theories have provided multifaceted perspectives for explaining international institutions. According to Hasenclever, Mayer and Rittberger, the explanation variables the three theories of international institutions lay stress on are respectively power-based, interest-based and knowledge-based approaches.<sup>4</sup>

Then, what explanation variables can we use to explain the swift increase of the numbers of international institutions and their intensified role in human social life? From the point of view of the power-based hegemonic stability theory, hegemonic states set up their own hegemonic systems, international institutions are principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures in the hegemonic systems and the strength and prestige of hegemonic states force other countries to

accept these institutions. Hegemonic states make use of these institutions to keep the smooth operation of hegemonic systems and maximize their interests. Meanwhile, to maintain these systems, hegemonic states are willing to provide international public goods to other countries in the systems and allow other countries to become free riders, while the international institution itself is a kind of public goods. The demands of the hegemonic system as a huge global system for international institutions are also gigantic. From the point of view of liberal institutionalism, states are egoistic players. Their rational choice and decision making tend to lead to collective irrationality and cause market failure in international life. In the international system after WWII, the national interests of players have presented complex interdependence and needed to achieve their own national interests through international cooperation. This is the driving force of large-scale development of international institutions. International institutions can reduce the cost of transactions in international relations and give birth to trend of cooperation and prospect of common profits. Unlike structural realism and liberal institutionalism, the institutional analysis of constructivism seems to stress more the significance of concepts. They have used some explanation variables related to culture such as values and norms in their theory. They hold that institutions often emerge in a process far from careful consideration rather than being created intentionally. This in reality describes the constructive role of culture in institution.

The explosion of the numbers of international institutions in the second half of the 20th century occurred in the context of globalization. We have noticed that the time span of the explosion coincides with that of current development of globalization. Globalization took place not only in the economic field but also in the cultural field. As British scholar David Held said, now few people doubt that the form of globalization felt and experienced most directly is cultural globalization. He pointed out that though 3000 years ago cultural interactions among societies were very complicated, strenuous movement of image and symbol and extensive spread of modes of thinking and exchange are the unique characteristics of the late 20th century and the new millennium. Because of construction of the current telecommunications, broadcasting and communication infrastructure, the global coverage and volume of cultural exchanges are unprecedented. 5 Held maintained that cultural globalization has formed a sustained interactive network and mutually cultural influential network—This may be the core of the concept of transcendent cultural power set forward by Michael Mann. That is, the movement of man and thing is beneficial to setting up a shared mode of cultural faith in an extensive scope and thus beneficial to setting up an interactive mode of cultural thinking in one region influencing that in another region among different regions.<sup>6</sup> Such a sustained interactive network and mutually cultural influential network provide a wide stage for cultural flow. Cultural values of different states, ethnic groups, social groups and individuals flow constantly in the global scope, converge and collide with each other and gradually shape some common faiths shared by the mankind. These faiths have become the deep driving force for large-scale development of international institutions.

Here the human common faiths include extensive contents, such as peace, democracy, freedom, equality, sovereignty, justice, human rights, cooperation, development, security, environmental protection, ecological balance and human common heritage. These contents are all the most urgent issues facing mankind in the age of globalization and need resolution through constructing corresponding international institutions. Tens of thousands of international institutions have sprung up after WWII. For example, the UN Charter, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Convention Concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the Antarctic Treaty, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations,

the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and Their Destruction, the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and National Heritage, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention on Climate Change, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. These international institutions embody mankind's identification and pursuit of the above faiths. The common faiths may be said to be cultural soil or original driving force of the birth of international institutions.

### **Cultural Role in the Chain of International Institutional Evolution**

The common 'faiths' as the original driving force of the birth of international institutions have a concise way of expression, but their implications are extensive and multi-sense. Different individuals in the international community can explain and understand the common faiths from the perspective of their own cultural values. For this reason, culture (I mainly refer to values.) plays a much more complicated and important role in the chain of international institutional evolution.

The reason why the international institutions can be established and subsist is that all the members joining the institutions accept the basic principles, norms and regulations offered by the institutions, no matter what values they hold. But the international institutions also tolerate respective explanations of the common faiths in the framework of the institutions by members holding different values. The UN is a typical example. This is a global international institution, the members of which are nearly 200 sovereign states. These states can be found on every continent. They have diversified cultural values, but they have all signed the UN Charter. The aim of the Charter expresses the following common faiths: maintenance of international peace, security and justice, maintenance of basic human rights of the whole mankind, maintenance of sovereignty and equality of all the member states and promotion of international cooperation. All these common faiths are the result of convergence and collision among different values. Hans J. Morgenthau calls this the "common moral norm".<sup>7</sup> Analyzing the moral principles of the League of Nations, he said that once countries are faced with some political situation they need to adopt specific measures against, they will make use of these abstract principles as theoretical basis for their policies. So these abstract moral principles are far from providing common standards of judgment and guidance for common actions. <sup>8</sup> This analysis also applies to the UN. Then he talked about the principle of justice of the UN, saying that the principle of justice the UN goes by is perplexed by two internal contradictions: One involving the mode of action of the UN; the other involving the objective of action to be taken.<sup>9</sup>

He maintained that the article about taking action on the basis of the principle of justice in the UN Charter doesn't explain or mention the principle of justice in any substantial sense. Morgenthau's observation is keen. Joseph Nye has a similar view: International consensus on values is small. On the judgment of whether some behaviors are just, there are differences in culture and religion.<sup>10</sup> On the one hand, the principle of justice or other principles is/are accepted

as common faith by all the member states and on the other hand these faiths can be given meanings with different value-colorations according to the member state.

The birth and explanation of institutional texts are two processes of international institutional evolution. Cultural values join the two processes and play a deep role in them. In the process of convergence, different cultural values produce one or some concise concepts considered to be commonly accepted and make the birth of institutional texts possible. Once the institutional texts are born and their explanation reflects the unique and dynamic characters of different cultural values, in the process of explanation players formulate different and rich secondary texts. This kind of explanation of institutional texts is of great significance in international institutional evolution. It may not only disintegrate the existing institutions but also make institutional innovation in the framework of the existing institutions. Disintegration may be the prelude to innovation. We have seen the Warsaw Treaty Organization's disintegration in the tremendous fission of values, and the survival of the NATO through renewal of concepts. The UN, a gigantic institutional body, has constantly achieved institutional innovations amidst so many collisions of values. For instance, the concept of human rights has evolved from an abstract and concise explanation to a huge, rich and specific human rights document system, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other human rights conventions. The concept of peace has also developed into numerous arms control treaties and organs and decades of peace-keeping actions in over 50 years. These innovations are the result of interactions among different values in the same institutional framework.

The process of international institutional innovation or change also demonstrates another role of culture. Douglass C. North, one of the representatives of the New Institutional Economics, maintains institutional change has "path dependence." In a speech, he talked about the factors restraining institutional change such as cultural tradition and faith system. The birthing institutions have inertia, which means dependence on the initial choice of the institutions, while this dependence is closely related to deep value orientation. When an international institution is faced with choice between innovation and change, cultural factor becomes one of the important restraining factors. This means institutional innovation or change may meet obstruction from some old concepts in the existing institution.

International institutions born after WWII were mainly set up under the management of hegemonic states, though they reflected the above abstract human common faiths. Keohane agrees with the realists: International mechanisms, to a great extent, will be designed by those strongest members in the institutions who pursue self-interests. Realization of self-interests depends not only on the expectation of players on possible results but also on their essential values.<sup>11</sup> He cited some important international institutions to reinforce this judgment: The principles on which the operation of the IMF, the GATT or the International Energy Agency relies for existence reflect the interests and ideologies of the strongest state in the international system.<sup>12</sup> Obviously, the original concept of design of these international institutions comes from the essential values of the designers. The basic structure, model of operation, definition of rights, decision-making procedures and organizational system of institutions no doubt have the cultural characteristics of hegemonic states. Therefore, when a motive in institutional innovation or change appears, a new concept of design will necessarily face the "path dependence" at this cultural layer, which may impede the process of institutional innovation. The slow progress of the UN restructuring—including amendment of the Charter, reform of the UN Security Council, reform of the UN General

Assembly, reform of peace-keeping actions and administrative and financial reforms—is related to the inertia of old concepts.

However, culture also demonstrates another aspect of vigor in the institutional innovation. These abstract common faiths with extensive implications pursued at the time of constructing the existing international institutions have given elasticity to the international institutions, which makes the institutions tolerant. The innovation of international institutions doesn't need disintegration of the existing institutions, but creates a new institutional text in the existing institutional framework, which is not contrary to the original common faiths accepted by all the members but offers a new explanation of them. Keohane holds that the value of an international mechanism is not limited by the objective envisaged by the founders. It is more possible to promote the ideal of universalist morality through amending rather than renouncing and renewing the current international mechanism.<sup>13</sup>

Besides, institutional innovation is also a learning process of players. It is often not replacement of the values of one player with that of another player, but creation of some new common values through collisions among values of all players in the institution. This type of 'values' must be accepted by all the players. Cultural blending should be of crucial significance in the process of international institutional innovation.

### **Cultural Values and Institutional Efficiency**

Keohane divides international institutions into effective institutions and ineffective ones. The former includes the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the EU and others, while the latter covers the UN Industrial Development Organization, the Organization of African Unity and others. In reality, institutional efficiency depends on many factors, for example, institutional structure, institutional incentive mechanism, institutional operation model and personal quality in the organizational system. Here, what we are concerned about is connection between cultural values and institutional efficiency.

In the same article, Keohane talks about this connection: "Institutions whose members share social values and have similar political systems—such as NATO or the European Union—are likely to be stronger than those such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe or the Association of South East Asian Nations, whose more diverse membership does not necessarily have the same kind of deep common interests."<sup>14</sup> The EU is indeed a clear-cut example. Ball Taylor expressed the following opinion: In Europe, the feeling of the community sometimes may transcend the consideration of utilitarianism.<sup>15</sup> Europeans do have many many common denominators: Ancient Greek civilization, Christianity and the ideal of freedom and democracy. Common cultural traditions and values have made European unification their common pursuit. From the Treaty of European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the Treaty of European Atomic Energy Community and the Treaty of European Economic Community in 1957 to the Maastricht Treaty in 1991, the EU as an international institution in Europe was set up and operated efficiently. The basis of this union is common cultural values. Former French President Mitterrand assessed the meaning of culture to Europe as follows: "The scope of operation is wide. But what links Europe is and will still be European culture, which is what someone said. I am willing to repeat it. I want to quote Jean Monet, one of the founders of the European Community, as saying that, if there is the need of a restart, I will start from culture rather than economic Europe. This is indeed the scope of displaying talents of persons in charge of the whole Europe.<sup>16</sup> Institutional high efficiency means saving of transaction cost. Common values and resulting similar political

structure allow EU member states to have a balance of information when reaching agreement (transactions). The moral risk is also small after reaching agreement because of commonly recognized ethical norms and code of conduct. Common values make them highly appreciate the degree of credibility and honesty of other member states and worry less about their opportunist behaviors. All these make it possible to save transaction cost. Sovereignty transfer is a crucial and sensitive content in EU agreements. The realized single market and single currency and the common defense and foreign policy being pushed forward show that the sovereignty transfer of member states within the EU has reached a considerable degree of depth, but the price for this kind of transfer is not a surprise. Common values are one of the factors for reaching transfer agreement at a low price. The ideal of European unification shared by member states implies the expectation of sovereignty transfer, so they need not spend effort in exploring the necessity of transfer. I again return to Taylor's expression: The European feeling as "Europeans" transcends mere utility and demonstrates a motive of altruism and non-maximization of wealth. This shows that values occupy an important position in the rational choice of EU member states, which have found an equilibristic point between wealth value and non-wealth value in the EU, an international institution.

Here, I do not mean EU high efficiency implies that no trade-off is required in all transactions. In the historical era in which sovereign states play the leading role, national interests are still an important choice of players. So, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Italy and other EU member states will often hesitate between European interests and national interests, which will increase obstruction in the EU operation. But common values have given an unusual joint force to the institution. In comparison, not a few trans-cultural values of other international institutions prove inferior in operative efficiency.

We are in the era of the complicated network of international institutions going deep into all the fields of human social life. China has signed over 200 multilateral international treaties and more than 10,000 bilateral treaties. The network of institutions, composed of all these treaties and agreements, has become an important stage for us to participate in international affairs. China, as a responsible power, should play a role conforming to its capacity on this stage. Our excellent cultural traditions and values should and may possibly become the grease and accelerator for the operation of the gigantic network of international institutions. We can absorb new and advanced cultural concepts from the contacts among institutions and meanwhile contribute the Chinese nation's excellent value concepts to mankind and jointly push forward the innovation of institutions with other players. We deeply believe that convergence and collision among different cultures may give an enduring driving force to the operation of international institutions.

The words of an African scholar may be used here as the concluding remark: 'Culture is mother and institution is child.'<sup>17</sup>

## Notes

1 Mr. Li Mintao is Senior Fellow and Deputy Director of the Editing Department in SIIS.

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3 Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?", *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1998, p. 82.

4 Andreas Hasenclever, Peter Mayer and Volker Rittberger, *Theory of International Regimes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 1.

5 David Held etc., *Global Transformations: Politics, Economy and Culture* (Social Sciences Literature Press, 2001), p. 456.

6 *Ibid.*

7 Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among States: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (China People's Police University Press, 1990), p. 563.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 587.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 590-591.

10 Joseph Nye, *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History* (Shanghai Century Publishing Group, 2002), p. 33.

11 Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Shanghai Century Publishing Group, 2001), p. 75.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 305.

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14 Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?", *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1998, p. 91.

15 Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Shanghai Century Publishing Group, 2001), p. 149.

16 Francois Mitterrand, "Speech at the Opening of Seminar of European University Students", *Mitterrand Memoir* (China Books Press, 1998), p. 330.

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#### 4.

## **Collective Identity and International Politics: A Cultural Perspective**

*Sun Suyuan*<sup>1</sup>

After World War II, especially in the post-Cold War era, there have been dramatic changes in the domain of international political studies. The function of traditional 'international politics' theories has become weaker and weaker in explaining post-Cold War international relations. On the contrary, culture, a traditional variable in international relations, after being long neglected and covered, has revealed itself and become the third dimension for researching state behavior, foreign policy, international security and so on. Constructivism studying interaction between culture and society in international relations has also become an international relations theory running neck and neck with neo-realism and neo-liberalism. Its core concepts include culture, norms and identity. Collective identity is not only a logical starting point for culture explaining international relations but also an important medium for the cultural factor playing a constructive role in international relations. Therefore, in some sense, a new international relations history can be almost annotated from the cultural perspective.

### **Culture, Norms and Collective International Identity**

Culture, in the theory of international politics, refers to shared or collective knowledge deriving from individual social interaction and is a kind of socially shared and structured knowledge, including norm, practice, custom and system. The school of *constructivism* represented by Alexander Wendt makes a clear-cut definition of concepts of culture and related norm and identity and on this basis develops its unique theory of international relations. According to it, culture in the international relations refers to international norms, international institutions and international rules shared by different state actors through state-to-state interaction and social learning, which include knowledge criteria such as international law, international mechanism, international practice and international common ground. In other words, culture refers to socially constructed shared knowledge, that is, shared concept. This kind of individually shared and interrelated concepts and knowledge includes not only belief but also desire.

Norm is a concept directly related to culture. It is also socially constructed, mainly including rule, criterion, law, custom and habit. Norm applies the collective anticipation and expectation to the proper behavior of actors with a certain status. One of its features is it can create behavior models. Norm is a causal force impacting state behavior and, more, a constitutive essential element constructing state foreign policy. Main theories of international relations including neo-liberal institutionalism realize the importance of norm. But constructivism holds that the role of norm in shaping international relations is not limited to regulating state behavior as realized by neo-liberal institutionalism, and emphasizes that its much deeper impact lies in redefining national interests, constituting state identity and developing collective identity.<sup>2</sup>

Identity is the result of social construction. Role identities are not based on intrinsic properties and as such exist only in relation to Others.<sup>3</sup> Identification is a cognitive process in which the Self-Other distinction becomes blurred and at the limit transcended altogether.<sup>4</sup> Identification is usually issue-specific and rarely total, but always involves extending the boundaries of the Self to include

the Other.<sup>5</sup> Identity-extending includes two aspects. One is the acceptance of other identity and interest, and the other is a kind of tolerance to difference between the Self and the Other. It is a process of identity socialization of the Self and its result is the emergence of international collective identity. International collective identity not only shows the positive identification of players with the role identity of friendship but also refers to the passive identification with the role identity of enmity. The relationship between countries based on collective identity can be conflictual or cooperative.

The following is the relation of culture, norm and identity. Culture constructs identity of state actors by constructing shared concepts or knowledge. The state actors prove each other's features of identity in the process of social practices or interaction, confirming the boundary of the Self and the Other and their respective interests and building the behavioral norms. Norm not only has the causal effects but also exerts constitutive impacts on actors. The internalization of norms shows the actors' response to collective expectations of dependability, while the depth and width of collective identity mainly depend on the degree of internalization of norms.

Constructing international collective identity is a constantly changing and dynamic process. The core of structural change is the transformation of cultural concepts. According to Wendt's theory, the formation and survival of social structure is the outcome of the actors' social practice: Interaction between actors gives birth to social structure and this interaction process is the basic condition for survival of social structure. Actors can construct a structure and can also disassemble it and establish another structure with a completely different culture concept.

The core factors constructing international collective identity include material force, progressiveness of culture and regional and global awareness of actors. Although international collective identity is a conceptual structure, material factors play a constitutive role, which cannot be replaced by conceptual factors. Wendt maintains that material factors such as national strength cannot be turned into cultural conceptual factors and can only exert impacts on actors' behavior through social structure, but we cannot deny for this reason the value of socialized material factors to the construction of international collective identity. According to what constructivism envisages concerning world peace and security, in building a peace community, the role of major powers does not rely on deterrence or persuasion, but rather on the 'authority' attraction. That is to say, an authority magnetic field resulting from political progress, economic development and security responsibility attracts other countries one after another to join the community dominated by the core countries.

The character of collective identity depends on progressiveness of culture. Collective identity constructed by affirmative culture will lead to positive and cooperative international relations, whereas that constructed by passive culture will lead to negative and hostile relations. Analyzing three anarchic cultures, Hobbesian culture, Lockean culture and Kantian culture, Wendt holds that they construct different subject positions: enemy, rival and friend. In the Hobbesian culture, the actors are enemies who observe no limits in their violence toward each other with the aim at destroying or conquering them.<sup>6</sup> Decision-making will tend to heavily discount the future and be oriented toward the worst-case.<sup>7</sup> Killing and being killed are the features of state-to-state relations. In the Lockean culture, states as rivals break away from the threat of cruel war. Violence between rivals is self-limiting, constrained by recognition of each other's right to exist.<sup>8</sup> Competition and cooperation build up the features of international relations. Based on a role structure of friendship, the Kantian culture fertilizes the relationship beyond competition and cooperation. State actors internalize others' interests into those shared by the community, and thus construct new concepts of cooperation. The Kantian cooperation is at a higher level than the Lockean one. The latter

appears as a means of self-help competition between actors, while the former evolves into part of the actors' interests. Among the anarchic cultures, the Kantian one is the top-level cultural form, so it constructs the friendly international relations impossible to exist in other cultures.

Interests are both the aim and basis of state-to-state cooperation. If the participating states are merely concerned about relative interest—whether their gains are greater than other states' gains—rather than absolute interest, that is, all participants can gain, the collective identity formed between states can only be passive and the state-to-state relations thus constructed can only be a zero-sum game without cooperation. For instance, in the Hobbesian culture, cooperation between states is impossible. Only when participants realize that everyone can achieve absolute interest from cooperation and thus abandon pursuit for relative interest, pay attention to interest of participants in a region or a larger scope of cooperation and regard regional or global interest as an indispensable step for achieving individual interest, can regional or global awareness be nurtured and positive collective identity be constructed among states. The positive collective identity can not only enhance the feasibility and credibility of cooperation, but also enlarge its scope and increase its stability.

### **Collective Identity and Foreign Policy Making**

The role of collective identity in state behavior, especially its foreign policy making, is played through two channels. One is defining national interests to exert impacts on state behavior, especially the choice of foreign relations; the other is forming international norms to regulate state diplomatic behavior and restrain its foreign policy.

National interest of a state determines the constitution and fulfillment of its foreign policy. As Karl pointed out in his "Twenty-year Crisis," national interest plays an important role in international politics. National interest is also the highest criterion for foreign policy. As Morgenthau said, interest is the eternal criterion in valuing and guiding political action. In addition, factors of determining national interest not only refer to material power emphasized by realism, but also include socially constructed state identity and collective identity. Wendt pointed out that national interests include physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being, and collective self-esteem.<sup>9</sup> In the constructivist theory, national interest is directly instituted by national identity, an ideal structure covering a material one. It is often the result of a state's learning from the international society. Interest that is defined by the actor's identity shapes its behavior. "National interest derives from national identity"<sup>10</sup> Identity constitutes interest. Only when a state possesses certain identity and interest, can it adopt actions conforming to its identity and interest.

Identities are the basis of interests.<sup>11</sup> Actor's identity implies interest and is the precondition of interest. Actor may sometimes choose its identity according to interests, which however themselves presuppose still deeper identities. But, identity doesn't equate with and can't be reduced to interest.<sup>12</sup> Identity is combined with interest to construct an actor's action. Without interests identities have no motive and without identities interests have no direction.<sup>13</sup>

A state as an actor with human social properties has multiple identities and its behavior is motivated by a variety of interests rooted in corporate, type, role, and collective identities.<sup>14</sup> Identities are arrayed hierarchically in this structure by an actor's degree of commitment to them. Thus, some are fundamental and nuclear and some are superficial and secondary. To a state, when conflicts arise between identities, the requirements of the former tend to win out and occupy the top position.<sup>15</sup> For instance, sovereignty is a state's internally highest and externally inviolable identity, so security requirements become its nuclear interest. But, a non-salient identity, that is

highly threatened, may dominate a more salient one that is not.<sup>16</sup> The importance of one identity can only be prominent in a change or crisis.

National interests are not invariable, because interests are constructed by the actors' identities and changes in national interests follow states' re-creation of their new identities and formulation of new identity among states in interactions with other actors. Therefore national interests are the result of interaction between actors and the international society. In the interaction, actors rethink their 'selves' in the social environment and re-create their identities. When actors' conceptual identity and identity orientation are transformed, actors will redefine the type, goal and degree of interest pursuit. National interests originate from international socialization and are also the result of social learning. So, national interests are not a "given, but themselves emerge from a process of interaction and socialization".<sup>17</sup> Just as Thomas Berger argues, Germany and Japan today differ significantly from them before World War II. Antimilitarism, he maintains, is an integral part of their national self-consciousness and embodied in domestic norms and institutions.<sup>18</sup> Katzenstien makes a similar case regarding the police and military in postwar Japan and Germany.

When the old international pattern is broken and a new international order is being formed, people tend to re-explain the history in order to identify their position and look forward to the future. The re-explaining results in the redefinition of the Self and the Other and the change of the relationship between the Self and the Other. National interests also change correspondingly. After World War II, the U.S. became dominant in the Western world and containing the Soviet Union became the link with US identity. The Cold War helped form this identity between the U.S. Government and the people. The end of the Cold War changed the international situation and also ended the US identity of containing the Soviet Union. Once the original enemy and threat disappeared, the identity also reduced and containment lost the support of identity. So, Huntington pointed out that the U.S. should readjust its national interests and mobilize new resources to safeguard them according to the new identity concept and in view of the new security threats and moral challenges.

As was remarked above, identity shapes interest. Identity is the offspring of cognition. Identification is a cognitive process, in which the Self-Other distinction becomes blurred and at the limit transcended altogether. Self is "categorized" as Other, thus giving birth to collective identity. But the emergence of collective identity does not mean it will certainly emerge among actors with some shared identity attribute. For example, France and Algeria are both "French-speakers", but France has failed to form a collective identity with Algeria.<sup>19</sup> The reason is identity cognition is a process of interest infiltration, convergence and blend. Collective identity has the causal power to induce actors to define the welfare of the Other as part of or equal to that of the Self, to be "altruistic".<sup>20</sup> Altruistic actors often rely on collective identity to determine and calculate their interests on the basis of the group or team. It also enables them to overcome collective action problems that can stymie egoists, define the welfare of the Self to include that of the Other and even transfer part of their interests to reach collective consensus.<sup>21</sup> Self-interest is only one kind of national interest and, when collective identity is absent, an interest idea. But when collective identity is present, can altruism determine more characteristics and contents of national interests. The possibility of generating collective identity and interests has increased with the jumping frequency of social interaction and the development of interdependence.

Norms have a constitutive impact on the formation of international collective identity and reshaping of national interests. Identities affect states' definition of interests and normative factors in addition to states' identities shape their interests or behavior directly.<sup>22</sup> State identity is self-definition of national image and characteristics on the basis of international recognition and

changes subject to the pattern of interaction among states. The interaction among states is solidified at a certain phase into international norms, which in turn prescribe all the states' identities and interests. The identities and interests of these states change subject to international norms. The function of norms is to prescribe state behavior. For example, as a state is a member of the WTO, its behavior must conform to the WTO rules. More importantly, the significance of norms is they change the actor's identity and endow it with new identity and interest, thus changing its behaviors. Therefore, the access to the WTO changes a state's identity and thus makes its interest and behavior undergo a series of relevant changes. It may be said that national interest results from a state's learning from the international society. A state internalizes international norms and makes abidance by regulations and rules a part of living need and self-development, reshaping self-identity and collective identity in social interaction. So, identities and norms in the international system impact the formation of national interest. Only after determining its self-identity in the international system, can a state fix the scope, degree and quantity of its interests.

International institutions based on the norms also play a deep-level role of regulation in state behavior. Constructivism offers a qualitatively deeper view of how institutions may affect and transform national interests and behavior. In this view, institutions not only "regulate" state behavior but also "constitute" state identities and interests.<sup>23</sup> Once an international institution is set up, it becomes the shared culture of the international society. "Socially shared knowledge plays a key role in making interaction relatively predictable over time, generating homeostatic tendencies that stabilize social order."<sup>24</sup> So international institutions are beneficial to establishing identity among sovereign states and restraining state behavior and also can promote states not to think and act according to realist concepts and words through changing the norms of constitution and management of the international system.

The model of interaction between collective identity and state foreign policy is as follows: state identity shapes national interest and affects state diplomatic behavior directly; social interaction rebuilds state identity and change national interest. The socialization of state identity forms international collective identity and fixes it in the forms such as international norms and institutions. Collective identity impacts normalized structure of interests and positive collective identity makes national interest move from egoism to altruism.

## **Collective Identity and International Relations**

International society is in a state of anarchy, defined as the absence of centralized authority, unlike the orderly government in a state. State behavior generally reflects the characteristics of some anarchic structure. The practice and interaction of identity verifies and recreates identity. A construction can be a powerful source of inertia and become more stable, if it is institutionalized. <sup>25</sup> The internalization of norms makes states abide by the logic of anarchy and act according to the identities and interests constructed by system. For example, as the identity changed, the bilateral relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the Cold War and the U.S. and Russia after the Cold War underwent a structural turn from regarding each other as enemies and containing each other to engagement and cooperation with each other. The three anarchic cultural structures shape different identity relations between states and construct different state-to-state relations, playing a direct and decisive role in international security.

In the Hobbesian culture, states regard other states as mortal enemies. The identity of the enemy means the actor does not recognize the right of the Other to exist as a free subject and to observe no limits on its violence. A state's existence is premised on the other states' death, so it

will tend to respond to enemies by acting like a deep revisionist, i.e., it will try to destroy or conquer them. But this behavior will tend to heavily discount the future. The state will vigorously arm itself for peace, if war has not yet broken out but clearly will soon, the state will be prepared to preempt and shatter the enemy's first strike and, if it comes to a real war, the state will observe no limits on its own violence. 26 The identity of enemy is constructed by representations of the Other. Once the cultural form known as the Cold War was in place, the U.S. and the Soviet Union had a shared belief that they were enemies, which helped constitute their identities and interests in any given situation, which they in turn acted upon in ways that confirmed to the Other that they were a threat, reproducing the Cold War.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, when enmity dominates a system, the relationship model of "the war of all against all" 28 will appear.

The Lockean culture is based on a role structure, rivalry rather than enmity. On the premise of mutually recognizing and respecting each other's right to live, competition is unfolded and use of force is restrained by sovereignty structure. The idea of expropriation and dominance in the Hobbesian culture is replaced by the concept of "live and let live." In the Lockean structure, there are antagonism and rivalry as well as rivalry and cooperation between states. They do not take destruction of each other as the reason for their own existence but rather cooperate in rivalry. In this culture, states treat each other as rivals, thus constructing international relations different from the Hobbesian culture. Though enmity and rivalry both imply antagonism and that they do not fully recognize the existence of each other, they are different on the issues of treating the Other and use of violence, thus causing two kinds of quite different international relations. Enemies seek to "revise" each other's right to life or liberty. However rivals, in contrast, are thought to recognize each other's right to life and liberty and seek to take away only some of its property. Enemies observe no limits on their own violence, since that would create a competitive disadvantage, 29 but limits exist in violence between rivals. Violence between enemies has no internal limits and whatever limits exist will be due solely to inadequate capabilities (a balance of power or exhaustion) or the presence of an external constraint. However, violence between rivals, in contrast, is self-limiting, constrained by recognition of each other's right to exist. 30

The Kantian culture is quite different from the above two cultures, which are anarchic self-help systems. The Hobbesian culture is a pure self-help anarchic system. Though the Lockean culture is different in essence from the Hobbesian culture in the level of violence and has constructed a cooperative relationship in rivalry, its basis of cooperation is self-help. In the Kantian culture alone, actors thoroughly renounce the self-help model and set up a collective identity of friendship. The principles of nonviolence and mutual aid feature the Kantian culture. In the role structure of friendship, disputes will be settled by states without war or the threat of war (the principle of nonviolence) and states will fight as a team, if the security of any one is threatened by a third party (the principle of mutual aid).<sup>31</sup> In the Kantian culture, a perpetually peaceful community is established among states as friends and an alliance is not an expedient measure like that in the Lockean culture. The cooperation in the Kantian culture implies the expectation of eventually reverting to a condition in which war between states is an option, so the temporary cooperation process is full of alert. However, the expectation of lasting friendship makes the disputes, if any, to be settled peacefully.<sup>32</sup> The principles of nonviolence and mutual aid in the Kantian structure construct the other-help system and the ideal state of the Kantian culture is a perfect society.

To sum up, in the Hobbesian culture, what is constructed among states is the collective identity of enmity, so they are in a mortal hostile relationship. In the Lockean culture, states don't treat one another as enemies, but compete with one another on the premise of respecting sovereignty. They

are in an antagonistic state of rivalry and limited violence. In the Kantian culture, the collective identity of nonviolence and mutual aid makes states settle disputes peacefully, and cooperation evolves from self-help to other-help.

## Notes

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## 5.

# Notes on Some Cases of Cultural Conflict and Convergence in the Current International Political Pattern

*Hua Jian*

Change in the international political pattern has always been the profound cause of various kinds of cultural conflict and convergence. Politics is the utmost expression of fundamental interests of different social groups. To meet their needs for interests, various interest groups mobilize all kinds of resources including economic, scientific, technological, military and cultural ones. The mobilization of cultural resources not only refers to making use of such means as media, web, publication, technology and famous brands, but also includes the comprehensive utility of ethnic traditions, cultural forms, social customs and habits as well as group psychology. The aim is to affect various social groups spiritually, attract international allies and isolate political rivals. So, any big change in international political pattern is like a seabed earthquake, the waves of which will certainly cause billows to surge on the sea. But culture as human creation of knowledge and spirit and result has its inherent law, such as dependence on innovation awareness, need for free space, respect for humanity and inheritance and continuation of predecessors' achievements. It in turn requires political interest groups to conform to cultural law so as to gain and utilize cultural results. Against the background of economic globalization and knowledge economy, interaction between conflict and convergence among cultures and international politics presents some new important characteristics.

### **Impact of Cultural Strength on International Political and Economic Patterns**

As early as the early 1990s, Joseph Nye put forward the theory of "soft power". He maintained that in fact there exists "soft power" relative to "hard power". If the former includes natural resources, military strength, economic strength and scientific and technological strength, the latter covers a state's cohesion and global cultural popularization and cultural role in international organizations. He also held that in the international political pattern, "hard power" and "soft power" are cooperative in playing a role.

After rapid changes in the 1990s, this view has been supplemented and developed by many scholars and experts. Scholars such as John Hall pointed out that the so-called cultural strength is a compound ability and includes innovation of contents and materialized productivity.<sup>1</sup> Some others noticed the profound influence of digital technology and pointed out that today any culture which has real power should suffix "culture.com", that is, any cultural formation which can not match digital technology and web will certainly be in a weak position. Only by establishing or enjoying the global web can cultural strength become mainstream knowledge product and spiritual influence.<sup>2</sup> It can be said that the cultural strength recognized by persons of insight roughly includes overall innovative ability, large-scale productivity and global popularization ability. It is the organic combination of innovation, technology, capital and management, especially with information technology, in the 21st century. Such cultural strength alone can become the fearsome power in the international political pattern.

Take Japan as an example. As soon as the early 1980s, Japanese political circles and academia put forward the slogan of "the third long voyage", upgrading enhancement of cultural strength to

the height of national strategy. Japan called the Meiji Restoration and the rise after WWII "the first and second long voyages" in its history. The so-called "third voyage" is to set a new objective the whole country will strive for. The objective is to move from the era of becoming civilized when Japan introduced and transformed European and US 'fine-tuned' technologies, to an era of developing civilization when Japan will give play to unique 'sowing and breeding' technologies. This can be seen as a new strategy of building a powerful country and political declaration geared towards the 21st century.

To further enhance the cultural strength in the international political pattern, in 1995 Japan's Advisory Committee for Promoting Cultural Policy issued an important report entitled "Towards a New Cultural Nation: Tentative Measures for Cultural Promotion". In the report it clearly set forth a general plan of establishing a nation founded on culture in the 21st century. On the basis of this report, Japan formulated and revised its policy of supporting culture and arts. "Arts Plan 21" is the plan formulated by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs to adapt to the new strategy of establishing a nation founded on culture in the 21st century and to support creative artistic activities. In the plan, promotion of international artistic exchanges is one of the four programs. The Japanese Government holds that a Japanese era has begun. Japan must export Japanese spirit. What Japan can provide to the U.S. and other countries in the world is not only technology and capital belonging to hardware but also what belongs to software. For example, Japan's spirit of enterprise is fully applicable to other countries. In the perspective of such a national strategy, the cultural products and services exported by Japan not only are commodities produced in large batches but also imply spread of Japanese culture in the spiritual field to the whole world to seek worldwide good opinion of and identity with Japan. Therefore, the trend of thought of "internationalization" springing up vigorously in Japan in the 1980s and 1990s marked in fact a new coordinate of the times for Japanese cultural development.

Under the guidance of these thoughts, Japan has actively conducted cultural exchanges featuring "cultural export". It has increased the amount of the international cultural exchange fund, sponsored "Japan Month" and "Japan Year" through its embassies and consulates in other countries and given demonstrations of "tea ceremony" and "flower arrangement" in many European and American countries. It has also donated a great number of books to Asian countries, especially East Asian countries and set up and enlarged Japanese cultural research institutions and cultural exchange facilities in other countries. Meanwhile, it has taken the popularization of Japanese language as an important part of disseminating Japanese culture to the rest of the world. Its government's plan to dispatch teachers to foreign educational institutions demands that the dispatched Japanese-language teachers shoulder the dual mission of doing their own jobs well and disseminating Japanese culture. With the energetic support of the government, since the 1990s Japanese-language schools have sprung up in the whole world. The Japanese government's objective is to provide financial aid to set up Japanese-language schools in the capitals and big cities of some countries in the Asian-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions before 2005. Domestically, it will actively enlarge admission of foreign students and make efforts to improve the foreign student scholarship system and cultural environment and to attract foreign young elite. When Japanese government leaders or the emperor of Japan visit other countries, they often present thousands of Japanese flowering cherries to the host countries, supported by the activities of Japanese Cultural Week, strengthening affinity of Japanese culture with local residents in a "soft way".

Japan's devotion of major efforts to the cultural industry and export of cultural commodities to the rest of the world implies this national strategic consideration of cultural export. In many

years, Japanese culture has relied on its commodities to spread to and infiltrate the rest of the world on a large scale. Those from Japan-style 'Demaeitcho' instant noodles to the cartoon image of Ottoman have all become the carriers of disseminating Japanese culture. Through long-term efforts, this basic national policy has achieved good results. Japan's karaoke has become a worldwide instrument of entertainment from prosperous towns in the Zhujiang River Delta to cities in Malaysia, from residence quarters in Seoul to nightclubs in Japan. Japan's cartoons, caricatures and game software have been decisive on the international cultural market as are its automobiles and electrical appliances. The output value of its electronic game hardware and software can reach about US\$ 17 billion each year, with them streaming into the mass consumer market of various countries. In this process what Japan has infiltrated into the world is not only visible commodities but also large numbers of invisible spiritual products such as Japan's art, film, tea ceremony, judo, karate and dhyana. Japanese characters have become children's familiar and favorite cartoon images in many places like Singapore, the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Though the ROK Government has long taken an attitude of stern restriction to Japanese popular culture, faced with such an important market by its side, how can Japan leave it at that? So it has spared no efforts to enlarge the sale of Japanese publications in the country, which reached 5239 types in 2001, 7 times those in 1990.

### **The Web as Space for International Politics: Competitive Advantages of Combing Mainstream and Indigenization**

Since the 1970s, the rapid development of the web and information technology has greatly changed the human means of information dissemination. Just as many times in history, technological progress has promoted systematic progress and changed the pattern and framework of international politics.

Recently, the Canadian *Globe and Mail* published a humorous news commentary "Hard Occupation or Soft Occupation?", pointing out that when big powers divided spheres of influence in the 20th century, their most direct means was first to rapidly change the geographic borders through military behavior and then to occupy the global market as much as possible through economic behavior, that is, by means of exporting products, technology and capital. These can be described as "hard occupation". But in the 21st century, the political trial of strength between big powers may appear in another form, that is, cultural and information "soft occupation". That is to say, they need not directly occupy the rival's territory but can achieve the objective of controlling the rival through catching hold of the upstream resources of knowledge and culture. What is of profound significance is this "soft occupation" doesn't mean the big powers make use of cultural products made on a large scale to gradually assimilate cultures of other countries and regions, but rather to form a global soft "integration" in the form of individuation, indigenization and nationalization.

On the one hand, against the background of economic globalization and on the basis of the synthesized technology of telecommunications, computer and web, large-scale transnational corporations and economic powers will certainly seek domination in the worldwide market, especially the cultural market. Domination is the main objective pursued by an enterprise in any economic era, but today when the information industry prevails and the information superhighway is omnipresent, realization of domination has a more realistic basis and the scramble for market domination becomes fiercer and more cruel. The reason is the web and soft technology enable all the social members to become users of dominant products, all the social resources may be most

cheaply used and all the enterprises in an industrial chain can rely on the web to form a union to greatly reduce costs. This kind of change was unimaginable in the traditional economic conditions.

On the other hand, every country or region has its own cultural tradition formed in history, including language, religion and values and also local government's policy and barrier to protect national culture and cultural market. This is an important obstacle to the global expansion of cultural investment and a strong reaction against the scramble of cultural investors for market domination. So the current cultural investment and export, in the process of globalization, have to make talented persons, programs and operations move to indigenization which in turn accelerates worldwide expansion and makes use of diverse and colorful indigenous cultural resources to achieve more superiority in content on the global cultural market.

US worldwide cultural expansion is an important part of its global strategy. One of its most important experiences is to combine globalization, web, and indigenization-infiltration organically to produce rich and colorful *indigenized* channels, columns, program sources and subsidiaries under the control of transnational corporation capital, and to blend these indigenized programs to enhance the US's position of controlling the global cultural market and dialectically binding together globalization and indigenization.

### **Regional Economic and Political Cooperation and the Promotion of Regional Cultural Integration**

Against the background of economic globalization, regional economic and political cooperation has rapidly developed. However, conflicts between cultures in a region often become the impediments of regional economic and political cooperation. This situation has compelled regional cooperative organizations to make efforts to push an integration of regional cultural values and formations to support political and economic cooperation. Facts have proven that the development of regional economic integration is unimaginable without political cooperation, while it is unripe without cultural integration. A successful regional cooperative framework not only takes into consideration cultural diversity of different countries, regions and ethnic groups as cultural resources of further integration, but also strives for their identity with shared cultural values so as to pave a path for a political, economic and strategic alliance. Culture has played a role of irreplaceable link in the important post-war economic communities such as the NAFTA and the ASEAN. The EU in particular put forward a clear-cut cultural investment policy in the process of pushing ahead European integration to strengthen the identity of its member states with integration in culture and promote European political and economic integration. Evident results have been achieved.

In 1954, 14 member states of the European Commission jointly signed the European Cultural Agreement, agreeing that cultural cooperation and exchanges would be conducted between one another. With the end of the Cold War, European integration has obviously accelerated. The signature of the Maastricht Treaty and the founding of the European EU are the inevitable results of this development trend. On October 28, 2002, M. d'Estaing, Chairman of the Convention, submitted the draft Constitutional Treaty to the Commission. This marked the emergence of an embryonic form of European future political blueprint, opening a new chapter in European integration.

Over more than 50 years from the European Community to the EU, Europeans have always strengthened solidarity and cooperation in political and economic fields. Economic integration has been deepened because of the birth of the Euro and political integration seems more urgent because

of the historical enlargement of the EU. Drawing up a constitution is an important step for European politicians to solidify the EU. It means a united Europe will look more like an integrated family and have a form close to a federal republic. The EU is a community of sovereign states, each of which has a constitution. So in the Convention, the focus of debates has always been on whether to persist in the principle of sovereignty while strengthening cooperation between member states or to continually reinforce the supranational factor of the EU and whether to establish a loose "United Europe" or close "United States of Europe". Big and small countries in the EU, out of their own interests, are divergent on some principled issues. For example, in the cultural policy, some countries with smaller languages such as Denmark and Holland have been strongly demanding to preserve their own cultural rights, especially to protect their national languages, religions and traditions from submergence by larger-language especially English-language cultural products in streams. Their appeal has been expressed in this discussion about the basic framework of the future European Constitution.

For this reason, the EU countries have gradually increased their support for and emphasis on cultural cooperation and mingling in pushing forward European political and economic integration. The Maastricht Treaty and the relevant articles of the Structural Fund Regulations embody the principle of preserving the cultural traditions of member states and promoting cultural mingling. In particular the EU allocates funds for projects of the countries and regions within its boundaries via a Structural Fund to bring cultural investment to full play in increasing employment, spurring urban and regional sustainable development and strengthening regional cooperation and promoting European integration and development of collective identity.

In the initial post-Maastricht period, the EU paid necessary attention to the respect for cultural traditions and promoted cultural mingling. Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty clearly stipulates that:

1. The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.

2. Action by the Community shall be aimed at encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action in the following areas:

- Improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples;

- Conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance;

- Non-commercial cultural exchanges;

- Artistic and literary creation, including in the audiovisual sector.

3. The Community and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organizations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe.

4. The Community shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of this Treaty.

Since the treaty became effective, the EU has made 4 major cultural programmes in cultural investment as the practical expression of its cultural policy. They are:

- The Raphael Programme. This was approved by the European Parliament on October 13, 1997. Its aim was to conduct cooperation in preserving and enhancing European cultural heritage.

Euro 30 million were injected into this four-year programme which was organized mainly around the following projects. They were conservation, safeguarding and enhancement of the movable cultural heritages (Action I), the exchange of experiences and the development of techniques applied to the heritage (Action II); public access to, participation in and awareness of the non-movable cultural heritage (Action III); and strengthening of cooperation with international organizations and third parties (Action IV).

- The Kaleidoscope Programme. This programme involves all artistic departments such as stagecraft, plastic art, music and multimedia. Its aim was to support cultural projects and artistic events organized by partners from at least three member states (Action I) and large-scale cooperation projects (Action II) so as to promote EU cultural integration.

- The Ariane Programme. This programme enjoying equal fame with the Ariane Space Project was aimed at supporting the books and reading sector and dissemination of European literature through translation, especially translation of ethnic minority languages. It was also aimed at safeguarding the dissemination of the language and literature of European smaller languages such as Danish to the whole of Europe so as to integrate European diverse cultures.

- The Ethnic Minority Languages Programme. This programme provided financial assistance to set up the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages in Dublin for preservation and enhancement of ethnic minority languages. In particular, under the support of this programme, an information network called "Mercator" was set up and became one of a small number of professional multilingual networks in the world.

Among these four programmes, the EU first organized the Kaleidoscope Programme. Between 1990 and 1995, it financed 525 cultural projects and effectively promoted cultural exchanges and cooperation between its member states and enhanced the public awareness of cultural participation. The implementation of these programmes also attracted more corporate and commercial investment and gave impetus to European cultural industry. After the signature of the Maastricht Treaty, the EU Ministerial Meeting and the EU Parliament passed Resolution 719/96/CE on March 29, 1996, deciding to set up a larger-scale programme of supporting cultural projects and artistic events in Europe and to still call it the "Kaleidoscope Programme", which the EU considered a fruitful and significant cultural programme.

It shows that the role of culture has appeared more and more important and been continuously manifested in a new form in the process from the scramble for strategic superiority in competition for comprehensive national strength to regional economic and political integration, and in the 21st century international political pattern. Research on the role of culture in the current international politics and exploration of its basic law will play a positive role in upgrading China's comprehensive national strength and establishing a new international order.

## Notes

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## **Part II**

### **Western Cultures and International Relations**



## **A Cultural Analysis of American Diplomatic Traditions**

*Wang Xiaode*<sup>1</sup>

The American culture is pluralistic, but Anglo-Saxon traditions have constituted its 'main body' from the day of formation of the American culture. No matter how many kinds of cultural forms there are in the American society, Anglo-Saxon culture has had a dominant position all along. Generally, the outstanding persons in American history who had an important influence on the American development had been trained by this culture. Therefore, the American culture was mainly a historical product of combining Anglo-Saxon traditions with the colonization of North America. The religious ideal in Christianity and the stress on material gain in secular life in this culture were extremely developed, which played a very important role in the American historical course. The combination of the ideal and the utility has been reflected on American foreign relations as well, and formed the traditions of both the idealism and the realism in American diplomacy. As Henry Kissinger said, "No nation has been more pragmatic in the day-to-day conduct of its diplomacy; or more ideological in the pursuit of its historic moral convictions."<sup>2</sup>

### **The Idealist Origin of American Culture**

The idealist core in the American culture is the idea of mission. This idea can be traced back to the Christian faiths. As monotheism, Christianity regards God as the only real god, and the highest deities the other religions follow are artificial ones or Satan in opposition to God. God brings gospel to the world and Satan makes humankind suffer from all kinds of disasters. It is the most important mission in the earthliness for a devout Christian to spread God's gospels, convert heathens and finally destroy those artificial deities. For this reason, Christians are very fond of teaching others to believe in God. Many of them are very glad to have an opportunity to do missionary work in foreign countries. Thus there is a strong idea of mission embodied in Christians to save heathens from a sea of woes.

The first European immigrants to go to North America mostly came from England, and believed in Protestantism. Protestantism was a new Christian sect separating from Roman Catholicism, which had been dominant for a long time, and Protestantism had a close link with rising capitalism in ideology because of its strong tendency against Catholic tradition. But it was unable to change its Christian essence in the religious doctrines in any case. So the Protestants in England had naturally a strong idea of mission. This idea was stronger in those puritans who advocated purifying the complicated old ceremonies retained in the Anglican Church. According to the position of the puritan reformers, as a country chosen by God, England had a mission in the world "to redeem Christendom, to restore the medieval unity of Europe by bringing all men under the Reformed Protestant banner".<sup>3</sup> The puritans wished to continue the reform in their motherland at first to set an example for Christendom and realize their dream to rescue and revive the world, but England's special standing gradually vanished in the mind of the puritans when the royal court increasingly intensified an autocratic rule. In this situation, the royal court naturally persecuted the puritans who were a threat to its dominant foundation, so those persecuted puritans had to leave their homeland to seek a new land to realize their religious ideals abroad. Many of them went to the North American continent, which was very wild at that time. These puritans did not occupy an

overwhelming majority in immigrant number, but they were a central group among the early immigrants because they had higher educational level and religious cohesion. As a result, the colonies under their leadership had strong religious color.

That those British puritans experienced all kinds of hardships and dangers to go to North America seemed to be caused by the intolerant religious atmosphere in England, but in fact, many of them were willing to abandon good conditions in England enjoyed by them and traveled across the Atlantic to land on the continent mainly for their religious faith, namely to seek a land without stain where they could realize their religious ideal, of course including their dream to make a fortune. These puritans "chosen by God" were really conscious of their mission when they linked the religious dream which was coming true in the New World with the hard circumstance they faced in opening up this "new" continent. "They were to become one people—gathered in their own land from among the heathen—and they were to make that land the promised land. They were to create an Eden, a paradise, by adapting that world and its ways to proper civilization, as God would have them do. Out of all the peoples God had created and put on earth, they were chosen. They were the New World. And, as the New Revelation had been brought to the world by Christ and replaced the old, so the chosen people had their mission."<sup>4</sup> In a sense, they planted the ideal seed in the soil to be suitable for its growth.

Thus one of the main purposes that puritans wanted to bring about in this strange land was to establish an ideal society to be imitated by the whole world. Under the leadership of William Bradford, a puritan leader, the puritan immigrants to go to North America signed the Mayflower Compact to be regarded as the American democratic foundation. They were determined to continue the puritan experiment in the name of God, magnify the glory of God, advance the Christian faith, establish the government in the form of compact and finally make North America a new Jerusalem. John Winthrop, who had led a group of free puritans to find out an ideal place to accomplish their religious faith in North America, told his followers that the success or failure of their mission was greatly significant to the world future. "We must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, [and] the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our god in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world; we shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of god and all professors for God's sake; we shall shame the faces of many of god's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us, till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going."<sup>5</sup> When these immigrant ancestors ultimately overcame or defeated the natural difficulties and obstacles they had faced, the idea of mission fixed in their mind was necessarily embodied in a new form. They were determined to perform a holy experiment in the new land so that they could establish an ideal kingdom to be revered and imitated by all persons. Bradford recorded those puritan sufferings in the hard time in historiography, which was, between the lines, full of the feeling they would bear a special mission.

The earliest immigrants from England in North America established a city upon a hill more for religious motivation than realistic consideration, but this ideal they had pursued was deeply rooted in the new soil. When the exploitation of North America revealed some characteristics different from that of the other parts in the world, the idea of mission the immigrants of the first generation had embraced was greatly enforced. It was gradually merged into the course of the formation of American national consciousness and became a distinct characteristic in the American Anglo-Saxon culture.

## The Property of 'Utility' in American Culture

There is a strong idealist color in the American culture, but at the same time this culture has paid much attention to material gain in nature, and there is a thick commercial spirit in its core. Only influenced by this culture, Americans are known as stressing practical results. This is a tradition which the earlier immigrants formed in the process of conquering the extensive wilderness. Those immigrants with a variety of purposes obtained the freedom they had dreamed to have in North America, but they could not enjoy this natural favor without working. They had to pay high prices to be suitable for the whole new natural environment. Many immigrants lost their lives in this continent because they were not able to fit into the terrifying natural environment. The ideals the immigrants had embraced played an important role in supporting their spiritual world not to such an extent of breakdown, but the practical working spirit was the key to their existence in this continent. They worked very hard and made a practical spirit embodied in bearing hardships, hardwork, thrift, individualism, forward-lookingness and so on, which deeply took root in the culture shaped in this continent.

Moreover, the utilitarianism in the American culture has a close link with the protestant ethics that the immigrants from England in the colonies followed. Protestantism was a new ideology different from Catholicism which safeguarded the European feudal system at that time, so it served the rising bourgeoisie to extend scope of activities and finally gain state political powers in nature. From the beginning, Protestantism had a very strong practical spirit which differentiated it from Catholicism and some oriental religions such as Buddhism and Taoism. In protestant doctrine, believers express piety for God by their worldly activities. The standards to measure the chosen people are not to follow the religious doctrines to the full, but their displays in real life. Comparing with Catholicism and the other religions, the protestant ethics advocates that people are saved by God not in illusory next world, but in truly real life. People get rich and become the chosen ones only by the practical spirit and labor. Consequently, the puritans to North America regarded their success in secular activities as their salvation by God. To acquire material wealth was the reward to diligent persons by God, while to be in hunger and poverty was the ruthless punishment to idlers by God. The amount of material wealth individual persons possessed became the criterion to judge and decide their success and social position. It is the practical spirit in protestant ethics that leads these earlier immigrants and later Americans to do their best to pursue material success. Undoubtedly, the practical value in the American culture has played a very important role in the course of American history. Of course, this does not mean that protestant ethics absolutely encourages people to pursue blindly material wealth; it also contains some values which have a highly idealist color. Differently, they have not been intoxicated with praises of the ideal. The ideal only plays a role to encourage people to be successful in the real world. American scholar Ernest G. Bormann regarded the puritans who went to North America as idealists with illusions. They established themselves as people chosen by God in an idealist form, but at the same time they paid much attention to utility. <sup>6</sup> This viewpoint that the puritan ideal served a pragmatic goal is correct. In fact, the ideal the American white men declared in history frequently covered the selfish interests they sought in real life. As Melvin Steinfield put it: "How was such justification possible? Paradoxically, by means of two polluted American Dreams—Manifest Destiny and Mission. Just as the Puritan ethic authorized a religiously intense pursuit of wealth, the twin concepts of Manifest Destiny and Mission (rooted in the belief in Anglo-Saxon Superiority) combined to authorize a zealous pursuit of territorial gains. Americans were ingenious at divining mythologies to justify their acquisitive goals. To justify their materialistic greed, they adapted the Puritan mythology to

American ends. To justify their greed for other people's lands, they fashioned an American version of the Chosen People."<sup>7</sup>

The practical value to pay much attention to utility in American culture has had a positive effect on the development of American history. It is American practical attitude and creative idea that produced pragmatic philosophy, which reflects the American spirit in all respects in this new land, while this philosophy's trend of thought planted the pragmatic spirit in the American culture by the American distinct manners in theory and behavior. Kissinger remarked that pragmatism was "American spirit", and cultivated practical style and enterprising spirit of Americans and the American government is "the bureaucratic-pragmatic leading group". Kissinger spoke about the true meaning of pragmatism from his official experience. Influenced by utilitarianism, few American leaders are intoxicated with those unpractical ideals. They usually deal with problems they face by a practical attitude. According to Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., a pragmatic American leader has the following features: "(1) he lacks clear ideological goals; (2) his actions do not appear to be guided by clearly defined moral-ethical principles; (3) he is motivated by immediate, here-and-now considerations, as distinct from long-term goals and strategies; (4) he is 'opportunistic' and seeks to achieve the maximum benefit or gain from opportunities available to him; (5) he is skilled in compromise and gaining agreement among divergent positions; (6) he is flexible, capable of learning from experience, and of adapting his position to changing realities; (7) he is prudent and judicious, tending to avoid extremist solutions." <sup>8</sup> As a matter of fact, the aforementioned features of American leaders would be created by the character to stress utility in American culture rather than influenced by pragmatist philosophy in the strict sense.

Undoubtedly, the practical spirit has had a great effect on Americans in daily life from the day when the European immigrants arrived in the North American continent and gradually become an important part of American cultural values. The tendency of stressing practice and ignoring theory is more obvious in the American daily life. The American leaders display stronger practical attitude for fear that their behaviors are contrary to this spirit in the American society and thus bring about disadvantageous results for their political future. To the American leaders, both internal affairs and diplomacy are two different fields in which they deal with completely different objects. The good or bad of achievements in internal affairs is wholly measured by their bringing the more or less of real interests for their citizens. The idealism often appears in American foreign relations, but it is clear that the idealism overlays their pursuit of the real interests. As a value in American culture, the practical spirit has had an obvious influence on the decision-makers in the U.S. governments formulating and implementing foreign policies.

### *The Idealist Tradition in American Diplomacy*

In the history of Western political thought, the rhetoric of idealism existed long ago. It either was an ideal explanation of Christians for Christian doctrines or a pretty vision and assumption of some persons who detested the world and its ways: these Christian idealists looked to a future life in order to escape reality. In the early international relations of Europe, idealism neither produced any effect on the countries dealing with foreign affairs, nor developed into a tool with which some country restrained other countries for its purposes. The Machiavellian diplomacy was overwhelming. Idealism in the American culture is very different from that in the European political thought. The former not only was a proposition elaborated in theory, but also produced a great influence on the development of the North American continent. The idea of mission as main content of idealism took deep roots in the American Anglo-Saxon culture and is distinctly

embodied in American white men as a character of the American nation. After the founding of the United States of America, as a sovereign entity, it began to have a holistic interest to represent a nation. When the leaders of the United States started to deal with foreign issues which were very significant to the security and development of the nation, the idea of mission deeply rooted in the American culture was naturally embodied in American diplomacy. As a result, idealism became an obvious characteristic of American foreign relations and a diplomatic tradition to serve its foreign interests.

The American idealist diplomacy has mainly showed that under the name of a 'rescuing nation' the United States judges the behaviors and cultural traditions of other countries, especially developing ones according to the right and wrong standards in the American culture, and argues that it has an obligation to spread the American democracy to the other parts of the world. It means that the United States has a duty to urge developing nations with different cultures to accept a political system in the light of the model of the American democracy, and finally realize the dominance of the American democracy in the whole world. This way to require or force developing countries to accept the Western political model accidentally exists in the diplomacies of other powers, but its duration and obviousness are less than the American diplomacy to these underdeveloped countries with different cultures. Irving Kristol believed that "[N]one of the European democracies thinks of itself as 'a city on a hill', as we do, having a special moral-political mission in the world, as we habitually think we do."<sup>9</sup> This practice to promote the American democracy abroad has a great link with the political system formed in this American continent. In the eyes of Americans, the United States adopts the best political system which can guarantee the democracy and freedom enjoyed by its citizens. James Monroe said in his last State of the Union Message: "Our institutions form an important epoch in the history of the civilized world. On their preservation and in their utmost purity everything will depend."<sup>10</sup> The dream to rescue and revive the world on the basis of this "free and liberal" system naturally became an important mission performed by Americans in the world. As a report of the House Appropriations Committee argued, "Our forebears planted on this soil the seed of liberty and freedom which, if properly nurtured, should outgrow our boundaries and reach out into the rest of the world, not through a centralized disseminating agency, but through the force of its own dynamics."<sup>11</sup> Therefore, when the United States started to deal with those countries with different political systems, it was necessary to embody this value in American foreign policies.

Narrowly speaking, to promote democracy abroad means that the United States requires other countries, especially developing ones or ones with different ideologies, passively to accept the American democracy. Broadly speaking, it means that the United States spreads its cultural values to other countries. Since the United States has relations with other countries as a sovereign nation, exporting and spreading the American democracy has existed in its policies to those "backward" countries all along as an important consideration of the American decision-makers. Of course, influenced by this cultural value, many Americans, including some important politicians at the policy-making level, devoutly wish that the American democracy can replace those governments which are—in their eyes—at present dictatorships replete with degeneration and corruption. They "expected that any new departure in their foreign policy would accord with the American society's deeply held values, its ethos and its traditions. Abroad, no less than at home, national policies should accord with the American belief in freedom, justice, laissez-faire, democracy and other cherished concepts".<sup>12</sup> Their attitude to and understanding of the outside world often have a pressure on the government intentionally or unwittingly, which forces American governments to implement foreign policies consistent with the American cultural traditions as much as possible so

that American citizens can support them. In fact, if speaking only from the ideology, American governments naturally strive to acquire effectiveness in promoting democracy abroad in order to finish a special mission given by God.

For a long time since independence, the United States was not able to positively advance democracy abroad because of its limited national power and focus on dealing with the internal issues and territorial expansion on the North American continent, but it did not abandon the desire to exert a special role in world affairs for this reason,— only it showed its "perfect" democracy to the world. This tendency to regard the United States as an example for other countries reflected in the mind of many early decision-makers. The first president George Washington declared that the continuance of "holy fire" was dependent on the experiment that the American people were carrying out. 13 Joel Barlow said in 1787 that "the example of political wisdom and felicity, here to be displayed, will excite emulation throughout the kingdoms of the earth, and meliorate the condition of the human race." 14 These arguments were no more than to show the special role that the United States would play in world affairs. This is a typical idea of "a city upon a hill", which means that the United States would set an example for the world on the basis of its social perfection.

Entering the 20th century, the United States started to transform from a world economic power into a world political power, which enabled the United States to involve in the affairs of other regions on the basis of its abundant material power. Since then, to promote 'democracy' has been a main feature of American foreign relations. Woodrow Wilson, called an "idealist president," was an example in this respect. Before becoming the president, Wilson believed that an important goal of American diplomacy was to spread democracy worldwide and urge other countries to accept the American democratic polity. After entering into the White House, the first thing Wilson did in diplomacy was to refuse the recognition of Victoriano Huerta's regime, because Huerta came to power through a military coup, and Wilson required that a democratic government should be established in Mexico. When there were a series of serious internal disorders in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Wilson sent American soldiers there and forced the citizens of both countries to vote under the menace of bayonet. Franklin Roosevelt was a follower of Wilsonian "internationalism". During his presidency, he tried to transform the "blueprint" of the world leadership Wilson had designed for the United States into reality. So in his eyes, one of the best means to achieve this goal was to spread the American democracy abroad. In December 1936, Roosevelt proclaimed at the Pan-American conference held in Buenos Aires that "Democracy is still the hope of the world. If we in our generation can continue its successful application in the Americas, it will spread and supersede other methods by which men are governed". 15

After the Second World War, it was opportune to advance and safeguard the democracy and freedom in American foreign policy. On March 12, 1947, Harry Truman as American president definitely put forward the choice "between alternative ways of life", 16 and it would be the United States' obligation to help and support those countries which had chosen the Western democratic and liberal system. John F. Kennedy was a president full of ambition and did his best to conquer the world with the American democratic system. He described the foreign policy his administration would implement as the arrow in one hand and the olive in another one. According to the strategy, the United States vigorously promoted democracy in the third world in order to change its bad image of supporting dictatorial regimes since the Second World War. Ronald Reagan proposed the slogan of restoring the U.S. former powerful force, endeavored to mould a new image for the United States in the international community and recovered the U.S. leadership in the world affairs. To spread the American democracy naturally became an important means to realize this end. On

March 14, 1986, Reagan declared in a report about foreign policy that the United States would play the powerful role of 'world leadership'. It would be the American target to advance the democratic revolution worldwide and make the world full of freedom without tyranny in any form. Therefore the United States would prepare to help other countries to achieve democracy at any time. 17

With the end of the Cold War, the United States paid much attention to the cultural factor in foreign policy, especially stressing advance in democracy abroad on the pattern of the American political development. That is to say, it tried to use the American cultural standards to unite a world with different ideologies and cultures and finally to bring about peace under the leadership of the United States in the post-Cold War era. The former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake talked about the benefits the United States would obtain from spreading democracy abroad. "The spread of democracy would help solve all other American foreign policy problems, in that democracies do not violate human rights, attack their neighbors, adopt restrictive trade policies, engage in terrorism, or generate refugees." 18 The United States put a particular emphasis on spreading the American cultural values and promoting democracy worldwide in its global strategy for the purpose of making a democratic world in which the American cultural values would be dominant come true as early as possible. George Bush was elected as the president at the end of the Cold War. During his presidency, to advance democracy abroad was embodied in his foreign policies. Bush asserted in an interview with reporters in April 1990 that he wished to become a president to assist the democratic changes which were rising in the whole world. He also declared that the "new role" the United States would play in the global affairs was to continue to guide the global development in the light of the standards of the American democracy and human rights. Under the guidance of this intention, the Bush administration provided various assistances to East European countries which had transformed from socialism into capitalism, supported those anti-communism groups to consolidate their regimes and urged those countries to start the free-market reforms as soon as possible. When there was some disorder in the Soviet Union, the Bush administration definitely proclaimed his support for the opposition demanding democratic reform and he played a positive role in the Soviet disintegration. In the Western Hemisphere, it became directly and positively involved in the Central American affairs, assisted to end the turbulent situations, and helped to form the pro-American civil regimes in this region. At the same time, the Bush administration gave much help to those Latin American countries which had recently established the democratic system, attempting to lead the rising democratic movement in this region in the direction the United States had designed and finally form a so-called "democratizing hemisphere" so as to lay a solid political foundation for a free trade area of 'the Americas'. When he ran for the presidency, Bill Clinton repeatedly said that if he was elected, he would attach importance to promoting the democracy and human rights abroad more than his predecessor, and clearly put forward "the realization of global democratization" as the general guiding principle of his foreign strategy. The present U.S. administration takes its 'war' against international terrorism as the most important task in American diplomacy, but it does not abate the attempt to advance democracy abroad. The administration is doing its best to spread American cultural values worldwide and wishes that a global community composed of the democratic countries under the leadership of the United States will come true as soon as possible.

Except for promoting democracy abroad, American previous administrations have embodied such ideas as human rights, religious freedom and speech freedom in their foreign affairs, which form the tradition of so-called idealist diplomacy. We can find out its origin in the American culture, but this tradition basically loses its original meaning when it is reflected in American

foreign relations, at most only appearing to preserve its idealist surface. Idealist diplomacy functions only to mask what are the real American interests and the idealist tradition continues in American diplomacy only to serve this end.

### **The Realist Tradition in American Diplomacy**

The tradition of idealist diplomacy has not been able to reflect really the essence of American foreign policy and is opposite to it to some extent: American idealism conceals an American administration's real interests abroad. A country always seeks the greatest actual interests as the final goal in its diplomacy. It makes and implements its foreign policy on the basis of its national interests. This is an essential condition to conduct all foreign activities. The United States cannot be an exception. A country seeking its interests in its diplomacy ought not to be accused, but American administrations often cover the most practical activities under the cloak of idealism, which leads to the goals of American diplomacy being very obscure to a great extent. As a matter of fact, the value to pay much attention to utility was reflected in American foreign relations from the beginning, which formed another tradition able to reveal the real goals of American diplomacy.

After the success of the American Revolution, the founding fathers all hoped that this new nation would be able to become an example imitated by the other parts of the world and destroy the dictatorial system, which bound people's thought and behavior. In their mind, the United States had a mission to rescue other countries or regions from the abyss of misery of dictatorship. This was also the hope that this new nation calling itself "a city upon a hill" would bring to mankind. Whether truthful or illusive, such an ideal could not deal with a series of complicated problems the new independent nation faced at that time. For example, influenced by the theory of economic liberalism, the founding fathers attempted to extend the principles such as free trade, equality and reciprocity in international trade, but those European powers did not pay any attention to the position of the new independent nation. They not only restricted and controlled American international trade, but also destroyed the young manufactures of the United States by different means. Those national leaders saw this course with their own eyes. They drew a lesson from the bitter experience and were forced to abandon the advocate of economic liberalism, something of an idealization, and accept the thought more suitable for realizing the national essential interests. In foreign relations, the leaders of the first generation had a clear understanding of the international environment in which the United States was. They placed the safeguarding of this new nation's independence and development over any other considerations, and worked out and carried out a foreign policy in favor of achieving the American short-term or long-term interests, which provided a relatively stable foreign environment for American development.

The realistic diplomatic tradition that the founding fathers shaped has offered a model for their successors. Any American president must regard the creation of an advantageous international setting for achieving the American essential interests as the first and highest goal when he makes and implements his foreign policies and those 'idealizing' presidents are no exception. For example, after becoming the president, Wilson asserted that he was going to teach the South American republics to elect good men as presidents, which embodied a style of power politics. The "good men" were dependent on the right or wrong standard of the United States. So-called "good men" would be chosen by the Wilson administration to come to power. If those chosen persons in power did not desire to become the puppets of the United States and harmed the American vested interests, then the "good men" were transformed into "bad men". In this sense, even the constitutional government might be opposed by the United States. That the Wilson

administration became enemies with some constitutional governments in the region profoundly accounted for this. Some American scholars often called its policy towards China "idealist", because it refused to provide any support to the American bankers to take part in the six-nation loan to China. In fact, this behavior did not mean that the United States would abandon the dollar diplomacy, and also cannot show the fundamental change of the American policy towards China. It was only a more actual choice for the Wilson's administration to *better* achieve the *vested* goal of the Open Door. Professor Arthur Link called Wilson's diplomacy "missionary diplomacy", but he pointed out that "experienced and cynical diplomatists thought they saw some Machiavellian purpose in Wilson's action." 19 In the First World War, whether the United States remained neutral or involved itself in the war, Wilson always explained the U.S. motivations to formulate foreign policies with unselfish words, which however could not conceal the U.S. pursuit of the *real* interests. In this point, Englishmen and Frenchmen dealing with the Wilson administration had some deep experiences. In March 1915, Colonel Edward House, a Wilson's confidant and adviser, asked De Casenave, the head of the French Press Bureau, to frankly give French views on Americans. De Casenave said that the French people at large thought that America had nothing in mind beyond 'dollar signs'. House wrote to Wilson: "This had been the case to such an extent that the opinion was fixed in France that we were guided entirely by mercenary motives."20 What Englishmen said was more frank. On February 2, 1916, English politician George Sale criticized Wilson's so-called idealist diplomacy in a letter to Colonel House: "As to idealism in foreign policy and international life, the President and you, sir, should remember that American policy is as calculatingly selfish as that of Germany." 21 Wilson was an idealizing president in diplomacy, but his foreign policies were typical examples to show that the American diplomacy is entirely dominated by its actual interests.

After the Second World War, the realistic theory in international relations had a great influence on the American diplomacy for a long time. The realistic theory did not originate from the United States, but when the realism as a theory arose in the international relation circles, the practical tradition in the American culture provided the necessary nutrient for the flourishing of this theory. Most of the famous persons who believed in realism after the war came from the United States, among whom the representative figures were either some experts and scholars with high theoretical training, or some experienced politicians and diplomats who occupied important places in the decision-making core. Their viewpoints were different, but all of them expounded the essence of international relations on the basis of the power politics and national interest. The American postwar strategies such as 'Containment' during the Truman presidency and the global strategic contract during the Nixon presidency were obviously influenced by the realistic theory. With the change of the international situation, some propositions of realism have gradually lost previous effects on foreign decision-making. As a result, the new schools of thought such as neo-realism and existentialism-realism have arisen in the American academic circles, and tried to keep the splendor that realism had possessed. However, the formulation and implementation of American foreign policies is controlled less by theory than by flexibility dependent on the needs of the situation. This is the basis of the realistic tradition originating from the United States. Undoubtedly, the realistic theory has had an important effect on the postwar American diplomacy, but the American leaders do not limit their diplomatic visions to the framework of the realistic theory. They have attempted to work out the foreign policies most favorable to the realization of the American interests in complicated international affairs. The "realism" in the American diplomacy has some common sites with the realistic theory, but it should be referred to the tradition that the founding fathers left as the legacy of American diplomacy. According to this tradition, the

first goal of American foreign policy is to create a favorable environment for the external expansion and internal development of the United States according to the criterion of the national interests.

With the end of the Cold War, great changes took place in world affairs: the international order which had been maintained for more than 40 years since the Second World War was gradually disintegrated, and the world entered a transitional period, the new international frame replacing the old one. As the only superpower, the United States continually readjusted its foreign strategy to fit into the unexpected change. Objectively speaking, since the early 1990s, the idealist element contained in American diplomacy has tended to go up, but the practical consideration has been a basic starting point to readjust the American foreign strategy. For example, the United States especially stressed the economic cooperation among nations for keeping its internal economic development and prosperity. Since the 9·11 event, the Bush administration has regarded the strike against international terrorism and the defense of homeland security as the first aim. It can be expected that however high the American policymakers set the ideal tone in their diplomacy, their foreign policies serve the realization of the American political, economic and strategic interests without any exception. This will never be changed, although the American foreign policies can be changed according to different situations. No matter in what circumstances, the realistic tradition that the founding fathers left in diplomatic area will take forever the dominant position in the diplomatic decision making.

### *Epilogue*

To sum up, whether it be the case of the idealist tradition or the realist tradition, we can find their roots in the American culture. Superficially, these two traditions have represented two basic clues to what seem total difference in American foreign relations. Many American scholars believe that these are two clashing tendencies in American diplomacy. As the famous historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. put it, "So two strains have competed for the control of American foreign policy: one empirical, the other dogmatic; one viewing international relations in the perspective of history, the other in the perspective of ideology; one supposing that the United States shares the imperfections, weaknesses and evils incident to all societies, the other regarding the United States as the happy empire of perfect wisdom and perfect virtue, commissioned to save humanity." 22 As a matter of fact, the ideal which American political leaders have advocated generally serves the reality and even becomes an effective means to achieve the American essential interests. Many American scholars believe that the diplomatic argument between Jefferson and Hamilton in the early days of the Republic was one between idealism and realism. According to them, in this argument, Hamilton's realism was in opposition to Jefferson's idealism. In reality, Jefferson's idealism was really founded on American self-interest too. During his presidency, Jefferson pursued a lot of policies consistent with Hamilton's thought. He had a strong desire to expand the American territory as well as devote himself to isolate the United States from Europe in political affairs. It is on the basis of Jefferson's idealism that the United States set off the high tide of territorial expansion in the North American continent, which finally created the objective conditions for the rising of the United States as a political power in the 20th century. Also it is on the basis of Hamilton's realism that the United States was kept out of the European political conflicts and devoted itself to the internal economic development, which laid a strong material foundation for the United States as a world economic power. This episode that occurred in the

realistic era of the founding fathers shows that the idealism not only is not inconsistent with the American actual interests, but also is a powerful tool to promote the achievement of these interests.

Swedish famous sociologist Gunnar Myrdall pointed out: "The popular explanation of the disparity in America between ideals and actual behavior is that Americans do not have the slightest intention of living up to the ideals which they talk about and put into their constitution and laws."<sup>23</sup> What Myrdall said indicated the fact of the American government's hypocrisy when dealing with race relations during that era. It is more general that what the American leaders said is inconsistent with what they did in their foreign affairs. Of course, this is *not* a problem of whether or not America puts its professed ideals into practice, but how the ideals better serve the realization of the actual interests. Crabb assessed the role of ideology in American foreign policy from the pragmatic point of view when he explained the idealist tradition in American foreign relations. He believed that Americans had traditionally justified the exercise of political power by reference to certain ideal standards or criteria, and the exercise of power by the United States abroad must be related to some ostensible, worthwhile human purpose, because "American society customarily relies upon the pragmatic standard of assessing its consequences for human well-being at home and abroad."<sup>24</sup> Crabb's viewpoint showed that the "ideals" American leaders profess only are a justified explanation to exercise *power politics* abroad. "In diplomacy the object sought is not always the object avowed."<sup>25</sup> This sentence was a penetrating conclusion Thomas A. Bailey reached from his study of Wilson's diplomacy, but it applies as a general conclusion for all American foreign relations. The professed ideals always hide high practical considerations. Ross Gregory was convinced that President Wilson fixed high moral standards for American diplomacy, but it was utterly unreasonable to assume Wilson's foreign policies in all respects were non-realistic and unpractical: "Moralism and realism do not automatically clash. Moral policy, depending upon what one interprets moralism to mean, might be in the nation's best interest."<sup>26</sup> Gregory talked about the agreement between moralism and realism with a note of favor. It has been proved by facts that the idealized foreign policies not only are not contrary to the American actual interests, but also promote those interests in a given period to be better realized.

The idealist tradition and the realist tradition in American diplomacy are not clearly demarcated. They are usually mixed with each other and play different important roles in American foreign relations. Only for this reason, some American politicians and scholars proposed to integrate ideals or morals with the realism in American diplomacy. This not only is a feature embodied in American foreign relations, but also justifies the exercise of power politics by the United States abroad. John Spanier said: "America could practice *Realpolitik* as long as it could be disguised as *Idealpolitik*, which suited its national style of conducting foreign policy. Power politics needed ideological justification in a nation that had always felt that the use of power internationally was evil. Domestically, power was legitimated by the democratic purposes for which it was used; externally, its employment had to be justified in the same terms."<sup>27</sup> Someone even advocated to integrate idealism and power politics as two opposing concepts and formed a new concept called "*Idealpolitik*" in order to better indicate the realism and practicability of the idealism.<sup>28</sup> In post-Cold War era, the United States has reinforced its interference in the affairs of other countries in order to preserve its status as 'world leader'. Nevertheless, the armed interference the United States is engaged in often has a strong color of moral punishment. In many situations, the United States flaunts the banners such as "humanitarianism" and "safeguarding human rights, democracy and freedom" to conceal its real objectives. Obviously, American governments have obtained a lot of benefits from integrating 'ideals' into their realistic diplomacy. Jacques Delors, former chairman of the European Economic Council, described the United States

as "Bible in one hand and gun in another hand".<sup>29</sup> Delors' description was full of meaning and vividly reflected the consistency of the 'idealist' tradition and the 'realistic' one in American foreign policy.

## Notes

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## **American Culture: The Features and Mechanism of Its Role in Diplomatic Behavior**

*Zhu Majie*<sup>1</sup>

American scholar Roland Robertson holds that the extent of cultural factor entering the real political field is higher than what many—of course not all—people specializing in international relations and other relevant researches recognize. It may be said, to varying degrees, again that all of international politics is cultural.<sup>2</sup> Here he stresses the profound relativity between culture and real international politics. This relativity prompts the original significance of cultural factor in international relations research.

Culture is an important part of US overall national strength. It, as a kind of soft power with strong radiation and infiltration, has been one of the fundamental driving forces of US diplomatic behavior, much as political, economic and military factors are. The role of cultural factor in US diplomatic behavior is not so distinct and direct as other factors, but, like a spirit, it controls the basic direction and way of US diplomatic behavior, so its role is more ‘original’.

### **Role, Mechanism and Control Model**

In his book *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Michael H. Hunt reviews the historical process of US foreign policy since its founding from the perspective of ideology. He maintains that ideology should be understood from the perspective of its interrelation with cultural system so as to grasp it better. Ignorance of the role of cultural value will lead to misunderstanding.<sup>3</sup> Culture, as a kind of original and directive factor, does have impacts on every aspect and link of US diplomatic behavior. Those politicians who have influenced and are influencing US foreign policy have more or less expressed such experience. Jimmy Carter once said that the new reality of the world requires a new type of US foreign policy—policy based on sticking forever to our values and traditional optimism. George W. Bush talked about the unchanging gist of US foreign policy at a press conference. He said that since the founding of the US, many things have changed, but the basic principles guiding its foreign policy remain unchanged. In the future, foreign policy must serve US national interests in the world and at the same time embody its maximum ideal.<sup>4</sup> The above-mentioned basic principles, national interests and maximum ideal unchanged for hundreds of years all originate from US cultural values. Henry Kissinger talked about culture’s impacts on decision-makers from the perspective of concept. He said that leaders’ views taking shape before their assumption of power are a wealth of intelligence, of which they will often make use during their tenure.<sup>5</sup> Here, the views refer to the political and moral concepts of these leaders taking shape under the edifying influence of the common US culture.

Diplomatic behavior is a kind of state behavior conducted by particular persons and groups. From content to way and means of conduct, it manifests the unique cultural details ‘soaking into’ the players. Expounding the significance of culture to human evolution, the famous cultural anthropologist Clifford Geertz pointed out that part of our central nervous system—the most important part, the cerebral cortex—grows in the interaction with culture. So, without guidance of meaningful symbolism, it is unable to direct our behavior or shape our experience. Our thought, value, action and even feeling are all products of culture like our nervous system itself.<sup>6</sup> We may

say that culture determines the basic connotation of a country's diplomatic behavior. The reason is persons as diplomatic players—decision-makers (or decision-making collective) or enforcers (or enforcing collective)—all grow in a particular environment and any of their behaviors (including diplomatic behavior) will inevitably bear an imprint of culture, which constitutes the inner quality of diplomatic behavior. In this sense, culture plays a broad role of control in human behavior. Geertz set forward a meaningful concept about control of human behavior—cultural control. This concept provides us a cultural anthropological idea for explaining cultural role mechanism to diplomatic behavior. He held that mankind relies extremely on control mechanism and cultural procedure transcending inheritance and 'skin' to control its behaviors, which he called the control mechanism of culture.<sup>7</sup> In fact, cultural control determines the social meaning of human behavior, especially human complex behavior including the diplomatic one.

The 'cultural role' mechanism for American diplomatic behavior can be expressed as cultural control, which makes US diplomatic behavior have a consistent and incontestable basic direction and ensures that it not deviate from the core value of US culture. As far as diplomatic players are concerned, culture is not their attachment or accessory, but core component.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, this kind of control does not come from external force, but rather from internal non-compulsory force. This control mechanism is an inherent one.

President, advisors to president, secretary of state, congresspersons and diplomats as well as governmental organs, relevant congress organs and various diplomatic organs composed of these—, they are all products of American culture. These US diplomatic players decide foreign policies, adopt foreign actions and judge whether these policies and actions are advantageous or disadvantageous. All the diplomatic behaviors can embody different styles due to different players. For example, one can easily see the divergence between Wilson and Harding, Carter and Reagan, Clinton and Bush, but one can also easily identify their diplomatic behaviors are typical 'US diplomatic behaviors' and have the same *value inclination*. Common culture controls diplomatic behaviors of different players and makes these behaviors point to the same value objective and attain some features brought about by American culture. Culture's control of US diplomatic behaviors is multifaceted:

1. It guides the trend of diplomatic behavior. Speaking in images, culture is the "navigator" of US leaders making decisions. Ian Johnston pointed out in 1995 that different countries have different strategic emphases, which originate from earlier or established experiences of the countries and are influenced, to some extent, by philosophic, political, cultural and cognitive features of the countries or their elite. So, it can be said that culture, as the "navigator", guides the direction of the country in international relations. In the unpredictable international environment, US leadership always observes the world and makes decisions through the prism of US culture, which provides it unique morale, ethic and value orientation and strongly influences its views on issues in international relations. In the process of making policies, it consciously or unconsciously takes its cultural concepts as the coordinate. Obviously, culture has the decisive impact on the direction of US diplomatic behaviors.

2. Culture provides the basis of strength and confidence to diplomatic behaviors. Zbigniew Brzezinski pointed out that the play given to the US "empire" force, to a great extent, comes from the superior organizational system, from the ability of rapidly mobilizing tremendous economic and technological resources for military purposes, from the unexplainable but important cultural attraction in American lifestyle and from the full vitality and inherent competitiveness of the US social and political elite.<sup>9</sup> The cultural attraction he said undoubtedly provides intangible but

strong strength and confidence for US diplomatic behaviors. Joseph Nye explained such a role of culture more penetratingly. He asserted in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* that the U.S. possesses a stronger ability of assimilation than other countries in the international system. He summarized the ability into guidance, attraction and imitation. It is *assimilative* strength. The attainment of the ability of assimilation is the ability of attraction of a country's thought or the ability of determining the political guidance which can manifest to some extent other countries' desire. He said that the global popularity of a country's culture and its ability of dominating international norms of behaviors and setting up favorable codes and institutions are important sources of power. He also quoted German journalist Joseph Joffe as saying that American culture, vulgar or elegant, radiates strongly. It is similar to the age of Rome, but is more novel. The cultural influence of Rome and the Soviet Union were limited to their military boundaries, but US soft strength spreads all over an empire where the sun never sinks.<sup>10</sup> He also maintained that American culture, well received by the world, always plays an important role in world affairs, greater than its economic and military strength. US mass culture implicated in products and contacts has extensive appeal and the racial openness of American culture and the political appeal of US values of democracy and human rights make it have international influence.

3. It provides norms for diplomatic behaviors. "Trust", as strong social capital, is such a norm of diplomatic behaviors. Francis Fukuyama stressed in his book *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* the significance of social trust. He held that a country's welfare and competitiveness is restrained by universal cultural features, which is a manifestation of social trust playing a role. The divergence in the degree of a country's social trust will certainly influence the extent of its cooperation in international relations. In his book *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*, he called this kind of trust as social capital. It is a set of illustrative informal values and codes of conduct jointly observed by members of a group who cooperate with each other according to this set of values and codes. The norms, which can produce social capital, must essentially include some virtues such as telling the truth, honoring commitments and reciprocity and mutual benefit. These norms overlap the values of the Puritans talked about by Weber to a great extent. Trust functions like a kind of grease, making the operation of a group or organization more efficient.<sup>11</sup> He held that the US has high social trust and a strong tendency of spontaneous social intercourse, which may lead to a huge, complicated organization involving the world, that is, a multinational cooperation. Therefore, providing such strong social capital through it for diplomatic behaviors, American culture exerts important impacts on the degree of trust of the international community and the nature of international cooperation organs.

4. It injects main features of culture into diplomatic behaviors. Arrogance and highhandedness is one of the typical features of American culture expressed in US diplomatic behaviors. The U.S. often relies on its strong superiority in strength to push forward hegemony and power politics, propagate its values of freedom and democracy and do its utmost to set its civilization as an example for others to follow and make it the universal civilization in the world. Because of world cultural diversity, comparative advantages of different cultures will inevitably play a dynamic role in responding to challenges of heterogeneous cultures. In the information era of scientific and technological swift development, with economic globalization, American culture picks up momentum towards expansion. This will certainly meet resistance from vast developing countries and even trigger contradictions and conflicts among Western countries in the same cultural scope due to their cultural divergence. Western countries' civilizations with the same origin and different development are basically consistent in value orientation, but they are divergent in views on different issues in their different development phases. Handling different issues in international

relations, they adopt different attitudes and approaches because of different objects, time, occasions and interest drive. Therefore, contradictions and conflicts may occur between the US and other Western countries. But, exploring the role of American culture in international relations, we cannot regard it as being too strong and exaggerate the possibility of cultural divergence triggering contradictions and conflicts. It is much less what Huntington asserted: The clash of civilizations will dominate the global politics. But it is definite that the cultural features of arrogance and highhandedness infiltrating into US diplomatic behaviors have been and will continue to be an important source of triggering contradictions and conflicts in the current international community.

### **Features of Cultural and Diplomatic Behavior**

The well-known features of US diplomatic behaviors originate from the country's cultural features. The former is the transfer, duplication and expression of the latter.

The birth, development and evolution of American culture have a unique background.

The US is an open immigration society. It took over 200 years for the US population to increase from 3.5 million in the initial stage after its founding to 250 million composed of more than 100 ethnic groups. This is the special environment for openness and diversity of American culture. The features of American ideology are formed by many factors. The cultures of many other ethnic groups are also reflected in the U.S. and mixed in the big melting pot of ethnic groups.<sup>12</sup> But the gene of American principal culture is the Anglo-Saxon national tradition. Anglo-Saxon immigrants in North America are whites believing in Protestantism and the culture they represent has become the leading model of American culture, that is, WASP culture.<sup>13</sup> Poor immigrants have traveled with misty expectations across the oceans to North America for pioneering work. Their hard work, blazing of new trails in a pioneering spirit and self-consciousness, have become the special tradition of American culture. "From the many, one" has become the American maxim.

American society has countless ties with religion, the position of which is prominent and the impacts of which are tremendous. Nine of ten Americans believe in God and pray. The Protestant ethic exerts a deep influence on American values. There are over 1300 broadcasting stations and 36 television stations in the U.S., which propagate religion at all times or most of the time. The Bible has become the best seller. Each US president takes an oath of office with his hand on the Bible, each meeting of the Congress does not start until a clergyman pastor prays, and the three armed services all have clergymen. A man who does not believe in God cannot be a witness at the court. The role of religion in US education is more attractive. Besides missionary schools, schools offer courses in religion. In the US society with a highly developed economy, science and technology, religious life is a part of American life. Max Weber held that the US capitalist spirit results from the Protestant ethic. Puritans advocate freedom, are not infatuated with doctrines and dogmas, attach importance to matter-of-factness, innovation, blazing of new trails and experiment, and lay stress on becoming rich through thrift and hard work, so as to save their souls. Their ascetic ethic has brought up the meticulous and conscientious style and the driving force of seeking wealth of the bourgeois and cultivated its spirit of adventure of exploring new territories and conquering the nature. All these have played an important role in the rise and development of US capitalism. The Puritans' sense of mission to build a new world and create a new social model has yielded a new ethnic identity, uniting all religious and secular members and combining religious and social reforms. In sum, Puritans have a great impact on the ethic, value orientation, social customs and

life model of American nationals. It may be said that the ascetic ethic is the source of American culture. With the evolution of the American society, the earlier puritanical ascetic ethic has gradually given way to hedonism of modern culture and the American society is flooded with the 'consumption' culture of the middle class, but the influence of religious culture is still great. Americans believe in God while stressing material comforts. As the American scholar William Isser said, the US is the most modernized country in the world and also one with the most developed religion among modern countries.<sup>14</sup>

Professor Robert Gruden with US Texas University summarized American culture as a special mixture of Christianity, capitalism and democracy, which are the three most fundamental elements composing American culture. They have inherited and developed European culture and have nativized it in the historical process of developing the New World—the Americas. From the perspective of ideas, concepts and ideology, American culture has shaped some obvious features in its development and evolution process.

1. *Racism*. It is the product of a sense of racial superiority. The American history has been always permeated with the spirit of the Savior and the self-glorifying sense of mission. This is related to most of Americans believing in Christianity. They consider themselves as voters of God, to have the natural destiny and to enlighten the whole world by education. Moreover, in the US historical evolution, Anglo-Saxonism was once in vogue and occupied the central position in the structure of the US racial concept. This concept preached that white Americans (especially British descendants) belonged to the most essential race. Americans have inherited the deep racial concept from the older generations of their European close relatives, regarding other races (especially colored races) as inferior ethnic groups. The self-centered racial concept has become the irresistible inheritance and passed on from generation to generation.<sup>15</sup> In the view of US racists, Americans are the people chosen by God and have the right to attain special rights and duties. In the past, when they went out to conquer the world, they did so for God.<sup>16</sup> Today, what they attach importance to is to bear the 'responsibility' to lead and help safeguard all the free countries in the world. This is their 'natural destiny'. Making a general survey of the American history, one can clearly see that "the sense of superiority", "the spirit of the Savior" and "the self-glorifying sense of mission" have been America's "evident spiritual prop".<sup>17</sup> This is also the ideological root of their "US as exceptional" theory.

2. *Individualism*. The most important value in American social ideology is individualism. It lays stress on independent motive, independent choice, self-reliance, respect to others, free personality and respect to privacy. This is a distinct mark of American culture. Individualism is different from egoism. Its connotation implies thought of democracy and freedom. It is seeking personal independence that is the starting and ending points of American thought of democracy. Individualism prevailed in the West in the 19th century. By the 20th century, individualism reached great heights<sup>18</sup> and dominated the ideological field. In the U.S., individualism has even become a kind of moral standard, main social creed and an important part of national thought. As far as Americans are concerned, individualism is the most vital identity.

3. *Liberalism*. Liberalism and individualism are twins of the American society. They flaunt the banner of freedom of conscience, freedom of speech and freedom of seeking wealth. The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States of America and The Bill of Rights all affirmed this freedom concept. In the view of President Wilson, the free thought and system of Americans of British descent is universally applicable.<sup>19</sup> The four freedoms put forward by President Roosevelt, that is, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and

freedom from fear, typify the concepts of the broad masses of American people. Liberalism is the basis of US political culture and also US important thought of building up the nation. US scholar Francis Fukuyama held that the two world wars in the 20th century and their attendant revolutions and upheavals simply had the effect of "forcing those societies in Europe and North America at the vanguard of civilization to implement their liberalism more fully".<sup>20</sup> He said that in the 20th century, the fundamental change in the world history was the "victory of economic and political liberalism". It is the ideal that will govern the material world in the long run.<sup>21</sup> It is evident that liberalism has been regarded as the most typical thought of the U.S. and the most prominent mark of American culture.

4. *Utilitarianism*. Individualism gave birth to utilitarianism. In the American society, stressing pragmatism and seeking efficacy and interests has become the general ethical concept. Thomas Penn and John Lock maintained that US political and economic progress is the product of every individual's behavior and the norm governing individual behavior is utility and self-interest. This kind of utilitarianism is embodied sometimes in "idealism" and sometimes in "realism". Taking a broad view of the American cultural development history, the two trends of thought have run through many debates, succeeding and infiltrating each other. No matter which concept dominates, its purpose is to seek efficacy. Americans have a concept, that is, what they must safeguard is not principles but interests. There is no friend but interest. Interest is the supreme god they really worship. Professor Huntington is right in saying that when Westerners went out to conquer the world, they did so for God as well as gold. Stressing efficacy and seeking interest has been a kind of code of conduct and value orientation of the American society. When the U.S. handles international relations, the ethical concept of utilitarianism is clearly manifested. It lies in seeking dominance over the world and meeting the needs of self-interest.

5. *Expansionism*. Like many Western countries, the US civilization's history is one of expansion. Expansionism is the inevitable product of the racial superiority theory. In the US ideological circles, the flavor of expansionism is obvious. They declare that expansion was, is and will be the law of American survival.<sup>22</sup> The famous American analyst Louis Harris pointed out that as a nation, "we are greedy and predatory."<sup>23</sup> After independence, the US followed in the footsteps of the UK and pursued a policy of expansion. The colonialist acts which ironically *The Declaration of Independence* condemns have repeated in the US history of foreign relations. The U.S. has gradually expanded from 13 states at the beginning of its founding to 50 states. In the heyday of Western capitalism, many Asian, African and Latin American countries were reduced to the status of the colonies and semi-colonies of Western countries. Western countries such as the US used armed might to explore new frontiers, disseminated the decree of God with the Bible of missionaries and relied on commodities and advanced science and technology to occupy new markets in the world. In the perspective of Americans, they should take the initiative to give play to their role of Savior like the missionaries. It is ironic that the more Americans take the initiative to devote themselves to destroy spheres of influence, the farther they go in establishing their own spheres of influence.<sup>24</sup> The US attitudes towards and concepts of Asian, African and Latin American newly independent countries have never changed fundamentally and the US has spared no effort to impose its social model and values on others. More post-war facts show the feature of expansion of American culture.

One of the most fundamental concepts—the concept of "natural rights"—runs through the above-mentioned main features of American culture. This is the most essential core content of American culture. The above three US historical documents in the initial stage of building up the

nation embody the thought of 'natural rights'. The Declaration of Independence declares that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. The Constitution of the United States of America ushered in a new era in human rights legislation. The constitution ensured replacement of the loose government of the Confederation with a more perfect federal government, thus more efficiently guaranteeing "freedom, equality and property". The Amendments to the Constitution in force on December 15, 1791—The Bill of Rights—developed the thought of human rights in The Declaration of Independence. It combined the earlier human rights theories and practices and played a huge promoting role in developing Western human rights theory.

But, the concept of natural rights embodied in these three documents has evident class limitations and weaknesses. Take the right to vote as an example. The people have limitations of property, age, sex, length of residence and level of education. A human rights report of the US State of Department recognized the following facts: the destiny of American aboriginal inhabitants is that their culture and society have been destroyed and replaced. Members of other American minority ethnic groups have also suffered unjust treatment. Immigrants coming to America's shores have often suffered discrimination and resistance, which in turn have worsened their predicament.<sup>25</sup> After all these years, there remain many problems in the 'human rights' situation of American Indians, African Americans and women.

However, the various kinds of malpractice of the concept of natural rights in US domestic practices in legislative, judicial and executive branches have not hindered its core position in American cultural values. American nationals are deeply in love with the concept of 'natural rights', which for them has the basic connotation of freedom, democracy and equality. This concept has gradually been saturated by strong nationalism and self-centering flavor. It is a spiritual product evolved against the US unique historical background. WASP culture is just the starting point of this kind of value-system. As Michael Hunt said in his book *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, a prominent feature of US nationalism is the strong 'millennialist' [apocalyptic] complex, which casts this country of America in the role of assuming a special responsibility for mankind and playing the part of the Savior.<sup>26</sup> This self-centered awareness is in essence a kind of racial superiority.

The above essential features of American culture are deeply embedded in US diplomatic behaviors, becoming the essential features of US diplomatic behaviors.

Pursuit of the ideal goal by US diplomatic behaviors originates from the faith in 'natural destiny'. The US supreme ideal is to fulfill the honorable mission God entrusts: turning the whole world into democratic capitalism. As early as 1776, Thomas Penn cited in his work *Common Sense* the Puritans' ideal of the 'millennium' and said that only voters blessed by God can play a special leading role in global spiritual regeneration. Americans regard themselves as 'God ["godly"] voters', who do their duty to the world whenever they do their duty to themselves.<sup>27</sup> In the opinion of Theodore Roosevelt, the world is an arena of racial and national competition. In a world full of competition, sometimes fierce and brutal, the US has the lofty responsibility, that is, to find and subdue challenges to make the strong stronger. This is the key of vital importance. He considered that collision between civilized and uncivilized races is unavoidable. Progress can only come from civilized people subduing their uncivilized neighbors.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Nixon explained, in his book *Beyond Peace*, what he considers to be an ideal world: All countries have free economic and political systems and are to be loyal forever to social justice and human rights.<sup>29</sup> Taking a general view of American history, we can see that all the previous US presidents stressed with a similar rhetoric that the U.S., as the strongest democratic country in the world, should bear the

responsibility of leading and safeguarding the free world and should push ahead and strengthen values of democracy in the world. A deep-rooted sense of racial superiority is manifested in this concept of freedom and democracy and in their sense of mission. Famous scholar Benjamin described the sense of racial superiority as follows: All the US expansions originate from this belief that US civilization is the supreme and ultimate one by now. Other nations' ability to reach the level of the US is considered to rely at least on the example it sets, that is, on its efforts to enlighten them.<sup>30</sup> US territorial expansion yesterday and hegemonic acts today can be in essence traced from the same origin of Jefferson's 'democratic ideal'.

The appeal of US diplomatic behaviors to national interests is always closely related to US fundamental value orientation. All previous US governmental leaders attached much importance to values such as freedom and democracy and propagated and pursued the values to the world. This is their consistent goal. Promotion of democracy abroad has become one of the three pillars of US national security strategy and foreign policy. In the words of Christopher, democracy is the moral and strategic order. The purpose is to extend national interests through spreading values. Besides, the appeal of US diplomatic behaviors to national interests depends on the intangible strength of American culture. The most basic connotation of US national interests is to ensure the nation's absolute security, promote economic growth and maintain the position of number one power and world hegemony. Brzezinski held that the US scope of forces and state of omnipresence in the world is unique. In the military field, it has an unmatched capacity to play a role in the world. In the economic field, it remains the locomotive of global economic growth. In the technical field, it maintains the all-round leading position in creative sophisticated fields and in the cultural field, American culture—though somewhat coarse—has incomparable attraction, especially to the young of the world. All these have given the US the political influence other countries are too inferior to bear comparison with. The four fields together have made the US the sole comprehensive global superpower.<sup>31</sup> He also pointed out that cultural rule is the field the US global force has not paid adequate attention to. He expressed his expectation of strengthening the cultural role in safeguarding national interests. In fact, American cultural values have been extended to the whole world through many attractive channels and means. As some US scholars said, when imitation of American style gradually spreads all over the world, it has created a more comfortable environment for the US conducting indirect hegemony which seems to be agreed-on. <sup>32</sup> It is evident that the global expansion of American cultural values has been regarded as the most "charming" way of realizing US national interests.

Racism, individualism, liberalism, utilitarianism and expansionism, the basic features of American culture, accompanying the arrogant sense of mission and the sense of superiority in cultural values, are fully embodied in almost all US diplomatic behaviors. They highlight the concerns sometimes for the ideal of freedom and democracy, sometimes for US strategic interests, and sometimes for human rights. They play the part sometimes of an ambassador of God and sometimes of the world policeman. The concept of natural rights and the resulting main cultural features alternate or simultaneously appear in US diplomatic behaviors.

In the past 200 years, the U.S. has at least sent its troops to the rest of the world 150 times with the aim at seeking its interests, peddling its values and fulfilling the 'mission of God'. In 1801, the U.S. invaded Libya and blockaded the Port of Tripoli and in 1805 forced the latter to grant the most favored nation status one-sidedly. In March 1815, it declared war on Algeria and in June forced the latter to sign an unequal treaty. In 1836, it used force to compel Morocco and Tunisia to accept an unequal treaty and pay the tribute in money. Between 1846 and 1848, the U.S. launched the aggressive war against Mexico and seized Texas. On July 3, 1844, it forced the

Chinese government of the Qing Dynasty to sign the Treaty of Wangsia and obtained the right in the Treaty of Nanking relating to opening five ports for trade, granting the one-sided most favored nation status and extraterritoriality. On June 18, 1858, the U.S. compelled the government of the Qing Dynasty to sign the Treaty of Tientsin to extend consular jurisdiction. After WWII, the U.S. has taken the road of global expansion, the misdeeds of which have been imprinted into China, DPRK, Greece, Iran, Guatemala, Lebanon, Cuba, Vietnam, Dominica, Chile, Grenada, Libya, Panama, Haiti, Iraq and the former Yugoslavia.

Let's look at Vietnam first. Michael Hunt raised the question in this way: Why did the US wage such a costly and destructive war in a small and faraway country which has no conflict of interests with it? The main reason for interference can only be summed up in one word "faith". In fact, US behaviors on this soil demonstrate its pursuit for US values of freedom and democracy and also for US interests in Asia.

On the issue of Iraq, US diplomatic behaviors display the typical features of utilitarianism. The US Government's Iraq policy after 1990 is quite different from that before. Before August 1990, Saddam Hussein was regarded as a useful ally of the US in the Middle East for containing Iran's influence. On April 26, 1990, the then Assistant Secretary Kelly still said before the House Foreign Affairs Committee that the Bush administration tried to gradually develop mutually beneficial relations with Iraq to strengthen the positive trend in its domestic and foreign policies. The Bush administration continued to provide export guarantee through the Eximbank for Iraq and the Department of State and the Department of Commerce encouraged US trade with Iraq and made efforts to resist the sanction measures of the Congress. On August 2, 1990, Iraq outrageously invaded and occupied Kuwait, severely threatening US strategic interests. For this reason, the US Government's Iraq policy underwent a fundamental change. It suddenly condemned Hussein as an 'incarnation of Hitler' and an out-and-out devil and pushed the UN Security Council to adopt the most stringent measures against Iraq. The U.S. launched the Operation Desert Shield, the Operation Desert Storm and the Gulf War. On February 27, 1991, President Bush declared the liberation of Kuwait and the US-led multinational forces won an all-round military victory at little cost of casualties. After that, Iraq has always been under the threat of military strikes by the US and other Western powers. Because of the obstruction of the US and others, the UN has not yet lifted the sanctions against Iraq, resulting in Iraqi economy on the verge of collapse, skyrocketing prices and the people in dire poverty. One year after the September 11th terror attacks, the U.S. is ready to undertake a new military operation against Iraq on the grounds of Iraq possessing weapons of mass destruction. The US policy to Iraq shows that what it is concerned about is its strategic interests in the Middle East and oil security. As far as US national interests are concerned, in the Gulf region, ensuring the oil supply is of vital importance.

An extreme example of embodying the values of liberalism in diplomatic behavior is that the US insists on declaring 'socialism and communism' as its bitter adversaries. After the Russian Bolsheviks seized power in November 1917, Secretary of State Robert Lansing in the Wilson administration regarded Bolshevism as the most shocking, most fearful event, one unprecedented in the human mind and representing the utter abandonment of modern civilization.<sup>33</sup> This hostile policy resulting from antitheses of cultural values has lasted up to now. When drastic changes occurred in the former Soviet Union and East Europe, the then US President Bush couldn't help saying at the Yale graduation that "[T]he iron curtain collapsed—it's gone, the wall is down—and with it the myth of an ideology called communism." "Look at every corner of the globe and you will find that the American example has consequences." A commentary in the *Washington Post* said that the Western world spent half a century and hundreds of millions of dollars to seek for the

way of collapsing communism, but suddenly found the answer in the TV news. A famous US film producer asserted in an article entitled "Hollywood Confronting Communism" that Hollywood films are ambassadors in the iron box and the most efficient destructive force against communism. Later this so-called destructive force pointed to China. A commentary on US-China relations in *The New York Times* on September 10, 1991 openly said that in the current world, no country is bolder than China in so daringly maintaining the ideology and values most Americans consider outdated or evil. With the disintegration of the former Soviet communist power, there appeared a vacuum in the position of the 'evil empire' at which the US had hurled abuse. Now there are indications that China may fill the vacuum and become the US's main ideological rival and the symbol Americans are, to a great extent, disgusted with. In the view of Americans, a successful revolution must conform to the purpose and method of their own revolution with which they are familiar in their mind and their political accomplishment. These concepts have been deeply rooted in the minds of decision-makers.<sup>34</sup> It is maybe the Chinese cultural values and the resulting strategic decisions and policy choices that challenge the US psychology of world leadership and dampen America's national overweening mentality. Thus bursts of hullabaloes of "containment" and "sanctions" were raised in the US Congress and the media. In the view of US leaders, no matter what policy the U.S. adopts towards China, it doesn't aim at China's interests, but rather its own interests and security. In the long run, the US will encourage "forces for economic and political liberalism" within China so as to promote China's extensive and peaceful evolution from communism to democracy.<sup>35</sup> Obviously, US China-related policy choices and behaviors bear a deep brand of its cultural values.

### **Cultural Expansion: The Instrumental Function of Culture in Diplomatic Objectives**

Besides controlling the basic trend and way of US diplomatic behaviors as an original and directive essential factor, American culture increasingly plays an independent role in US external affairs. Besides a directive role, culture also plays an instrumental role. It has become an instrument of the US in pursuing its international strategy. Cultural expansion is a manifestation of this instrumental role.

Joseph Nye holds that, in the current international community, an ideal result cannot be achieved only by military strength on many issues related to US interests. If the U.S. wants to remain strong, it is necessary for Americans to concern themselves about US 'soft power'. This power can make others do what you want them to do. If the US represents the values others are willing to imitate, it can easily play a leading role. <sup>36</sup> He also maintains that American culture is a rather valuable resource of soft power needing not much input. The US has stronger ability of assimilation than other countries in the international system. It has successfully built a political framework for world capitalist institutionalization.<sup>37</sup> In fact, the US Government has always attached importance to planning and using cultural power to achieve its national interests, which is the US cultural strategy. In the view of US leaders, it is the most efficient way to use cultural power to pursue the democratic system and values. The reason why the US lays stress on making use of cultural strategy is cultural products themselves embody its ideology, concept of democracy and freedom and value orientation. US production and export of cultural products can not only earn tremendous commercial profits but also yield huge political and ideological impacts and social effects. According to statistics, US TV programmes and films account for 75% of the world market. Of the US's top 400 corporations, 72 are cultural enterprises. US audiovisual industry ranks second in export, next only to the aerospace industry. In the current US society, liberal

market economy is highly developed, all spiritual products are marketed and commercialized and cultural power is closely integrated with commodity power. All these, especially the use of high technology, have made its cultural products more attractive and absorbable.

US cultural expansion is increasingly drawing people's attention in the following aspects:

1. Taking "human rights" as a tool of achieving diplomatic objectives. As some researchers say, the U.S. regards "human rights diplomacy" as an "excellent weapon" and "the most important superiority in liberal and democratic countries fighting for expanding influence".<sup>38</sup> Some Western countries led by the US have launched attacks once again with an insufferable arrogance at the meetings of the UN Human Rights Commission. Those that have been accused are without exception the developing countries. The pertaining Western countries think the Western lifestyle is the beacon to be imitated by other countries and the Western social system is the role model to be followed by other societies. Interfering in internal affairs, violating the sovereignty and even going further to subvert the regimes of other countries in the name of safeguarding human rights, has become an important means for the US to achieve its diplomatic objectives. Pursuing "human rights diplomacy" has become the US national policy.

2. Strengthening cultural infiltration in international organizations and pursuing hegemony by controlling international organizations. The U.S. tries to impose its will on international organizations to force them to represent its values and give service to its interests. In the process of economic globalization, many important international organizations and systems, which have been set up under the dominance of the US and other Western countries, obviously bear the features of American and European cultures and are controlled in varying degrees by these countries. In the article "The Clash of Civilizations?", Huntington frankly admitted that the US controls international political and security institutions and uses "the world community" as the substitute term for the older phrase, "the free world". Decisions made at the UN Security Council or the International Monetary Fund that reflect the interests of the West are presented to the world as reflecting the desires of the 'world community'! "The West in effect is using international institutions, military power and economic resources to run the world in ways that will maintain Western predominance, protect Western interests and promote Western political and economic values." It is making efforts "to induce other peoples to adopt Western ideas concerning democracy and human rights."<sup>39</sup> It is particularly worthy to be pointed out that the US and other Western countries take their own values and human rights standards as the universal principle and do their best to force the UN to play a role in a way conforming to their interests. Sometimes, some actions adopted by the UN and other international organizations may be transformed into their tools to pursue hegemony and interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and violate their sovereignty.

3. Making use of "humanitarian intervention" to carry out neo-interventionism. There are some basic ideas in the neo-interventionism. The first is human rights over sovereignty. The second is pursuit of global "democratization". The third is expansion of democracy beyond national boundaries. On these grounds, US-led Western countries can conduct "humanitarian intervention" in the countries they identify as violating human rights according to their standards of "civilization". It is on the pretext of "preventing genocide" that the barbarous bombing of Yugoslavia, by the US and its NATO allies, was conducted.

4. Taking advantage of market economy to carry out cultural infiltration. US cultural strategy attaches much importance to producing complete sets of and exporting a wide range of cultural products. The US has made full use of market forces to spread its ideas concerning freedom and

democracy and values so as to make market economy a main channel of enhancing engagement, instilling ideas and transplanting concepts. In the process of economic globalization, the export of US cultural products is extraordinarily active and the utility of high technology makes them more attractive, penetrative and competitive. The US has devoted major efforts to strengthen and enlarge ideological industries such as film, TV, broadcasting, compact disc, fax and Internet and upgrade the competitiveness and market occupancy rate of these cultural products with superior conditions and advanced means. US mass media are called "another government" and its newspapers are called the "bible of democracy". US Web technology is dominant with US information accounting for over 80% in the current 320 million Web pages, of which service information accounts for over 95%. The Internet is called the "wall of democracy in the air". The U.S. has also tried to break restrictions set up by developing countries and force them to open their markets in the name of "protecting intellectual property rights" so that its cultural products can be exported and spread smoothly. A US journalist (Jones) published an article entitled "Western Culture Is Assaulting the East" in *The Christian Science Monitor*. He said that all over Asia, the rapid development of trade, technology and tourism has combined with the post-Cold War large influx of ideas, personnel and mass cultures, resulting in changes in Asian social values. Their own social values have been alienated while being weakened, which makes them feel uneasy. But this is just the social effect Westerners wish to achieve.

5. Using cultural strong points to vie for human resources. The competition in soft power focusing on culture has become an important phenomenon in world development. In the new century, global cultural collision will be unavoidable and cultural competition fiercer. The competition in soft power is a world cultural game, with its result depending on human resources of countries. Upgrade of national quality and cultivation of excellent talents are an important basis and precondition of enhancing comprehensive national strength. Therefore, vying for human resources is one of the focuses of competition in soft power. Brzezinski pointed out in *The Grand Chessboard* that US national culture is the only one of its kind suitable for economic growth. This culture absorbs and quickly assimilates the most talented people overseas, thus promoting the development of national strength. The US has become a sacred place for those seeking higher education. Nearly 500,000 foreign students have poured into the US, of which many, often the most capable students, have never returned to their motherlands. There are graduates from US universities in almost every government cabinet all over the world.<sup>40</sup> For a long time, the US has always made full use of its cultural strong points to cultivate the elite and enlist able persons in the world, especially from developing countries, to serve its development and strategic objectives.

US cultural expansion shows the independent role of culture in giving play to instrumental function. Culture's instrumental function and its directive function in diplomatic behavior have made it of dual importance for the implementation of US international strategy.

## Notes

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## **Rethinking Efficiency and Institutional Capacity: Globalization and the Challenge of Selective Adaptation**

*Man B. Potter*<sup>1</sup>

This paper examines conceptual and methodological approaches for examining normative and regulatory dimensions of efficiency in cross-cultural context. The importance of the topic is linked to key conceptual and policy dilemmas of globalization, where economic benefits are unequally distributed and compliance with regulatory regimes aimed at promoting efficiency is uneven.

### **Globalization and the Spread of Liberal Norms of Market Regulation**<sup>2</sup>

The notion of "globalisation" may well be an ideology (White, 1995), but it has its origins in material interest. For just as states deploy and manipulate international economic organisations to suit their own policy imperatives (Trachtman, 1997), so both states and private actors build popular support for particular institutional and normative regimes through the deployment and manipulation of ideas. Thus, while political and economic elites often decry the overuse of the term "globalisation", it is these same elites who make most use of opportunities for increased international mobility of capital and information. And while the international movement of people and goods often involves sub-elites more directly, as migrants, producers of exports and consumers of imports, the conditions under which these activities occur remain subject to the priorities and imperatives of elite managers and policy makers.

Nonetheless, it would appear that political and commercial elites are content to dismiss and even conceal many of the phenomena of globalisation. For example, negotiations (abandoned in October 1999) on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) were ill-publicised if not concealed by the governments concerned (Thomas, 1997; Clarke, 1997). Similarly, there was little public discussion of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) until isolationists in the US Congress began to detect political advantage in opposing the agreement (Randall, Konrad and Silverman, 1992; Alexander, 1993). Producers of consumer products from sneakers to hand-held computers and other electronic goods would be all too happy to conceal the fact that these products are made in developing economies with working conditions that would shock the good citizens of Portland and Sunnyvale. And while the growth of personal computer-cum-modem technology has allowed increasingly large sections of the middle class to become their own stockbrokers, precious little encouragement is given to these investors to look beyond the blue chip opportunities of Wall Street and Bay Street.

Rather, official attention is paid to specific issues attendant to the "new world order". Thus, the completion of the Uruguay Round of the GATT and the finalising of the Marrakesh Agreement in 1994 and the formation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995 are viewed officially not as globalisation phenomena, but as practical solutions to the increasingly complex conditions of world trade. To the extent that these conditions have global effects, however, policies and analysis operate at the global level. Thus, the international monetary system is subject to a globalised analytic framework (Germain, 1997). The international political economy approach to global finance is complemented by world-system theories of markets and institutions (Chase-

Dunn, 1989). Yet these are a far cry from the treatment of "globalisation" that captures the public attention.

To a very large extent the phenomenon of globalisation is also an issue of imagination. In the popular culture, globalisation is perceived as a troubling phenomenon. While the increasingly free flow of information, goods, people and money across borders is recognised as having unparalleled importance in the post-Cold War world, the effects are often seen as harmful by local communities. Jobs are seen to be lost to overseas and immigrant workers. Consumer goods are at once welcomed for the cheap prices that production in developing economies allows, but also scorned as the product of less than savoury authoritarian regimes. The Internet is viewed by many as a helpful educational and commercial instrument, but also is treated with apprehension as a source of pornography and hate speech. The relationship between international capital markets and the value of the national currency is increasingly seen as depriving local communities of control over their standards of living.

These popular concerns are not unknown to national elites. The perceived perils of globalisation have led to calls for greater pursuit of justice in the interplay between local communities and the global system (Silbey, 1997). Indeed, the extent to which the international economic system remains dependent on the interaction of national economies (Obstfeld and Rogoff, 1996) has allowed states the opportunity to pursue nationalistic economic policies aimed at protecting local interests (Cohen, 1991). Whether in pursuit of protecting local communities from the perceived deleterious effects of "globalisation", or merely to ensure that local elites gain advantage in their participation in the international economy, political leaders have paid continuing attention to the question of sovereignty (Pauley, 1995; Sassen, 1996). Resigned to the limits on sovereignty presented by trends toward global economic integration, some contemporary thinkers suggest that international legal regimes are appropriate and capable to protect national interests (Hainsworth, 1995). The integration of international economic norms with domestic institutions is seen as a crucial step (Kohona, 1987). Drawing perhaps unknowingly on a discourse of protection theory and welfare economics, some observers have suggested that international legal and political regimes should draw on those aspects of domestic law that are best suited to promoting public welfare internationally (Fox and Ordovery, 1996; Corden, 1974).

Juxtaposed to elite observers who focus on world systems theory are those who stress the conflict between globalisation and regional arrangements, particularly in the area of trade relations (Van Dijk and Sideri, 1996; Faini and Grilli, 1995; Preusse, 1994; Wyatt-Walter, 1995). Regionalism has been a particularly attractive theme in the context of developing economies, where export-led growth benefits from access to international markets, but where full integration in the world economy is seen as entrenching dependence on global capital markets (Haggard, 1995; Brown, 1994). In the East Asian region especially, notions of "open regionalism" as envisioned by the APEC forum, and even narrower interpretations of regional preferences, have played a significant role in the articulation of national policies aimed at balancing cooperation and protection in the interaction between local and international economies (Pierson, 1994; Rudner, 1994; Sornarajah, 1995).

Whether viewed as an empirical phenomenon or as a dilemma of imagination, globalisation remains a powerful expression of changing social, political and economic relations at the international level. To a very important extent, globalisation includes an attempt to spread liberal ideals of social and particularly economic and political organisation. The regulatory norms associated with the GATT and the WTO are emblematic of the liberal market paradigm being spread around the world under the rubric of globalisation. The general GATT principles of national

treatment, most-favoured nation treatment, non-discrimination and transparency have been incorporated into the Marrakesh Agreement on Establishment of the World Trade Organisation.<sup>3</sup> The GATT/WTO system represents a model for the unification of law and trade practices based on ideas of liberal open market and free trade principles. While the capacity of the liberal industrial economies to promote this vision derives as much from the predominance of their political and economic power as from the inherent wisdom of their ideas (Wagner, 1988), there is little doubt that the influence of these ideas has spread dramatically in the post-Cold War world.

Globalization has seen the emergence of ideals of efficiency as a touchstone for law and policy. Although, both Pareto optimality analysis and Kalder-Hicks efficiency analysis acknowledge potentially broad parameters for notions of public goods (Trebilcock), the discourse of efficiency tends to consign to a secondary role essential goals of development, sustainability, and public goods on such issues as safe and secure employment, housing, health care, education, and environmental protection. Yet even private goods ideals of efficiency often go unmet in practice, as a result of human behavioural preferences (Porter, Scully). Weaknesses of efficiency theories result in part from assumptions about the universality of liberal norms of efficiency and a corresponding lack of appreciation that enforcement of regulatory regimes aimed at furthering efficiency ideals depends on consensus of underlying norms and values. Such normative consensus is particularly elusive in cross-cultural context.

Regulatory regimes based on ideals of efficiency, particularly those associated with the WTO, the IMF, and the proposed multilateral agreement on investment, derive largely from socio-economic and political norms (Etzioni) associated with elites in Europe and North America. The process of globalization has imposed regulatory regimes based on liberal norms of efficiency on societies outside the European tradition, but has had less effect in displacing local cultural norms. The absence of normative consensus about efficiency may help explain both uneven enforcement of regulatory regimes aimed at promoting efficiency and the unequal distribution of purported economic benefits associated with it. The joining of regulatory and normative analysis supports more expansive approaches to efficiency that recognize a range of normative and behavioral factors, including issues of fairness and equality (Putterman). Just as Berle and Means suggested, corporate managers do not necessarily act out of the same perception of self-interest that drives decisions by shareholders (Bratton), so too might inquiries about efficiency take into account varying norms of workers, local communities, and other stakeholders. Such an approach can expand upon social cost analysis (Coase), by addressing local norms about market failures and efficiency. Re-examining ideals of efficiency in the context of local norms also permits consideration of new approaches to economic and political utility, allowing interests of "rational utility maximizers" (Malloy and Braun, Rose) to include norms about community interests (Rose-Ackerman).

### **Conceptual Foundation: Selective Adaptation**

The interplay of regulatory regimes and norms of efficiency in cross-cultural context can be examined by reference to the concept of "selective adaptation". Selective adaptation describes a process by which practices and norms are exchanged between economies and across cultural boundaries (Potter 1999, Potter 2001a, Cf. Donald Kennedy). Selective adaptation is reflected in the ways that governments and elites express their own normative preferences through interpretation and application of regulatory regimes. Selective adaptation also operates within societies as different groups interact with and respond to dominant discourses (Etzioni). Both

internationally and domestically, selective adaptation represents a coping strategy for balancing local needs with requirements of compliance with regulatory regimes derived from the non-local norms.

Selective adaptation depends on a number of factors, including perception, complementarity, and legitimacy. Perception influences understanding about foreign and local norms and practices (Unger). Complementarity describes a circumstance by which apparently contradictory phenomena are combined in ways that preserve their essential characteristics and yet allow them to operate together in a mutually reinforcing and effective manner (Bohr). Legitimacy concerns the extent to which members of local communities support the purposes and consequences of selective adaptation (Weber, Scharpf). These preliminary observations about selective adaptation and its components suggest a range of research questions and hypotheses.

Selective adaptation involves a number of research questions on such issues as: (i) the role of information, education, gender, class, location, and other characteristics on perceptions of individuals and groups engaged in interpretation and application of regulatory regimes (i.e. interpretive agents); (ii) the effects that factors such as historical background, political ideology, policy priorities, structural and organizational environments, and substantive and procedural precedents have on complementarity; and (iii) the effects that issues of content and procedure in selection and adaptation, relationships between interpretive agents and affected communities, consequences (expected and real), and factors of perception and complementarity have on legitimacy.

The dynamics of selective adaptation suggest a number of preliminary hypotheses, including (a) sharing of regulatory regimes on investment and corporate governance does not necessarily indicate consensus on underlying norms about efficiency, and (b) compliance with regulatory regimes on investment and corporate governance in different cultural communities depends on consensus about underlying norms about efficiency. These in turn suggest that: (a) perceptions about regulatory regimes and underlying norms affect their interpretation and application by local individuals and groups; (b) interpretation and application of regulatory regimes about investment and corporate governance depend in part on the extent of complementarity between local and non-local norms about efficiency and (c) compliance with regulatory regimes on investment and corporate governance depends in part on the legitimacy accorded underlying norms of efficiency by affected communities. Additional hypotheses include (a) perceptions about regulatory regimes and norms depend on access to information, education, gender, class, location, and other characteristics particular to individuals and groups; (b) complementarity between local and non-local regulatory regimes and norms depends on factors particular to specific rules and norms such as history, ideology, policy, structure and organization, substance and procedure (c) legitimacy of selectively adapted non-local regulatory regimes and norms depends on content and process in selection and adaptation, relationships between interpretive agents and affected communities, consequences (expected and real), and factors of perception and complementarity. These can be refined for later research testing.

### **Efficiency in International Investment and Corporate Governance**

Policy sectors of corporate governance and international investment are particularly useful examples where selective application can help explain the interplay between regulatory compliance and normative consensus on issues of efficiency. Dissemination internationally of regulatory regimes for investment (based primarily on the IMF system, the GATT and the WTO)

and corporate governance (based largely on domestic legislation) derive largely from Europe and North America, raise opportunities for selective adaptation locally (Pistor and Wellons). Ideals of efficiency can be re-examined from the standpoint of interrelated issues of development, sustainability, and public goods, as these affect selective adaptation of regulatory regimes for international investment and domestic corporate governance.

**International Investment.** International investment reveals the ways in which non-local regulatory regimes intersect with local norms about efficiency in the global context, while regulatory regimes on corporate governance based on efficiency norms encounter selective adaptation by subaltern groups within particular economies and internationally. Building on interdisciplinary policy and academic discourses of behavioral law and economics (Rostain), socio-legal studies (Hunt), legal culture (Friedman), new institutional economics (North), and power and information asymmetries (Stiglitz and Greenwald), policies on investment can take into account regulatory regimes and underlying norms on such issues as (a) investment structures and processes; (b) timetables and benchmarks for returns on investment; (c) continuity and change in international cross-cultural perspectives on investment; (d) ancillary effects of investment on local societies and economies; (e) effects of external factors such as power and information asymmetries.

**Corporate Governance.** Drawing on discourses in behavioral law and economics (Blair), socio-economics (Dallas & Dickerson), norms as regulatory instruments (Sarra), and issues of trust and contract in discourses of corporate governance (Bratton), policies on corporate governance can examine regulatory regimes and underlying norms on such issues as (a) the effects of market definitions of efficiency on structures and processes for corporate accountability; (b) the availability of alternatives to market-based definitions of efficient corporate governance; (c) continuity and change in international and domestic cross-cultural perspectives on corporate governance; (d) effects of multi-national enterprises on the provision of public goods and regulatory authority; (e) power and information asymmetries and their effects on the implementation of corporate governance regimes.

## **Regulatory Institutions and Institutional Capacity**

Efficiency depends in part on the mobilization of resources by institutions. This in turn depends on capacity of regulatory institutions – particularly those operating at the intersections of law and the market. Although few legal scholars debate the importance or utility of studying law in different societies, the field of comparative law remains conflicted as to identity and purpose. Classical approaches to comparing the content and origins of statutes, administrative edicts and other texts have long given way to studies of institutional performance and social behavior, and inquiries about norms and ideology (Ewald, Frankenberg, Sacco). Often this is done in disciplines other than law. Political scientists have worked to bring to the study of comparative law critical questions about political movements, ideological change, and regime dynamics. (Lev). Anthropologists have offered important insights to issues of power, social norms and behavior (Geertz 1983, Nader 1969, Starr & Collier). Economists examined the interplay between institutional change and economic performance (North, Mattei). Scholars focusing on law and development have examined the important role that law and legal institutions play in socio-economic and political change (Jayasuriya, Pistor & Wellons).

While norms of law may inform somewhat the interactions of everyday life (Jutras), reliance on globalized structures and processes of liberal governance and market regulation associated with

globalization cannot be assumed to lead to changes in socio-economic behavior (Rostain). This is particularly the case in developing economies, where the role and effect of formal institutions have been challenged by a variety of historical and cultural factors. Accordingly, assessments of the potential effects of globalization on socio-economic behavior should examine first the issue of the capacity of intermediary institutions to manage socio-economic change. Institutional capacity has usefully been examined in terms of functional issues of information, communications, symmetry, and enforcement (Blomquist & Ostrom). In developing economies, however, where regulatory institutions face the challenge of re-orienting their mission from one of restraining economic behavior to the confines of state planning to one that facilitates market-oriented transactions, and where policy consensus over this transformation is weak, institutional capacity may depend on more fundamental conditions of identity and structure (Betancourt, Desveaux). Accordingly institutional capacity may usefully be examined by reference to issues of institutional purpose, location, orientation and cohesion.

### *Institutional Purpose*

Institutional purpose plays a significant role in determining the capacity of institutions to respond to socio-economic change. The capacity of regulatory institutions depends largely on the policy priorities to which they are directed. Many developing economy reform efforts are driven largely by policy imperatives centered on economic growth. The effectiveness of regulatory institutions will thus depend on whether there is complementarity of purpose between their regulatory function and policy imperatives of the economic growth. Selective adaptation affects the ways in which the policy purposes and performance of regulatory institutions are conceived and implemented.

In the field of economic regulation, the process of selective adaptation permits globalized principles of trade liberalization and the rule of law to be balanced with local concerns over socio-economic welfare and development. Specific outcomes will depend in part on the extent to which local political leaders and by extension the managers of the economic system view global norms as furthering the policy purposes of economic growth and social development. Globalized regulatory norms, such as WTO requirements concerning transparency, national treatment, non-discrimination and other disciplines may well encourage economic growth. But full compliance with these norms will depend on whether they suit policy objectives supporting social equity and protection of public goods.

Thus institutional capacity depends to a significant extent on the interplay between policy purpose and institutional performance. Where globalized regulatory norms reinforce existing priorities, institutional capacity will be strengthened. But where there is conflict between globalized regulatory requirements and local policy priorities, institutional capacity will be limited.

### *Institutional Location*

Issues of institutional purpose vary depending on location. Institutional development in developing economies has widely been seen to require increased decentralization (Wunsch). WTO requirements set forth in GATT Article XXIV on national and regional compliance may permit the central government to ensure local level enforcement of WTO requirements. As the central governments assume responsibility for ensuring local level enforcement of WTO requirements, protecting local initiative and policy diversity will be a key challenge. In this respect, Canadian

and international policy discourses on federalism offer useful insights to the dilemmas of central-local relations that inform national integration programs (Hogg, Livingston).

Disparities of central and local perspective raise questions about institutional capacity. In the process of bargaining that accompanies the allocation of resources and the distribution of costs and benefits of policy initiative, formalistic requirements of fealty to the unified state limit the flexibility of local officials. As the interplay of political institutions and economic performance remains central to the success of various economic restructuring programs the separation of formal political authority from genuine economic power limits the capacity of institutions to respond to socio-economic change. The lack of clarity in the division of powers between local and central authorities hampers local initiative and tends to reinforce abuses of discretion for parochial purposes.

### *Institutional Orientation.*

Much has been written on the role of informal networks as vehicles for socio-economic regulation. In socio-economic relations, *guanxi* is frequently posited as a fundamental dynamic that determines the process and outcomes of behavior (Luo), and contextualizes personal relationships and networks to local conditions (Staber & Aldrich, Huang). Thus, *guanxi* is seen as a coping mechanism that substitutes for the norms and processes associated with formal institutions. *Guanxi* networks operate alongside an increasingly formal set of largely imported rules and processes made necessary by the increased complexity of social, economic and political relations. As an expression of social capital, *guanxi* operates along with other mechanisms of economic or symbolic capital for regulating socio-economic and political relationships (Smart). To the extent that economic restructuring and compliance with globalized regulatory norms causes socio-economic dislocation particularly among urban and rural workers, informal networks may provide an important safety net. The role of civil society organizations has been the cause of much scholarly inquiry, and may be an important safety valve in managing socio-economic change. However, a key question remains the capacity of formal regulatory institutions to support civil society processes, so as to strengthen informal as well as formal arrangements, for managing socio-economic change.

### *Institutional Coherence – Issues of Organizational Discipline*

Linked to the relationship between formal and informal institutional approaches to managing socio-economic relations are issues of the institutional coherence. A continuing and compelling question for many political-legal institutions concerns organizational discipline – in effect, the responsiveness of the individuals within institutions to comply with edicts from organizational and extra-organizational leaders. Compliance concerns the recognition and enforcement of norms (Etzioni 1961, 1969). Conflicts arise when the norms of particular organizations differ from those of the individuals within these organizations – such as where norms of public policy that drive organizational priorities require subordination of parochial interests of individual officials within the organization. Thus, organizational norms about social safety nets, social insurance, public goods in education and health may require individual officials to devote long hours and significant amounts of political capital to formulating and enforcing policies in these areas. The behavior of individual officials may derive from these organizational norms, but may also involve unrelated personal issues of material, family, and status interests. Individual officials within organizations

are persuaded to conform their individual behavior to the requirements of the organization through a combination of positive and negative sanctions – the prospect of advancement in status and salary for compliance with organizational norms may be combined with the certainty of punishment for violations.

In many developing economies, ongoing efforts at bureaucratic reform have faced continuing difficulties in subordinating individual norms of officials to organizational norms of institutions. Whether it involves a bribed official speeding up the approval process for a business project, a senior bureaucrat using his position to gain a monopoly position in a particular industry, or a political leader using influence to favor a family member, corruption involves in essence the subordination of collective institutional norms to the parochial priorities of individual officials. Rule of law systems that might give certainty to punishments for violations of organizational norms remain incomplete. Perhaps the best hope for strengthening institutional cohesion lies with the new cohort of younger officials and managers who have joined the system during the last twenty years and are increasingly taking positions of authority and influence. This increasingly well-trained cohort has benefited from accelerated opportunities for technical training at home and abroad, and has the opportunity to build a sense of organizational identity that would include fealty to organizational goals. However, this remains a relatively nascent possibility and the recent record suggests that youth is no barrier to corruption. Thus, issues of institutional coherence remain a troublesome and as yet unresolved dimension of institutional capacity.

### **Implications – Performance and Legitimacy**

Interaction with the forces of globalization poses a number of serious challenges for socio-economic relations. Compliance with WTO disciplines, particularly in areas such as anti-subsidies, non-discrimination, and national treatment will challenge existing arrangements for employment and the provision of public goods. Management of the transition to compliance with the WTO and increased integration with the world political economy will depend on the capacity of political-legal institutions. This in turn is linked closely to issues of regime legitimacy.

The dilemma of maintaining legitimacy through granting limited socio-economic autonomy, and maintaining political power by ensuring political loyalty becomes more acute in instances of social crisis. Whether in the course of devastating natural disasters or the socio economic impact of WTO, regimes attempt to deploy institutions to maintain social cohesion while at the same time building political loyalty. Yet where the effectiveness of regulatory organizations is limited by factors of institutional capacity, regime legitimacy suffers. As factors of institutional purpose determine the direction of performance, pre-existing policy priorities may weaken institutional responsiveness to new socio-economic changes. As factors of institutional location bring competition and uncertainty to the exercise of policy purpose and political authority between central and local agencies, state institutions may fall into inaction and abuse. As factors of institutional orientation determine the process for performance, state institutions may continue to deny and even repress the role of informal civil society organizations that might deal effectively with the consequences of globalization. As factors of institutional coherence undermine responsiveness of individual officials to organizational norms, political-legal institutions may be unable to mobilize effectively to implement government policies aimed at economic restructuring. To the extent that institutional capacity problems weaken the ability of governments to manage socio-economic change effectively in the face of globalization, legitimacy becomes a very practical problem.

## Notes

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2 This section is drawn from the author's "Globalization and Local Legal Culture: Dilemmas of China's Use of Liberal Ideas of Private Property Rights," *Asian Law* vol. 2 (2000).

3 For documentation and commentary, see (1994) 33 *ILM*. 1125.

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## **Conflict and Assimilation among Different Civilizations: A Note on Samuel P. Huntington's Views**

*Zhuang Xichang*<sup>1</sup>

In the *Journal of Foreign Affairs* issued in the summer of 1993, Samuel Huntington of Harvard University presented an article titled "The Clash of Civilizations?". Just after the publication, the article met strong international sensation and caused fierce arguments. Some people agreed with his perspective, while more people were dubious about it.

The basic idea of the article lies in the perspective that "the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics." He argued that after the end of the bi-polar confrontation between two blocs led by the U.S. and the USSR, the global scale conflict would not take the form of division between political ideologies, but the form of division between cultures. He anticipated the possibility of conflict between the Western civilization and the connected Confucian and Islamic civilizations.

Three years later, namely, in 1996, Huntington published a book titled *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*. In this book, he further developed the above-mentioned perspective. He said, "[T]he years after the Cold War witnessed the beginning of dramatic changes in people's identities and the symbols of those identities. Global politics began to be reconfigured along cultural lines." He asserted, "[I]n the post-Cold War world, the most important distinctions among people are not ideological, political, or economic. They are cultural."

He prescribed the present situation as follows. "A civilization-based world order is emerging: societies sharing cultural affinities cooperate with each other; efforts to shift societies from one civilization to others are unsuccessful; and countries group themselves around the lead or core states of their civilization." Thus, "for the first time in history global politics is both multipolar and multicivilizational."

He wrote, "[T]he post-Cold War world is a world of seven or eight major civilizations." Then, at first, he presented the following civilizations: the Chinese civilization, the Japanese civilization, the Indian civilization, the Islamic civilization, Western civilization, the Russian or Orthodox civilization. In addition, he presented two possible civilizations: the Latin American and the African. Letting aside the scientific validity of the classification, it is of no doubt that they do form the actual cultural blocks today.

Among many problematic perspectives in his book, the following statement aroused severe arguments. "The West's universalist pretensions increasingly bring it into conflict with other civilizations, most seriously with Islam and China." For a very long time, Western scholars have been used to considering Christianity as a universal world religion. As is well known, Christianity originated from Judaism. The Jews believed that they were the only chosen people of God, who were endowed with the holy mission of salvation of the world. However, Christianity spread the idea that everyone in the world was the child of God; Christianity was a transnational or universal religion. As the ancient Catholicism had been incorporated with the Western culture, Westerners have identified universality with the Western culture.

Since the Modern Era, West European countries began imperialist policies and built many colonies in Asia, Africa, America, and Oceania. In these colonies, they ardently propagated their

Western culture and converted those peoples in their colonies to Christianity. At that time, they certainly misunderstood that their culture and religion would be universally applicable to any people in any place. For hundreds of years, even the world-famous Western intellectuals have insisted that the Western culture and religion are universally applicable to any people or place, so they also have been very eager to disseminate them. As the result of imposing such false universality, Huntington says, "the West's universalist pretensions increasingly bring it into conflict with other civilizations."

He was right only at a phenomenal level. Thus, it should be made clear that firstly, conflict and war, the highest expression of conflict, between Western countries and other peoples in other different civilizations are caused not by the cultural factor in essence, but by the political and economic factors. Secondly, the clash between different civilizations may end in a certain kind of positive result: cultural assimilation.

As for the first point, we Asians have already experienced it. Since 1840, foreign imperialist countries caused several wars with China and the reasons for some wars seemed to be based on some cultural problems such as religious activity, but the wars ended with China ceding part of its territory to the foreign imperialists. Take another example, the Crusade seemed to be a large-scale war that had broken out because of some religious conflict. It looked as if the religious doctrine had been the major issue. However, the truth was different. Historians concluded that the true reason for the Crusade was economical. It was a war encouraged by a temptation for economic interest. Pope Urban (1088-1099) delivered an address to encourage the first dispatching of the Crusaders. "Because your residential area is surrounded by ocean and large mountains, it cannot serve so many residents. In addition, things are too limited to feed the people. Get on your way of Crusade to the land of the pagans, and get back what belongs to you." Economic interest tempted many declining aristocrats and chivalries. It also attracted numberless peasants, serfs and even beggars. In the Crusades that lasted about 200 years, and especially as the movement drew towards its end, wars clearly expressed their predatory character.

As for the second point, it may be said that the collision between different cultures may result in some cultural fusion or adoption. We can easily find the evidence in various contemporary civilizations that are the products of interactions among different civilizations. "The clash of civilizations" is just one side of the phenomenon. Along with it, there is another side, say, the exchange between and the fusion of civilizations.

Shortly after the terrorist attacks on September 11, some people said that Huntington's perspective was verified to be right. Huntington said, "[I]n this new world the most pervasive, important, and dangerous conflicts will not be between social classes, rich and poor, or other economically defined groups, but between peoples belonging to different cultural entities." And he presented a new picture of the world in the 21st century: "Countries tend to bandwagon with countries of similar culture and to balance against countries with which they lack cultural commonality."

Quite strange enough, men of the 21st century described by Huntington seem to be solely concerned with and fighting for the purity of culture they belong to, with no interest in any actual sense of interest, whether economic or political. I venture to say that men in the 21st century will pursue, just as those in the past, material interest that is necessary for their physical existence. How won't the conflict over economic interests or between rich and poor be the major and universal conflict in the future?

Even at the present time, the most serious problem in the world no doubt is that of poverty. Thorough examination will make it clear that the most fundamental reason for the regional conflict

is the mass poverty. For that reason, all the people in the world are establishing regional economic organizations to accelerate economic development with one another. Governments, especially those governments of poor or relatively backward countries, also are most concerned with economic issues.

Huntington predicted that in the 21st century the Confucian civilization and the Islamic civilization will connect together to fight with the Christian civilization. This also is nothing but his own conjecture. In fact, Huntington also is well aware that civilizations can not be clearly defined. "Civilizations have no clear-cut boundaries and no precise beginnings and endings." When a certain civilization is mentioned, it just refers to a large group of people with a certain commonality that also is defined in a broad sense. "Civilizations are cultural not political entities", as Huntington himself acknowledged. One thing more, civilization is not an economic entity, either. Then, if a civilization is neither a political nor an economic entity, how can it be possible to organize and lead a civilization to fight with another one that also is neither a political nor an economic entity?

Today there are many political, economic or military organizations that are transcultural (or transcivilizational) or multicultural (or multicivilizational). Even if a certain organization is based on a certain civilization, it still is composed of various cultural groups. What is of most importance here is that such organizations are the general tendency in the world affairs, economic organizations are set up to escalate the degree of cooperation and coordination so that they may fulfil their purpose of rapid economic development. It is beyond question that conflicts in the 21st century also will be due to the economic and political interests, as the history of mankind has witnessed so far. Cultural conflict is just a reflection of the economic or political. Needless to say, people in the 21st century will be different from those in the Middle Ages. It will be out of the question that people will be instigated to carry out a large-scale religious war. Fanatically devoted religious believers are decreasing in numbers as time goes by. Though Huntington said that the Confucian civilization will connect with the Islamic civilization and fight with the Christian civilization, this is nothing other than nonsense. Different from his wrong conjecture, the Confucian civilization does not need to fight with any other civilization for its own existence and development. Of course, it does not need to oppose the Western civilization. The Confucian civilization rose in the Spring and Autumn Period in China and has lasted for more than two thousand years without any need for fighting with other civilizations.

As for the central idea of the Confucian culture and the Confucian civilization, scholars differ with each other in their perception. However, it would be largely acceptable that the core idea of the Confucian doctrine lies in the concept of "ren" (benevolence), on which Confucius himself laid the utmost emphasis. Then, what is "ren" anyway? According to Confucius' explanation, it is love. Confucius' idea of "ren" has been that of all human beings and the ultimate goal of the world community. His ideas are well expressed in *The Analects* of Confucius. In the book, the concept of "ren" is dealt with more than one hundred times. He asserted that to practice "ren", one should respect others and have sympathy for others. One valuable sentence about "ren" reads: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

The Confucian doctrine basically is a system of political ethics. It is a kind of system of thought on peace and nonviolence, as is well exemplified in the sentence: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others." The Confucian doctrine has been successful till the present time and, of course, it has gone through not a few changes, but its core idea has not been changed yet. It still forms the mainstream of the traditional Chinese culture. Consequently, its core idea of

"ren" remains the central value of the Chinese culture and the most dominant idea of the Chinese people.

The Chinese people have been very open-minded in assimilating foreign cultures into their own culture. As the historical evidence shows, it is wrong for Huntington to foresee that the Chinese civilization will be opposed to the Christian one. The Confucian civilization does not need to stand against any other civilization for its own existence or development. On the contrary, its development rather needs to assimilate positive aspects of other civilizations including the prominent achievements of the Christian civilization. It is the harmony among different civilizations and not the clash among them that matters more to the Chinese civilization.

The ancient Confucian doctrine has been changed ceaselessly, assimilating various valuable heritages of other civilizations, as is well exemplified by the adoption of the Indian Buddhism. Confucianism and Buddhism so far have shown a pleasant and desirable example of the blending of two different cultures. When the Western Christian civilization first came into China, the Chinese people very peacefully assimilated it. Only in the Modern Era, as the Western countries imposed political and economic expansionist policies upon China, the Chinese people and intellectuals began to take antagonistic attitudes toward the Western civilization. However, even in the process of the anti-Western movements, the Chinese people did not exclude the Western civilization in everything. They accepted the positive aspects from it. Moreover, today in China, when the people are exerting their utmost efforts to propel the modernization of the country, they need to adopt the advanced elements from the Western civilization and utilize them for the development of their own culture. Can there be any need to stand against the Western culture or Western civilization or to connect with the Islamic civilization to fight with the Western civilization?

Globalization has become an overwhelming tendency of the contemporary world. Faced with this tendency, a country with splendid historical tradition like China should consider a question, that is, how to treat its own traditional culture correctly. The Chinese civilization has developed and evolved for several thousand years, cultivating the great cultural heritage which had developed in the traditional agrarian society, thus corresponding to the particular need of such a society. China did not experience the full development of the capitalist industrial society. As the process of development from the lowest to the highest stage, what can be called the middle stage, was left out, China also lacked the cultural process corresponding to the development of the capitalist economy. Under such a historical situation, suddenly in the 1950s, China began to leap forward into a modernized industrial society. At that time, the world had already entered into a highly developed industrial society, as some people put it, a post-industrial society. Now globalization has been the main topic all over the world. As a result of such a particular historical situation, China is now faced with serious problems as follows: How can the traditional culture be adapted to the needs of the highly developed industrial society and be transformed into a driving force instead of an obstacle?

As is well known, Europe was the first region in the world that had begun industrialization. Through a few hundred years of industrial development, Westerners have accumulated abundant experiences, which are the very texts the Chinese are so eager to obtain. For a couple of decades, China has sent a few hundred thousand students to study abroad. They have learnt the Western culture and experienced the Western civilization. Of course, they know that not everything in the Western civilization is superior to their traditional one. This also is a very useful experience.

From the experiences of the last one hundred years, the Chinese people have learnt that the traditional culture that has been developed for several thousand years should not be either totally

discarded or totally preserved. In other words, it is necessary to absorb all the advanced and useful achievements of other civilizations, but this does not mean overall Westernization.

Globalization is not equal to global Westernization. It also does not mean the dominance of a single civilization over other civilizations. The world in the 21st century will still be multicultural and civilizations will converge and not clash. Each civilization will absorb the relatively more advanced elements from other civilizations, resulting in a tendentious convergence among different civilizations. In the long run, those relatively advanced elements of each civilization will last and form a real global culture that mankind is searching for. The interactions among different civilizations and their convergence are inevitable as actual human history shows.

Every culture or civilization is changeable as its environment, especially the social environment, changes. To put it concretely, as the productive forces of material production develops, the mode of material production also changes and the change in the mode of production causes the change in the form and content of the specific culture, thus finally resulting in the change of civilization. However, a certain essential element will remain relatively unchanged despite those changes, which constitutes the basic characteristic of a certain culture or civilization.

As mankind has almost the same basic needs for subsistence and proliferation, different cultures also share somewhat similar elements with one another. That's why one can find various cultural relics in different cultural sites, which are very similar to one's own. As the communication between different cultures or civilizations increases, the collision of two different cultures or civilizations will certainly produce sparks and even flames, accelerating their changes.

There always has been the idea of "Great Harmony of the World" among the Chinese people, so they are very positive to the tendency of globalization. Looking back on the last one hundred years of history, China has gone through several conflicts with foreign countries and even experienced wars. Those were mostly triggered by foreign countries and imposed on China, forcing China to stand against them inevitably. There also were some people who had been very antagonistic toward foreign cultures. However, that was because the foreign imperialists imposed their cultures upon the Chinese people. Now China has consolidated her political independence and is able to protect her own economic or political interests. China is willing to establish friendly ties with other countries.

## **Note**

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## **Part III**

### **Eastern Cultures and International Relations**



## **Cultural Misunderstanding and the Need to Promote Consensus in International Relations: An Arab Perspective**

*Mohamed Noman Galal*

The traditional approach in studying international relations either ignores the culture factor or gives it limited influence. However, if one goes deep in analyzing the undercurrents in politics including world politics, then the role of culture looms more importantly than it was traditionally thought. It shapes the thinking of peoples and their conception of world history and their role. New approaches in analyzing world politics and world history focus on the role of cultures and civilizations. This paper will focus on the role of culture in its proper context. It analyses the role without going to the extent of envisaging that world history is totally the history of civilizations or cultures. Needless to say, the unilateral approach in explaining history or politics has many deficiencies. At least one could safely say that it does not reflect the complexities of human behaviour and thinking.

### **Culture: Its Definition and Limitations**

While culture can be defined in many ways, the following three elements are essential:

1. Culture, in its essence, is non-material; it is a way of life and code of conduct. However, it includes material elements that are a product of human activity at certain periods of history. The non-material elements include customs and traditions, as well as human conduct, ethics, morals and values.

2. Culture is not isolated from the evolution of a society or its history; it is a continuous and cumulative process. Thus, the culture of any society reflects its development as well as its characteristics.

3. Culture is not limited to a certain generation, so its influence does not stop or vanish at a certain historical period even if it so seems. It rather stays dormant, but transferable, from one generation to another, with lesser or greater changes at various points in history.

If one casts a look at the world of today there could be four main cultures: the Western culture based on Greek-Roman/Judeo-Christian traditions, the Chinese culture based on Confucianism and Buddhism, the Indian culture based on Hindu-Buddhist tradition and the Arab/Islamic culture based on Islam and influenced by Persian, Indian, Greek and Egyptian civilizations as well as Judeo-Christian traditions. In this way Islamic/Arab culture, from a historical point of view, is more comprehensive and, to a great extent, all embracing of the world civilizations compared to other civilizations or cultures.

Whilst studying various cultures one has to hasten to put forward three important observations:

*First:* None of these cultures exist today in its pure or original form or in a single country alone. Hence there are many variations in each culture in different countries and regions. The Christian culture spread from the Middle East to Europe including Russia to the two Americas,

Australia, Africa and Asia. Islamic Arab culture is based in the Middle East, Asia and Africa with some recent spots in Europe and the Americas. The same could be said about the Indian and Chinese cultures which have a seat in the Indian subcontinent and the Chinese mainland respectively and off-shots in the regions around, as well as in the 'New World'.

*Second:* None of these cultures existed in isolation from the other three cultures. For example, the Islamic Arab culture deeply affected the Western culture, as it was the basis for European Renaissance. The Arab-Islamic culture was the pot in which three ancient civilizations melted, i.e., Indian, Greek and Persian. It also became a vehicle to transmit all this new synthesis to Europe. Even the Judeo-Christian traditions are deeply rooted in the Arab/Islamic culture as Judaism and Christianity emanated from the Arab region. Also one may add that some studies attribute the Chinese civilization partly to an Egyptian origin.

*Third:* None of these cultures existed or coexisted peacefully all the time with other cultures. The contacts between these cultures were peaceful at times but at other times were hostile and even violent, as each culture provided a social system and theological thinking with certain values that was in contradiction with the value system of the other cultures. Christianity and Islam were keen to convert others to their own, so the missionary zeal became part of their culture. They also established a political system with expansionist ambition commencing with the invasion of the neighbouring countries and then moving further. However, the most salient cultures that had the greatest impact on each other and the world at large are the Western/Christian and the Arab/Islamic cultures. The Islamic conquest of the Iberian Peninsula (Andalusia) and Eastern Europe, and the European Crusade Wars against Islamic countries in the Middle East are the most striking examples in this context. The Chinese and Indian cultures have a similar experience with each other and with their neighbours but to a lesser degree. The Indo-China region, the Korean peninsula and Japan were under the influence and expansion of the two main cultures, i.e., the Indian and the Chinese.

### *Expansion and Reaction*

In the last four centuries the world witnessed the dominance of one culture, one civilization, i.e., the Western one, while the other three cultures went through a process of decadence and stagnation. From the beginning of the 16th century, the Western culture began utilizing the products of industrial revolution and geographic discoveries to expand worldwide in an unprecedented way. It imposed its dominance on the basis of three concepts:

- Spreading the "white man" civilization
- Spreading Christianity through missionaries
- Promoting the concepts of freedom of trade and freedom of navigation

This led to the phenomenon known as colonialism and imperialism which generated two reactions: (a) a resistance movement worldwide and (b) a Renaissance or revival of the values of "the cultures in trouble," i.e., Islamic, Indian and Chinese. This reaction is a normal one for an individual as well as for a society. One does not need to go into details of the violent reaction and repressive acts of the Westerners vis-à-vis the aspirations of peoples of other cultures. One does not need to narrate the concepts of racial discrimination promoted and practiced by imperialism to designate certain areas in China or India or Africa wherein a notice was put up that certain premises were prohibited to the "natives and dogs" and only reserved for the "white masters". However, a

considerate opinion and rational thinking should be that whatever these practices or malpractices, they should be considered as past. A scholar, an intellectual or a politician should look and aspire to live in the future and not the past. Bygones should be bygones. Unfortunately, this is not always the case and here lies the crux of all the political problems, human misunderstandings and culture clash, which represent a substantial part of international actions and conduct.

The question, which one puts forward, is where we are today. One is alarmed by three main challenges:

1. Cultural challenge as some intellectuals and scholars such as Samuel Huntington are promoting concepts of the "clash of civilizations". He singles out the Chinese and Islamic cultures as the main threat to Western domination, but he never explains why there should be Western domination in the first place. One may wonder, aren't there any alternatives to concepts like "domination", "hegemony", "clash" and "conflict"? It is only rational to explore other concepts and promote them and one should pinpoint that this is the responsibility of intellectuals worldwide.

2. The economic challenge emanating from the concept of globalization and standardization in all fields: free trade, free market, free economy, free information, open skies, ...etc. Again, this is good thinking if we look at it with an open mind, and apply one criterion or measure worldwide. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Powerful countries call for a free market but not as far as their own markets are concerned or their own interests are affected. The European, Japanese and American tug-of-war on trade tariffs is one example. Moreover, the concept of globalization has many drawbacks and negative effects on certain sectors of societies, thus creating a backlash in many developed countries wherever there is an international meeting to deal with the issue.

The political challenge as represented by the "new rightist-wing movement" in the West, particularly in American politics. This tendency endeavours to change the whole world into the American mould, not in values of development or technology but only in following the American lead in each decision/policy, whilst putting severe restrictions on the transfer of technology or technological education. Such restrictions became worse after the September 11th event. The most drastic and flagrant manifestation of this challenge is U.S. President George W. Bush's new national security strategy pronounced in a comprehensive way on 17th September 2002. And also President Bush's statement "either you are with us [i.e. America] or with the terrorists" is pretty alarming. This brings to mind two bad precedents: the first when Louis XIV said, "The State is I", "l'etat c'est moi"; the second when John Foster Dulles, American Secretary of State in the mid-fifties said "either you are with us or you are our enemy". While the first precedent represented the most despotic and totalitarian thinking, the second concept was promoted in the climax of the Cold War. This approach of thinking and acting is heightened when one moves to the UN system where American pressure is exerted upon every country to compel them to accept the American point of view. The American legitimacy becomes the international legitimacy. Otherwise America goes its own way; the rejection of the Kyoto Protocol on Global Warming, the American withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty are but a few examples in this connection.

### *Changing Circumstances*

Needless to say, political thinking and action changed immensely in the last quarter of the 20th century. This change is evident in the way political conflicts are dealt with in the political relations between states and in international economic relations as well. It is a recognized fact that

the infrastructure of a society has an impact on its superstructure, i.e., in the field of political institutions, culture, and in particular political culture, as well as social values. It also has its echo in the international arena. Many consider that such developments were paving the way for a new global code of conduct in the 21st century. The September 11th event was a big bang to announce the advent of the new century. It was a drastic and bloody event with far-reaching repercussions in all aspects of life all over the world.

This paper will focus on the cultural dimensions of international relations, albeit with an interdisciplinary approach. It is clear that the dramatic changes, which took place in the field of international relations since the end of the Second World War, would have their impact in all aspects of the international society. The globe has become seemingly smaller and its parts are intertwined to the extent that it has been dubbed the "global village". Indeed, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, two main concepts, "reconciliation" and "interdependence," have been gradually emerging and widely promoted. However, once more the event of September 11th changed international thinking, global agenda and its priorities. I will deal with the outstanding trends on the eve of the 21st century, then with the impact of September 11th.

As already stated, the concepts of reconciliation and interdependence gained ground in the last part of the 20th century and were expected to continue to do so at least in the first quarter of the 21st century. It is pertinent to put forward this question - Why have these two concepts emerged?

### **The Emergence of the Concept of Reconciliation**

Up until the establishment of the League of Nations, and later the United Nations, the idea of military force as a means of settlement of disputes prevailed. The concept of invasion was historically recognized as a means for expansion and enlarging the size of the state. Accordingly, military build-up to achieve security was commonly accepted until quite recently. However, the developments in the last quarter of the 20th century have led to the emergence of many elements affecting traditional political thinking and culture. Prominent among these are:

1. Development in the field of information, communication and related technologies. This has resulted in the quick spread and transfer of news and views, which are difficult to screen or hinder due to the use of advanced telecommunications technology. The impact of this development on the cultural field leads to increasing one's sense of responsibility and awareness of a common destiny, as well as generating new thinking to bring about changes in many sectors of society. Consequently, traditional values, customs and habits are being confronted with the challenge of what can be termed a "new telecommunications culture".

2. The tremendous increase in the available means of war and its destructive capabilities. Linked to this, is the cost of military equipment. The price of a fighter aircraft, for example, is equivalent to the cost of building a number of schools or hospitals. This issue becomes more controversial when developing countries, often with scarce resources, buy such weapons while they suffer from low levels of education, health care and other facilities necessary to cover the basic needs of their citizens.

3. It is also evident that large state budgets are wasted in endless conflicts, which at the same time provide no real security for the states involved. Two examples for this situation could be mentioned, which are: Israel's huge arsenal of heavy and sophisticated arms failing to guarantee its security in the face of the Palestinian uprising, and the failure of the former Soviet Union's

military might to prevent its collapse. In spite of their large military arsenals, nuclear as well as conventional, these two countries could not achieve complete security. Military might alone cannot guarantee security or even achieve it. Thus, the security doctrine has gone through a radical change and has sought new parameters.

4. European thinking and culture after the Second World War have developed conceptually towards "mutuality of interests" as a means of solving military conflicts and overcoming traditional enmities, hostilities and belligerence between antagonistic parties. New approaches to economic competition and political accommodation have emerged. An indicative example is the situation between France and Germany since the 1950s, and the development of the European integration process from the Coal & Steel Union, to the Common Market, to the European Community and finally to the European Union.

This model of development in Europe, particularly after the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, received special attention as a viable model of integration in cultural, political and economic fields. With other regions in the world starting to emulate the European model, there is a growing feeling, in particular among intellectual groups and the political elite, that the old concept of armed conflict and dogmatic attitudes were fruitless and impractical in the context of the new environment. Thus it became imperative to search for new methods and means for the articulation and the protection of national interests. Many academic circles and research institutes in Europe and the United States have begun to draw up new guidelines and world maps, especially since the collapse of the bipolar world order.

All these factors led to the emergence and elaboration of the concept of 'reconciliation' worldwide and the spread of the conviction that certain problems could not be solved with a "zero-sum strategy" or "lose-win theory", but rather through a new concept based on a "win-win theory". Rigid positions have become outmoded and are considered counterproductive and repugnant. This could explain why a number of important problems could not be solved during the bipolar system of the Cold War era although they moved closer to being solved after its end. Examples of such problems include: the situation in Namibia; the apartheid regime in South Africa; and the conflicts in Angola, Mozambique, Cambodia and El Salvador. Likewise, the search for a solution to the Palestinian issue gained momentum after Russia and the United States became co-sponsors of the peace process in the Madrid conference of October 1991 and since then, the two die-hard enemies, the PLO and Israel, became partners in peace negotiations.

Analyzing Cold War conflicts, one can conclude that the common denominators were as follows:

- Local factors feeding the conflicts, including nationalistic, communal, ethnic, linguistic and religious sentiments based on native or primitive culture.
- Involvement of neighbouring states in the conflicts.
- The role played by the two conflicting superpowers in instigating the continuation of these conflicts. This included providing weapons, ammunition and material help in addition to highlighting the ideological justification to guarantee the continuity of the conflict.

The majority of these conflicts could be generally termed as proxy wars between the two superpowers. With the new phase in international relations being strengthened and new tendencies gaining momentum, these three elements started to diminish and a new political culture promoting

the spirit of reconciliation started to emerge. Nevertheless, a few problems remain pending, waiting for the objective conditions to be developed. Such objective or facilitating conditions are:

- Increase in tension related to certain conflicts to push them to the point of crisis so that the local parties feel they are suffering and reach the point of exhaustion, both economically and humanely. Thus they will be obliged to search for a solution and accept a compromise.
- Deterioration of the positions of regional or local parties due to their involvement in a particular conflict. The paucity of the economic and material assistance, particularly after the cessation of military aid by the foreign powers, forces the parties to be amenable to accept a compromise.
- Emergence of international interest, especially from the dominating international powers in the world, to launch a process of negotiation, conciliation or mediation, or to resort to the services of international organizations such as the United Nations.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has continued for a number of years, provides an example for the initial absence and later emergence of these three conditions. The situation between Israel and Palestine in the last decade of the last century is another example.

### **The Concept of Interdependence**

The world passed through a period of fundamental evolution during the last two centuries. It moved from a stage of dependence, when colonialism and domination prevailed, to a stage of independence – during the 18th and 19th centuries for the colonies in the Americas, and during the 20th century for those in Africa and Asia. The stage of interdependence that emerged in the last quarter of the 20th century was expected to gain ground and take concrete shape in the early part of the 21st century.

Some manifestations of this new stage of evolution in international relations include the following:

- The role of multinational companies with their financial strength and cross-border activities. A number of these companies have bigger budgets than the governments in some of the developing countries in which they operate.
- The role of NGOs working in the fields of humanitarian assistance, human rights, disarmament and environment. Many NGOs have become influential in the international system to the extent that many governments in the Third World countries are compelled to accept their requests to monitor humanitarian aid or accept their arguments in the fields of human rights and disarmament.

Needless to say, the advancement in science and technology has had an immense effect on the world and contributed greatly to the move towards interdependence. Other issues that contributed to this trend are:

1. The issue of refugees and its impact on regional and international stability and security. Take, for example, the refugee situation in South and East Africa and Latin America, the movement of Kurdish refugees after the Gulf War and Bosnian refugees in Europe. Economic refugees, or immigrants from poor countries to developed ones, also have an impact on the social

fabric of the societies into which they move; for example, North Africans in France and Hispanics in the United States.

2. The drug problem and its impact on countries involved in production, transit and consumption. The menace of drug barons and cartels has become conspicuous and threatening, not only in regard to health, but also in the banking system and economy with the spread of money laundering.

3. The debt issue and its impact on world economy. The financial crisis in Southeast Asia in 1997-1998 is a case in mind though not the only one. The debt problem in the larger countries like Brazil, Mexico and Argentina in the last century as well as on the eve of the 21st century is another example.

4. Human rights issues, which came to the forefront after Jimmy Carter assumed presidency in the United States in the mid-1970s, and the increasing role of Amnesty International and other watch groups in this field. The Helsinki Accords on Security and Cooperation in Europe included a basket on human rights, and various UN instruments and committees play an important role in the field of human-rights promotion.

5. Environmental problems, such as pollution and climatic change, which have unpredictable ecological and biological consequences around the globe.

6. The problem of international terrorism and its implications across political boundaries. International criminal organizations, extremist fanatic groups raising the banner of religion, hostage-taking and hijacking are but a few examples.

These issues gained international attention in their manifestation, their impact, their dangers and the approaches to counter them. This development led to the convening of many international conferences. Prominent in this series of international conferences are: the World Summit on Children held in New York in 1990; the International Conference on Drugs held in New York in 1990; the Rio Summit on Environment and Development in 1992; the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in 1993; the Casablanca Conference on GATT in 1994 which became the WTO; the Cairo Conference on Population and Development in 1994; the Copenhagen Summit for Social Development in 1994; and the Beijing Fourth Conference on Women in 1995.

### **Combating Terrorism Is the Call of the Moment**

One important issue failed to get proper attention at the right time to get nipped during the budding stage, i.e. the issue of terrorism. The Egyptian President's call for an international conference, to tackle the issue from all aspects, went unheeded particularly by the big powers. Egypt first highlighted the issue in a speech by President H. Mubarak at the European Parliament in 1986 and continued to highlight the seriousness of the issue and reiterate the call for an international conference, but to no avail until September 11th, 2001.

The unfortunate catastrophe that befell America, in New York and Washington, brought new life and gave new dimension to the problem of terrorism albeit with a wrong approach. From the Arab, particularly the Egyptian, point of view the issue of terrorism has certain characteristics:

1. It is an individual action by organized crime groups. It is not executed by a society, state, a particular religion or culture.

2. It needs concerted international effort on proper legal basis. It is not a matter of human rights as the Western countries emphasized in the period before September 11th, when as a

consequence they refused to extradite these criminals to their countries of origin to be brought to justice.

3. There should be a clear distinction between terrorist acts and the liberation movements where people fight against occupation to gain independence and self-determination. The denial of self-determination for peoples under occupation and the continuation of occupation are the root causes of so many violent acts. The continuation of occupation and oppression of other peoples is the most abhorrent act. It is a crime against humanity. Ironically some groups in the West argue the opposite, contrary to all logic and international behaviour along the march of history. Thus they create double standards and invite severe criticism to such policies adopted by certain Western countries.

4. The UN system must be the focal point to combat terrorism and all countries should abide by the decision reached in the multilateral forum through consensus and free dialogue, not by coercing, blackmailing and arm-twisting.

### **The Role of Culture in International Relations**

The experience of human history indicates that culture plays a very important role in the behaviour of individuals as well as the conduct of societies in world politics. Thus the role and impact of culture in world affairs are undeniable. One is aware that the evolution of societies, including the international one, cannot be explained by one factor or one component. The unidimensional theories represented a complete failure let alone a shortsighted way of rational and scientific thinking. Evolution of human history is an outcome of a host of factors. One has to adopt a multidimensional, multifaceted approach. It is based on gradualism and relativism of the influence and weight of the various factors such as historical experience, level of social and economic development, geostrategic situation, type of political system and role of leadership. While focusing in this paper on cultural impact on international relations, for the sake of analysis, other factors are not overlooked or forsaken as they have their impact in the final assessment of actions or interactions in world politics.

It could be envisaged that cultural impact on world politics emanates from four aspects:

First, the concept of national character, as each society has managed to develop certain traits of thinking, behaviour, values and ethics that influence its conduct, and the way it reacts towards other societies.

Second, the concept of national image, which deals with the way other societies look at a given society. In other words, the national image is the other side of the coin to the national character.

Third, the conception of the elite in a certain society about the role of their country in the community of nations based upon their historical experience or their historical contribution in human civilization.

Fourth, the comprehensive concept of the national power of the state. Needless to say, the national power of a state is based on many pillars: economic, social, political, historical, geographic, leadership as well as cultural one. Of course, each of these pillars is studied in detail in the relevant textbooks. However, the culture factor could be envisaged in many aspects such as to what extent the society has an integrated culture, what is the level of education in general and technological education in particular, to what extent the progress of a certain society is enhanced or hindered by the value system, customs and tradition, including the religious ones which are an

integral part of the culture of society and influence substantially the conduct of its citizens and their thinking.

Homo sapiens are the only species that possess intellect and logic. In other words they have culture and they highly value their cultural experience. Thus the cultural factor is an integral, built-in factor in human behaviour and in the development of human societies. Hence, it influences, shapes and represents the substance of the identity of the society. It is a foregone conclusion that religion represents the most powerful element of culture. Some religions have little appeal to outsiders while others offer universal value to the community of mankind. Judaism, Hinduism, Confucianism and Sikhism belong to the first category, while Christianity and Islam belong to the second. Though it became common knowledge that foundations of Western modernization have challenged all faiths and religions since the 18th century, empirical studies and public opinion polls show that Western societies have not given up the concept of religion: thus its influence in political behaviour is undeniable. In a study ['Political Behaviour' by Steve A. Peterson, Sage Publications, London, 1990] about the role of religion in Western societies, the results were striking. Those who believe in God represented 94% in USA, 88% in Italy, 76% in UK, 72% in France and Germany, 65% in Scandinavian countries. The conclusions of the study were as follows:

- The Democratic Party in USA draws more supporters from the Jews and Catholics than the Protestants.
- The religious personalities generally tend to be intolerant and less liberal.
- Political participation is more from the Jews and Catholics than from Protestants.

Another survey in 1985 in USA ['Political Behaviour' by Steve A. Peterson, Sage Publications, London, 1990] showed that there was an upsurge of a "new religious right" among the white Evangelicals and Christian fundamentalists which started to shape American politics on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, school prayers, sex education, drugs and pornography. They demanded change in American society as well as in the international society in accordance with their concepts. Thus they seek to change values, ethics, cultures in other societies to correspond to their own concepts and values. This new religious right moved away from the Democratic Party towards the Republican Party, particularly since former President Ronald Reagan, who played a dominant role in rallying their support with concepts in international relations such as the "evil empire". It is a striking contradiction that such a "new religious right" while insists on Christian values as a base for the cohesion of society denies the other societies' adherence to their religious values particularly the Muslim societies and calls for changing these values. Such call is clearly manifested in the new American National Security Strategy. Needless to say, such approach and logic is not new for certain Western circles; its roots could be traced to missionary activists which mushroomed worldwide under the protection of colonialism particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In the current phase the role gets more attention due to a number of factors, *inter alia*, the role of media and the telecommunication revolution, the political and economic pressure of the sole superpower, as well as the propaganda techniques of terrorizing, blackmailing many societies. They resort to many techniques in this connection such as generalization of the negative aspects of other cultures and religions, distortion of the national characteristics of societies and ignoring their positive aspects or their contribution to civilization. Many pronouncements were made by

religious and political figures in America and Europe against Muslims and Arabs particularly since 11th September 2001. Thus concepts like "clash of civilizations", "end of the world and the last man", "Islam as an enemy" and "Islamic terrorism" were promoted by some scholars, echoed by politicians and propagated by so called religious peoples or ministers. Such approach in using wrong concepts of religion or culture in political or international relations will have a tremendous damaging effect. The phenomenon of terrorism is not an exclusive right of a certain group, it could be found in every society, religion and culture. Many incidents in various European, Asian, African and American countries could be mentioned in this regard. A terrorist act is a repugnant one. It should be strongly condemned by all. International cooperation to combat it is badly needed. Having emphasized this fact, one cannot ignore the proper diagnosis of the phenomenon. Some of its aspects belong to organized crime, while others originate from the continuation of colonialism and denial of right to self-determination of the peoples under occupation. In the absence of a peace process, in the state of frustration and desperation, it is difficult to control the reaction of peoples wherever their societies are located, be it in Northern Ireland, in Palestine or elsewhere.

Some political scholars put forward the concept of "virtual state", which is based on wealth and power, as the main player in the international community in the 21st century. They envisage the example of Singapore as a "virtual state", due to the economic progress and power which it has achieved, along with others such as the US, Japan, Russia, China and Europe. However, the economic progress could include the technological aspect, which includes the culture dimension. Thus they concluded that a contradiction would emerge between the successful states and the failed ones. Moreover, conflict will appear inside states due to the dissatisfaction as a result of disparity and inequality or the failure to achieve national ambition. This will lead the dissatisfied groups and individuals to resort to international terrorism and even to cyberterrorism to manifest their disapproval of the international system. It is worthy to note that Rosecrance included in the dissatisfied terrorist groups those that belong to Israelis, Palestinians, Americans, Japanese, Irish, Egyptians, . . . etc. However, such groups could not halt economic progress. He adds that countries tend to embody their national ambitions in ideological terms; the French revolution in liberty, equality and the right of man and the USSR in communism. One may apply the same concept to the American policy particularly after the collapse of the USSR, and the emergence of its dominant role as the only superpower. In the shadow of the Bush administration's war on terrorism, sweeping new ideas are in circulation about U.S. grand strategy and restructuring of today's unipolar world. Here it is imperative to highlight the contrary. A leading world power has a responsibility to shape the world not according to one culture, one vision or one civilization but to advocate the interaction or the American traditional experience of being an "international melting pot". Also true international intellectuals have their own role to play to bridge the gap among societies, cultures or civilizations. They have to advocate human world culture, culture of peace based on compromise, reconciliation and accommodation of other interests and aspirations, not excluding them.

### **Globalism or Interdependence in International Relations?**

A pertinent question at this juncture of study is about the role of culture in international relations. One encounters a jargon of concepts/ideas promoted by various circles; scholars as well as politicians. As a student of international relations in a developing country, one is inclined more to the concept of interdependence than to globalism. Globalism is oriented towards the concept of standardization, which in practical terms could lead to hegemony, while interdependence is more

oriented towards interaction and dialogue, which leads to the enrichment of civilization. Each society makes its own contribution, no matter how big or small, and this in itself provides all countries with satisfaction, pride and a sense of belonging to the international community as a whole.

The concept of interdependence needs special attention and focus in today's world. Interdependence began gaining ground in modern socioeconomic and political analysis due to the conditions following the Industrial Revolution, and was given a boost by developments in global communications. It is envisaged that the concept necessitates the existence of five main components:

- An economy based on industry and advanced technology
- Developments of means of transport and communications
- A political and social awareness regarding the benefits of large-scale economies as well as the theory of relative advantages
- An awareness of the dangers and risks of individuality in thought and conduct vis-à-vis issues that have global impacts.
- A milieu where peace and security prevail, with the interests of every one either taken fully into account or at least not overlooked completely.

Needless to say, the inception of the concept of interdependence can be attributed to a number of factors. However, prominent in this analysis are those related to the nature of change in international relations. One must hasten to say that the first part of this study dealt with the concept of interdependence in brief and with a different objective in mind, i.e., the cultural, political focus. Thus some repetition cannot be avoided.

In the 19th century, international relations were moulded in the framework of colonial theory. Industrial nations in Europe tended to expand their possessions to the detriment of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Confrontation among those nations and powers weakened the colonial regimes. This also partially helped the resistance movements that struggled against the encroachment of foreign powers. The liberation movements gained momentum after the Second World War, when many new independent states emerged.

Polarization in world politics, the dangers of global war and the high stakes emanating from the arms race eventually led to the inception of the non-aligned movement and the Group of 77. These came as means to defend the sovereignty of the newly independent states, to protect their security and to help them achieve their political and economic aspirations. These movements played a role in world politics in the 1960s and 1970s.

The impact of the technological revolution in communications heightened the expectations of the masses. This, in turn, contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union and communist bloc, and brought with it the victory of capitalist and liberal thought. These developments were reflected in and had their impact on the non-aligned movement and other groupings of developing countries, which for the first time were facing a world with no manual to explain how to deal with or how to behave in it. The impact of this drastic change was so strong and unpredictable that it even affected the victorious Western nations, which started to search for a new focus to replace their adversarial relationship with the Soviet bloc.

Though comprehensive analysis of the changes in international relations falls out of the scope of this study, it is nevertheless pertinent to draw attention to a number of issues that have a special

impact on the concept of interdependence which one is advocating in international relations in the 21st century:

a. The world has developed over the last two centuries, passing from a stage of imperialism to one of independence and sovereignty and finally to a stage of interdependence. This last stage is characterized by the intertwining and interaction of numerous players. In the world today distances have been bridged due to modern transport and communications. Now, news and views travel faster than ever before and with only minimal restrictions.

b. The new technological revolution, covering fields as far apart as information and genetic engineering, has led to widespread changes with positive as well as negative impacts on life. It has become a driving force and a catalyst for change in international economic, social and even political relations. Consequently, certain social and economic issues have ceased being the monopoly of the state, irrespective of the state's size, power or system of government. The good or bad consequences of such issues no longer stop at borders or recognize political frontiers. Thus, in order to tackle problems, joint and collective action, as well as common efforts, are essential. This has led to the erosion of the concept of sovereignty in its classical or traditional sense. Likewise, the concepts of patriotism and nationalism have become more fluid. Ethnic strife within established states is now a common phenomenon and secessionist movements, though not welcomed or encouraged, are no longer taboo in modern political vocabulary.

c. Certain social and economic issues have become the focus of global attention as their impact transcends political frontiers. Prominent in this connection are human rights, environment, debt, narcotics, terrorism and refugees. Such issues or problems are no longer exclusively in the domain of domestic jurisdiction. Moreover, the traditional concept of sovereignty is no longer a strong enough argument to shield abusive states or governments from international scrutiny and blame if need be. No state is totally free to abuse vulnerable groups such as women, children or minorities within its territories. New humanitarian laws are being codified using a contractual approach due to the international instruments covering such issues.

The same development applies to environmental issues. Agenda 21 of the Rio Earth Summit represents a milestone in this move towards collective responsibility, covering the ozone layer, global warming, climatic change and pollution. The same line of thought applies to the problems of debt, refugees and combating drugs. Indeed, when the United States invaded Panama in 1989, the pretext was the involvement of then Panamanian president General Noriega in drug trafficking.

d. The change in priorities that prevailed in the aftermath of the Second World War. The priority of many issues, including arms control and planned economic development based on industrialization and self-sufficiency, decreased in the global agenda. The approach and concepts related to such issues have also been reformulated. For example, arms-control talks in Geneva yielded limited fruits for 30 years during the Cold War era. Since then, there has been a new orientation for the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the establishment of arms registry in the United Nations and the Chemical Weapons Treaty.

e. The sovereign state is no longer the sole player in international relations. Most notably, a number of multinational corporations and non-governmental organizations in various fields have become more influential even than some sovereign states. These new players have intensified their lobbying of different governments on various issues and clearly have an impact on the process of decision-making. Examples include Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

f. The emergence of new economic blocs and groupings, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the European Union and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The World Trade Organization (WTO) came into being to represent the new global approach towards economic interdependence and complementarity.

Furthermore, recent UN socioeconomic conferences on women, population, social development, human rights and the environment, which are redrawing the world map for the 21st century, attach great importance to the concept of interdependence.

One may conclude that political concepts are similar to human beings in their development, their role, their impact and their lifespan. Many political concepts came into existence and then vanished, either because they were unrealistic, such as the classical concept of communism as developed in Europe, while others, such as colonialism and empire building, survived for a certain period of historical development and later became obsolete and eventually extinct as their roles became exhausted.

The new era of the 21st century should be one of interdependence rather than globalism. Dialogue and interaction among nations and civilizations will enrich human civilization rather than conflict, clashes, domination or hegemony. The unprecedented gathering of world leaders at the United Nations on the occasion of the new millennium could be a milestone and catalyst in ushering the world into a new era. The focus of the new era should be unity in diversity and diversity in unity. While standardization could be a good thing for industry, human beings and their lives – and consequently societies and political, social and cultural systems – cannot be the same everywhere.

Life has its own dynamics and characteristics, and societies also have their own. Interdependence could be a viable concept for the 21st century: it allows every country and every civilization to take part and make a contribution.

### **A Look into the Future—East vs. West or West vs. East: The Need for Another Alternative**

To move into the future, one has to test the proper ground to feel to what extent it is solid or to consolidate the soft spots as well as to clean it from the weeds, which sometimes look green but are in fact very harmful. In doing so, one may encounter difficulties, misconceptions and misunderstandings. The accumulation of false notions does not turn them into solid facts but unfortunately generate frictions and conflicts. With the uprising of the Western civilization under the banner of colonialism many intellectuals in the West acquired some superiority complex, particularly the famous British poet Rudyard Kipling, as well as some among the so-called Orientalists. They propagated the idea that "East is East and West is West and they will never meet". The end result of such approach was to separate the Eastern history and culture from the Western one, which is called World History. Studying Eastern civilization, culture and history was not included in courses of world history but became reserved for the so called Orientalists or specialists in Eastern civilizations be they Arab, Islamic, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, ... etc. This situation created a cultural gap between peoples of different cultural background. Some intellectuals in the East intentionally or non-intentionally repeated similar concepts claiming that the Eastern civilization is spiritual whilst the Western one is materialistic. Unfortunately many generations in both East and West were raised up on such false concepts, thus conceptual and political rifts became wider and deeper. Some scholars in the 20th century using the old material with fabricated and non-verified information claiming to be true developed false hypotheses and

came to wrong conclusions. Such a situation is difficult to accept in the 21st century whereas all tools for investigation, survey and analysis are available. If one could accept bias and prejudice in the approach and assessment towards other civilizations in the 17th, 18th or 19th centuries, it is very difficult to accept such an approach in the era of human rights, mass media and electronic media. Let alone that such false hypotheses are very dangerous especially since the globe became smaller due to the revolution in communication and mass media.

This does not mean to ignore the fact that there are differences in habits, customs, traditions or cultures among various countries and civilizations. But such differences should not be a pretext to promote hatred or antagonistic tendencies. A call for dialogue and understanding is in the tone of the era. It reflects the tolerance towards others be it a person, country, people, culture or civilization. The OIC in its summit meeting in Tehran in 1998 called for a dialogue of civilizations. The proposal was accepted by the UNGA, which named the year 2001 as the "year of dialogue among civilizations". However, an effective dialogue should take into account certain paradigms:

1. Different civilizations complement each other, as they are integral parts of human civilization.

2. The basis for dialogue is recognition of the right to differ and to be respected. It is the simple principle for democracy. It is impossible to advocate democracy at home and deny it in the international level.

3. A reappraisal for the history textbooks of both the East and the West to compile an integrated textbook for the history of humanity. It is logical to ask the Third World countries to revisit the textbooks about their history and culture but it is equally logical to ask the Western countries to do the same. There are many myths, prejudices in the so-called Western history, culture textbooks about the East as there are the same in the East.

4. The objective of the dialogue should be searching for the common denominator in characteristics that are existing in each civilization and promoting them with the aim of creating more understanding, advocating more cooperation and deepening the sense of common destiny to fight against enemies of darkness that spread terror, hatred or bigotry.

5. To build dialogue on solid basis it is necessary to promote cooperation and mutual interests bearing in mind respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country as all are members in the community of nations.

6. The world call for open skies and open markets should be matched with a similar call for open minds. The most dangerous problem facing dialogue is for it to be a result of closed minds, then the dialogue could be termed as "a dialogue of the deaf"; everybody speaks and nobody listens, none think of or consider what the others' concerns or interests are. It is necessary to make ends meet and not to accentuate them to fall apart.

7. The proper dialogue should be based on:

- Realistic approach in determining its objectives and means of achieving them.
- Gradualism in achieving these objectives.
- Respect for national characteristics of each country, region or nation.
- Promoting the common denominator among nations, countries and civilizations.
- The national aspirations of peoples towards independence and right of self-determination should be respected especially if such claims have solid foundations and should not intend to disintegrate a country of its long history or weaken it.
- Common problems require common solutions based on the 'win-win' principle.

It is advisable to have more seminars of scholars, intellectuals and politicians to promote concepts of dialogue and cooperation and to refute all ideas of clash, conflict or antagonistic tendencies.

**Note**

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## **Influence of Islamic Culture on Foreign Policies of Islamic Countries**

*Ye Qingl*

The world today is a diverse and plural one, in which different cultures keep running in the rhythm of conflict and integration, shaping the aspects of world politics. As for the Muslims, who hold more than one fifth of the world's population, Islamic culture represents both the norms that guide their behaviors and the settling place that their feelings eventually gravitate towards. With the increase of the role Islamic countries are playing actively in the world arena and the rise of various forms of Islamic movements, Islamic culture has become an important factor impacting contemporary international relations. With more and more scholars of International Relations (IR) paying attention to it, the study of Islamic culture is no longer a reservoir of other disciplines such as religion, sociology and anthropology.

This article prefers to approach Islamic culture and its role in international relations from a historical and evolutionary perspective and tries to integrate the structural methodology of IR studies and the social angle of culture studies in order to orient Islamic culture properly. It will be divided into two parts. The first half will try to summarize the two core values of Islamic culture and its three characteristics, while the second half will be devoted to studying its influence on the foreign policies of Islamic countries.

### **Values of Contemporary Islamic Culture and Their Characteristics**

#### *The Aspiration for Islamic Unity and the Pursuit of Social Justice Are the Two Pillars of Islamic Cultural Values*

The aspiration for Islamic unity is considered at the heart of the system of Islamic values because the unity of Arabia accompanied the birth and spread of Islam. Primitive polytheism was replaced by the monotheism, and the parochial allegiance towards local tribes was replaced by the Islamic teaching that "all Muslims are brothers". The oneness of God is one of the fundamental beliefs in Islam, so a united *umma* is indispensable to the realization of Allah's rule on earth. Pan-Islamic thoughts are rooted deeply in the tradition of the monotheism because the aspiration for unity is related directly to the belief of Muslims in Allah. It is more than a political cause, for it has greatest appeal to the Muslims, easily arousing the deepest feelings inside their hearts. The symbol of unity has been absent from the Islamic world since Mustafa Kemal abolished the caliphate in 1923, leading to the rise of a variety of Pan-Islamic movements. The fact that the ideal of Islamic unity has not yet been realized has been affecting the individual and collective identity of Muslims, their beliefs and value system and even their attitude towards nation-states. Although this ideal remains elusive, it continues to emerge with the development of situations rather than disappearing completely. As for contemporary Muslims, while accepting the reality of nation-states, they believe that it is just one stage in the process of the final realization of this ideal. Unreachable though it seems, it always appears on the horizon for the Muslims.

The pursuit for social justice is another pillar underpinning the system of Islamic values, which is reflected in the emphasis of the Islamic society on *Sharia*. It originated from the revelations from Allah, quite different from other laws. Its juridical power is unlimited, covering every aspect of life. Because of the sanctity of *Sharia*, the aspirations of Muslims for justice and order are all inspired by it. As one Iranian scholar pointed out, although the national interests claimed by realists are admitted in the Koran, pursuing them is not free of restraints because justice is the final goal and criterion.<sup>2</sup> In analyzing the causes of the rise of Islamic movements, one Western scholar observed that

the 'Islamic resurgence' characteristic of our time cannot be explained as simple nostalgia, or even as the result of outrage at injustice. It flows from the sense of mission that has always been a part of Islam. The imperative to command good and forbid evil, or to build a just social order on earth, forms a basis for the action and thought of a variety of contemporary Muslim groups.<sup>3</sup>

### *Characteristics of Islamic culture.*

*Practicality.* Islam is a religion oriented towards this life, so it is inclined towards a strong practicality. The spread of Islam was based on the Islamic *umma* founded by Prophet Muhammad in Medina, so it was much more concerned with secular affairs from the very beginning. The word "Islam" means submission in some sense, but it is not valid to explain on this ground that Muslims are fatalists, only deferring to the manipulation of the *kismet*. They are not allowed to predict and change their *kismet* predestined by Allah, otherwise the authority of Allah would be offended. But they should not be passive and do nothing. Being Allah's agents on earth, they should exert all their efforts to realize their destiny. As long as their efforts are on the path of Allah, the result will be favorable. What Islam pursues is social justice, which can't be realized without the active practice of Muslims. This is the true meaning of predestination. This thought is manifested most obviously in modern Islamic reformist trends of thought. Especially Islamic fundamentalists take the Prophet's missionary career as an example and orient themselves towards the secular world. They are extremely inclined to activism, believing that only by positively engaging in the activities of this world can salvation of humanity be possible.

*Retrospectiveness.* Every religion in the world tends to look backward for the first golden era in its history, but Islam is most salient in this respect. Muslims believe that Muhammad was the Seal of the Prophets and the Koran was the final revelations of Allah, which superseded the Old Testament and the New Testament. So Islam is the most perfect religion and the Islamic *umma* is the best society. These doctrines have been internalized into the education system of the Muslim society, preventing Muslims from self-reflecting on their own problems. Criticizing this tendency sharply, the Muslim scholar Bassam Tibi argued that the criticism of 'Eurocentrism' around the world should be developed into a general objection to 'ethnocentrism'. The narcissism of Islam not only represents a psychological barrier in education, but also obstructs the Muslim society from treating others as of equal value. This misconception is in deep conflict with the initiative of the Third World for an equal and plural global society. The education system of the Muslim society may immerse future generations in a sense of superiority, preventing them from understanding the reality correctly that is quite different from their self-images, so that they will be incapable of dealing with the reality and making substantial changes in it.<sup>4</sup> Although the humiliating defeat of the Arab world in the Six-Day War in 1967 triggered a tide of heart-searching among the intellectuals, this trend didn't continue. It was replaced by fundamentalism that carried the slogan,

"Islam is the solution". Therefore, it was this defeat rather than the success of the Iranian Revolution that paved the way for political Islam. 5

*Expressiveness.* Islamic culture was born out of Arabic culture, bearing its deep brand. Because the Koran was written in Arabic, Arabic also gained a sort of divine status. Language is the central concept of the art expressions in Arabic culture. "Arab society has been characterized in this study as being inclined to spontaneity and expressiveness, reflecting deep-rooted sensitivity and a special fascination with poetry, imagery, metaphor, and symbol." 6 Two results derive from this feature of Arabic Islamic culture. Firstly, it is relatively easy for charismatic leaders such as Ayatollah Khomeini and Gamal Abdel Nasser, who had special appeal to the masses, to emerge in such a society. The capacity of making speeches and publicity is an important criterion for evaluating the competence of a leader in the Muslim society. This is the reason why the leaders of Muslim countries pay much more attention to the words than the deeds in the domestic and state-to-state politics. Secondly, the lack of rational dialectic is to a large degree the cost for the emphasis on language. The Syrian philosopher Sadiq al-'Azm analyzed the negative effect of this tradition on the defeat in the Six-Day War, asserting that the disaster Arabs suffered in that war can be ascribed to this cultural attitude in a great measure.7

### **Influence of Islamic Culture on Foreign Policies of Islamic Countries**

The formulation of a foreign policy is a process which can be divided into two systems: the input and the output. These two systems can also be subdivided into three independent as well as interrelated fields: guidelines and goals, decision-making, implementation. The realists tend to pay much attention to the 'consequence analysis' of foreign policies, starting their studies from the output system and tracing back to the motives of decision-making. As a result, they often neglect or downgrade the importance of cultural factors. In fact, Islamic culture has a great influence on these three fields.

First of all, the values of Islamic culture constitute the dominating belief system and ideology of the Islamic society, shaping its cognitive system, and deeply influencing the worldviews of the whole society and the people in it. Islamic culture is the cultural prism through which the Muslims develop their views towards the outside world and make the value judgement. The Islamic values are to a large degree internalized in the goals and contents of the foreign policies of Islamic countries, and Iran is a typical example in this respect. Being an Islamic republic, Iran always takes an uncompromising stance even tougher than the Arab countries towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, although it adopted flexible policies that reflected strong pragmatism in the Iran-Iraq War and the Gulf War. This policy seems to go against Iran's national interests. Israel was a close ally of Iran before the Iranian Revolution and has sought rapprochement with Iran since then. Improving its relations with Israel would help Iran break away from the isolation it faces. But as far as this diplomatic reality is concerned, Iran can only weigh gains and losses within the framework of Islamic principles in its diplomatic choice. For Iran, to uphold Islamic justice in the Palestine issue is closely related to its Islamic identity, which is its utmost national interest, excluding other realistic choices. Take Saudi Arabia as another example. It is an important goal of its foreign policy to promote Islamic cooperation, which leads to the duality of the policy. On the one hand, as a conservative and moderate Muslim country, it is exerting its efforts to prevent extremist forces at home and abroad from challenging the regime. On the other hand, the great amount of petrodollars it inputted has made it linked with many extreme Islamic movements and organizations, thus

damaging its national interests, as manifested in the deterioration of Saudi-US relations after the September 11 event.

Secondly, most Islamic countries are still developing countries in which the democratic system hasn't been fully developed yet and a political strongman or elite group takes the reins firmly. So, in doing research on these countries' foreign policies, it becomes a common practice to study the decisive role the idiosyncrasy of a specific leader plays in foreign policy making. There is no doubt that the idiosyncrasy of a leader has great influences over foreign policy. But it is more important to analyze how the context of policy-making encourages certain styles of leadership, how it allows certain idiosyncrasy and how a leader's idiosyncrasy alters the context and affects the foreign policy orientation of other leaders.<sup>8</sup> Islamic culture constitutes the social and cultural contexts for formulating foreign policies of Islamic countries. The ruling elite comes from the Islamic society, facing the Muslim masses straightly. Their views, judgements and responses towards social realities are to a large degree shaped and constrained by the political and social values of Islamic culture that the whole society inherits. Their foreign policies have a very strong subjective flavor, but this subjectivity is within the framework of the Islamic cultural values. As far as the leaders of Islamic countries are concerned, their biggest threat comes from the lack of legitimacy caused to a great extent by the current international system. On the one hand, the prime interest of the governments of Islamic countries lies in political survival in the international system. On the other hand, ordinary Muslims consider this system unfavorable, leading to the split of the Islamic world, the marginalization of Islamic countries and the injustice they suffer. The great tension between the government and the people imposes Islam (regarded as the people's ideology) on the governments from bottom to top. In order to consolidate their rule, the governments sometimes have to adopt a number of appeasing measures and carry out some sorts of policies colored with Islam and accommodating some Islamic forces, as Egyptian President Sadat did soon after he took power. These policies only mitigate the conflicts temporarily, but enhance the capacity of Islamic forces inside the system in restricting the government's room to maneuver in the long run. The wide gap between the government and the people exerts completely different impacts on Islamic countries in handling relations with Western countries (the United States in particular). As for those radical countries that are challenging the international order, the sentiment of Muslim masses is a great asset for them to deal with external relations. For example, the call of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for Arab unity and Islamic Jihad during the Gulf War had immense repercussions all over the Arab countries and even the whole Islamic world. It is not so much because they supported him specifically as "because Iraq's confrontation with the West provided him with an opportunity to express judgments and aspirations common to a significant number of Arabs, Muslims, and others. To summarize and oversimplify these: There is a double standard in world politics. For the West and its friends, the present international order provides freedom, security and dignity. But for Arabs, Muslims, and developing nations, there is only oppression, exploitation, and dishonor. It is time the oppressed stood up for their rights, with the Muslims bearing the standard for justice and equity against an irreligious, morally bankrupt West." <sup>9</sup> But in the meantime, those moderate countries satisfied with the status quo are often forced into a dilemma. "It contributed to rigidity in policy, as insecure governments were unwilling to deviate from established approaches, particularly with regard to longstanding opponents such as Israel and in many cases, the Western powers." <sup>10</sup> One of the reasons for the dawdling peace process since the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference lies in the absence of impetus from the Arab side. By force of internal pressures and instability, the leaders of Arab countries are unable to make policies flexible enough. Neither do they have the same courage as that of Egyptian

President Sadat, who ventured into Jerusalem. When the peace process is in crisis, the Palestinians have to face pressures from Israelis as well as their fellow Arabs, who ask them not to compromise. Even good initiatives put forward by some Arab countries such as the peace plan proposed by the Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah often fail to yield results due to the absence of substantial and subsequent policies.

Last but not least, the Islamic norms play a very important role in the diplomatic practices of Islamic countries, Arab countries in particular. The spread of Islamic culture endows the Islamic countries, the Arab countries in particular, with a sort of cultural homogeneity. The fact that the Arab world has been united under the banner of Islam for a long time results in the frequent interactions among the Arab countries, especially their peoples, blurring the borders and sovereignties. The aspiration of Muslims for unity facilitates all sorts of cultural activities and strengthens the links and identifications among Muslims. For the Muslims, Islam is the symbol of identity and the source of allegiance. Within the current international system, there exists a great tension between the consolidating Islamic countries and the transnational Muslim masses, which is even intensified by the ongoing globalization. Every family in the Muslim world has been penetrated by the outside world via the highly developed modern communication technologies, so Muslims around the world all feel that their fates are more closely linked together and are forced to face the similar challenges. The dissemination and popularization of Internet and satellite TV strengthen the transnational links and identifications of Muslims, transforming the local issues into regional ones. The rise of Al Jazeera of Qatar is the best example.

Studying the politics among Arab countries, many scholars singled out accurately its unique transnational characteristic. As Michael N. Barnett claimed, "If Arab politics has any distinguishing traits, it is the dramatic relief of the supposed existence of a community and shared identity against the harsh reality of anarchy and rivalry."<sup>11</sup> Although a united Arab world no longer exists, the system of Arab nations still behaves like a family even without a supernational authority. "It is almost as if inter-Arab relations are not really foreign relations but part of the politics of the extended family instead. Thus, Arab leaders tend to talk directly to the citizens of other Arab states."<sup>12</sup> Once a crisis breaks out, the leaders will have to face the threats from outside the border but within the family, in addition to the pressures of domestic opposition.

Therefore, norms are very powerful in the system of Arab nations. In the politics among Arab nations, the traditional arms race and balance of power are no longer the main tools to maintain the balance of the system and rivalry centers around definition and control of norms. Lack of legitimacy rather than the military intervention of foreign countries is the biggest threat to Arab countries' governments.<sup>13</sup> Islamic values are most salient in the norms' structure that dominates the politics of the Arab world. Even in the heyday of Pan-Arabism advocated by Nasser, Arab solidarity was under the shadow of Islamic unity. The values represented by Islamic culture are the sources of legitimacy for the Arab countries' governments, blurring the borders between domestic politics and international politics and linking the domestic policies closely with the foreign policies within the Arab world.

## **Conclusion**

Culture is the product of history, and social structure and historical process restrict its development. It is in a constant process of adjustment and change so as to accommodate itself to varying times and societies, and Islamic culture is no exception. The contemporary Islamic world has been involved passively in the modernization process and forced to integrate into the

international system. This is the social and international context it is up against. The Islamic world is now facing problems similar to those of the developing countries. Although its responses to these problems share the common traits of developing countries, they are also characterized by distinct Islamic particularities. Islamic culture plays an important role in these. The aspiration for unity and justice is the core value in the system of Islamic culture, playing a guiding role in shaping the worldview of Muslims, and permeating their behaviors. Islamic culture and contemporary world politics are in an open process of mutual affection, mutual restriction and mutual construction.

## Notes

1 Ye Qing is a researcher with the Department of Middle East Studies in SIIS.

2 See Seyed Mohammad Farid Mirbagheri, "Nationalism and Islam", *The Iranian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. XII, No.4, Winter 2000-2001, pp. 607-620.

3 John Kelsay, *Islam and War: A Study in Comparative Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), p.115.

4 Bassam Tibi, *Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change* (Westview Press, 1990), p.118.

5 Bassam Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Preindustrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1988), Preface.

6 Halim Barakat, *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p.206.

7 Sadiq Jalal al-'Azm, "al-'ilm al-hadith wa al-naksa al-akhira" (Modern Science and the Recent Defeat), in *Diasat 'Arabiyya* (Beirut), vol.3, 10 (1967), pp. 34-53, particularly p.39. Quoted from Bassam Tibi, *Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change* (Westview Press, 1990), p.98.

8 Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds., *The Foreign Policies of Arab States* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp.5-6.

9 John Kelsay, *Islam and War: A Study in Comparative Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), p.8.

10 Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds. *The Foreign Policies of Arab States* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp.42-43.

11 Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), p.1.

12 Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds. *The Foreign Policies of Arab States* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp.2-3.

13 See Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

## Characteristics and Values of Indian Culture

*Wu Yongnian<sup>1</sup>*

At the first press conference after his election, Indian President Abdul Kalam emphasized the need for the Indian younger generation to learn scientific knowledge and also correct values from their older generations, and added that India should get rid of poverty and become a developed country in twenty years.

Why did President Kalam mention Indian values anew in his first press conference? This question deserves studying. But what's more important is to clarify what Indian values are. Before we start, we should have some knowledge about Indian culture and its characteristics. The reason is Indian values have taken shape in the fertile soil of Indian culture, which has cultivated the specific values of Indian people and made them differentiate from those of Chinese culture and Western culture. These are issues affording food for thought and research.

### Characteristics of Indian Culture

Being an Oriental ancient civilization, India has a history of 5000 years. And its culture, extensive, profound and mysterious, has made immeasurable contributions to the world progress and civilization. Its distinct characteristics and personalities have made scholars and experts of academia today excited and confused, arousing their interest in probing the mysteries inside. But no consensus has been reached among them up to now. Some experts divide the characteristics of Indian culture into eight aspects, while others argue that there are no more than three.

I would argue that the characteristics of one specific culture must meet two requirements as follows. One is commonality. The Indian cultural system is made up of numerous cultural elements. So the characteristics of Indian culture must be incarnated in each of the cultural elements with their own personalities, representing the mainstream of Indian culture. The other is individuality that represents the uniqueness of Indian culture and plays the role irreplaceable in the system. I would sort the characteristics of Indian culture into four categories, using the two criteria mentioned above. They are religiosity, diversity, inclusiveness and regionalism.

#### *Religiosity*

India is a religious country, and almost all the people sincerely believe in religion. Religion touches every corner of the Indian society and the soul of all the ordinary people, thus maintaining tight and close links with Indian society, politics, economy, military, art and literature. Indian people witness the great and irresistible pacts imposed by religion on themselves in every aspect of life. In short, 'Life' will have no meaning without religion. In the first few years since independence, the Indian Government headed by Nehru took the policy of secularism as the fundamental one of developing economy, getting rid of poverty and stabilizing the society in order to mitigate the conflicts among different religious sects. The Indian National Congress, however, didn't comply with this policy consistently due to the deep and vast influence of religion on the Indian society. It was unable to fully pursue secularism and sometimes even made use of religion to meet some interests of the government due to the interweaving religious and caste

contradictions. It is the incomplete secularism policy of the Congress that led to the soaring power and influence of Hinduism throughout the 1980s. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) used this as an excuse to attack the Congress's secularist program and dismissed it as "camouflaged secularism" because it could not represent the interests of Hindus. The Muslims, for their part, also did not consider this policy in their interests. This is one of the main factors that led to the humiliating defeat of the Congress Party (despite a history of more than 100 years) in the 1990 election.

If we try to analyze and do some studies on the language, literature, art, music, dance and sculpture of India, it will not be hard to find that they are all centered on religion, both in form and content. Even the legislation of the country, the shaping of individual morals and traditional customs and habits of ethnic groups are developed under the influence of religion. Religion has been fully integrated into Indian culture. In short, there will be no Indian culture without religion. For example, in literature there are many works regarded by the academia as the purely religious literature such as the well-known *Pancatantra*, which was edited and disseminated by religious figures especially for their descendants and is full of passionate feelings that preached the religious spirit.

Even in the liberation movement of the Indian people against the British colonial rule and for national freedom and independence, the idea of nonviolence in the movement of nonviolence and non-cooperation advocated by their greatest national hero Mahatma Gandhi also originated from the benevolence and humanity of Indian religious thoughts. It was from the tenets of Hinduism such as "perseverance in truth", "abstention from killing" and "self-renunciation" that the 'nonviolent' thinking derived, with which Mahatma Gandhi invented the unique path in the struggle for national independence and liberation, and won the final victory and established the Republic of Hindustan.

If we observe the life experience of Mahatma Gandhi closely, we can see clearly that he persisted in using religious tenets through his whole life to instigate people to take part in the struggle against British colonists. For he deemed that "politics will lose its soul without religion". He also strongly believed that the strength of patriotism, the willingness to sacrifice and the national dignity could be unbounded, if aroused by religious thoughts. The reason was they represented the intrinsic elements at the very core of Indian culture with a history of 5000 years and the highest ideal the Indian people pursue. For that reason, he held a firm belief that the religious and moral strength of 'nonviolence' thinking could eventually force the British colonists to correct their errors since they also cherished justice in nature.

### *Diversity*

Diversity stands out as one of the most prominent characteristics of the Indian cultural system. Within this system, there are different cultural elements such as Hellenic culture, Islamic culture, Persian culture, English culture and Chinese culture. The reason for this diversity is multifaceted and the most important factor is the alien cultures brought to India by invaders. For example, the Indian Islamic culture was launched after Babur defeated Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, the ruler of Delhi, in 1526 and founded the Mogul empire. Babur, who had a Mongolian origin and came from Central Asia, was one of the descendants of the Turkish conqueror Timur. The introduction of English culture into India was completed after the British colonists invaded India and imposed colonial rule on it, which lasted for 200 years. Only the spread of Chinese culture into the subcontinent had occurred by peaceful means. Moreover, the friendly cultural exchanges between the two sides have been lasting for several thousand years. This is a matter for renewed collaboration on both sides.

As Ji Xianlin put it, "it's rare in the world history for two countries like China and India to have a history of cultural communications and friendly interactions for at least 2000 years "

Even in Indian pure vernacular cultures, there are different types of vernacular cultures with different characteristics resulting from varying periods, conditions and environments for subsistence and development. They include Vedic culture, Aryan culture, Dravidian culture, Brahmanic culture, Marathi culture, Punjabi culture, Assamese culture, if defined by time period and linguistic area. They include Brahmanic culture, Buddhist culture, Indian Islamic culture, Jain culture, Christian culture, Sikh culture and Bahai culture that rose in the modern times, if defined by religious sects. It is the diversity of Indian culture that exhibits its antiquity, brilliance and glory, making it without parallel in the whole world.

### *Inclusiveness*

Inclusiveness is another salient characteristic of Indian culture that distinguishes it from other cultures. Of all kinds of local cultures, linguistic cultures and religious cultures of India in history, each contains a variety of elements in part from alien cultures. I have experienced it deeply since I started learning Hindi and engaging in the study of Indian culture and South Asian affairs several decades ago. Although all the major languages of the world have loanwords and alien elements, which accords with the law of linguistic development to realize their functions through constant assimilation and creation, Hindi is most salient in this respect. I want to take this as an example to prove the value and universality of the inclusiveness of Indian culture. The constituent elements of Hindi that my colleagues and I have studied are summed up as follows:

Every language has loanwords and alien elements, but those of Hindi are unique. The analysis of the etymology of Hindi shows that Hindi absorbs many words from English, Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic and even a few from Turkish, besides its own derivations. All these words integrate into the vocabulary of Hindi, perfectly representing the contents of Hindi. If we open a Hindi-Chinese dictionary, we will find that the etymologies of many words are given at the end of the entries, indicating their origins, either from English, or Persian, or Sanskrit, etc. There are also compounds, either made up of a Hindi word and one from a foreign language or composed by two alien words. The reconfiguration of words from different languages not only enriches and enhances the expression of Hindi but also enables it to express meanings that didn't exist in Hindi before. For instance, the word "contract" and the word "separation" are both combinations of Arabic and Persian words so that they are capable of expressing meanings more accurately.

The assimilation of English by Hindi is manifested not only in its vocabulary but also in its absorption and broad use of English grammar and punctuation. English has left a great impact on Hindi, especially modern Hindi. Owing to the influence of English and its absorption and use of English, the capacity of Hindi is further enlarged both in depth and breadth and keeps up with the modern era, thus evolving for a prosperous future. The assimilation can be sorted into two aspects. First, there are many loanwords from English. The linguistic culture brought by the British after they entered India had many words to represent new things with no equivalent in Hindi. Consequently, Indian people had to copy the pronunciations and meanings from English in order to represent things absent or unrecognized in India. Second, there are some paraphrased words and mixed words. Paraphrased words are those created by using Hindi's own linguistic materials and transplanting the meanings of English words according to its word-building rules. Mixed words are those words or phrases that integrate the borrowed components from English with the form of

Hindi. Besides English, many other foreign languages also share their contributions to the development and prosperity of Hindi, which can be found if further research is to be carried out.

### *Regionalism of Culture of a Tropical Subcontinent*

Being a result of the particular geographic environment and climate, regionalism is the unique characteristic of Indian culture, which some scholars tend to call the "culture of the tropical subcontinent". From a geographic point of view, the Indian subcontinent is just like an isolated island projecting into the Indian Ocean. The geographic separation and scorching weather are the main external factors contributing to the regionalism of Indian culture. Snow covers the Himalayas, the towering 'world roof', all year long and no one would set foot on the tops of these mountains in the winter. Oceans and seas surround India in the east, west and south. The only land which links it to the outside world in the east and west is also blocked by mountains, forests and deserts. People are terrified by the vast virgin forests permeated with noxious mist and miasma and the boundless deserts in which strong winds blow sands and stones day and night, so visitors have no courage to go beyond these limits. The Ganges and the Indus, mother rivers of India, bring benefits to the people, while they often cause serious flooding. Moreover, the tropical and subtropical climate also produces broiling weather and monsoon downpours.

The residents of Indian subcontinent felt insignificant and powerless in the face of the nature, so they held it in more reverence, thus giving birth to the thought that humanity and nature is identical. They imaged hazily that there was a dominating force in the heaven, earth and midair and that humans and everything on earth were nothing but its illusion. This dominating force was later on called 'Brahman'. Gradually, the ideas about "the identity of Brahman-atman" and Self and self were fixed in their minds.

The scorching weather of Indian subcontinent often made Indian people unable to pursue their normal life and work, forcing them to go into the woods or gather under the trees so that they could unfold their endless imaginations about all the phenomena of the nature. As time passed, their imaginations had been enriched and their talents of expression had also grown. The abundance of food and availability of all sorts of tropical and subtropical fruits made it easy for Indian people to eat their fill. So the intellectuals and religious people among them had more time to probe into such questions as the nature of humans, the origin of cosmos, the delicate but concrete relationship between humans and nature or between humans and spiritual world,—all from their unique perspectives. Thus Indian culture has been marked by the characteristics of the culture of tropical subcontinent, and Indian people are famous for their imaginative thinking and eloquence. The works they created are charming, extending their philosophic thoughts aimlessly to rewrite the historical events and the real stories of the heroes in order to mix them with the rich and colorful myths of India. Great poems that are beautiful in rhythm had been compiled and spread wildly. As time passes, it's hard for the later generations to tell the histories from the poems. Ramayana and Mahabharata, the two most famous epics of India, are among the greatest works of this culture of the tropical subcontinent. Both not only reflect the historical facts of India in that period, but also cover broad fields including philosophy, medicine, literature, carving, music, dance, astrology, geography and meteorology. The epics also spend a large portion of volumes touching upon statecraft such as politics, law, morality and traditions.

## Values of Indian Culture

In recent years, many scholars and experts engaging in studies of cultural values have emerged in China. As a result, quite a few dissertations and works analyzing the values of Chinese and Western cultures have been published. However, those dealing with Indian cultural values are less, not to mention those that expound Indian culture and its values systematically and comprehensively and conduct comparative research about them in international cultural research. So I want to explore this topic to the best of my knowledge in order to receive advice from experts and colleagues.

According to knowledge about cultural values, the patterns, factors and traits of specific values are determined in many aspects such as politics, morality, religion, nation, equality, justice, truth, goodness and beauty. However, they can still be generalized into three major aspects. As Tugalenov, a scholar of the former Soviet Union, put it in his book *On the Values of Life and Culture*, all the cultural values can be classified into three categories: material values, social and political values and spiritual values. In the following paragraphs, I will use these three criteria to advance my study of the values of Indian culture.

### *Material Values*

The material value on which Indian culture puts emphasis is the perfect devotion/commitment of humans. Though enjoyment of material values is a part of Indian cultural values, it is only a part and cannot represent the ultimate goal the Indian cultural values pursue, that is, to realize the perfect devotion of humans. Most Indians brought up by the traditional Indian culture care less about the possession and enjoyment of material values: thus there exists a strong national mentality of helping those in distress and aiding those in peril. In India as well as in other countries, it's not surprising to find that a rich person, even a very wealthy one, hands over his fortune for the good of social welfare. But the difference between India and others lies in the fact that Indian people see it as one way to fulfill their value objectives. It is no doubt that this mentality is linked to such religious thoughts as acquiring merit, doing good, good being rewarded with good and evil with evil. But we can't deny the reality that Indian people pursue spiritual values much more than the material ones. Of course, there are Indians who collect wealth by unfair means or dissipate money without restraint. However most Indians pay little attention to clothing, food, shelter and means of travel and live a plain life. Even senior officials or wealthy people may not certainly seek the enjoyment of modern material life. A number of millionaires, presidents, premiers and ministers eat simple food, live in common houses, wear native clothes and travel by homemade unrefined cars. This is not artificial, but is exactly the spiritual pursuit of Indian people. Most Indians don't think much about possessing their properties after death because they don't believe that man must take money and valuables with him in order to continue his enjoyment. Generally there are no luxuries and treasures buried with the dead after cremation, which is the reason why the majority of Indian cultural relics remain aboveground rather than underground. Another example is Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Indian independence movement and the founding father of India. During the Indian struggle for national autonomy and liberation and against British colonial rule, he proposed that Indians weave native cloth themselves, wear native garments, and refuse to use foreign fabrics exported to India by the British. He also led several hundred thousand followers to evaporate brine to make salt. At first glance, it seems that everything Mahatma Gandhi did was just to resist the cruel suppression and rule of British colonists over the Indian people. The ultimate

goal of Mahatma Gandhi, however, was the nonviolence as a means and a thinking, that is, he tried to awaken the conscience of the vicious British colonists by demonstrating the self-sacrifice of Indian people, to achieve independence and autonomy of India, and to make Indian and British people live in harmony. Through his whole life, Mahatma Gandhi cared little about personal gain and loss of material interests in his pursuit for material values. He led a strenuous and simple life. He lived just as common people, carrying nothing valuable with him. However, he believed in the law of cause and effect and sought release from the cycle of death and rebirth through realizing the oneness of Brahman-atman.

### *Social and Political Values*

The social and political values of Indian culture are that humans should intend to create a harmonious environment, using the eternal law of the cosmos to normalize their own conducts in order to reach the ultimate stage of oneness with Brahman-atman. On the one hand, India attaches some importance to pragmatic interests and desires. On the other hand, more importantly, it spares no efforts to promote that everyone should persevere in his life and undertake the obligations of his family and his nation for the prosperity of the society and the wellbeing of his posterity rather than personal pursuits and gains. People must follow law and submit to it, complying with the social rules and morals prescribed by the eternal law, which is more than mere civil law and covers a whole range of meanings such as the task and justice of man, human relations and the social order. So the Indian traditional cultural values strongly emphasize that only by dedicating oneself selflessly to the society can his behaviors truly accord with the social and political values and can a harmonious environment be created.

The comprehensive survey of the historical development of the Indian society shows that its social and political values came into being through a strenuous course. In the era of the Upanishads, Indian religious philosophy considered that "karma" was the cause of the round of death and rebirth. So man had to suffer from the round and could not return to Brahman. The only way to eliminate the cause of "karma" was to quit working and stand aloof from worldly affairs. Therefore, it became more and more popular for Indians to sit in meditation and enter into religion in order to cultivate themselves according to religious doctrines.

This trend of thought developed even further and reached its peak with the rise of Buddhism. Buddhism taught people that life was no more than sufferings, the root of which is "karma". Man can't escape from the round of death and rebirth because of "karma". It's a dead circle that life follows death, and death is at life's heel. Therefore, the only way to extricate oneself from the endless sufferings is to seclude oneself from working, family and society. The attitude of looking down upon fame and gain, power and wealth, and tending to keep distance from the secular world became a big obstacle holding back the productivity of the Indian society and one of the factors eventually leading to the decline of Buddhism in India.

When Hinduism prospered in India, it began to amend the conception of "karma". According to its doctrines, those who dedicate themselves wholly to their work, abide by laws and social norms, and adhere to the eternal law to discipline their behaviors are considered to be free of "karma". Thus, Hinduism changed the utmost way of release from the round of death and rebirth from 'standing aloof from the worldly affairs' to 'joining into the worldly affairs'. The principle of behavior of Hinduism stressed that man is always content with his lot and is able to control his feeling and get rid of insatiable desire. If he works whole-heartedly, he can set himself free from "karma". The social responsibility and dedication that Hinduism advocates reflects the identity of

the social and political values of Indian culture and the nature, which are linked together by the same core contents as benevolence and kindness. Because only by love and benevolence, by loving people and by loving and kindly treating everything on earth can the political values be embodied perfectly. For this reason, Hinduism requires that people should speak, act and work in order to coexist with everything in nature rather than stress blindly on conquering it.

### *Spiritual Values*

The ultimate goal that the spiritual values of Indian culture pursue is to realize the oneness of Brahman-atman, which is the only way for final salvation. India is a religious country. As early as the Vedic era, Indians had a strong belief that some kind of individual personality existed after death, which was considered to be the primitive soul of a human. This belief developed into the thought of heaven at the end of this era. It was said in Atharva Veda that the soul of the dead could reside in heaven, earth and midair, but heaven is the most ideal place. While it was believed in Rig Veda that those people eligible to enter the heaven were sadhus who conducted ascetic practices, soldiers who gave up their lives on the battlefield and devotees who didn't hesitate to sacrifice their properties to Brahman could also enter heaven. Then the conception of 'karma' began to emerge in Atharva Veda, which claimed that man must hold responsibility towards both the good karma and the evil karma on his own, and evil deeds must be punished accordingly. Based on this concept, the idea of the round of death and rebirth came into being. Evildoers must be punished, either being sent to the hell or being transmigrated into such humble things as pig, dog and muck, while those who did good would be rewarded by paradise. It was in the Upanishad era that such issues as the time limit of punishment and reward, soul and salvation were developed and clarified further.

The appearance of the Upanishads had a positive significance to a certain extent because the text was founded on the three major guiding principles of Brahmanism. It was the result of the efforts of some Brahmanic scholars who aspired to seek advanced thoughts to interpret the ultimate meanings of the 'forest treatises', part of the Vedas. These treatises included philosophic thoughts, so they were also called Vedanta philosophy. After it was finalized, the Vedanta philosophy claimed that the dominant in heaven, earth and midair was Brahman. Though invisible and unrevealed as it was, it would appear in every place at any time. The material world and everything in it were just its illusion. Individual soul was essentially one with Brahman. This was the thinking of "the identity of Brahman-atman". Therefore, Hinduism sees the self-realization of the identity of Brahman-atman as the loftiest goal of reaching salvation. But because of "karma" man can't experience and recognize the atman. "Affected by Karma, the atman is unable to return to Brahman to identify with it after death. So man has to suffer from the round of death and rebirth or be reincarnated into a bird, a beast, a worm and a fish." For that matter, Indians consider life to be painful and that they must strive hard to find the way to reach salvation and the identity of Brahman-atman so that the suffering from the round of death and rebirth can be exempted, 'escaped from'. In order to achieve this goal, new paths had been put forward in the Bhagavad Gita, the classic work of Hinduism. They were the path of behavior, the path of devotion and the path of knowledge.

*Path of Behavior.* The believers must abide by the moral norms strictly, devoting themselves to the gods. Actions derive from freedom, so Hinduism encourages people to participate in all kinds of working practices, to love their jobs and to dedicate themselves to their jobs, which quite differs from the Buddhist way of salvation by quitting jobs to eliminate the cause of "karma". As

put in the Bhagavad Gita, one whose every undertaking is devoid of the motivation of desires and their objects and who has incinerated all activities in the fire of pure knowledge,—he is the one the spiritually intelligent describe as educated. After giving up attachment to object-driven results, always satisfied, indifferent to external phenomena, he in spite of being engaged in activities does not ‘do’ anything at all. Bereft of desire, controlled in mind and body, relinquishing all conceptions of proprietorship whereby a person can incur sinful reaction, he performs only sufficient actions to maintain body sustenance.

The "spirit of self-forgetting aloofness of the Indian people", which people in today’s India often talk about, is considered to be the ultimate truth they are pursuing, which requires that they exert their efforts to cultivate this spirit in order to work selflessly. This spirit also incarnates the correct values of India that the Indian President Kalam called upon the young people to ‘inherit’. Kalam himself is the model practicing these values: he dedicates himself wholly to his work selflessly and remains indifferent to personal gains and losses in his pursuit for the causes of India, be they missile projects or prosperity and strength. So his colleagues described him as a work maniac. For the sake of the missile programs, he pledged to remain a bachelor all his life and joked that he had already married missiles. This is the reason why he is called the "father of missiles" in India. In fact, it is Hinduism itself that has turned the way of release from the round of death and rebirth from aloofness to a joining into worldly affairs and promoting a spirit of ‘involved detachment’. Therefore, the great Indian poet Tagore asserted this spirit promotes a ‘stage of perfection’ which is a combination of philosophic theory and practice. This is also the highest spiritual value modern Indians seek.

*Path of Wisdom.* Being a Hindu, he must seek truth in rationality and try to realize the identity of soul and Brahman through grasping the experience that "Brahman is atman". He must recognize that the identity of Brahman-atman is the absolute truth, since only Brahman is the absolute existence while all other things are nothing but an illusion. Only through this understanding can he break up the limit of ignorance and eventually reach salvation. The Bhagavad Gita described the importance of the path of wisdom vividly. In the world there is nothing that exists as purifying as transcendental knowledge. One perfected by the science of uniting the individual consciousness with Ultimate Consciousness automatically attains that knowledge in the self in course of time. One with full faith, attentively focused, who has conquered the senses, achieves transcendental knowledge and having achieved transcendental knowledge attains supreme peace. Moreover, the Bhagavad Gita clarified further the importance of knowledge to the people who master it: It is directly related to reaching the highest state of the oneness of atman with Brahman.

The path of wisdom is very popular among Indians today. To most intellectuals, they feel subconsciously the urgency to master knowledge and open the door of wisdom not only for the sake of finding a favorable living and working condition, but also for approaching God and identifying with him.

*Path of Devotion.* If a Hindu loves a god and submits to him piously in the extreme, this is also a way of gaining the god’s favor and reaching salvation. It is an effective way to identify with a god to cherish the god in heart, to do everything for god and to read the name of god silently every minute. For example, Mahatma Gandhi was so pious in his commitment to Rama that, after being shot down by a young Hindu fanatic, he kept murmuring the name of Rama as he used to, until his last moment. His last word, "hay, Rama", was carved on the black gravestone. His commitment to Rama also reflected the piety of Indian people at large. There was one passage spoken out by the god in the Bhagavad Gita, explaining this matter profoundly. "I am equally

disposed to all living entities; there is neither friend nor foe to Me; but those who with loving sentiments render devotional service unto Me, such persons are in Me and I am in them. Even if one committing the most abominable actions renders service only unto Me exclusively without deviation, one is to be considered saintly because one is correctly resolved and properly situated. One swiftly becomes endowed with righteousness and justly obtains everlasting peace. O Arjuna declare it boldly, My devotee never perishes."

### *'Nonviolent' Thinking in Indian Cultural Values*

Nonviolence is the goal and state the Indian cultural values seek to achieve. According to Vedanta philosophy, everything in the world is self deriving from Self, so it should be friendly and equally disposed to others. Everything's true nature is divine and has the true, good and beautiful moral conduct, so people should be kind to and love each other. Moreover, the spirit of friendliness and love ought to be extended to beasts and birds, flowers and plants. Thus, killing is forbidden.

Within the ideological system of Mahatma Gandhi, nonviolent thinking derived from the tenets of Hinduism such as abstention from killing and restraint from harming others' feelings. Nonviolence is love, which means loving everyone and doing more good. He even considered asceticism as the criterion for love. For he always believed that everyone is identical in nature and shares the same humanities as kindness and conscience. He advocated that the nonviolence seekers fully express their inner kindness through self-sacrifice and self-refinement in order to awaken the internal conscience of their enemies, so that they can give up evil and return to good.

The core of 'nonviolent' thinking of Mahatma Gandhi is "perseverance in truth". He believed that the truth was the ultimate reality and source of the cosmos and that everything in the world was no more than its external manifestations. He also presumed that the truth and the god are the law dominating every life in the cosmos. This view of Mahatma Gandhi emphasized that the human internal spirit originated from the same source as that of god, reflecting the divinity in human body. The Indian cultural values believe that people are identical with each other in spiritual nature because god is absolute and indivisible. It is this theory that drove Gandhi to stick to such doctrines as nonviolence and perseverance in truth in the national liberation movement. It needs to be pointed out that Gandhi's thought belongs to historical idealism, which takes truth, goodness and beauty that are abstract and colored with mysticism as something eternal that goes beyond history and class and as the only way to handle human relations and solve social contradictions. But it also needs to be noted that India is a religious nation and people have strong beliefs in religions. Religion is so popular in India that religious thoughts have penetrated deeply into people's minds and touched every corner of the society. Gandhi succeeded in creating a new ideology that collected the core values of Indian culture completely by combining his view of truth with the idea of nonviolence. Therefore, he was able to mobilize Indian people sufficiently to realize his thinking through arousing the spirit of self-devotion. And his thinking perfected the pursuit of Indian people for spiritual values, leading to the final victory of perseverance in truth and the movement of nonviolence and non-cooperation (with colonialism) and the founding of the Republic of Hindustan.

Although Gandhi's ideas about nonviolence and non-collaboration and perseverance in truth were influenced by Western humanitarianism, it was the spiritual values of Indian culture Gandhi inherited that played the fundamental and decisive role. His theory combined traditional Indian philosophy closely with religion, ethics and social political theories. His ideal was to build a Europe-type society with Indian religion, and adhering to the view of truth and epistemology

derived from mystical Indian philosophy and basing its hopes on gods and the identity of humans with God.

**Note**

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## **National Identity, Strategic Culture and Security Interests: Three Hypotheses on the Interaction between China and International Society**

*Qin Yaqing*<sup>1</sup>

Ever since China's reforms and opening-up, its domestic political, social and economic process has changed greatly. At the same time, China's relations with the international society have also changed greatly in a substantial sense. These changes, in terms of what image China will have in the global family in the 21st century, what posture China will put itself in before the international society, and in what way China will develop, are of profound significance.

This paper will focus on the interactive relations between China and the international society. The issue it takes into consideration are the great changes which have taken place in China's conception and behavior relative to the international society. The time-span the paper covers is the more than 20 years of reforms and opening-up. There are profound domestic and international social backgrounds, as well as complex political, economic, social and cultural causes for these changes. We are not going into the detail of these complex backgrounds and causes. What we want here is to show clearly 3 processes of important changes concerning China's relations with the international society, and to raise 3 hypotheses around them to demonstrate these changes and have the hypotheses initially verified.

In the past 20 years, relative to the international society, China has started and been experiencing three important processes of change and development.

1. China has been experiencing a redefinition of its national identity.
2. China has been experiencing a reconstruction of its strategic culture.
3. China has been experiencing a reflection on its security interests.

Although the above three processes are still ongoing, signs of the processes are quite obvious, and have already been reflected in the interaction between China and the international society. At the same time, this process continues gaining motive power and will develop along the already revealed orbit if there is no grave accident.

### **Redefinition of National Identity**

National identity refers to a nation's status relative to the international community. Specifically, it is the degree of identification of a sovereign state in the modern sense with the guiding international society.

Such a degree of identification can be put into three categories: positive identification, zero identification and negative identification. Positive identification means that a nation holds an 'accepting' and basically satisfactory attitude towards the guiding international society, regarding itself as one member of the latter and taking an active part in the latter's activities and affairs. Zero identification means that a nation neither accepts nor opposes the international society, thinking the latter doesn't matter to itself and adopting a detached attitude towards the latter's activities and

affairs. Negative identification means that a nation takes an opposing attitude to the international society, regarding itself as a non-member of the society or a nation outside the system and taking no part in the latter's activities and affairs, which, it believes, will be of more negative than positive significance.

Following the above definition of identity, the states relative to the international society can be divided into status quo states, detached ones and revolutionary ones. Those maintaining positive identification with the guiding international society are status quo states. Those maintaining zero identification are detached states. Those maintaining negative identification are revolutionary states. While status quo states are expecting to maintain the basic status quo of the international society, detached states are expecting to make their choice according to their own taste and revolutionary states are expecting to change the basic status quo of the international society. Of course, difference among the three categories is more in degree. But within a certain degree area, the basic national identity orientation can be manifested rather obviously.

The status quo states are identified at three levels with the international society, or called three degrees of identification. At the first degree is coerced identification, that is, a state is coerced by a strong outside force to unwillingly accept the identification with the international society. This usually appears within a power hegemony system, in which the strong outside force comes from the hegemonic state. At the second degree is interest identification, that is, a state identifies itself with the international society for its own interests. Strongly driven by interests, it hopes to join the international society and to maintain the latter's essential order arrangements. This easily emerges within the institutional hegemony system and the institutionalized international society. At the third degree is ideational identification, that is, a state's integration with the international society involves identity, culture, legitimacy and other factors. It doesn't need coercion of outside force or drive of interests and is the complete internalization of the international social system and norms.<sup>2</sup>

Our hypothesis of China's national identity is China has redefined its national identity, undergoing a process from a revolutionary state to a status quo one. This transition started from the early 1970s when the UN restored the seat of the PRC and was accelerated in the early stage of reforms and opening-up. Now it is within the area of positive identification and at the degree of interest identification.

What has a close relationship with the change in domestic political culture is the concept of national identity in the international society. The so-called national identity refers to a state's identity orientation in world politics and its demonstrated guiding characteristics. Any judgment of interests and formation of conception depends on a state's cognition and orientation of its identity in the first place. <sup>3</sup> Viewed from the social theory of international politics, the attitude and behavior of a state towards the international society are functions of national identity. That is to say, states with different identities may have different concepts and the resulting policies; even the state's conception of and policy towards the international society may change owing to the meaningful changes in its identity. <sup>4</sup>

National identity is a relatively stable factor, but it is not a constant. Changes of the environment, development of social process, ups and downs of the interactive frequency will all lead to changes of identity to a certain extent. These changes, through the feedback of the player from its practical interaction, will guide the player to reexamine, revise or change its original identity. That does not mean that its original orientation of identity was fallacious. But the changed political cultural environment may help the player realize its revised or changed identity may be more suitable to the changed environment. The research agenda of identity politics demands we

observe first changes in national identity and identity orientation and then the interests of a state resulting from these changes and the behavior based on the interests.

Important political, military and social changes often lead to a state's re-realization of its own identity. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, great changes took place in China's domestic politics. Under the impact of these changes, China's orientation of its own identity in the international society changed as well. The People's Republic of China, from its founding to 1971 when its seat was restored in the UN, was a great power 'outside' the international society. During the 1970s after the restoration, though being a member of the organization, China's participation in its activities was quite limited. This was obviously reflected in its participation in the international system: Up to 1999, China had altogether joined 220 international conventions, but after 1979, 185.5 The real transition occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when China's domestic political process had radical transformation. Viewed from the general trend, before the 1980s, China advocated the policies and principles of opposing imperialism, exporting the proletarian revolution and asking for the overthrow of the existing international system. It actually defined itself as a state outside the system with a rather distinct revolutionary nature.

After 1978, the signs of a political revolution of national identity appeared in China, which were manifested at the following three levels. Firstly, they were manifested in the country's economic interests. China regarded the development of its national economy as the primary task and placed the focus of its diplomatic work on maintaining the international environment beneficial to its economic development. Therefore, viewed from the country's direct interests, China needs to maintain connection to the international order and the international society. In practice, China's economic development in these years, to a large extent, has benefited from the international society's opening-up and free trade, as well as from its own policy of market economy. The share of foreign trade in GDP rose from 12% in 1978 to 36 % in 2000. Now China's dependence on foreign trade arrives at 44%. In 2001, its total volume of import and export reached US\$ 509.8 billion, the sixth largest in the world, and the actually used foreign investment reached US\$ 46.9 billion from zero in 1978.<sup>6</sup> These economic interests have linked China with the world economy and resulted in China's high interest identification with the international society.

Secondly, China has begun to all-dimensionally participate in the activities of the international society, including political, economic and social ones. The number of the international conventions it joined from 34 in 1949-1979 to 220 in 1999 means not only the sharp increase in quantity but also a dramatic rise in the degree of identification. In addition, such participation not only means gain of the present national interests, but also includes the interactive process between China and the international society. In this process, China, through constant cognition, learning and feedback, better understands the international norms, while its behavior is more in keeping within the bounds of these norms. Even in the areas where there are no present interests to it, China will pay more attention to following the principles of the international system and maintaining its own international reputation. The more China takes part in the activities, the more it becomes an important member of the international society.

Thirdly, participation in the international society expanded China's identification with the international society and system. The development of China's relations with the international society in the post-war over a half century demonstrates that China has transformed from a big power outside the system to a state playing an important role in the international society and a status quo state maintaining the world and regional order. It has become one of China's important strategic tasks to maintain the stability of the international society and the region where it is located.

Therefore, viewed from the three levels, China's identity has changed a lot in the international society. It regards the international society as the important guarantee of China's national interests rather than the threat to China's security. That is to say, China is transforming from a political and revolutionary state outside the system into an economically developing country maintaining social stability. This transition is of essential significance, of which the important cause is the fundamental changes in China's domestic political process. China's identification with the international society, to a large extent, belongs to the second degree, i.e. the interest identification. And judging from the current development situation, the orientation of the new national identity is still in the process of formation and consolidation. But we should expect the characteristics of the new identity to be further strengthened, if no accident in the security area occurs. Such change of identity will have direct influence on China's cognition of a series of issues concerning national security such as the international society, war and conflicts and will also form the base of thinking of China's foreign behavior.

### **Reconstruction of Strategic Culture**

Strategic culture refers to a whole set of social macro-strategic concepts. The basic contents of the society are identified by state decision-makers, and accordingly a long-term state strategic choice orientation is set up.<sup>7</sup> Johnston believes that strategic culture is an integrated system of symbols (i.e., causal axioms, languages, analogies, metaphors, etc.) that acts to establish pervasive and long-standing strategic preferences by formulating concepts of roles and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs.<sup>8</sup> Strategic culture includes the basic assumption about the orderliness of the strategic environment and the state decision-makers' understanding of international conflicts and their methods of resolution, especially the understanding concerning the use of force. To a large extent, strategic culture decides strategic choice.

Basically, we can divide strategic culture into two categories: conflictual strategic culture and cooperative strategic culture. In order to make the concept of strategic culture operable, we can further define three kinds of recognition: Recognition of war, of conflict and of the efficacy of the use of force.<sup>9</sup> For the purpose of convenience, we put recognition into two antagonistic ideas.<sup>10</sup> Recognition of war touches upon how to understand the role of war in human affairs, i.e., whether war is inevitable or aberrant. Recognition of conflict touches upon how to understand the nature of conflict, i.e., whether conflict is zero-sum. Recognition of efficacy of the use of force involves how to understand the outcomes of the use of force, i.e., whether the use of force can effectively control outcomes and eliminate threats. If considering that war is inevitable in human affairs or unnecessary to avoid, conflict has inevitable zero-sum nature and the use of force can effectively control outcomes and eliminate threats, then it follows the player's strategic culture belongs to the *conflictual* one. Otherwise, it is a *cooperative* one. At the level of behavior, strategic culture affects the formulation of a state's security policy and the implementation of its security strategy.<sup>11</sup>

Our hypothesis of China's strategic culture is that China's dominant strategic culture has been undergoing reconstruction, from one more conflictual to one more cooperative. During the time-span covered by this paper, China's dominant strategic culture has undergone changes of great significance, which is the key factor for explaining China's strategic choice. Viewed from the time-span, the late 1970s and early 1980s were the historical period of this transition. Therefore, we need to examine whether, around the period, there was any fundamental difference in the essential

respects concerning China's security concepts of the dominant strategic culture such as the nature of war, the nature of the adversary and the nature of conflict.

Before the 3rd Plenary Session of the 11th National Congress of the CPC at the end of 1978, China's basic view concerning war and conflict was that war is inevitable and conflict is a universal phenomenon in human affairs. As to the nature of the adversary, China stressed that both the essence of the adversary and its strategic intention were unchangeable. As to the nature of the conflict with the adversary, China stressed the struggle, the cruelty of struggle and the necessity of carrying through the struggle to the end and complete elimination of the adversary, that is, the zero-sum nature of conflict. This nature existed in either domestic class struggles or all kinds of international threats to China. In addition, the role of violence in conflicts was confirmed as well. Especially after 1962 when class struggle was taken as the key link, the antagonistic struggle around the world was also considered the basic policy of China's diplomacy. China's post-war international security environment, especially the threats posed by the two superpowers to China, further strengthened these core factors of strategic culture in their interaction with the environment. Therefore, China's awareness of getting ready for a big war had never been weakened in more than 40 years after World War II. Struggle was the substance and the principal aspect of China's strategic culture and cooperation was the non-principal aspect. Mao Zedong pointed out again and again in the 1970s the danger of a new world war.

The 3rd Plenary Session of the 11th National Congress of the CPC set the basic line of concentrating on economic growth and decided to transfer the work focus of the Party and the country to achievement of modernization. As a result, the status of struggle (both at home and abroad) was gradually weakened. In the late 1970s, Deng Xiaoping initially set forth his thinking that war could be postponed. "The Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPC on Some Historic Problems since the Founding of the PRC" published in 1981 pointed out that class struggle was no longer the principal contradiction.<sup>12</sup> In 1982, the 12th National Congress of the CPC clearly pointed out that world peace was possible.<sup>13</sup> In 1985, Deng Xiaoping put forward that peace and development are two themes of the contemporary times and held that war will not break out in at least ten years. In 1987, he said that "[W]ith regard to the international situation, it seems to me that relatively long-lasting peace is possible and that war can be avoided."<sup>14</sup> This demonstrated that China not only was no longer ready for a big war but also gave a definition totally different from before in terms of the important factors in strategic culture such as war's role in human affairs, the nature of international conflicts and the efficacy of the use of force.

China's third generation of leaders displayed more obvious awareness of cooperation. Jiang Zemin pointed out at the 15th National Congress of the CPC that "[I]t has become the mainstream of the times to desire peace, seek cooperation and promote development. The factors safeguarding world peace are gaining strength. For a fairly long period of time to come, it will be possible to avert a new world war."<sup>15</sup> Later there appeared a series of incidents, such as bombing of China's Embassy in Yugoslavia and the mid-air collision over South China Sea, which China believed were unfavorable to its political and military security. But China's basic evaluation of the world situation was still "overall peace, local warfare; overall relaxation, local tension; overall stability, local turbulence",<sup>16</sup> stressing the stability and peace of the world situation on the whole. As to the nature of the adversary, Jiang held that "[T]hey should seek converging points in their common interests, expand mutually beneficial cooperation and work together to take up the challenge facing mankind for survival and development." As to the efficacy of the use of force, he said that "[T]hey should persist in dialogue, not confrontation, in properly handling their differences...."<sup>17</sup> At a grand gathering marking the 80th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, Jiang Zemin reaffirmed

that peace and development are the themes of the times and set forth that mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and collaboration are the core of security. He also said that "[D]ifferent civilizations and social systems should enjoy long-term coexistence and draw upon and benefit from each other in the process of competition and comparison and achieve common development while seeking common ground and shelving differences."<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, China's new strategic culture began to emerge. By the mid-1980s, some basic factors of the strategic culture had taken shape step by step. In over a decade from the 1980s to the 1990s, some of these important concepts of the strategic culture were still in the process of formation and some to a certain extent were internalized and strengthened in the changed international environment. As far as the most fundamental change in China's strategic culture was concerned, it was the change of strategic conception from stress on struggle as the core to stress on cooperation as the core, with struggle receding to the secondary aspect. The avertible nature of war, the cooperative nature of the adversary and the obvious degradation of efficacy of the use of force are manifestations of the changes in strategic culture.

### **Rethinking Security Interests**

National security is one of the basic concepts in the study of international relations, but there is no unified, immutable definition of national security. From the traditional security concept of political realism based on territory to the post-Cold War concept of global security and national comprehensive security thought of so highly, both the connotation and the extension of security have changed a lot. Owing to the change of the conception of security, considerations of national security interests are different.<sup>19</sup>

With the development of the historic process after World War II, especially the increase of interdependence, various aspects of security have more and more indicated their interrelated and transactional relations, gradually constructing an all-directional, dynamic and three-dimensional security concept.

At the state level, the essential meaning of the security-concept stems from the survival and development of the country, that is, whether the country is under an external threat and how serious such a threat is. In the international political realm, the definition of security is based on the international environment.<sup>20</sup> National security is a sovereign state's demand in an anarchical international environment for its own survival, with political security, military security and economic security at its core. Political security refers to the establishment of the state sovereignty, that is, the government and system representing the state are not threatened by any outside factors and enjoy generally recognized legitimate status both at home and abroad. Military security refers to a state's territorial integrity, that is, no threat by any foreign military forces to its territory or the main body of its territory. Economic security refers to the realization of a state's economic interests, that is, a benign outside environment for its economic development without interference and destruction by any foreign negative influence. The non-state level, non-traditional security concept is not totally new, but its importance has been prominent after the Cold War and has attracted more and more attention.

We have respectively defined a country's political, military and economic security and stressed the importance of non-traditional security, but this does not mean that these aspects of security can be entirely separated and have nothing to do with each other. Actually, they are often regarded as being mutually prerequisite and guaranteed and, especially in the more and more interdependent world, the comprehensive security concept is of greater significance. Furthermore,

since these aspects of security are all of the core concepts of national security, sometimes their demarcation lines are indistinct. However, in the perspective of analysis, they can be differentiated and the definition of each security concept is rather clear. Accordingly, we can first suppose that a country, when considering its security, will put one or several aspects of security in the primary position according to its environment and can readjust their positions when the environment and other conditions change.

Besides, according to the neo-realist theory of international relations, the core content of national security concept depends on international power distribution and reflects the country's relative power position in the international social structure.<sup>21</sup> Neo-liberalism holds that a country's definition of its own interests (including security interests) depends to a great extent on the international system.<sup>22</sup> I think international social structure and system are of vital importance to determination of national interests, but structure and system make sense through the country's cognition.<sup>23</sup> So, this paper puts security concept at the core of research, that is, how national decision-makers recognize their security situation and threats.

Taking China's cognition of security and its readjustment of such cognition as a clue, we can divide roughly the evolution of China's security concept starting from 1949 into four periods. The first period: 1949-1969; the second period: 1969-1982; the third period: 1982-1996; and the fourth period: 1996-.

From 1949 when the PRC was founded to 1969 when the Soviets invaded Zhenbao Island and Nixon was elected American president, there were 20 years. During this period, China's security consideration was concentrated on the areas of high politics in core security aspects: Equal stress was laid on political and military security, while economic security was in the secondary position, and security in other areas was basically out of the decision-makers' sight.

The second period was from 1969, when the counter-attacks in self-defense were fought at Zhenbao Island, to 1982 when China declared an independent foreign policy. During this period, cognition of security was still focused on the core security realms. But military security became the center of China's national security, the sense of political security threat was decreased and the sense of urgency of economic security was increased, but was still on the margin of national security consideration compared with the former two.

The third period was from 1982 when the 12th National Congress of the CPC was held to 1996. During this period, China's security concept was still focused on the core security realms, but great changes took place, that is, security consideration transferred from the areas of high politics to the areas of low politics in core security realms. The importance of economic security began to rise obviously, while the status of political and military security was relatively down. This was a new security concept of the second-generation leaders of the CPC.

The fourth period was from 1996 when China put forward the new security concept up to the present time. During this period, while economic security is still thought of highly, non-traditional security has begun to draw attention. China's security concept has begun to extend outwardly from the core realms. Other aspects of security such as environmental security have attracted more attention and so is international and regional security. It can be said that the new security concept featuring cooperative and mutual security is the new thinking of the third-generation leaders.

On the basis of the above analysis, we can derive such a general hypothesis: The higher the degree of positive identification of a state's identity orientation with the international society is, the more obvious the features of its cooperative strategic culture are and the more its security interests focus on economic and cooperative security, then the more possibly the basic interaction between the country and the international society will present a state of benign cooperation. The

process of interaction between China and the international society in the past 20 years shows that China's identity in the international community, strategic culture and security concept have been undergoing great changes. This is of important and far-reaching significance to China's more harmonic integration into the international community and enables China to play an important and active role in a more cooperative and responsible spirit.

From the perspective of the interaction between China and the international society, China has been making further efforts to raise its identification with the international society, deepen the internalization of cooperative strategic culture and pay more attention to its economic security interests and other non-traditional security interests. So we have every reason to believe that, being a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a vigorous member of WTO, China will more and more become a highly stable factor and play a more responsible and active role in the world system.

## Notes

1 Qin Yaqing is Professor with the Diplomatic Institute. This paper was for the seminar on Cultural Factors in International Relations sponsored by Shanghai Institute for International Studies on December 5-6, 2002.

2 This classification takes Wendt's three degrees of internalization for reference. See Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics*, pp. 335-349. As for the conditions and standards of classification, see Boulding's elaboration on three systems, that is, threat system, exchange system and integrative system. See Boulding's *Ecodynamics* (Sage Publications, 1978), p. 333.

3 On the attribute of state, see Wendt's "Collective Identity Formation and the International State", *American Political Science Review* 88 (June 1994), pp. 384-396.

4 Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security", *The Culture of National Security*, p. 52.

5 See FMPRC, "Table of China Joining Multilateral International Conventions".

6 See *People's Daily*, September 24, 2002.

7 Alastair I. Johnston, *Cultural Realism* (Princeton University Press), p.ix.

8 Johnston, "Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China", p.222.

9 Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, p.ix.

10 It should be pointed out that there is not such a clear-cut dividing line in the real world. Cooperative strategic culture and conflictual strategic culture are more manifested in difference of degree, rather than that there are two sides to everything.

11 See Alastair Iain Johnston, "Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China", *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 216-268.

12 *Selected Important Documents (Vol. 1)*, p. 211.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 264.

14 *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, Vol.3, p. 233.

15 Jiang Zemin's Report at the 15th National Congress of the CPC.

16 *Jiang Zemin on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics*, p. 522.

17 Jiang Zemin's Report at the 15th National Congress of the CPC.

18 Jiang Zemin's speech at a grand gathering marking the 80th anniversary of the founding of the CPC.

19 See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (McGraw-Hill Education, 2005), 3rd ed. pp. 562-563; 21 Kenneth Waltz, Hedley Bull and Herbert Butterfield, *Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), Chapter 6; Michel T. Klare and Daniel C. Thomas, *World Security: Challenges for a New Century* (Cengage Learning, 1997).

20 National security at the domestic level is also a multifaceted issue having direct impacts on a country's security. As this paper focuses on the national level, it does not discuss security issues at other levels.

21 Waltz, Bull and Butterfield, *Theory of International Politics*.

22 Robert Keohane, "International Institution: Two Approaches", *International Studies Quarterly*, 32:379-396.

23 Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).