ProQuest Number: 10183201

ProQuest 10183201

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

COMPARATIVE STUDIES OF EUROPEAN AND CHINESE CULTURAL IDENTITY: A CONCEPTUAL AND HISTORICAL APPROACH

CHUN-YU LIU

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of The Nottingham Trent University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2002

Abstract

Adopting a combined conceptual and historical approach, the main theme of the thesis is to investigate, through the structured history of Europe and China in the *longue durée* (with the emphasis on the period from 1450 to 1900) and their historical cultural encounters, the disparate "cultural logics" of self-identification in both cultural systems. The thesis takes "cultural identity" as an ongoing interactive process within which an individual and a collective continuously derive their self-awareness from, and at the same time reflect their self-consciousness upon, multifaceted "life aspects" (i.e. material conditions; social, economic, political institutions; norms, ways of thinking, mental vicissitudes, and mundane practices). Such communicative processes between meanings and life aspects provide each individual a distinct way of life, which when generalised at a collective level may be recognised as the "Chineseness" or "Europeanness" of people, and which when traced through time may be specified as their "trajectories of cultural identity".

Differing from most political and economic centred history, the thesis asserts that the ebb and flow of power between Europe and China started at the turn of the 16th century (and only became clear in the 19th century), had not so much to do with China's shortfalls of economic resources, advanced technologies, political institutions, and military power, but more to do with its insistence on the principle of virtuous rule, the inward-looking and non-aggressive cultural logic. What is critical for the Euro-Chinese divergence in material progress after the 16th century is not simply the practice of endless accumulation of capital and the institutional mobilisation of power in Europe, but the moral-ethical reforms, or the collective mentality changes behind such structuralised behaviours. It was such moral-ethical reforms that directed Europe into a culture that was characterised by an outward-looking and goal-profit-calculating cultural logic, which values the acquisition of wealth and power over the moral and ethical claim of equality among nations.

The thesis concludes that since the inner logics varied essentially, it is inadequate to judge the success or failure of Europe or China simply through the comparison of material progress and superficial political and economic structures without taking the

possible effect of cultural logics into account. Rather, it is held that every culture may maintain its own way of value judgement, and the incommensurability of culture often lies in the lack of appropriate interpretations of the inner logics. On the other hand, cultural logics are not invariable. Our historical studies suggest that the transformation of a culture is subject to continuous negotiation processes among different aspects of culture, which involve a variable pattern of combinations among geo-ethnic conditions, political-economic institutions, practices of routine, embedding cultural logics, external challenges, as well as historical contingencies (or unintended consequences). Under such a dialogic connectivity, culture influences the practice of policymakers by saturating into their way of thinking, and by containing them within a culturally defined value system in such a way that a political-economic policy is set within a context of cultural debates. And by conceiving the instrumental and humanistic rationalities under an interactive yet integral theoretical framework, a cultural perspective contributes in elaborating further on how cultural factors may influence the functions of political economy, and clarify many of the *yet-to-be-identified* factors that cannot be adequately contextualised by instrumental rationality alone.

Table of Contents

Table of Maps

Table of Charts

Chapter 1   Introduction: Concepts and Definitions

"Culture" is almost a mysterious thing. Tylor defined it as the "complex whole"[1] of human lives (or to Raymond Williams, the "whole way of life").[2] It is the product of human beings, which in turn shapes the identity of people. In his *Les Mots*, J. P. Sartre stated confidently that, "people reflect and recognise themselves from culture, and only through the old mirror of culture could people see clearly their own image."[3] Nonetheless, despite a mass interpretation of "culture", the image of it has long been too complex and too confused for our generation to explore, let alone identify ourselves distinctively through it. Such enduring yet perplexing ties between men and culture makes it one of our main concerns to rediscover a way through which one could place culture again into his/her everyday life, into the real political economy, and into the inter-ethnic (-cultural) relations so as to identify him/herself more properly.

The contemporary re-emergence of identity politics in Europe is much more complicated an issue than that which fell in the wake of the 1789 French Revolution, when modern nationalism and hegemonic cultural essentialism first stretched its claw and encompassed its "nationals" beneath the wing of the nation-state, which later brought together the principle of nationality and the principle of rights in the very body of citizenship.[4] Be it pan-Gaulism, pan-Slavism or pan-Germanism, identity building and citizenship forming under the ambit of European modernisation have so often been characterised as an ethnocentric, assimilative, inclusive and homogenising process, which encloses the identification of cultural awareness or consciousness of membership within territorial boundaries based upon national units. What is observed after the 1950s and 1960s is much more intricate. Intellectual discourses and social

---

[1]   E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture. Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*, Gloucester, MA, Smith, 1958, 1.
[2]   Raymond Williams, *Cultural and Society*, London, The Hogarth Press, 1982 (First Published in 1958), xviii.
[3]   Quoted from Chi Pei-Wen 齊珮文, "Research on French Cultural Policy 法國文化政策之研究", Taipei, MA Thesis in Graduate Institute of European Studies Tamkung University, 1991, 15.
[4]   Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, "Changing Citizenship in Europe, Remarks on Postnational Membership and the National State", in David Cesarain and Mary Fulbrook eds., *Citizenship, Nationality and Migration in Europe*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996, 17-29.

1

movements of counter-modernisation such as postmodernism, postcolonialism, post-structuralism and multiculturalism have invoked massive cultural turns that celebrate concepts of decentralisation, decolonisation, deconstruction, differentiation, discontinuity, hybridity and fluidity rather than their "modern" counterparts. The paradoxical phenomena occur not only in Europe, but also in the far eastern end of the Euro-Asian continent—China. On one hand, self-determinant states from the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia reinvent their traditions, accentuate their uniqueness in culture and history and assert their new nationhood. Scottish, Flemish, Basques, Corsicans are detaching themselves from the former coherent, assimilated concept of national commonality, while indigenous people, immigrations and diaspora are crying out loud for legitimating their particularity and recognising their ethnic differences. On the other, similar reassertions of self-autonomy through the rediscovery of the Tibetan, Mongolian and Taiwanese cultural roots are also happening in China, where culture is declared to be "early mature" and national identity "highly integral and coherent". [5] This seems to suggest that a course parallel to the claimed Western-originated postmodern phenomena are also evolving in the "once retarded" old Eastern "Middle Kingdom 中國". The cultural tide, however, is not a one-sided effect. At a macro level, transnational regionalism and an overarching cultural identity, which has long been the benchmark of China, have now come into sight in Europe too with the integration movement (whilst pan-Islamism and "Asian values"[6] are upheld among the Muslim and Asian states). Soysal's remark has been pertinent, "if one aspect of the dynamism generated by identity politics is re-legitimisation and reification of nationness, the other is its fragmentisation, and the displacement of its meaning hence its delegitimisation."[7] The distinct approaches (and the trajectories) of cultural identification within Europe and China, in this sense, are drawing closer together.

---

[5]　Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, *The Essence of Chinese Culture* 中國文化要義, Taipei, 里仁書局, 1982, First Edition; Chien Mu 錢穆, *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History* 中國文化史導論, Taipei, 台灣商務印行, 1993.

[6]　Leaders of prosperous and entrepreneurial East and Southeast Asian countries stress Asia's "incommensurable differences from the West and demand special treatment of their human rights record by the international community. They reject outright the globalisation of human rights and claim that Asia has a unique set of values, which, as Singapore's ambassador to the United Nations has urged, provide the basis for Asia's different understanding of human rights and justify the 'exceptional' handling of rights by Asian governments." See Xiaorong Li, "'Asian Values' and the Universality of Human Rights", *Business and Society Review*, Vol. 102/103, 1998, 81-87, quote page 81.

[7]　Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, op. cit. (1996), 26-27.

2

As to be argued below, the main theme which underlies the contemporary issue of cultural identity is actually that of re-positing culture *with-in* the process of modernisation (and postmodernisation) in order to employ it as a more inclusive and neutralised concept for the substitution of the ethnocentric view of individuality and collectivity. It is important today to recognise the power of cultural identity, which has been serving as the orienting logic of historical evolvement in different societies. Modernisation to us is the critical entry point for analysing European and Chinese cultural identity. Though it is undeniably an internal-generated process of Europeanisation of Europe itself, its impact upon one's cultural identification has been distinct within and without Europe. It is true that the formation of the traditional Chinese cultural identity shared similar features with that of the European, despite that it was in time earlier, in scale larger and in degree more intense. Nevertheless, where modernity was for Europe a retrospective construction of tradition and self-identity,[8] it is for China a Sino-European cultural encounter, which represents not only the *de facto* historical continuity (or discontinuity) from "tradition" to "modern", but also the conflicting identity of "self" and "other", "same" and "different", and "native" and "alien". We do not adhere to the linear model of "cultural evolution", or in Banton and Harwood's term the notion of "superorganic evolution", for there is no reason to expect every culture to progress through the same advancing stages and reach its final goal.[9] Rather, we argue here that Europe and China have but chosen, consciously or unconsciously, different paths in modernisation. Cultural Systems respond distinctively according to their specific historical, social circumstances and maintain their characteristic trajectories. Where there is a "Post-" following the implied imperfect modern Europe, there is the possibility that Chinese modern or even "counter-modern" courses could in turn become modifying indicators for the European "neo-modernisation". The rise of Neo-Confucianism since the mid-20th century has been remarkably significant on present-day international political and economic platforms. Such a current attempts to incorporate the spirit of modernism, Western capitalism, and democratic politics into long-standing traditions, and generate

---

[8] Agnes Heller, "Europe, An Epilogue?", in Brian Nelson, David Roberts, and Walter Veit eds., *The Idea of Europe*, Oxford, Berg Publishers, 1992, 12-25, quote page 12.
[9] Michael Banton and Jonathan Harwood, *The Race Concept*, Newton Abbot, London and Vancouver, David & Charles, 1975, 78.

a contemporary cultural connotation. Concepts such as the "Chinese International Community", "China's Economic Area" and the "East Asian Mode" of industrialisation and management of enterprises have been noticeably highlighted since the 1980s,[10] while the rise of the "Four Small Dragons of Asia" (Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong) are relentlessly destroying the Marxist *myth* of an "Asian mode of production". It seems to us more than ever before that only through the re-examination of the historical encounters of cultures could people recognise their ethnocentric self-images, and redefine their own logics of identity with utmost compatibility to accommodate with this global age. With this in mind, Chinese culture, no matter how often being depicted as "static" or "anti-modern", could offer an alternative way of thinking and doing for Europeans today.

The "crisis of identity" incurred by the "current of posterity"[11] not only obscures the modern idea that the nation-state is the most appropriate instrument through which cultural identity is expressed, but also induces a critical destruction of existing socio-cultural patterns and a shift of power relations that have led to the re-evaluation and re-presentation of identity itself.[12] Let us not judge too early whether it is the embedded cultural trends and systems that trigger the political transformation or vice versa, yet it is clear that to resolve such an identity crisis would require not only a general retheorisation of the concept cultural identity itself, but also a pragmatic reinterpretation of its ties to political economy. Our approach, thus, is to examine more closely in the following chapters the interaction between changes at the political, social, economic and cultural levels in European and Chinese history. Before we start theorising the now intricate idea of cultural identity, it is necessary to look at the

---

[10]   Tien Chih-li 田志力, *21 世紀中華經濟區 China's Economic Area in the 21ˢᵗ Century*, Taipei, 立緒文化事業, 1998, 45, 261-278.

[11]   By "current of posterity" we mean that there have been certain cultural values under formation mainly since the 1960s, which are countering, or at least reassessing, the hegemonic cultural interpretation of modernity and the process of modernisation. We use the term "current" or "envelope of posterity" to bring together the rising cultural trends including postcolonialism, post-structuralism, postmodernism and multiculturalism, and to summarise theories of counter-modernisation. The main theme of posterity for us is to transcend the modern juncture, and redefine the normative and authentic ideas of cultural identity. By deconstructing and hybridising the artificial cultural division, it provides a more amiable and compatible milieu for an individual to identify him/herself. Nevertheless, it is too early to conclude or deduce the "essence" of the posterity, for the countering forces of modernity are far from converged, and "posterity" itself has refused to create another centre in regulating the "Post" age.

[12]   Siân Jones and Paul Graves-Brown, "Introduction: archaeology and Cultural Identity in Europe", in Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds., *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996, 1-24, quote page 1.

modern and counter-modern debates in Europe and China. We want to explore how modern cultural identity has been allegedly constructed, and how the individual's cultural identity has been structured or authenticated. In what way is the past utilised and culture instrumentalised to legitimise the political and economic enterprises? And what exactly are the counter-modernisation movements attempting to deconstruct in the modern cultural fabric? Via the tensions and problems that come into view, we wish to set up a more incorporating framework. This leads towards some revisions of notion of cultural identity in Chapter 5.

1. 1   The Concept of Cultural Identity in Europe

1. 1. 1   Modern Construction of Cultural Identity

By the term "modern construction" we do not mean that there is a sharp demarcation or a date of identity forming between the premodern, modern or postmodern (or late-modern) eras,[13] although in many cases the consistency does pertain (which reminds us not to overlook certain cultural and historical currents and socio-political structural factors behind these identity arena that we shall try to trace later and in the chapters that follow). We agree that modernity could be taken as an "incomplete project", which we can learn from and re-appropriate through tradition.[14] However, the constitution of cultural identity under the processes of European modernisation—the Renaissance, Reformation, Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment, state formation, industrialisation and overseas expansion—does reveal several distinctive characteristics, in a sense that it has been a rational, universal, specialising and authentic construction, which is well grounded in the conception of modernity, and which is facing an enormous repercussion within both the sphere of international identity politics and intellectual discourses after the Second War especially from the 1960s.

---

[13]   Therefore, the analogous ways of identification with modern characteristics could exist in the 1980s or 90s, while cultural identification with similar postmodern ideas could also be found in ancient and modern ages. It is clear that people's identification maintains to a certain extent its commonality across time and space (as argued by historians, sociologists and anthropologists illustrated below), and thus the pattern or its characteristic should be realised or assessed in terms of degree or propensity rather then a distinctive categorical differentiation.
[14]   Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity—An Incomplete Project", *New German Critique*, No. 22, Winter, 1981, 3-15, quote page 3.

Examining the late modern European writings, it is not difficult to find that the construction of cultural identity shares several features. Cultures, civilisations and ethnicities in the narratives of modern historical (and also anthropological, archaeological) works are often perceived to be bounded, structured and self-sustained entities, which obtain their own lives, historical continuities, and structural accumulations. Toynbee in his eminent comparative work *A Study of History* illustrated "models" of civilisations, their linear genesis, growth, breakdown, disintegration and encounters.[15] Spengler's *The Decline of the West* depicted the organic logic of cultural morphology, the physical structure of dynamic phases that pass through youth, growth, maturity into decay and death.[16] For Geertz, Keesing, and Malinowski, cultures bear resembling systems (religion, ethos, rituals, norms and values), elements (material, spiritual factors, languages and social organisations), characteristics and functions, and hence form the basic structures of human lives.[17] For Kroeber and Kluckholn, culture consists of patterns and shared features, which provide norms for or standards of behaviour. Every culture includes broad general principles of selectivity and ordering in terms of which patterns of behaviour are reducible to parsimonious generalisation.[18]

In Durkheim's cultural analysis, *totemism* forms the compulsions of a coherent belief system (or the social structure) and becomes the source of group identity and recognition. For Levi-Strauss, culture is the conventional, yet deep unconscious of its members. Therefore, within a particular culture, meanings emerge from convention that tends to overcome the arbitrary relation between the signifier and the signified,[19] hence identity emerges from culture constraint. Within a Marxist argument, a society is dominated by political ideology or class consciousness, which formulates a constitutive cultural form that has the power to direct cognitions, evaluations, ideals,

---

[15] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1972 One Volume Edition.
[16] Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1932 (Translated One Volume Edition 1971, by Charles Francis Atkinson).
[17] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, USA, Basic Books, 1973; R. Keesing, *Cultural Anthropology, A Contemporary Perspective*, New York and London, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976; and B. Malinowski, *What is Culture?* 文化論, Taipei, 台灣商務印書館, Translated Fourth Edition 1987 (by Fei Tung 費通, First Published in 1944).
[18] A. L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, New York, Vintage Books, 1963, 159, 189.
[19] Chris Jenks, *Culture, Key Ideas*, London, Routledge, 1993, 26-27, 36-37, 127-128.

and purposes, and serves to mobilise collectivities, groups, and classes around social values.[20]

What is revealed here is that, though different emphasis has been accentuated in the cultural discourses, traditional modern assumptions of cultural identity are based on a normative conceptualisation of culture: "cultural practices and beliefs tend to conform to prescriptive ideational norms or rules of behaviour, and that culture is made up of a set of shared ideas or beliefs, which are maintained by regular interaction within the group, and the transmission of shared cultural norms to subsequent generations takes place through the process of socialisation… [that] results in a continuous cultural tradition."[21] In his controversial piece *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, Huntington locates similar descriptions of the integrative and linear nature of culture within works of distinguished sociologists, anthropologists and historians such as Max Weber, Marcel Mauss, Pitirim Sorokin, Philip Bagby, William McNeill, and Immanuel Wallerstein, while he himself subdivides the world into eight major civilisations and even suggests that they are shaping the patterns of cohesion, disintegration, and conflict in the post-Cold War world.[22] These structural, unified, integral cultural concepts have engraved a linear and cohesive perception of cultural identity that formed our modern legacy.

In addition to the linear, bounded and structured narrations, many modern cultural

---

[20] Weiner argues that for cultural Marxism, the consciousness of collectivities and the conflict groups they form—be they of a "political conscious" or "class conscious" are shaped by both the social economic context and the dominant political belief system in which they are living. As a constitutive cultural form and a structure of intentionality, ideology has the power to communicate and direct cognitions, evaluations, ideals, and purposes. A dominant ideology—be it hegemonic or incorporating—serves to provide interpretations of social reality. It mobilises collectivities, groups, and class around social goals and values in order to legitimate the exercise of political domination. See Richard R. Weiner, *Cultural Marxism and Political Sociology*, Beverly Hills and London, Sage Publications, 1981, 75.

[21] Siân Jones, "Discourses of Identity in the Interpretation of the Past", in Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds., op. cit. (1996), 62-85, quote pages 64-65.

[22] See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1996, 20, 39, 324-325, footnote 1. Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, Boston, Beacon Press, trans. Ephraim Fischoff, 1968; Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss, "Note on the Notion of Civilisation", *Social Research*, 38, 1971, 808-813; Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, New York, American Book Co., 4 vols., 1937-1985; A. L. Kroeber, *Configurations of Culture Growth*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1944; Philip Bagby, *Culture and History, Prolegomena to the Comparative study of Civilisations*, London, Longmans, Green, 1958; William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West, A History of the Human Community*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1963; and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Geopolitics and Geoculture, Essays on the Changing World-system*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992.

discourses demonstrated various characteristics, which might be located in egocentric, ethnocentric or exceptionalist ways of narration. Culture was for Coleridge a goal, an ideal and most of all a condition of the mind in social life, which must be safeguarded, preserved and aspired towards and worked for by an elite group. Similarly, for Matthew Arnold, culture meant "high culture"; it is the best production that humankind can achieve, not an average or a descriptive category applicable to all human thought and production.[23] Such egocentric discourses of cultural superiority among the elite have drawn the authentic boundary among the high and low, folklore and popular cultures. Moreover, processes of the Enlightenment, industrialisation and the overseas expansion that led Europe to its "modernity" have produced the binary image of the exceptionalist West, which stands for the rational, civilised, developed, urban and modern side, and the degraded Rest, which represents the uncivilised, primitive, savage, under-developed or rural part of the world.[24] Gunder Frank observes Marx's Eurocentric standpoint in explaining the rise of the West, as Marx argued that "in all of Asia the forces of production remained 'traditional, backward and stagnant' until the incursion of 'the West' and its capitalism woke it out of its otherwise eternal slumber."[25] Weber in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* suggest that the "product of modern European civilisation, studying any problem of universal history, is bound to ask... what combination of circumstances the fact should be attributed that in Western civilisation... only in the West does a science exist at a stage of development which we recognise today as valid."[26] Toynbee inescapably revealed his Eurocentric position when claiming that only Western society – which until recently had enjoyed an extended period of exemption from external challenges, could continuously maintain its creative dynamic response to challenges and never show sign of breakdown.[27] Spengler emphasised the superiority and uniqueness of the West by saying, "we men of the Western Culture are, with our historical sense, an exception and not a rule." [28] The West-European-American is "the only Culture of our time and on our planet which is

---

[23]   Chris Jenks, op. cit. (1993), 17-18, 20-21.
[24]   Stuart Hall, "The West and the Rest, Discourse and Power", in Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben eds., *Formations of Modernity*, Cambridge, The Open University, 1992, 275-331, quote page 277- 278.
[25]   Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, California, University of California Press, 1998, 14-15.
[26]   Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Surrey, Routledge, 1930 (Translated, Second Edition 1992, by T. Parsons), 13.
[27]   Arnold J. Toynbee, op. cit. (1972), 140, 398-399.
[28]   Oswald Spengler, op. cit. (1932), 15.

actually in the phase of fulfilment," which only reveals its decline or transit from culture into civilisation in the late 19th century or the beginning of the 20th century.[29] German archaeologist Gustaf Kossina, who speaks explicitly of German racial and cultural superiority, is inextricably tied to the practice of ethnic interpretation in the fascistic and nationalistic usages.[30] Roberts in *The Triumph of the West* writes that "almost all the master principles and ideas now reshaping the modern world emanate from the West."[31] Mendelssohn states that his object in *Science and Western Domination* is "to trace the essential steps in thought that have led along the path of science to white domination over the rest of the world."[32] Huntington, although observing the shifting balance of civilisations, still argues that the maintenance of world order will depend overwhelmingly on the ability of Europe to "preserve, protect, and renew the distinctive character of its values and institutions, and the unique qualities of Western civilisation."[33] Ethno- or Eurocentrism has been so astutely and formally, thus severely, seeped into the modern European intellectual tradition that only few even bother or dare to oppose and identify it.

National essentialism and cultural instrumentalism are other facets of modern identity construction. The processes of state-formation involve a combination of the inclusive, assimilative, essentialist, and instrumentalist approaches of cultural homogenisation. Within the commanding strands of distinguishing western writers such as Machiavelli, Thomas More, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseu, Montesquieu, Marx and Max Weber, people's cultural identities are seen as having been formulated by either the sovereign state or to an ideology of class collectivity.[34] As Habermas put it, "nationalism is the

---

[29]   Ibid., 3, 32.
[30]   Siân Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity. Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*, London and New York, Routledge, 1997, 2.
[31]   J. M. Roberts, *The Triumph of the West*, London, Guild Publishing, 1985, 41.
[32]   K. Mendelssohn, *Science and Western Domination*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1976, 8.
[33]   Samuel P. Huntington, op. cit. (1996), 311.
[34]   As Bronowski remarks, Marchiavelli's artistic ability in *The Prince* is treated as an artist shaping the state; More, whose *Utopia* upheld the notion of the commonwealth, was a real statesman-writer; Hobbes' *Leviathan* stated the absolute sovereignty, while in his *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke justified the 1688 continuation of the 1640-60 struggle, and "to establish the throne of our great restorer, our present King William"; and after the Revolution the totalitarian implications of Rousseau's doctrines are in full force. As Meister observes Marx's class interest, consciousness and ideology have led to the inclusion of proletariat under a collective political identity; Held argues that Weber's definition of state's "legitimacy" has founded its legal authority in monopoly. See J. Bronowski and B. Mazlish, *The Western Intellectual Tradition*, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1963, 61-62, 68, 227, 451; R. Meister, *Political Identity, Thinking through Marx*, Cambridge, Basil Blackwell, 1990, 15-28; and also D. Held, "The Development of the Modern State", in Stuart Hall and B. Gieben eds., op. cit. (1992),

term for a specifically modern phenomenon of cultural integration, this type of national consciousness is formed in social movements and emerges from modernisation processes... nations are communities of people of the same descent, who are integrated geographically... and culturally by their common language, customs and traditions."[35] Such an essentialist utilisation of identity in its extreme can even act as a motivating force of history, as is clearly revealed in 20th century Europe by the Nazis in their attempts to exterminate Jews, Gypsies and other groups in the 1930s and 1940s.[36] Obviously, certain varieties have been overlooked, if not assimilated, during the process of national cultural integration, while commonality and sameness have been highly emphasised. The "invention of tradition" in pre-1914 Europe has been critical to both the construction of social identity and the legitimation of systems of political power and authority.[37] The past, therefore, is used as a claim for the distinctive culture of a nation, and may thereby legitimate its cultural authenticity, political self-government and independence. Much in contrary to Weber's Protestant cultural argument,[38] culture regarding politics and economy was deemed often capable of being "engineered", "guided", "manipulated", or in the instrumentalist traditions to be "invented" to legitimate the political authenticity or serve economic ends. As Inkster argues, the stress on discipline and hierarchy in Japanese Confucianism might have been quite deliberately fostered by an entrepreneurial or bureaucratic elite utilising a process of cultural engineering "in which moral injunctions to work were combined with a socially meaningful reward system."[39] Culture, in its intersection to policy, was carefully designed to spread the idea of the dominant group, and augment its social, economic control. And it is not surprising to discover that the modern formulation of cultural identity, which bears a

---

71-125, quote page 106-114.

[35] Jürgen Habermas, "Citizenship and National Identity", in Bart van Steenbergen (ed.), *The Condition of Citizenship*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 1994, 20-35, quote page 22.

[36] See Siân Jones and Paul Graves-Brown, op. cit. (1996), 7.

[37] Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass Producing Traditions, Europe, 1870-1914", in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger eds. *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, 263-307.

[38] Weber argues that the rational ethics of Protestant asceticism religion or culture forms the main spirit of capitalism, which then helps to shape the capitalist society or capitalist way of life, such as division of labour, specialisation of occupation, standardisation of product, accumulation of capital and industrious workman. See Max Weber, op. cit. (1930), 163, 166, 169, 172, 177.

[39] Ian Inkster, "Culture, Action, and Institutions, on Exploring the Historical Economic Successes of England and Japan", in Penelope Gouk ed., *Wellsprings of Achievement, Cultural and Economic Dynamics in Early Modern England and Japan*, Hampshire, Variorum Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1995, 239-266, quote pages 265-266.

highly ethnocentric propensity, usually appeals to cultural assimilation or domination in facing its internal or even external diversity. Cases of racism, genocide, ethnic discrimination, and socio-cultural exclusion occurred not because cultural differences were unrecognised, but because the dominating majority—perhaps for reasons of feeling culturally superior or because of the fear of internal session—refused to accept the particularity within its national boundary. Thus, diversity however emphasised is eventually ignored or sacrificed, because ethnic minorities were deemed either not belonging to the society, or, being subject to the national sameness, not qualified to sustain another equal status based on their differences. The acknowledgement of racial, religious and historical differences did not stop the 1999 Yugoslavia ethnic-cleansing in Kosovo, and few could believe that this residual of genocide would actually accompany us right here, entering into the Third Millennium. Simply recognising the difference is far from sufficient. It is more critical to act or react accordingly with an unbiased or de-ethnocentric attitude that rests upon that recognition of diversity, particularly in respects of the institutionalisation and legalisation of culture.

To sum up, in Europe, typical modern constructions of group identities are represented as unified, monolithic wholes, with linear and continuous histories which in turn are used to legitimate claims for political or economic autonomy. The idea of cultural identity is much formed of a unified entity, which is located in a fixed, bounded territory. Self-cohesion, homogeneity and historical continuity are key features for cultural specification. Such hegemonic, essentialist, or instrumentalist interpretations of identity overlook internal diversity, and have long been used to represent the interest of dominant groups. The ethnocentric or exceptionalist past, which is composed of a retrospective and selective invention of traditions, is then used to justify and appropriate the majority's economic and political objectives without giving the ethnic minorities too much say. Notwithstanding these, some credit must also be given to modern conventional cultural approaches, for these discourses although very much likely lead us to a homogeneous, self-centric and structural based cultural identity, they might well be the very basic notions for the comparison of cultures across time and space.

1. 1. 2   Counter-modern Deconstruction of Cultural Identity

Here we might begin with political economy. Questions of identity often come to the fore at times of social and political change. It only becomes an issue when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty.[40] Such is the circumstance when emerged again after the Second World War, and especially during the post-Cold War epoch. Political, economic and social structure changes within and beyond Europe seem to have led to the reconsideration of cultural identity throughout Europe. Politically, the collapse of the Communist bloc and the reunification of Germany blurs the former ideological boundary of East and West Europe.[41] The balance of the overwhelming ideological-based cultural identity divided by the river Elbe is broken, and people from former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and countries of Central and East Europe are anxiously redefining their new identities. Moreover, the failure to predict (or adequately to explain, even in retrospect) the end of the Cold War, and the inability to accommodate a revival of old identities after the demise of the Soviet empire, has surprised the state-centric theorists. There has aroused a need for a "return of culture and identity to international relations".[42] In the post-Cold War era, political realists, international political economists and foreign policy analysts, who have harshly marginalised culture and identity and long been content to treat culture as "an explanation of last resort," are now swinging "to move forward in the study of cultural effects in foreign policy".[43]

In the economic aspect, the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system in the 1970s prompted Western European countries in moving slowly towards a closer union, as did the rising East Asian economic power at the same time. This in turn caused social institutional changes and pushed the European Union to the fore in discussions about

[40]   K. Mercer, "Welcome to the Jungle", in J. Rutherford ed., *Identity*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1990, 43.
[41]   Wendt argues that the Cold War was at base a cultural rather than material structure. The conflict formations must be conceptualised in cultural concepts like beliefs, ideas, understandings, perceptions, identities, in which case cultural structure is embodied in threat complexes, relations of enmity and fear, ideological hegemony, and so on. See Alexander Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics", in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996, 47-64, quote page 48.
[42]   Y. H. Ferguson and R. W. Mansbach, "The Past as Prelude to the Future? Identities and Loyalties in Global Politics", in Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996, 21-44, quote pate 21.
[43]   Y. Lapid, "Culture's Ship, Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory", Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil eds., op. cit. (1996), 3-20, quote page 3.

the future of the continent and picking up the key elements of "Europeanness".[44] The integration movements of the EU and EEA since the 1950s and especially after the 1980s have invoked the rise of regionalism and transnational activism, which severely challenged the national mode of "we" construction. Besides, social movements of postmodernism, postcolonialism and multiculturalism are dissecting the traditional concept of ethnicity and hybridising the authentic patterns of cultural identification, which have opened up further the opportunity for the reshuffling of the inter-ethnic relations and the reinterpretation of their history and hence identity, while national minorities, immigrants (e.g. German-Polish, French-Algerian, European-Muslims etc.), diaspora (e.g. Jewish, Gypsies), refugees and guest workers are pleading for protection or more autonomy. Beyond Europe, movements of decolonisation in newly independent states in Africa, South America and South East Asia stimulate the so-called Pan-Africanism and Pan-Latin Americanism, which are based on common cultural characteristics or a "family of culture".[45] The resurgence of Islamism and Neo-Confucianism alongside the world-Americanisation are relativising the Eurocentric view of cultural interpretation, whilst the time-space compression by the speeding up of transmission of information and the feelings of rootlessness under a "complex connectivity" of globalisation carry this uncertainty even further.[46] This is an age of "identity crisis". Both internationally as well as intra-nationally, the trans-border political and economic factors are more likely than ever to affect cultural identity. Paradoxical, if not contradictory, phenomena of identity claiming status in local, regional, ethnic, national, and transnational levels, have created a new socio-political milieu, which makes the reshuffle of modern cultural identity in Europe inevitable.

Coming back to the intellectual discourses, we find correspondingly that a critical shift emerged from the 1960s and early 1970s, which has been labelled the counter-modern deconstruction of cultural identity. Historians, although still much reliant on the existing European tradition, make their effort in discarding the former Eurocentric and structural interpretation of causality and start to re-examine the

---

[44] P. W. Preston, *Political, Cultural Identity, Citizens and Nations in a Global Era*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1997, 13.

[45] Anthony D. Smith, "Towards a Global Culture?", in Mike Featherstone ed., *Global Culture*, London, Sage Publications, 1990, 171-191, quote page 186.

[46] John Tomlinson, *Globalisation and Culture*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1999, 1.

interconnection of the world civilisations. Wolf's *Europe and the People Without History* emphasises the world's "inextricably involved netlike connection", which tries to ensure that "the people who claim history as their own and the people to whom history has been denied emerge as participants in the same historical trajectory."[47] Braudel, Burns and Chaudhuri's studies of civilisations although they still involving time-space settings and structures, such as geographical structure (climate and land), social structure (state, government, family, and ways of thought), and economic structure (food, drink, clothing, architecture, and housing),[48] have been very much a break-away from the supremacy previously accorded to the unilinear ethnocentric narration. As Chaudhuri observes, Braudel's search for "physical structures in the geography of the earth and of human societies might repudiate the idea of intentionality inherent in the principle of structures, a principle which acts as systems of classification."[49] Chaudhuri's *Asia before Europe* obviously shifts its focus on the world economic system before 1750 to the civilisations around the Indian Ocean, within which cross-boundary interactions and similarities of social habits and identities between Asian civilisations are evidently illustrated. Frank pushes the trend even further by advocating both a global economic system and urging a "*Re-Orient*" action of Europe, as he argues that European economy before 1800 was in fact marginal. Only "the coming of. the industrial revolution and the beginnings of European Colonialism in Asia had intervened to reshape European mind, and if not to 'invent' all history, then at least to invent a false universalism under European initiation and guidance... world history rewritten wholesale... not just as a European discipline, but as a Eurocentric invention."[50] The Eurocentric past, the authenticity of linear causality, and the integral, bounded cultural self of Europe is under reshaping, they are challenged not by others, but by the repercussion of culture itself.

In the sphere of cultural studies, post-structuralists like Lacan, Derrida and Foucault through their psychoanalytic theory, deconstructive criticism of structural, social and

---

[47]   Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, California, University of California Press, 1982, 1997, 23, 384.

[48]   Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilisations*, London, Allen Lane and The Penguin Press, 1987 (Translated Edition 1994, by R. Mayne); E. M. Burns, R. E. Lerner and S. Meacham, *Western Civilisations*, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1980; and K. N. Chaudhuri, *Asia before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

[49]   K. N. Chaudhuri, op. cit. (1990), 9-10.

[50]   Andre Gunder Frank, op. cit. (1998), 14.

linguistic construction of self, and power-knowledge-discourse narratives, defy the classical concept of the unitary subjects. Notions such as "originating consciousness", "authority for meaning and truth", and "causality of truth and of identity" are now by all means destructured and reconsidered.[51] Anderson defines the nation as an *Imagined Community*, which is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. This imaginary commune dismantles the existing illusionary nation state that based on a so-called shared memory and common cultural roots.[52] Meanwhile, postcolonialism in Europe strives for the dismantling and decentralising of the Eurocentric interpretation of central-peripheral cultural relations. Stuart Hall urges us to recognise "the critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute 'what we really are'", and to take cultural identities as the unstable points of identification or "suture", which are always in process and positioning rather than a complete essence.[53] Homi Bhabha suggests that the postcolonial critic presents "the incommensurability of cultural values and priorities," which forces a recognition of the more complex cultural and political boundaries beyond the binary structure of oppositional relation to the Third World that is generated by the tradition of the sociology of underdevelopment or dependency theory.[54] In his benchmark piece *Orientalism*, Said dissects the European innovation of the Orient into discourses of power and representation that "Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony." For him, "Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imaginary doctrine, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles."[55] The rejection of the Cartesian individual, the instability of signification, the location of the subject in language or discourse, and the operation of power, all these familiar post-structuralist concepts emerge in postcolonialist thought in different guises, which together are confirming time and again about the dynamic activities of political agencies supported by the colonised

---

[51]   M. Sarup, *An Introductory Guide to Post-structuralism and Postmodernism*, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Harvester and Wheatsheaf, 1993, 3, 4, 6, 50, 73.
[52]   Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London and New York, Verso, 1983, 6.
[53]   Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory. A Reader*, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994 (First Published in 1993), 392-403, quote page 394-395.
[54]   Homi K. Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern. The Question of Agency", in Simon During ed., *The Cultural Studies Reader*, London and New York, 1993 , 190-208, quote page 191-192.
[55]   Edward W. Said, *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London, Penguin Books, 1978, 2, 5.

subject.[56] Europeans are definitely not the only one people who have their own identities and history.

Postmodernism might be an even more powerful force in deconstructing modern cultural fabrication. During summarises Lyotard's definition of the "postmodern" era:

> First, the ideas of progress, rationality, and scientific objectivity which legitimated Western modernity are no longer acceptable in large part because they take no account of cultural differences; second, there is no confidence that "high" or avant-garde art and culture have more value than "low" or popular culture; and, third, it is no longer possible securely to separate the "natural" from the "artificial" in a historical situation where technologies have so much control and reach.[57]

Turner also profiles the outset of the post-modernisation of culture that it is

> an increasing fragmentation and differentiation of culture as a consequence of the pluralisation of life-styles and the differentiation of social structure... the erosion of traditional "grand narratives" of legitimation in politics and society... the celebration of the idea of difference and heterogeneity (against sameness and standardisation);... the emergence of a central emphasis on a flexibility and self-consciousness in personality and life-style; a partial erosion of the idea of coherence as a norm of personality.[58]

Postmodernisation of culture means the deflation of high and low culture, de-stratification of fine art, folk culture and popular culture, and the commercialisation and reproduction of culture. The criterion of the boundary has been blurred (again), and the original text hybridised. The altering of artistic taste or flavour seem to indicate a further potential change of the "Post-" value system, which although it still remains unclear in content does force people to reconsider and redefine their identity ever cautiously. The wrestling of identification is initiated at two ends. People on the one hand detach themselves from the authentic label of belonging to the integrated past, celebrate their distinct lifestyle, and express their will

---

[56] B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths and H. Tiffin eds., *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, 117.
[57] See Simon During's introduction to Jean-Francois Lyotard, "Defining the Postmodern", in Simon During ed., op. cit. (1993), 142.
[58] Bryan S. Turner, "Postmodern Culture / Modern Citizens", in Bart van Steenbergen ed., op. cit. (1994), 153-168, quote page 154.

to live differently in the future. While on the other, many of them still cannot help but act abiding by the modern interpretation of identity, and take it as the very "basis" for building up the postmodernist criticism.

The re-conceptualisation against the modern closed notion of culture has brought together practical social, political and institutional reforms, side by side with a renewed multiculturalism.[59] Multiculturalism involves a range of theories and social movements de-legitimating the dominant position of the national majority. This in practice implies a decentralisation of the political community, and calls for a reformulation of the relations between its cultural collectivities in order to create new forms of identity politics.[60] Multiculturalism on the one hand relativises Europe, seeing it as a geographical fiction that flattens the cultural diversity and hybridity even of Europe itself.[61] On the other, it promotes folklore and common culture to a position equal to the "high" arts, and uses cultural diversity as a basis for revising basic notions of dominant and minority culture alike, so as to construct a more vital, open, and democratic common culture.[62] Multiculturalism opposes monoculturalism, which "is one defining strand, along with anti-Semitism, of the European racist Germany's denial of its own ethnic diversity, and the recent reassertion of English 'core values' in the National Curriculum."[63] It claims to stand for a liberating recognition of the *de facto* heterogeneous cultural and ethnic makeup of contemporary metropolitan societies—an attempt to retheorise the intra-cultural relations of multicultural society,

---

[59] Multiculturalism since its appearance at the end of 1960s and early 1970s has been consigned different meanings, and in practice taken various forms. It is referred from demographic and descriptive usage, ideology and norms usage, to programme and policy usage, and ranged from sociological approach, political philosophy approach to political science approach. In practice it is used differently from Canada, Australia and Sweden a relatively integrated multiculturalism, to United States a more disintegrated multiculturalism. Besides, it is particularly common used in United States to encompass a wide rage of non-ethnic social groups such as disabled, gays, lesbians, the working class, atheists, Communist, or even the whole female sex, which have for various reason been excluded or marginalised from the mainstream of society. Michel Wieviorka, "Is Multiculturalism the Solution?", in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 5, Sep. 1998, 881-910, quote pages 881-889, and also Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1995, 17-19.
[60] Terence Turner, "Anthropology and Multiculturalism, What is Anthropology that Multiculturalists should be Mindful of it?", in David Theo Goldberg ed., *Multiculturalism. A Critical Reader*, Massachusetts, Basil Blackwell, 1995, 406-421, quote pages 408, 411.
[61] R. Stam and E. Shohat, "Contested Histories, Eurocentrism, Multiculturalism, and the Media", in David Theo Goldberg ed., op. cit. (1995), 299.
[62] Terence Turner, op. cit. (1995), 408.
[63] Gideon Ben-Tovim, "Why 'Positive Action' is 'Politically Correct'", in Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner eds., *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe*, London and New York, Sed Books Ltd., 1997, 209-222, quote page 217.

which would accommodate rather than ignore or repress the multiple identities and social groups comprised by such societies.[64]

Under the so-called "envelope of posterity", creolisation, hybridisation and hyphenated identity (e.g. German-Turks, British-Pakistanis) became the antidotes to essentialist constructs of culture and identity. Fluidity and hybridity have turned out to be the most celebrated concepts used in critiques of cultures as cohesive, bounded and commensurable wholes. In opposition to homogeneous construction, they refer to the internal heterogeneity of nations, cultural mixtures, new positions of identification and the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices. [65] National and ethnic minorities in Europe—Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Bosnian, Slovakian, Jewish and Gypsy etc, have been working to overturn the over simplified version of the original rich, complex histories. These simplified histories were unified under the teleological modern notion of progress in the past centuries, which in turn incorporated those ethnic groups into the Soviet Union, German, Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian culture or even European civilisation. Now they are once again trying to differentiate their cultural particularity and striving for autonomy in pursuing their own aspiration. Cornel West interpreted this new cultural politics of difference as an effort to "trash the monolithic and homogeneous in the name of diversity, multiplicity and heterogeneity; to reject the abstract, general and universal in light of the concrete, specific, and particular; and to historicise, contextualise, and pluralise by highlighting the contingent, provisional, variable, tentative, shifting, and changing."[66]

All these above tend to highlight experiences of hybridity and historical discontinuity. They act to deconstruct the ethnocentric view of authenticity and decentralise the hegemonic form of majority domination. They applaud the pluralistic pattern of life-style that detaches itself from the essentialist invention of a common past, and claims recognition of particularity and future aspiration. Increasing emphasis was placed on the self-identification of the social actors, exhibition of variation, cultural

---

[64] Terence Turner, op. cit. (1995), 407
[65] Ayse S. Caglar, "Hyphenated Identities and the Limits of 'Culture'", in Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner eds., op. cit. (1997), 169-185, quote page 172.
[66] Cornel West, "The New Cultural Politics of Difference" in Simon During ed., op. cit. (1993), 256-267, quote page 257.

commonalities across boundary, recognition of fluid self-defining systems that are embedded in economic and political relations, and a dynamic process of transformation. Such discourses contrast sharply with the traditional holistic analysis of supposedly discrete, organic entities.[67] Nonetheless, it must also be noted that this approach is not unproblematic. As Caglar observed, hyphenated or hybridised identity, instead of resolving cultural essentialism ironically constructs another essentialist notion of anthropological "little communities" (German-Turks means immigrant Turkish people in Germany). Such communities, which hyphenated smaller ethnic identities to the exclusion of other forms of identification, however, remained to be "cultural wholes".[68] Turner clearly recognised the danger of decentralisation held by "difference multiculturalism" when he said, "it risks essentialising the idea of culture as the property of an ethnic group or race, reifying cultures as separate entities by overemphasising their boundedness and mutual distinctness, and the internal homogeneity of cultures in terms that potentially legitimise repressive demands for communal conformity."[69] In other words, the concept of the static, modern bounding cultural entities remains intact. Only different homogenised identities are now combined, and thereby a multitude of smaller and fractured centres are created. Moreover, by over accentuating the "principle of diversity" and excluding a holistic view of cultural interpretation paradoxically shapes a new form of hegemony.

The "current of posterity" and counter-modernisation in Europe, though, is very much a course of self-critique, soon reveals its "natural limit" in a still Eurocentric position, particularly when taking the process of Chinese cultural modernisation as an alternative. As Elzinga stated, "even when we try to be critical and redefine terms we have a problem in that the point of reference in the literature against which we polemicise still tends to influence our own reformulations."[70] In a non-European perspective, the whole process of European modernisation to that of postmodernisation (or late-modernisation) might only stand for a prolonging, or a reconsideration and reconstitution of an overarching European cultural identity. The

---

[67]   Siân Jones, op. cit. (1997), 66-67.
[68]   Ayse S. Caglar, op. cit., 169, 172.
[69]   Terence Turner, op. cit., 407.
[70]   Aant Elzinga, "Revisiting the 'Needham Paradox', The Multifaceted Nature of Needham's Question", in S. I. Habib and D. Raina eds., *Situating the History of Science, Dialogues with Joseph Needham*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, 86.

sense of historical continuity does not cease to exist simply because of apparent changes and processes of self-deconstruction. To push it further, for non-Europeans, counter-modern currents in Europe might be seen as, in Gerschenkron's terms, processes of "continuous changes" of the Eurocentric traditions,[71] which are based on new dominant principles of diversity, fluidity and decentralisation. Why should the sense of integrity and continuity be abandoned in China or the Middle East simply because of it appeals no more to Europeans? We need far more rationales than merely "catching the fever of culture" to assert the new path of modernisation. This can only be derived from some re-examination of specific social-historical contexts in both China and Europe.

1. 2   The Chinese Tradition—An Alternative of Cultural Identity

1. 2. 1   Traditional Chinese Cultural Identity

Much similar to the case of Europe, Chinese people were (and to an extent are) highly confident about their culture. Discourses about Chinese culture proclaim its historical continuity and integrity, and uphold its internal harmony, stability and variety without many disputes. The best description of the traditional or ideal Chinese concept of cultural identity might be the phrase "the multi-polared complexity in integrity 混元一體", which means that several indistinguishable and indivisible entities, through continuous interaction and transfiguration, compose a cohesive and integral whole. This concept reflects very much on the image of the Chinese dragon. According to historians, the Chinese dragon is a collective creativity among different tribal ancestors dwelling at the middle and lower stream of the Yellow River, who were unified by the legendary ancient Chinese emperor—Huang-Ti 黃帝(c. 27th century BC). Huang-Ti conquered the tribes around the Yellow River and became the leader of northern China. To achieve peaceful interactions, several totems and images that represent different tribes were selected and incorporated into one unified symbol—the Chinese dragon, which subsequently went through a series of transfigurations and

---

[71]   Alexander Gerschenkron, *Continuity in History and Other Essays*, Cambridge and Massachusetts, The Belknap Press, 1968, 13.

20

became the representative communal emblem of Chinese culture.[72] The image of the dragon is a mixture of several animal parts; it intermingles the histories, memories, lives and images of different tribes into an integral and inseparable whole, and constructs a cohesive and harmonious cultural community,[73] hence communal identity, among various peoples.

Apart from the legend, the dawn of Chinese cultural identity could be traced from the Hsia 夏 (c. 22nd –18th BC) or Shang Dynasty 商朝 (c. 1752-1111 BC). During the Spring and Autumn Period 春秋時期 (722-481 BC), residents at the Yellow River side were known as the Hua-Hsia peoples 華夏民族,[74] whose culture, like the symbol of the dragon, later experienced continuous transformation and prolonging, constituted an overarching identity for Chinese. After the emperor Chin-Shih-Huang-Ti's 秦始皇帝 political and "cultural unification" of China in 221 BC to the end of the Ching Dynasty 清朝 (1644-1911),[75] the Middle Kingdom had absorbed and assimilated more than four hundred million people. However, much different to the case of Europe, Chinese had been given and accepted a very authentic image of cultural identity, which was based on the historical continuity, or the "legacy of Tao 道統" that emphasised the linear transmission of *The* tradition or heredity from Huang-Ti to that of Confucius.[76] The word "culture" (*wen-hua* 文化) in Chinese

---

[72] Although according to anthropologists, it is doubtful that there was such a Hua-Hsia tribe which indeed took the incorporated symbol of dragon as its representative totem, this common emblem dragon theory does remain to be the most influential one among the Chinese academics. Chen Yung-Cheng 陳永崢, "The Essence of Chinese Culture—Dragon 中國文化的本質—龍", *The Fine Arts of China 中國美術*, Vol. 10, July 1988, 121-123, quote page 121.

[73] Different animal parts were pointed out to be in the image of the Chinese dragon, such as the eagle's claw, snake's body, bull's ear, pig's mouth, fish's skin, dear's horn, camel's head and tiger's paw etc. Yen Yun-Hsieng 閻雲翔, "Research on the Dragon 試論龍的研究", *Chio-Chou Academic Periodical 九州學刊*, Vol. 2 No. 2, Jan. 1988, 99-110; also Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明, *Modern Spirit and Confucians Tradition 現代精神與儒家傳統*, Taipei, 聯經, 1996, 34.

[74] "Hua" was said to name after the Hua Mountain 華山, that is today's Shong Mountain 嵩山 in the Ho-nan 河南 province, while "Hsia" came from the name of Hsia River 夏水, today's Han River 漢水. Thus, Hua-Hsiah people were initially indicating those who lived around the area of Hua Mountain and Hsiah River in ancient China. Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), 21, 24.

[75] In BC 221, Chin-Shih-Huang-Ti established the centralised government, and unified the writing characters, measuring system and inter-personal ethics of the different states, and founded the first unified dynasty of Chinese Kingdom. After that, Chinese history fell into a cycle of dynastic substitution and transformation until the end of the Ching. Liu Chih-Chin 劉志琴 and Wu Ting-Chia 吳廷嘉, *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History 中國文化史概論*, Taipei, 文津出版社, 1994, 69-76.

[76] The Confucian Legacy of Tao has an authentic linear history, which often traces itself from

21

intellectual tradition means to cultivate, educate, or transform people through "Tao", that is, the courtesy, custom, virtue system, or the way that nature functions.[77] For instance, *The Book of Changes* 易經 put that "to observe the details of the sky so as to know the change of the time; to observe the details of humanity so as to cultivate or transform the world (or *tien-hsia* 天下)."[78] Following this line, Confucian teaching depicted (and maybe idealise) rulers like Yao 堯 and Shun 舜 (c. 23-22 century BC) as filial and self-cultivating sages, their era as the "golden age", and their way of rule as the ideal political model of China.[79] This belief of rule by culture (or virtue) was considered as applicable even outside China. For example, the Han scholar Hsiang Liu 劉向 argued that "the reason for using military force is the enemy's unsuccumbing, yet, we should not attempt to fight them unless our culture (or virtue) proves unable to transform them."[80]

In other words, culture in Chinese intellectual tradition is itself a continuous self-civilising process, which aims to identify the society with a linear authenticity and spiritual legacy. As Kung and Yu both point out, culture for Chinese concerns mainly the creation of meanings and consciousness, which could be presented only through the social custom, virtue, morality, and religion of a nation. Only via the spirit, value system and meaning structure of a culture can one realise the behaviour of the people.[81] The emphasis on the meaning and spirit of the Chinese cultural system, or to Sun the "deep structure or subconscious of Chinese culture"[82] simultaneously reinforces the pursuit of the origin and orthodoxy in its cultural legacy. It therefore strengthens people's identification with an authentic China. Although this spiritual continuity and belief in historical authenticity is very much a Confucian construction

---

Huang-Ti 黃帝, Chung-Hsu 顓頊, Ti-Ku 帝嚳, Tang-Yao 唐堯, Yue-Shun 虞舜, Yu 禹, Tang 湯, Emperor Wen 文帝, Emperor Wu 武帝, Chou-Kung 周公 to Confucius 孔子.

[77] Liu Chih-Chin 劉志琴 and Wu Ting-Chia 吳廷嘉, op. cit. (1994), 5-6; Yung-Chieh Liu 劉永佶, *Chinese Cultural Modernisation* 中國文化現代化, Ho-pei 河北, 河北大學出版社, 1997, 32-33.

[78] *The Book of Changes* 周易, Vol. 3 (Taipei, 地球, 1994 Reprints).

[79] Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, 從傳統到現代 *From Tradition to Modern*, Taipei, 時代文化, 1992 Third Edition (First Published 1990), 168.

[80] Liu Hsiang 劉向, *Shuo Yuan* 說苑, Vol. 15. (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1965 Reprints.)

[81] Kung Peng-Cheng 龔鵬程, *Thinking and Culture* 思想與文化, Taipei, 業強出版社, 1995, 41, 56-57; Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, *Observing the Modern Meaning of Chinese Culture from its Value System* 從價值體系看中國文化的現代意義, Taipei, 時報文化, 1992, 20-21.

[82] Sun Lung-Chi 孫隆基, *The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture* 中國文化的深層結構, Hong Kong, 集賢社, 1992, 6-7.

or essentialisation of cultural identity, yet, such a construction has been so powerful that hardly any Chinese could escape from it. Even today Chinese people still constantly identify themselves as the offspring of Hua-Hsia people and the dragon.

Integrity is another "original sin" of Chinese cultural identity. As Huang argues, since Chin-Shih-Huang-Ti, Chinese people see political and cultural unification as normal and division abnormal. Even in the period of long division people still look forward to unification, and the diaspora government deems re-unification its objective and responsibility.[83] Although in history, Chinese people had been politically governed by "other nations" or "outsiders" in the Southern and Northern Dynasties 南北朝 (420-580), Yuan Dynasty 元 (1271-1386) and Ching Dynasty, and culturally challenged by the "barbarian" way of living and high spiritual culture (such as Buddhism), yet it is basically agreed that during the past two thousand years there is hardly any identity crisis for Chinese people.[84] Those external challenges either stopped at the political level, or "the barbarian cultures" were eventually out-competed, "absorbed" and "cohered" by the powerful melting pot. The import of Buddhist culture at the end of Han Dynasty 漢朝 (206 BC-AD 220), although it caused a major transformation in almost all cultural spheres, was finally merged and digested by Chinese culture and became a Sinicised Buddhism.[85] Thus, distinct from the case of Europe, sharp divisions and confrontations among different cultures and nations were superseded by the incessant incorporation and harmonisation of new ingredients into an integral Chinese culture, just like the main stream receives the flow of its branches. The invasions and challenges not only did not damage the existing Chinese cultural system, in contrast, the aliens were eventually Sinicised culturally even though they were in a political and military dominant position. Using Wei's words, "although China has contacted various cultures since the Shang Dynasty, it is always able to absorb and assimilate other cultures without losing its integrity and

---

[83] Huang Jen-Yu 黃仁宇, *Discussing Chinese History at the Hudson River Side* 赫遜河畔談中國歷史, Taipei, 時報文化, 1989, 24.
[84] Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), 22, 41.
[85] Ting Wei-Chih 丁偉志, "The Historical Features of Sino-West Cultural Exchange in Modern China 近代中國中西文化交流的歷史特點", *Cultural Studies 文化研究*, Beijing, Nov. 1998, 32-36, quote page 33.

subjectivity."[86] Early cultural counters only enriched the content of an overarching Chinese cultural identity, and enhanced its complexity and stability.[87]

We must also recognise that, as the name the "Middle Kingdom" itself reveals, conventional discourses of Chinese cultural identity maintained no less an ethnocentric perspective towards the "barbarians" around it. For instance, Mou argues that "Chinese culture is a unique cultural system, which maintains its particularity and originality... for the unique and original utilisation of its mind, we call it the nation's 'distinctive cultural life'".[88] Chin in his *From Tradition to Modern* argues,[89]

> before 1800, China developed solitarily in the far eastern Asia continent, and enjoyed a kind of "honourable solidarity"... In respect of culture, China was surrounded by lower cultures of nomadic nations and thus was an absolute cultural exporter... it generated naturally a sense of superiority, and constructed spontaneously an ethnocentric self-image not of "one amid hundreds", but "The Middle Kingdom" of the world under Heaven 天下.

Li in his *Chinese History* ascribes the success of Chinese national and cultural integration to its cultural superiority, huge population and its powerfulness in spiritual and moral assimilation.[90] Liang, although he criticised the stagnancy of China in the past two thousand years, still held firmly that it was the early matured version of Chinese human culture (which unlike Egyptian, Babylon, Indian, Persian and Greek culture) that gains its uniqueness and independence.[91] Shih wrote even more explicitly that, "Chinese is the best nation, and Chinese culture is the most excellent culture of the world. This is nothing more than a undeniable fact."[92] Similar ethnocentric discourses could easily be illustrated in the works of Chinese scholars, which we need not pursue further here. Yet, one particular point should be noted. That is, the traditional (or "authentic") Sinocentric identity in China is claimed to be

---

[86]   Wei Cheng-Tung 韋政通, *Introduction to Chinese Culture 中國文化概論*, Taipei, 水牛出版社, 1991, 31.

[87]   Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, *The Modernisation of China and Intellectuals 中國現代化與知識份子*, Taipei, 時報文化, 1991 Second Edition, 29-30.

[88]   Mou Tsung-San 牟宗三, "The Feature of Chinese Culture 中國文化之特質", *The Symposium of Chinese Culture 中國文化論集*, Taipei, 中華文化出版事業委員會, 1954, 190-222, quote page 190.

[89]   Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, op. cit. (1992), 91-94.

[90]   Li Kuo-Chi 李國祁, *Chinese History 中國歷史*, Taipei, 三民書局, 1986, 3-4, 7.

[91]   Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, op. cit. (1982), 2-3.

[92]   Hsu Wei-Shan 徐文珊, *A Research on Chinese Nation 中華民族之研究*, Tai-chung, 中台印刷場, 1969, 2.

"culture" rather than "blood", "race" or "national" based.[93] As Han Yu 韓愈, a distinguished scholar in the Tang 唐 Dynasty (618-907), pointed out, "if the Hsia peoples adopted the barbarian's way they became the barbarians; while if the barbarians adopted the Hsia peoples' way, they became Hsia people." In other words, the criterion distinguishing Hua-Hsia and the barbarians (or Yi-ti 夷狄) is "culture", or more specifically, "the way of living and mode of politics," such as difference in nomadic and agricultural economy, language, food, clothing, customs and rites.[94] People in traditional China had no clear concept of "nation" and "state" based on the modern notion of people of the same "race".[95] The Middle Kingdom was understood as a supranational existence of "*tien-hsia* 天下", an idealistic model of "world government", which was constituted of different nations and governed by the emperor, who represented the "son of heaven 天子". It is quite pertinent that the philosopher Bertrand Russell claimed, "China (the Middle Kingdom) is actually a cultural entity rather then a state." And as the sociologist R. E. Park held similarly that the Middle Kingdom is not a state but a "big cultural society". [96] Chinese cultural identity if still exceptional and superior, is more "cultural-centric" rather than "ethnocentric". This, although still self-centric assertion, contrasts to the more racially based notion of self-distinctiveness in the West with respect to its possibility of accepting "others" and adapting to changes. The shift from race to culture seems to shed some light in which we may reconsider modern cultural identity.

1. 2. 2   The Challenge of Cultural Modernity and Chinese Response

History after the 19th century is another story. Traditional Chinese culture faced a series of challenges from Europe. Under the forces of industrialisation, urbanisation, rationalisation, bureaucratisation, secularisation, specialisation and democratisation, the complexity of European modernisation followed the opium and gun power had massively impacted on the former self-sufficient and "solitarily honourable" Chinese

---

[93]   See Chi Chien-Fei 祈劍飛, *The World's Perspective towards China* 世界的中國觀, Taipei, 博遠, 1993, 10; Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, op. cit. (1991) , 94.
[94]   諸夏而夷狄則夷狄之, 夷狄而諸夏則諸夏之。Quoted from Chien Mu 錢穆, *Outline History of China* 國史大綱 *Vol. I*, Taipei, 國立編譯館, 1995(a), Revised Third Edition (First Published in 1940), 56-57; Chien Mu 錢穆, *Nation and Culture* 民族與文化, Taipei, 東大出版, 1989, 6.
[95]   For modern concept of "race", see Section 2.2 and Chapter 2 footnote 7.
[96]   Both Russell and Park are quoted from Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, op. cit. (1982), 19-21.

25

society. For the first time, the "barbarian's" warships, gun powders, science, technology, political system, and even the dressing and food, flowed into the "superior Heavenly Kingdom" and invoked an unprecedented identity crisis in China. Unlike the previous experiences of encounter, Chinese were reluctant to accept, or even resistant of, the alien culture under the Western threat. Chin appropriately depicts the historical and psychological circumstance of 19th century Chinese modernisation, that it is a self-strengthening movement under the intimidation of Western gun-point, a fight not only for the wealth and power of the nation, but for washing away the disgrace of defeat for self-survival.[97] Those who underwent the early process of Chinese modernisation would find it very difficult to imagine the contemporary western attempt of substituting, or neutralising, the image of "cultural imperialism" with "cultural modernity" or the "globalisation", as these are still very much dominated by the West today.[98]

Despite the early reluctance, different responses were soon initiated from inside China. From a total resistance of Western culture to a cultural eclecticism (such as using "Chinese system with Western means 中體西用" in the Self-Strengthening Movement 自強運動), and then culminated in the wholesale westernisation in the May 4th Movement 五四運動,[99] the process of modernisation in the 19th and early 20th century China had formed an overwhelming reform trend that carries over from the technical level to a complete reconsideration of the belief system and social custom of China.[100] The history suggests that modernisation was an irresistible current, which even the Heaven's Kingdom could hardly oppose. Chinese people eventually recognised this,

---

[97] See Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, op. cit. (1991), 33.
[98] Tomlinson concludes in his well-known piece that, "by thinking of cultural imperialism as the spread of modernity, these problems are avoided...all the discourses of cultural imperialism we have encountered can be interpreted in terms of a different configuration of global power that is a feature of these 'new times'. This configuration replaces the distribution of global power that we know as 'imperialism', which characterised the modern period up to, say, the 1960s. What replaces 'imperialism' is 'globalisation'". See John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism, A Critical Introduction*, London, Pinter, 1991, 173, 175.
[99] See Hu Shih 胡適, "Whole Scale Globalisation and Wholesale Westernisation 充分世界化與全盤西化", in Hu Shih 胡適, *Dr. Hu Shih and the Chinese and Western Cultures 胡適與中西文化*, Taipei, 牧童社 First Edition, 1980, 140. (Title Translated by the Author.)
[100] Chin point out that Chinese modernisation initially started from the technical level—the imitation of western warship and gun power, but soon invoked transformation at the deeper institutional level—new schools, institutions, banks and media. It finally brought out a wholesale reconsideration on the belief, value system and social custom of Chinese cultures. See Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, op. cit. (1992), 161-166.

and during the past hundreds years, they have again made efforts to incorporate the "alien" modern culture into its own cohesive system. Only "modernity" as a "significant other" has inevitably damaged the original Chinese interpersonal relations and social organisations. It not only challenged the traditional value system and social customs, but also invoked a sense of crisis in cultural identification.[101] The whole process of Chinese catching up for western power and wealth therefore is itself a painful proceeding of native cultural denial.[102] To put it in another way, for China modernity is never simply an issue of the "old" and "new", "modern" and "tradition", it involves simultaneously the conflicting image of "Chinese" and "Western", and identity of "self" and "others".[103] The military and economic defeats of China in the last century and more have reversed the original "Middle Kingdom" (centre) and the West (periphery) structural cultural relations. The West and cultural modernity has moved from the marginal to the central position, which at the same time promotes the overall western technical and non-technical value system to a universal status.[104] Traditional Chinese culture is seriously questioned and degraded, at times even discarded irrespectfully. Such is the reason why Huang disappointedly stated, "the consumerism, individualism, non-principled competition, and the indifferent devastation of Chinese history and culture initiated by modernisation have made us forget the uniqueness and advantageous nature of our culture, and blindly take the western criteria and values as our own."[105]

Nonetheless, it is maybe too early to conclude that there has been a total collapse of Chinese culture. Resistance, or in our term the force of counter-modernisation, of Chinese culture remains strong. The western "currents of posterity" and multiculturalism did not shake the insistence upon one integral and historical continuous cultural China. (Taiwan, Hong Kong, Mongolia and Tibet today can claim

---

[101] Guy Alitto 艾愷, *Cultural Conservatism* 文化守成主義, Taipei, 時報文化, 1986, 57. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[102] Chang Pao-Min 張保民, "Comparative Studies of Processes of Modernisation In China, Japan and Taiwan 中日台現代化進程之比較", *History 歷史月刊*, Taipei, July 1997, 110-119, quote page 112.

[103] Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基, op. cit. (1992), 120.

[104] And apart from science and technology, western philosophy and religion such as Christianity have come to a more dominant position than the eastern philosophy and religion—Buddhism or Taoism—in the world. See Guy Alitto 艾愷, op. cit. (1986), 58.

[105] Huang Li-Chih 黃力之, "Reconsideration of Cultural Assimilation in the Post Cold-War Era 冷戰后文化同化問題沈思錄", *Cultural Studies 文化研究*, Beijing, November 1998, 93-96, quote page 93-94.

no international status without adhering to one cultural China, and people in the PRC seem to see nothing wrong with the essentialised overarching cultural identity.) Chinese culture has never given up its attempt to incorporate the western modernity. Since the 1970s, the successful adoption of capitalism in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the surging coast economy in China under the name of "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (that brings together certain ingredients of capitalism and Chinese socialist culture),[106] have seriously confronted traditional Western statements such as Marx's "stagnant" Asiatic Mode of Production, and Weber's "irrational" Chinese feudal society. The enculturation of Chinese and Western civilisation in the last century has undeniably revealed a creative response of China, which coheres (or even transcends) dually the Chinese cultural traditions and Western modernity.[107] This, hence, could be taken as a re-appropriation of Chinese cultural identity. Chinese experience no doubt will play an important role in the future process of cultural modernisation, or on a wider scale, cultural globalisation. If modernisation and modernity is an *unfinished* project, and somehow modifiable under the current of posterity in Europe, we see no reason why the counter-modern forces in traditional and contemporary China should be taken as purely anti-modern ingredients that hinder the *unfulfilled* project of modernisation. Unless here "anti-modern" in fact means the "anti-Eurocentric" or "counter-western" approach of modernisation. In the "post" age, when the explicit Eurocentric discourses through time again become implicit, the cultural-centric Chinese identity may serve as a valuable counterpart in theorising the new European identity. As for the Chinese side, China today is gradually walking out of the shadow of defeat, and starts to hold a more objective attitude toward the issue of cultural modernisation. Only it needs to keep Toynbee's alert in mind, that "we cannot be sure that the introduction of this alien Western ideology has not brought with it a decisive break in Chinese history...we do not know now whether this indigenous *Weltanschauung* is going to prove potent enough to reassert itself victoriously once again."[108] Taking the challenge—response model, whether cultural modernity is a transformative stimulus for a Chinese culture or a disintegrating force for the traditional identification remains unclear.

---

[106] Lo Hsiao-Nan 羅曉南, *Contemporary Chinese Cultural Transformation and Identity* 當代中國文化轉型與認同, Taipei, 生智, 1997, 31-32.
[107] Ibid, 181.
[108] Arnold J. Toynbee, op. cit. (1972), 59.

Chapter 2   Theorising Cultural Identity

2. 1   *An Initial Model for Cultural Identity*

By juxtaposing the discourses of modern and late- or postmodern cultural identity in Europe with the traditional Chinese counterpart we purposefully put forward a contrastive image across the temporal and spatial framework. However, seeking an inclusive and accommodating profile for "cultural identity", we have left the concept vaguely defined, yet, alternatively brought it in through different perspectives. Asking about what cultural identity is, and why it matters, is actually asking about a set of basic questions: How does an individual recognise himself, or in what way does she picture herself? How do people associate with one another, and in which circumstances does this offer an individual the sense of belonging to a communal group? At a collective level, what is the material, spiritual and institutional constitution of a collectivity? Can we figure out the binding force of a collective that makes a group of people particular and distinct from others? Answering fundamental questions like these, we need to go back to the very origin of social life, where cultural identity started.

We might begin by suggesting the following intersubjective scheme. If there was only one man in the world and nobody and nothing else existed, there could be no culture at all and the man could have no sense of identity. For even if he has *consciousness*, there would be no interaction and no reflection from others and from the material world. What an *individual* has is his *life* solely (see bloc A in *Chart II-1: The Trajectory of Cultural Identity*), which keeps him being. However, anthropologists and historians tell us this is not the case. Since the dawn of history, the appearance of *Homo Sapiens*, human beings are born into the *natural* or *material world* (block C), which is constituted of elements such as animals geography and climate. Individuals dwell within a collective, which is presented in forms of a tribe, race, ethnic community or nation etc. Simultaneously, there begins, on the one hand, contacts between individuals (axis AB), that create amongst them an identity of *collective*

Chart II-1: The Trajectory of Cultural Identity

X. Cultural Encountering

T1. Trajectory of Cultural Identity

C. Nature, Material World

Production and Construction

E. Culture: Complex Interconnectivity of Practice

Recognition and Reflection

G1 Time Past

A. Individual *(Life, Consciousness)*

B. Collective *(Styles, Representation)*

F. Culture: Intersubjectivity of Meaning System

Production and Construction

G. Time Future

Recognition and Reflection

D. Norms, Institutions

Y. Historical Contingency

T. Trajectory of Cultural Identity

(block B); and on the other, communications between individuals and the natural world, through which people obtain continuous reflections and reassurances of their existences and consciousness (arrow CB). As soon as one seeks to maintain or prolong his/her life and consciousness through the *production* of food (arrow AC), utensils and houses, and the interaction with a collective (arrow AB), which formulates the normative structure of life (arrow BD)—the institutions (e.g. family, church, school) and norms (e.g. customs, values, rites and beliefs)—then *culture* commences.[1]

---

[1] Chien Mu 錢穆, *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History* 中國文化史導論, Taipei, 台灣商務印行, 1993, 231; and B. Malinowski, *What is Culture?* 文化論, Taipei, 台灣商務印書館, Translated Fourth Edition 1987 (by Fei Tung 費通, First Published in 1944), 3-6.

30

The situation becomes more sophisticated hereafter. The lives of artefacts, texts, institutions and value systems, which were once given by men, endure longer than their creators. They then became the "distinctive repository"[2] or resources of self-recognition for the future generations, and give reflections to those who ask questions about who they are, and how they should live their lives (arrow DA). For culture, which carries the memory, experience, wisdom, labour and image of one's ancestors, incurs the intimate feeling of familiarity or sameness, hence generates the sense of belonging (and of course differentiation). It has now in turn formed an *inseparable part of the constitutive organism* of one's identity, and the source and logic of identification, through which social practices are networked and the meanings or values of life are collectively constructed.

These chaining effects (as expressed in *Chart II-1* among blocks A, B, C, D) show at least two analytical levels of the concept "culture", which we call the "interconnectivity of complex practices" (space E) and the "intersubjectivity of meaning system" (space F). By "interconnectivity of complex practices" we mean that there have been multifaceted interrelations among various life aspects (social, economic, political and routine praxis), which bring the collectivity into that interweaving network, which Raymond Williams labelled as a "whole way of life"[3] (this will be further examined in Section 2.3.1 and 2.3.2). As for the "intersubjectivity of meaning system", we indicate that there is a mutual influencing process occurring within the mechanism whereby meaning is produced. Such a process involves at the same time an individual's material and spiritual inputs into his outer environment, and the reflections that he in turn receives from the natural and institutional world. It is through these diverse circuits of agent (human) and structure (environment) communications that culture provides each individual and collectivity the *distinct way of life* (see Section 2.3.3). Those two schemes of culture permeate throughout the whole course of self-identification, and serve on the one hand as the constituents of life experiences, and on the other, as the conjunctions that integrate disparate elements of values and beliefs into a whole (space E, F). Since that for the individual and

---

[2] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London, Penguin, 1991, 38.
[3] Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society*, London, The Hogarth Press, 1982 (First Published in 1958), xvi.

31

collective, the acquisitions for meanings of life are performed through their constant "dialogues" with the spatial and temporal milieus, when tracing across time (axis GG1) it becomes possible for us to specify the *trajectories of cultural identity* (curve TT1) within different civilisations. These trajectories, as we attempt to locate them through the distinctive life patterns in European and Chinese history in the *longue durée*, may in turn reveal the logic or priority of cultural identities (also see Section 2.3.4.). Lastly, to transcend or counter the ethnocentric view of cultural identity, it requires us to extend this complex connectivity beyond cultural borders, and build in the wholesale external linkages through cultural encounters and globalisation (block X). Searching for an incorporative synthesis, never should we neglect the possibility of random effects, or the so-called "historical contingency", which appear time and again in the course of modernisation (block Y).

This, though much-formalised, model introduces our approximate meaning of a more holistic view of cultural identity, which we shall explore further respectively in the following sections. To set up an integral picture of cultural identity, we need to look further, firstly, into the interconnections between identity, its "primordial" racial, ethnic constitutions and the geo-lifestyle linkages (Section 2.2). Then, we shall pursue deeper into the institutional structure (in 2.3.1 and 2.3.2) and the mechanism of "meaning production", and explain the intricate conjunction of identity and daily routine (2.3.3). By establishing the intersubjective relations between cultural practices and meaning, we intend to develop a practice-meaning-weighing-framework, which would allow us to trace the formulation and historical function of cultural trajectory (Section 2.3.4). Finally, by configuring various possibilities of cultural encounters across time and space (2.3.5), we may broaden our view in interpreting the historical data, the role of "accidents" and the direction of European and Chinese modernisation. A summarising of our present theory and former discussions in Chapter 1 will then instigate a more detailed model of cultural identity (as presented in *Chart II-3: The Constitution of Cultural Identity* in Section 2.4), upon which we will base our historical analysis. Nonetheless, explicating this initial model requires us to go back to the very beginning of our discussion of culture and identity, which may in turn initiate a theory that places culture not only *with* but also *in* identity.

2. 2   *From Race, Ethnicity to Cultural Identity*

2. 2. 1   Race, Lineage and Ethnicity

Let us start very briefly with three basic taxonomic concepts of human beings, namely, "race", "lineage" and "ethnicity". Although they are very much a production of the modern tradition, they do serve as essential and indispensable parts of one's cultural identity. As Banton and Harwood suggest, the large geographic races have remained reproductively isolated—thus maintaining their statistical genetic differences—for two main reasons. One is the obvious fact of geographical isolation: long distances and awkward geological barriers; the other is of the social or cultural nature: barriers to intermarriage between individuals belonging to certain groups within and between societies, thus the maintenance of genetic differences between populations by discouraging outbreeding.[4] In Europe, with the perception of generic and biological division, this very category of "race" was employed as a means of classifying human bodies, skin colour, hair and appearance.[5] It was assumed that man's physical nature determined his culture or way of life. Such a biologically determining interpretation (later coined by Herbert Spencer and used enthusiastically by the Social Darwinists)[6] accompanied with the genealogical inquiry of intellectuals into predominant European Judeo-Christian, scientific, and psychosexual discourses,[7] have developed a strong taxonomic tradition in the human sciences since the early 19th century. For many the

---

[4]   Michael Banton and Jonathan Harwood, *The Race Concept*, Newton Abbot, London and Vancouver, David & Charles, 1975, 74.

[5]   It is first employed by François Bernier, a French traveller and physician in 1684. Cornel West, "Toward a Socialist Theory of Racism", on the website of Democratic Socialists of America, 1997. (URL:http://www.dsausa.org/rl/Race/West.htm.)

[6]   The French anatomist Georges Cuvier first signalled a radical application of physical cause theories in 1800. Writing instructions for a French expedition to the Pacific on how they should study savage peoples, Cuvier constantly assumed that man's physical nature determined his culture or way of life. Michael Banton and Jonathan Harwood, op. cit. (1975), 26-27, 73.

[7]   The Judeo-Christian racist logic emanates from the Biblical account of Ham looking upon and failing to cover his father Noah's nakedness, thereby receiving divine punishment of being made black. The scientific logic rests upon a modern philosophical discourse guided by Greek ocular metaphors. The notions of the self are buttressed by Baconian ideas of observation, evidence, and confirmation, which promote the activities of comparing and measuring physical characteristics of human bodies under the rules of classical aesthetic and cultural norms (Greek lips and noses etc). Within this logic, the value-laden yet prestigious authority of "science" legitimates notions of black ugliness, cultural deficiency and intellectual inferiority. The psychosexual racist logic arises from the phallic obsessions, Oedipal projections, and anal-sadistic orientations in European cultures, which endow non-Europeans with the image of sexual prowess, cruel revengeful fathers, frivolous carefree children, or passive long-suffering mothers. See Cornel West, op. cit. (1997).

idea of race has been so self-evident a "fact" of difference requiring no protracted thought, and the whole meaning of it is often reduced to "the biological transmission of innate qualities." Race performs as part of one's self-recognition, and has become "an all-pervading natural phenomenon, and mysterious primordial force operating mechanically or organically, materially or spiritually, through all historical and prehistorical time."[8] In China, similarly though less scientifically based, blood and lineage are highly accentuated in the genealogical-racial differentiation.[9] Under its blood-tie based "descent-line system 宗法" Chinese people trace their ancestors back to unlimited generational depth with infinite number, and build up a kinship-organised interpersonal social network extended from this descent-line system.[10] It is in this sense that they differentiate the offspring of Yen-Ti and Huang-Ti 炎黃子孫 from other peoples of varied lineages. Though, as biologists (commissioned by UNESCO after the War) concluded, it was not evident that physical differences such as the cephalic or nasal index, skin colour, hair type were correlated with behavioural or psychological differences,[11] the concept of race associated with lineage (that is characterised by specific blood ties and physical qualities,) has actually served as a crucial perception of cultural identity for distinct human groups.[12] It is the most intimate and substantial element of one's self that can be physically felt without *other* intermediation.

In the wake of race and ethnicity, the study of "culture" and "society" shaped itself in the early twentieth century. Although it retained an overriding concern with holism, homogeneity, order and boundedness, there has been a critical shift away from the physical and racial division of people. [13]   An ethnic group, traditionally as Herodotus

---

[8]   Ivan Hannaford, *Race. The History of an Idea in the West*, Washington, D.C., The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press; and Baltimore London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, 3.

[9]   The traditional Chinese concept of "race" has less to do with the genetic or biological (skin or colour) appearances, but more associate with blood ties, lineage or common ancestry, which is termed as "familial race" (*chia-tzu* 家族)".

[10]   A descent-line is a group of agnates sharing the same ancestry. A "descent-line system" refers to the method of designating an heir (*tsung-tzu* 宗族), originally the firstborn of the main wife in the main line of the descent group. See Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China. Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse*, Taipei, SMC Publishing Inc., 1994, 76, 84.

[11]   John Rex, *Race and Ethnicity*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1986, 18-19; also Michael Banton and Jonathan Harwood, op. cit. (1975), 61, 127-128

[12]   Siân Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity. Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*, London and New York, Rougledge, 1997,41.

[13]   Siân Jones, op. cit. (1997), 48.

applied it, could have been tightly defined, "in the case of Greeks, a people sharing a common descent, a language, gods, sacred places, festivals, customs and ways of life, in spite of having no geographical unity of territory in space."[14] If the development of the notion "ethnicity" stays on this line, then it is deemed as a primordial attachment, which in Geertz's words, "stems from the given… the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language… and following particular social practices. These congruities of blood, speech, custom and so on, are seen to have an ineffable, and at times, overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves."[15] Identity based on this ethnic sentiment, therefore, is a feeling of belonging and continuity-in-being through time, resulting from an act of self-ascription, and ascription by others, to a group of people who claim both a common ancestor and a common cultural tradition.[16] Ethnicity in this sense is often taken as a primary or "basic group identity", which can be distinguished from other categories of social grouping, for it is an inherent attribute of an individual's self-recognition, and is conceptualised as an ineffable, static identity.[17] Nonetheless, differing from race and lineage, ethnicity also ascribes one's identity beyond the physical appearance and blood tie of an individual, and incorporates factors as Renfrew has defined: a shared land, language, history or myth of origin and common descent; community of customs, culture, beliefs and religion; and a name, an ethnonym and self-awareness to express group identity.[18]

Based on this race-ethnicity-culture logic, Friedman and De Vos both suggest that,

[14] Ray Laurence, "Territory, Ethnonyms and Geography. The Construction of Identity in Roman Italy", in Ray Laurence and Joanne Berry eds., *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 95-110, quote page 99.
[15] John Rex, op. cit. (1986), 26-27.
[16] Eugeen Roosens, "The Primordial Nature of Origins in Migrant Ethnicity", in Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers eds., *The Anthropology of Ethnicity. Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*, Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 1994, 81-104, quote page 84.
[17] Siân Jones, op. cit. (1997), 63. This ethnic-based cultural identity as shown in Chapter 1 is severely challenged by counter-modern discourses, thus when posed within the interconnected context of social, economic and political praxis, should subject to further scrutiny.
[18] C. Renfrew, "Prehistory and the Identity of Europe. Don't Let's be Beastly to the Hungarians", in Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds., *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996, 125-137, quote page 130. To Barth, ethnic group is composed of: the largely biologically self-perpetuating; shared fundamental cultural values, overt unity in cultural forms; a field of communication and interaction; a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order. Fredrik Barth, "Introduction", in Fredrik Barth ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries—the Social Organisation of Culture Difference*, Bergen-Oslo, Universitets Forlaget, and London, George Allen and Unwin, 1969, 9-38, quote pages 10-11.

cultural identity in a primary sense of belonging leans toward one of three orientations, which contain overlapping conditions for its establishment and maintenance: (a) Cultural identity as a past-oriented and generic based concept refers to the attribution of a set of qualities, which is experienced and carried by individuals in the blood, or if in culture, myth, religious rituals and superstition. This in the strongest sense is expressed through the concept of race, common ancestral origin or biological descent. (b) A present-oriented concept of membership is articulated via ethnicity, as heritage and cultural descent, or via nationality, a citizen in a particular state, that is achieved through everyday practice, social behaviours, political-economic entitlement, and learned by each at the level of an individual, and not inherent. (c) A future-oriented cultural identity in a transcendent sense refers to lifestyle or way of life, which may or may not have a basis in tradition. It acts to detach the authentic past or tradition, and emphasises the will of individuals, elements of fluidity, and aspiration of particularity.[19] Such perspectives extend the concept of cultural identity from the primordial and essentialist descriptions further into the sphere of people's daily habits, life styles, their ties with geographical conditions, and social-political praxis.

2. 2. 2   Geography and Lifestyle

Geography, locale and lifestyle are undeniably constituents of people's self-identity. The traditional rational and material approach to geography and landscapes takes space as a concept to be value-and-meaning-free. Such an approach, as Petts points out, "fails to deal with landscape as an experienced phenomenon, a network in which socially informed individuals live their lives." The relationship between people's life style and geographical conditions is reflexive: points on the landscape gain their importance and constitute a manifold web of meaning in relation to the day-to-day subjective existence and, more critically, the response of real people. Living style also changes according to natural and spatial context (land, climate, vegetation, animal species, and density of population).[20] As Braudel argues, "civilisations, vast or

---

[19]   Jonathan Friedman, *Cultural Identity and Global Process*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage, 1994, 29-30; and George A. De Vos, "Ethnic Pluralism: Conflict and Accommodation. The Role of Ethnicity in Social History", in Lola Romanucci-Ross and George A. De Vos eds., *Ethnic Identity. Creation, conflict, and Accommodation*, Walnut Creek, London and New Delhi, Third Edition 1995, 15-47, quote page 18.
[20]   David Petts, "Landscape and Cultural Identity in Roman Britain", in Ray Laurence and Joanne

otherwise, can always be located on a map, an essential part of their character depends on the constraints or advantages of their geographical situation." Every landscape bears the traces of continuous and cumulative labour of people who dwell on it, which generation after generation contribute to the distinct historical contour of a community as a whole.[21] Similarly, communal identification is inseparable from particular habitats. Braudel and Chaudhuri's *"set and sets theory"*,[22] which utilises a comparative economic and social history as the integral logic for the unity and disunity of civilisations by encapsulating the various temporal-spatial life facets, provides a good entry point here. Tracing from the food habits (the categories of food and the way people eat); food production (techniques of rice growing); the conventions on clothing, or the connection between "the sensory process of assimilating information and the symbolic meaning of dress"; the building material, style, design, constructional methods and functional logic of architecture;[23] the images and scale of city; to the different sedentary or nomadic forms of life in European and Chinese cultural history; it is potentially achievable to extract the symbolic power and meanings through the geo-lifestyle of the two civilisations. The feelings of intimacy to a specific landscape, a mountain, a river or an ocean, the material and style of dress (silk-robe rather than long flax gown) and the food (rice rather than potato) one eats, have contributed to form a collective image for a cultural community. Yellow River is not simply a river to the Chinese. To many it serves as the transformed symbol of the dragon, which lies right beneath the soil and shows its temper or discontent occasionally by swamping over the river dike. The collective representation of patterns and habits in this sense sketch the logic of identity that is embodied in the historical profile of life style.

Berry eds., *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 79-94, quote pages 81-82.

[21]   Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilisations*, London, Allen Lane and The Penguin Press, Translated Edition by R. Mayne 1994, 9.

[22]   The set theory, as derived from the mathematician Georg Cantor argues that, by an "aggregate" or set, we are to understand any collection into a whole M of definite and separate objects m. The awareness of a principle of "differentiation", which divides one into many, "integration", which unified many into one, and the principle of ordering or succession, which derives one set from another according to anterior or posterior notions, allow the historian a powerful logical instrument for identifying unities and discontinuities of a culture or civilisation. See K. N. Chaudhuri, *Asia before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 27-28.

[23]   K. N. Chaudhuri, op. cit. (1990), 34, 152-156, 182, 202, 210, quote page 156.

Following the above analysis, culture as content of identity here has to be analysed in two orders: (a) overt signals or signs—the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity, often such features as dress, language, house-form, or general style of life; and (b) basic value orientations—the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged.[24] Although it remains unclear whether this life-style identification as a whole is so "*self-evident* an internal quality of a pre-identified structure" as Chaudhuri declares;[25] or is situational, that "determined by ecology as well as transmitted culture" as Barth argued;[26] or that it is "more directly influenced by collective perceptions, encoded in myths and symbols, of the ethnic 'meanings' of particular stretches of territory…turned into 'homelands'" as Smith indicates.[27] Yet, what is evident is that there have been apparent perceptions of distinctiveness or commonalities within dissimilar cultural communities, which are somehow crystallised through these continuously inter-penetrating images generated by both the external environment and the internalised territorial features of life-styles. The communicative interactions between the natural world and humanistic constructions seem to have formulated an individual atmosphere and tradition that seeps "instinctively" into successive generations.

2. 3   *Placing Culture within Identity*

2. 3. 1   Routine and the Life-way Identity

What the concepts of race, lineage, ethnicity and the extended interactive relations between geographical conditions and life styles reveal is that, apart from the so-called essential elements (blood, skin, colour), culture as one's identity has to be encapsulated through an overall reflection of different life aspects. Such encompassing association leads us to reconsider the definition of culture and its tie to

---

[24] Fredrik Barth, op. cit. (1969), quote page 14.
[25] K. N. Chaudhuri, op. cit. (1990), 42.
[26] Barth held that, the overt cultural forms, which can be itemised as traits exhibit the effects of ecology. The same group of people, with unchanged values and ideas, would surely pursue different patterns of life and institutionalise different forms of behaviour when faced with the different opportunities offered in different environments. Likewise, we must expect to find that one ethnic group, spread over a territory with varying ecologic circumstances, will exhibit regional diversities of overt institutionalised behaviour, which do not reflect differences in cultural orientation. Fredrik Barth, op. cit. (1969), quote pages 12-13.
[27] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations,* Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell, 1986, 183.

identity. As a broadened concept, identity could only be fully expressed through two interlinked perspectives of culture, upon which my later argument will be based: The first for sure relates closely to the anthropological discourses of race and ethnicity: Tylor's culture as the "*complex whole*" of knowledge, belief, art, law, custom,[28] education, entertainment and the social, economic and political institutions; and/or Raymond Williams's "*a whole way of life*", which incorporates from a state or habit of the mind, a general body of arts and moral activities, to the *whole form* of our common life, material, intellectual, or spiritual.[29] These tend to serve as the objectively comprehended constituents of cultural identity, "with respect to attributes of membership set off... by racial, territorial, economic, religious, cultural, aesthetics and linguistic separateness" of people (as expressed in *Chart II-1*, space E).[30] The second perspective maintains culture as the driving force of deeply embedded values and beliefs, lying behind the perceivable shift of a society. Such embedding values form the "informing spirit", "deeper structure", or in Yu's words, the "signifying system" that is held to constitute all other activities,[31] and through which necessarily a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored.[32] (*Chart II-1*, space F) The meaning system is a "*subjective, symbolic, or emblematic* use of any aspect of a culture," from which people try to recognise their sameness and continuity and make their life distinct from others.[33] Therefore, the analysis of cultural identity can be seen as "a description of *a particular way of life* [my emphasis], which expresses certain meanings and values... implicit and explicit in... a particular culture."[34]

---

[28] "Culture is...that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture. Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*, Gloucester, MA, Smith, 1958, 1.

[29] Raymond Williams, op. cit. (1982, First Published in 1958), xvi, 295.

[30] George A. De Vos and Lola Romanucci-Ross, "Conclusion. Ethnic Identity: A Psychocultural Perspective", in Lola Romanucci-Ross and George A. De Vos eds., op. cit. (1995), 349-379, quote page 350.

[31] Kung Peng-Cheng 龔鵬程, *Thinking and Culture* 思想與文化, Taipei, 業強出版社, 1995, 41, 56-57; Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, *Observing the Modern Meaning of Chinese Culture from its Value System* 從價值體系看中國文化的現代意義, Taipei, 時報文化, 1992, 20-21; Sun Lung-Chi 孫隆基, *The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture* 中國文化的深層結構, Hong Kong, 集賢社, 1992, 6-7.

[32] Raymond Williams, *Culture*, London, Fontana Press, 1981, 13.

[33] George A. De Vos, "Ethnic Pluralism: Conflict and Accommodation. The Role of Ethnicity in Social History", in Lola Romanucci-Ross and George A. De Vos eds., op. cit. (1995), 15-47, quote page 24.

[34] Graeme Turner, *British Cultural Studies An Introduction*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996 Second Edition (First Published in 1990), 52.

Several aspects could be further explored and clarified with regard to this "dialogic connectivity" amid the complex and whole way of life, and the meaning-verifying self-identification, which shifts people's identities from primary elements to attach further with the overall material and spiritual production of life and mundane praxis. Gilroy uses the notion "dialogic" and "dialogism" in depicting the expressive culture of diaspora identities and aesthetics, by which he emphasises the communicative features of modern black artistic forms and the cultural politics in black communities. As Gilroy points out, a "gospel choir and soloist, an improvising jazz band, a reggae toaster, a scratch mixer and Keith Piper have all developed the dialogic character of black expressive culture in different directions. Their expressive forms are dialogic, but that dialogism is of a special type and its irreducible complexity has moved beyond the grasp of the self/other dichotomy."[35] Here, by "dialogic connectivity" we intend to express the communicative characteristic of the modern world that is constituted by the interactive processes of multifaceted life experiences. For these increasing dialogues among complex life-narratives have brought different cultural agents into an interconnective framework. As Williams argued, what "a whole way of life" stands for is not only as a scale of integrity, but also as a mode of interpreting all our *common experience* (rather than only intellectual discourses and high arts).[36] The understanding of cultural identity should never be apart from one's life experiences and everyday routine, for from housing, dressing, eating, consuming, reading, recreating to travelling, these insignificant routines actually occupy the essential parts of one's daily life, and form the crucial mutual perception of sharing *one same life community* with other members within. These everyday details of material life though, as Braudel points out, are the "dust of history", yet by indefinite repetition would add up to form linked chains. These chains with history in the long term then "introduce a kind of order, indicate a balance, and reveal to our eyes the permanent features", for "'social' values – should present themselves at the level of the humble realities of material life".[37] Tomlinson has rightly pointed out that Williams's principle of "culture is ordinary" concerns "questions of existential significance[,] matters that

---

[35] See Paul Gilroy, *Small Acts. Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures*, London, Serpent's Tail, 1993 (a), 106.
[36] Raymond Williams, op. cit. (1982), xviii.
[37] Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. The Structure of Everyday Life*, Vol. *I*, London, Fontana Press, (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds) 1979, 560, 562.

every human being routinely addresses in their everyday practices and experiences." Therefore, culture should refer to all these mundane practices that directly contribute to people's ongoing "life-narratives", in which human beings construct meaning through practices of symbolic representation and form the order of life.[38] Giddens also stresses culture as the ways of life, in the sense that it concerns how people dress, their marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits.[39] These mundane and ordinary experiences thus form the basis of an important logic of people's identity of routine, what Alfred Schutz terms "commonsensical" logic. By this he means people's idealisation of the "interchangeability of the standpoints" and the "congruency of the system of relevance". Or to put it simple, people often assume that their thinking and actions are not merely relevant and taken for granted by the actors themselves, but also supposed as being taken for granted by their fellowmen's private experiences until counterevidence appears.[40] It seems so obvious that this commonsensical daily routine is the indispensable, if not the only, way to get hold of the essence of people's cultural identification.

Indeed, identities extracted from mundane lives may appear to be trivial in most occasions. Unlike the "great traditions" (which as defined by Rietbergen stand for "culture as a system of ideas and ideals articulated"[41] by intellectuals and social elites), life in routine usually results in fragmentary cultural experiences when we attempt to address the continuities across time. However, it is this "normalness", which generates a sense of intimacy and closeness to common people that allows routine images (as mentioned in the end of Section 2.2.2.) to obtain *extensive* or "*diffused power*". Such "diffused power", as Michael Mann suggests, spreads in a "spontaneous, unconscious, decentred way throughout a population, resulting in similar social practices that embody power relations but are not explicitly commanded." It "typically comprises, not command and obedience, but an

---

[38] John Tomlinson, *Globalisation and Culture*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1999, 19-20.
[39] Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1993 Second Edition (First Published 1989), 31.
[40] Alfred Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, Collected Papers Edited by Maurice Natason, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1973, 12.
[41] Peter Rietbergen, *Europe: A Cultural History*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 173.

understanding that these practices are natural or moral",[42] hence is most likely to repulse or resist in an "unperceivable" way. Of course, by "unperceivable" we do not mean that the repercussion or resistance cannot be noticed or felt, but because identities, which accumulated from ordinary lives, are often seemingly irrelevant (or at least without direct connection) to the "cultural projects" that elites are "engineering" (see Section 2.3.2), therefore are usually overlooked in the pubic domain. For instance, foreigners can be excluded from local business simply because they cannot use chopsticks, or do not enjoy Chinese "phoenix claws" (chicken feet), and therefore are distrusted by local communities for "humanistic reasons". Due to the difficulties in pining down the exact causes, and the extensive scale they usually involve, "cultural resistances" that ascribe to such diffused power tend to persist for a long period and remain obstinate in repressing. This inner logic of mundanity often lies beyond the calculations of instrumental rationality, for what the life of routine has recourse to are usually the *feelings, tastes* or *sense of moral-ethical attachment* to food, dress, landscapes, soil and life habits, which fall right within the realm of humanistic rationality. Distrust engendered by mundane effects may simply spill over to high politics, which is a reason why humanistic arguments are conventionally defined as "irrational" in modern tradition. However, no matter how "irrational" such distasteful distrust is labelled, it only reminds us that the humanistic rationality can no longer be downplayed. To argue for recognition of self from one's daily routine is certainly very appealing, and to our position, very convincing. However, we should not conclude too abruptly by equating "routine" and "common" experiences with this "whole way of life" before we further examine the seemingly unproblematic concepts. It must also be inquired into whether this life of routine can really serve as the pivotal conjunction that links various facets of life into a whole or can be used as a model for comparative history.

2. 3. 2   Multi-dimensionality of Life: Normative Structure and Institution

People's daily lives, if understood as a "whole", do not remain merely at the level of casual forms of routine—eating, dwelling, shopping, clothing and travelling. While

---

[42]   Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: A History of Power from the Beginning to A. D. 1760*, Vol. I, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 8.

most people maintain their lives as simple, some do have sophisticated ones. Where life and culture are also composed of political, economic and social practices, activities and different forms of institutions, people must also maintain their political and economic participation, and at times sophisticated intellectual lives. Such sophisticated occasions although they seem weightier to most people with respect to their daily routines, are however inseparable from their daily cultural practices. As will be shown, this is where power and institutions intrude.

Positing identity into the public sphere immediately complicates any primordial sense of cultural identification. For to identify one's distinct way of life through the public sphere involves at the same time the primordial and instrumental power relations (natural affiliation *vis-à-vis* cultural engineering), the institutionalisation of uniqueness and the structured norms or traditions. Different, although not necessarily contradictory, directions or propensities of collective identities may emerge based upon disparate instrumental and humanistic considerations: Whether people in 1800s China should stick to the *unique* Chinese way of life, self-sustaining agricultural society with strong familial ties, and small profits business without accumulation of huge capital, steam engines or railway; or whether they should modernise, thus "westernise", the society and raise the living standard, even if it would require them to reinterpret and restructure the tradition of harmonious human-nature relations. Different elites with dissimilar ideals had attempted to mobilise their influences in divergent routes, and the result was apparently ruthless wrestling among agents, which generated the exact sense of identity crisis. [43] The "power elite", although not omnipotent, is surely not impotent. After all, they are the ones who occupy the command post; the ones who are "with position to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men," and who possess the means of power to make decisions that have major consequences.[44] This is the *authoritative power*, which "comprises definite commands and conscious obedience," that is actually willed by

---

[43] As also noted by Mills that those who occupy the formal places of authority are at times so "check-mated—by other elites exerting pressure," this in the extreme may weaken the power of elites by compromise, and fall within the "theory of balance" that "no one has enough power to make a real difference; events are the results of an anonymous balance." See C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*, London, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1956, 16-17.

[44] C. Wright Mills, op. cit. (1956), 3-4, 23.

elite groups and exercised through institutions.[45] Identity can no longer dwell in the comfortable bed of taste, lifestyle, blood ties or lineages, but has also to now become subject to negotiations and compromises of interests of the elite's "cultural engineering" process. Such a process, as Inkster suggests, is a cultural selection procedure wherein the elite or the state initiates "a manipulation of traditions and values" in order to reach specific political or economic ends; it is a process that focuses on "the selection, specification and publication of appropriate ideology" in order to legitimise certain thought and behaviours and suit the needs of the time.[46]

The construction of national identity provides another entry point here. A nation, as Smith defined it, "is a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members." Such a definition interrelates ethnic, cultural, economic, territorial, and legal-political components as a complex whole, and recognises that people in a nation are united not only by common institutions and code of rights and duties, but also shared memories, myths and traditions.[47] However, placing identity into the public sphere simultaneously challenges the primary based notion of ethnicity, in the sense that it escalates the power of situational (political and economic) interests and of institutions. For the notion of citizenry and state are often described as purely legal and bureaucratic ties. They are empty with respect to ethnicity, religion and tradition and pertain only to the fact of formal membership in a larger political unit.[48] "Cultural traits, though often experienced as given, can be under deliberate control," Gellner critically remarked.[49] Under the process of socialisation, as Weber argued, the racial or ethnic patriarchal discretion was progressively curtailed with the monopolistic closure of political, status or other groups, which restricted the *connubium* to the offspring from a permanent sexual union within the given political, religious, economic and status group. Hence to Weber, ethnic membership "does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand, it is primarily the

---

[45] Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 8.
[46] Ian Inkster, *The Japanese Industrial Economy. Late Development and Cultural Causation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2001, 22, 85.
[47] Anthony D. Smith, op. cit. (1991), 9, 14, 15.
[48] Jonathan Friedman, op. cit. (1994), 34.
[49] Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997, 2.

political community, no matter how artificially organised, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity."[50] Cohen argues even stronger that, "ethnic groups attempt to maximise the advantage, or to minimise the disadvantage, which they expect to accrue to them by taking the role of the collective other, and presenting their ethnic identity accordingly."[51] In other words, cultural identity is modulated by the perceived pragmatics of interaction, and culture may be made use of to systematise social behaviour in pursuit of economic and political interests.

As we have suggested above, instrumental and determinist conclusions such as these are not thoroughly convincing, as they attempt to transcend the primary attributes of cultural identity simply by stressing their insubstantial character and by underlining political-economic inspiration. Such approaches automatically omit the "procedural correctness" for admitting an individual's right to recognise an emotional attachment to cultural roots, and his *embedding historical cultural distinctness* (no matter how artificial it is). So, such approaches have failed to properly acknowledge the coexistence of (instrumental) rational and humanistic mental interdependency. What this over-emphasised pragmatism does tackle, however, is the point that cultural identification in the public sphere engages political and economic mobilisation, which often operates through the systems of power (via institutions, *Chart II-1*, bloc D) by control of the movement and use of resources within a material environment (*Chart II-1*, arrow DC). Through the political processes—negotiation, transaction, mobilisation, imposition and resistance, an image of similarity, which is the defining characteristic of collective identity, is at the same time symbolically constructed (*Chart II-1*, arrow DA). Hedetoft is right that, "on this new battleground of political, social and cultural contestation, identities are no longer just organic, natural, collective loci of belonging and attachment, but also properties of the individual, rational mind and therefore strategic points of negotiation, useful for the vindication of political, cultural and historical rights, and for the smooth adoption of and assimilation to new terrains of allegiance and culture."[52] Institutions, political or

---

[50] Max Weber, "What is an Ethnic Group?", in Montserrat Buibernau and John Rex eds., *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism Multiculturalism and Migration*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1997, 15-26, quote page 16, 19.
[51] Anthony P. Cohen, "Boundaries of Consciousness, Consciousness of Boundaries. Critical questions for Anthropology", in Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers eds., op. cit. (1994), 59-79, quote pages 60-61.
[52] U. Hedetoft, "The Nation-state Meets the World, National Identities in the Context of

economic, are patterns of behaviour that are established over time as "the way things are done", they undeniably form an integral part of the social construction of reality, with reference to which individuals make decisions and orient their behaviour. The question, which remains here is that of under what circumstances would these instrumental and primordial elements of cultural identity merge, and in what way might they compromise each other within the formulating process of identity? If there are genuine and formative instances or phases of elite control or design of cultural identity through cultural engineering within the course of European and Chinese history, may we ask under what objective and/or subjective conditions they converge into sufficient conditions for successful cultural mobilisations? And vice versa, can we also inquire as to the condition under which such cultural mobilisations may possibly encounter resistance from the all-pervading powers of common experiences and humanistic attachments, or even cause reverse-effects and cultural repercussions? It is perceivable that elites can also be "re-educated" by the mass or existing social beliefs through the failure of a cultural engineering project.

We shall attempt to search for resolutions to the above questions by reassessing European and Chinese cultural modernisation in later chapters. Here it is sufficient to sketch this thematic tension and advance to a potential theoretical solution for the question of cultural identity. What appears obvious here is that the habitualisaion or routinisation of behaviour contains "important cognitive and psychological gains [,which] become institutionalised as a taken-for-granted feature of the social landscape."[53] The instutionalised behaviour complies to a certain degree with discontinuously perceived history and emotionally attached cultural sentiments. Such institutionalisation of uniqueness as presented in the familialised ties of the Chinese emperor and *his* officers; "the ancestral hall, the descent-line system, offerings at the graves of stirps, charitable estates, family instructions and genealogies" in the worship system;[54] the canonised Confucian teachings in the civil service and examination system; and the self-cultivating calligraphic arts, are often much more powerful than

Transnationality and Cultural Globalisation", *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 2 No. 1, 1999, 71-94, quote page 83.
[53] Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, London, Routledge, 1996, 127-128.
[54] As Chow suggests, the descent-line system joint acts with Confucian ritualism, which institutionalised systematically by Chinese gentry, particularly after the mid-seventeenth century, has comprised the crucial social order and maintained the solidarity of Chinese kinship effectively. Kai-Wing Chow, op. cit. (1994), 75-76.

many have estimated. For they not only serve as the self-addressing evidences of cultural habituation, but also become the structurised norms, which illustrate how distinct ways of life are institutionalised. The underlying logic for such successful institutional mobilisations seems to rely their appealing not plainly on the material resources and institutional interests, but also on the very inner morality and emotion of a society.

"Institutions order social life, provide predictability," yet apart from those visible institutions, "it is language and discourse, in the form of ritualised speech, rules and laws, written records, narratives, etc. that fashion the pre-eminent sources of this superimposed order." Life of routine inevitably associates with those normative constructions and is often consciously or unconsciously "ruled" by them.[55] As Said illustrated in his critique of Eurocentrism, "without examining Orientalism as a discourse one can not possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period."[56] While Gunder Frank makes it even clearer that, "the theoretical, analytical, empirical, and in a word 'perspective' limitations of contemporary received theory are the heritage and reflection of our 'classical' social theory and the equally Eurocentric historiography on which it is based."[57] Life as a whole is an interconnected multidimensional world, which includes patterns of both simplicity and complexity. Interests, powers and institutions, normative structures and intellectual traditions do not merely *intervene* in the way of life; they spill over and permeate unconsciously *back* into people's daily routine. Those "heavy lives" (i.e. moments when people attempt to make sense of their everyday lives, and where intellectual discourses and social-political participations "gravitate" people's mundane practices), though they may occur less frequently in people's day-to-day experiences, are usually the key moments when people's inner value principles, or in our terms, the intersubjective signifying systems is formulated.

---

[55] Richard Jenkins, op. cit. (1996), 129.
[56] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London, Penguin Books, 1978, 3.
[57] Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, California, University of California Press, 1998, 27.

2. 3. 3   Cultural Logics: The Intersubjective System of Meaning

Hence, in addition to the horizontal interconnectivity we must not overlook the incessant vertical integrative process of meaning within people's day-to-day living. Culture as common experiences, Williams reminded us, has to be taken as a record of important and continuing reactions to the overall changes in a routine, which includes the conversions in our social, economic and political life that are triggered by transforming concepts such as industry, democracy, class and arts.[58] In other words, social, economic and political alteration in the real world has to be perceived through values that have already been embedded in, or planted into everyday life. Brook and Luong's remarks make the point here, "culture or meaning systems are necessitated to the material and political circumstances of daily economic life, both in the microscopic analysis of human action and in the macroscopic examination of system transformation, and hence must be brought back in to the theorising of the shaping capitalism in Eastern Asia and the interactive relations of culture and economy."[59] There must exist certain "deeper logics" beneath those cultural practices.[60] As Petts puts it, while "identity and self-perception may be in the last instance discursive they are limited by the control of the cultural locales within which they operate."[61] Political, economic and intellectual powers and discourses cannot mobilise effectively unless they permeate people's daily routine, that people recognise as part of the way of life instilled by their political, economic or intellectual participation. While the daily practices, in turn, associate consciously or unconsciously with new values and beliefs. Such practices would then be historicised through the selective and accumulative process of time, as elements of cultural norms and beliefs. Obviously, such values and beliefs may, in many cases, originate from previous political, economic engineering or mobilisation.

Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of practice, these chaining effects shape what he labels *habitus*, "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures

---

[58]   Raymond Williams, op. cit. (1982), xvi-xvii.
[59]   See Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong, "Introduction: Culture and Economy in the Postcolonial World", in Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong eds., *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern Asia*, Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 1999, 1-21, quote page 14.
[60]   Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, London and New York, Verso, 1991, xii.
[61]   David Petts, op. cit. (1998), 91.

predisposed to function as structuring structures."[62] In other words, the formation of norms and institutions of a society and people's daily routine are interconnected processes. While the existing norms and institutions (i.e. the structured structures) were formulated first through the daily routine of the society's past members, they later becomes the "structuring structures", which moulded the general atmosphere of the society that directed people's daily practices towards the central values.[63] As Bourdieu explain further that *habitus* operates in such a way that

> the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the *habitus*.[64]

Similar argument is held in Giddens's discussion concerning the "recursive nature of social life", by which he means, "the structured properties of social activity—via the duality of structure—are constantly recreated out of the very resources which constitute them."[65] In short, there is a substantial and continuous intersubjectivity throughout the whole process of meaning construction, which constitutes one's perception of the external world (as we presented earlier the chaining-effects among blocks A, B, C and D in *Chart II-1*). Such an intersubjective signifying system encompasses the old and new, social and economic, political and cultural beliefs and values (what Boudieu terms "durably installed generative principle"), and generates covert feelings and overt expressions for an individual. Those cultural experiences are sometimes mutually accommodating, approving or reinforcing, but at times are reciprocally vying, contradicting or conflicting, while in many instances they simply remain fragmented or colourless. The implication here is that the meaning-system is itself dynamic rather than static. It is a continuously and integrally changing process rather than an artificial reproduction or given construction of homogeneity, which can only be fully grasped through the overall mapping of the interweaving life narratives through time. As Hall also noted, "cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well

---

[62] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977, 72.
[63] Aaron Gurevich, *The Origins of European Individualism*, Oxford UK & Cambridge US, Blackwell, 1995 (Translated Edidtion by Katharine Judelson), 10-11.
[64] Pierre Bourdieu, op. cit. (1997), 78.
[65] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1984, xxiii.

as of 'being'... It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time history and culture... they [cultural identities] undergo constant transformation."[66] Therefore, instead of looking for an invariable or completed life or cultural identity, what we should be searching for is a *stable pattern of intersubjective meaning system*, that which we term "cultural logic", or which Confucius labelled *the attitude, manner or stance towards one's whole life* that he could hold on persistently to face the World.[67] This persistent cultural logic, the comprehensive perception of the whole way of life, has to be realised as a continuous refining or changing process (even a holy man like Confucius had to spend seventy years of his life to fully apprehend it[68]) that coordinates various levels of meaning and facets of life into an integral whole. Stability in this sense represents the way of pertaining the utmost compatibility among the constant flowing interpretation of meanings across ranges of internal and external variety, rather than creating a standing version of authenticity or homogeneity. Such a logic is a philosophy for living, which allows *the particular way* and *the whole way* of life to be mutually accommodated, and enables the intersubjective narration of culture and identity to coexist in an overarching sense of integrity. The notion of "changing sameness" provides an internal dynamism within a stabilised pattern of life, which accommodates vitality and constancy in an ongoing sense of cultural identity.[69]

The implication of this processual intersubjectivity is that it offers a conceptual outlet for self-identification, which allows to a certain degree inconsistency or even contradiction among one's encapsulated meanings and values across time and circumstances. A person may identify himself by occupation, as a worker, or more specifically as a historian or scientist, however, in time of conflict, ethnic or national

---

[66] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory. A Reader*, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994 (First Published in 1993), 392-403, quote page 395.

[67] Confucius said confidently that "my life philosophy (or Tao) is simply that all pervading consistency 吾道一以貫之." See *The Analects* 論語, Section 4. (Taipei, 啟明書局, Reprints.)

[68] According to *The Analects*, Confucius spent forty years of his life to get hold of such persistent attitude, while using another thirty years to behave accordingly with this manner in spontaneity. See *The Analects* 論語, Section 2.

[69] As Gilroy also noted, the expressive cultures of the black Atlantic direct "the consciousness of the group back to significant, nodal points in its common history and its social memory. The telling and retelling of these stories plays a special role, organising the consciousness of the 'racial' group... that are required to invent, maintain, and renew identity... there is a direct relationship between the community of listeners constructed in the course of using that musical culture and the constitution of a tradition that is redefined here as the living memory of the changing same." See Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London and New York, Verso 1993 (b), 198.

allegiance may assume priority, as happened with some German and Japanese social scientists, who (voluntarily or involuntarily) distorted professional knowledge in the direction of ethnic-national ideologies in World War II.[70] Such inconsistency does not necessarily impair the integrity of one's identity, given the logic that a dynamic changing process is the indispensable force for self-recognition, and given that the pattern of the signifying system for the individual becomes progressive and maintains its sense of solidarity. In other words, the shift of self-identity is therefore located within certain parameters. This shift alters according to the interactive relations between cultural practices and meanings that formulate the logic of cultural identity (further explained in section 2.3.4 and *Chart II-2*). Indeed, this intersubjective perception enlarges the narrowly defined racial, ethnic and national identity, and provides an individual flexibility in coordinating past oriented racial-ethnicity and the present-future oriented social, economic and political identity.

2. 3. 4   The Trajectory of Cultural Identity

In her *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, Jones pertinently points out the dichotomies in various perspectives concerning the interpretation of ethnic cultural identity. Most attempts to develop an integrated theoretical approach involve the assertion of a primordial basis for ethnicity, which is then articulated through the interaction of epiphenomenal social stimuli. Such approaches often lead to posing an unproductive opposition between the specific economic and political based rationality on the one hand, and primordial based "irrationality" on the other. The "objectivist" and "subjectivist" opposition fail to provide any adequate theory of the relationship between ethnicity and culture, as well as the inscribed relations of production and reproduction. Consequently, the mutual influences or the explanatory power of both approaches were left relatively unexplored.[71] Bourdieu has attempted to transcend the subjective and objective contradiction by highlighting the possibility of transforming practices into collective action through the dialectical relationship between[72]

---

[70]   George A. De Vos, "Ethnic Pluralism: Conflict and Accommodation. The Role of Ethnicity in Social History", in Lola Romanucci-Ross and George A. De Vos eds., op. cit. (1995), 15-47, quote page 26.
[71]   Siân Jones, op. cit. (1997), 82, 87.
[72]   Pierre Bourdieu, op. cit. (1977), 82-83.

on the one hand, a *habitus*... which integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions... and on the other hand, an objective event which exerts its action of conditional stimulation calling for or demanding a determinate response.

As Jones notes this method does "accommodate the possibility of strategic agency within the limits of the *habitus* and the possibility of social change in terms of continuous transformations in the structured dispositions of the *habitus* within changing contexts of social practice."[73] However, when she transposes Bourdieu's approach into a highly complex society Jones concludes in a rather tentative way that,[74]

> Ethnicity is a multidimensional phenomenon constituted in different ways in different social domains. Representations of ethnicity involve the dialectical opposition of situationally relevant cultural practices and historical experiences associated with different cultural traditions. Consequently there is rarely a one-to-one relationship between representations of ethnicity and the entire range of cultural practices and social conditions associated with a particular group... The formation and transformation of ethnicity is contingent on particular historical structures which impinge themselves on human experience and condition social action,... ethnicity... is just as likely to have been a product of transient configurations of cultural difference reproduced and transformed in a variety of different social domains in the past as it is in the present.

We agree with Jones that there have been constant oppositions between primordial and instrumental, as well as agent and structural interpretations of ethnicity. The ascribed cultural experiences and situational social factors across historical contexts and cultural traditions have often been treated as incompatible, while the explanatory power and mutual influences of both remain unclear. We also agree that there are so-called accidents in history, which as Carr indicates, represent sequences of "cause and effect interrupting and clashing with the sequence[s] which the historian [is] primarily concerned with," and cannot be generalised (as shown in *Chart II-1*, block Y).[75] Nevertheless, instead of giving in absolutely to the notion of unpredictable contingency, we would suggest that it is still possible and necessary to build up a more incorporative and integrative contextual-social-historical analytical framework

---

[73] Siân Jones, op. cit. (1997), 89-90.
[74] Ibid., 100, 104-105.
[75] E. H. Carr, *What is History*, London, Penguin Books, 1961, 99, 107.

52

for European and Chinese cultural identity. Such an incorporative framework in association with the reinterpreted subjective matrix of cultural experiences and objective social conditions together might help to explain the reciprocated impact of *humanistic* and *instrumental rationality* (see Section 5.2.1). In other words, an alternative way of realising these oppositional relations or dialectical tensions is to re-conceive them in a logic of consensus or harmony rather than one of struggle for dominant positions.[76] We intend to consider the instrumental and humanist rationality, *at the very first instance*, as reciprocally indispensable and indivisible parts of day-to-day life that, although they at times contradict each other, are mutually compatible and requisite.[77] This, in place of focusing on dichotomies, holds that both the humanistic and instrumental rationality, and the dialectical relations between cultural practices and social domain have to be understood as integrally constituted elements within cultural identity. For culture as the "whole way of life" is after all a sympathetic dialogue among people's interconnected life narratives (as shown by scheme E in *Chart II-1*) on the one hand, and the intersubjective signifying system (or cultural logics, scheme F in *Chart II-1*) on the other (the two schemes are divided by an intermittent curve AB to express the interconnective and interactive relation between practice and meaning, and that the boundary of the two schemes is by not means clearcut). It is through the horizontal and vertical conflation of practice and meaning that this whole way of life forms a *critical integrity* or an all-embracing organic totality, which in turn can be said to absorb the living patterns of both simplicity and complexity. In this sense, culture is placed not only *with* but also *in* identity.

---

[76] See Jang Byung-Seok 鄭炳碩, "Viewing the Harmony of Confucius and Confucianists from the Viewpoint of Cultural Conflict 從文明衝突看孔子與儒家和諧理念", *Leguin Monthly 鵝湖月刊*, Vol. 3 No. 25, 1999, 9-12, quote page 10. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[77] Such as Yi and Yang, or in Lao-Tsu's words Emptiness and Being, which although usually operates in an opposite way, is the very substance that gives birth and sustains the being of one another 有無相生. Lao Tan 老聃, *Lao-Tsu 老子*, Section 2. (Taipei, 時報文化, 1987 Reprints.)

Chart II-2: The Dialogic Interaction of Practice and Meaning
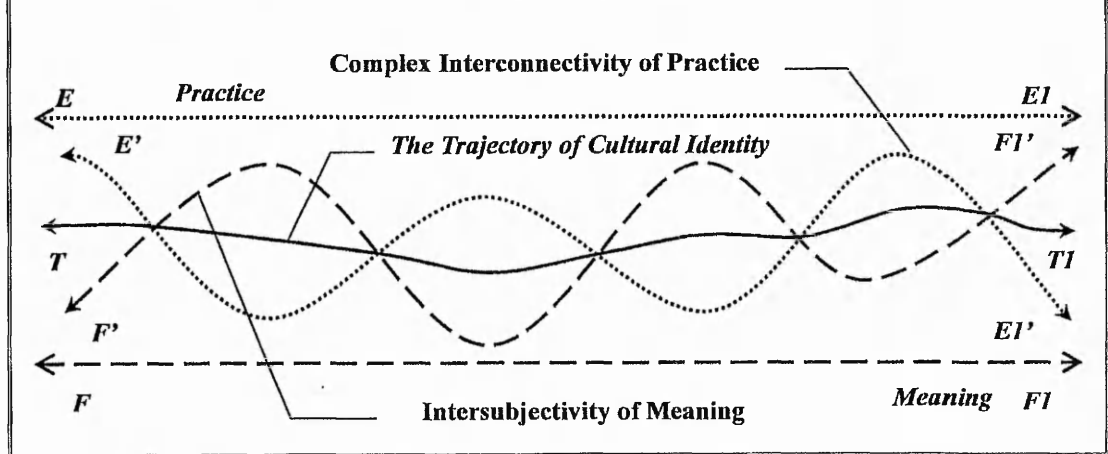
The significance of this notion of "dialogic connectivity" is that it provides a potential practice-meaning-weighing-framework, which allows the analysis of people's life-propensity and priority to take place. If we set the two schemes E and F of *Chart II-1* into a two-dimensional model (without heeding cultural encounters and historical contingency for a short while,) as expressed in *Chart II-2*, we shall see the communicative relations between these two schemes. The two curves that representing the "complex interconnectivity of practice" (curve E'E1') and the "intersubjectivity of meaning" (curve F'F1') though they fluctuate irregularly within the perceived boundary between the axes of practice and meaning (axes EE1 and FF1), make periodic contacts. More specifically, given the observable complexity of life praxis, where living patterns are formed of the interweaving social actions, cultural practices and environment; and also the implicit mechanism where meanings are constructed; these contact points (where the two axes join) are actually the moments when one's deeds and thoughts conform. Or, putting it the other way, when the two axes do not join, the middle points between these two curves may be seen as an extreme "eclectic" perception of one's own identity, which should actually be recognised or identified as such by others. We can visualise the trajectory of an individual's cultural identity as found on line TT1, which represents the curve of best fit linking the points of greatest conformity between deeds and thoughts. We can extend this analysis at a collective level by visualising a great series of curves E'E1' and F'F1', which could be said to represent the trajectory of cultural identity for an entire community of individuals whose parameters of practices and meaning are shared. Again at this collective level, we may also ask, what curve do these balance or

54

meeting points inscribe, and how may we describe that trajectory that may impart the tendency or focus of a culture? If there is tendency or trend in a culture, may we describe the curve or logic of its trajectory (see below)? In these terms, the *trajectory of cultural identity* becomes the course that links up different occasions in the *life durée* of an individual, whence he/she should actually be identified. Such trajectory can be seen as an inner logic of self-identification, or the stable pattern of life and identity, which we are pursuing. It may be presented consciously or unconsciously, deliberately and implicitly, and may be scattered disproportionately in the routine life. Due to its dispersed allocation within daily existence, and the accordingly transient or situational configurations that follow from the specific temporal-spatial contexts, the trajectory may only be properly grasped through the communicative interpretation of cultural values and life practices across time. This is as shown in *Chart II-2*, where the trajectory of cultural identity is skimmed (curve TT1), and falls within the parameters between the axes of practices (axis EE1) and meaning (axis FF1).

As Braudel suggests, civilisations have to be observed through long-term history or history-at-a-distance, within which they reveal "their longevity, their permanent features, their structures – their almost abstract but yet essential diagrammatic form."[78] Taking culture as the accumulation and collective representation of lives through time, the intertwining life trajectories reflect the priority of a culture and reveal its direction of momentum in route. If we accept the commonsense that it is not possible to examine each individual's everyday life in every historical period, then we might as an alternative attempt to map out this trajectory through the overall historical vicissitudes and by identifying the interactively formulated whole way of life. This potentially opens up the abstraction of collective life through observations of the material environments, living styles, the influential political, economic or social institutions, events, movements, and the mainstream thinking or values in different stages. Grasping the momentum of different cultures helps to explain why certain social movements or shifts occur under certain historical circumstances without resorting to an ethnocentric or exceptionalist interpretation. For example, in our case, we might ask why modernisation (capitalism, industrialisation, nation-state formation) occupied a substantial position in Europe, while in China people were mostly

---

[78] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1994), 35.

habituated to a self-containing or self-sufficient way of life prior to the 18th century. The distinctness or prominence of a culture should not be equated to the economic or technological advance or backwardness of a society, without taking its historical context and value system into account. Toynbee's "challenge and response" model thus addressed itself clearly to the logic of cultural trajectory: people residing at different physical locations face different human relations and must acculturate into different natural circumstances, they therefore responded to their challenges in dissimilar way. This shaped the "differentiation of civilisation." [79] However, Toynbee's misinterpretation of the Chinese cultural trajectory drew him into the invalid conclusion, that the "explosive Western way is dynamic; the petrifying Chinese way is stable. If the present dominance of the West is followed... by a unifying and blending of cultures, it is conceivable that Western dynamism might mate with Chinese stability in proportions that would produce a new way of life for all Mankind."[80] As we have remarked several times, blending of cultures is insightful. However, in such an approach "stable" is defined as worthless in the sense that culture is petrified due to its inability to make creative responses, or in Braudel's terms is trapped in the routines of material life. This appears to neglect the seemingly obvious possibility that "a stable pattern" may be dynamic and constantly transforming as we have argued above. Indeed, it maybe only in this way that the idea of social and cultural stability has any meaning. As Tu accurately remarks, "every culture maintains its own way of value presentation, only through an adequate comprehension of the *priority of value* [my emphasis] within a certain cultural system could one possibly apprehend the entire picture" of the cultural envelopment.[81]

2. 3. 5 Cultural Encountering and Globalisation

Culture encounters may be the best checking points for tracing and countering the ethnocentric interpretation of identity, for such occasions involve a wholesale re-evaluation or reassessment of the subjectively formulated cultural framework, its tendency, trajectory and priority. Such vital conjunctures demand that we move the

---

[79]   Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History,* London, Thames and Hudson, 1972 One Volume Edition, 97.
[80]   Ibid., 443.
[81]   Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明, *Modern Spirit and Confucians Tradition* 現代精神與儒家傳統, Taipei, 聯經, 1996, 104.

analysis beyond the civilisation boundaries, and stretch this internal multi-faceted interconnectivity and intersubjectivity outside the cultural borders. We can observe at least four levels of cultural encountering through space and time, the first two of which follow from a Toynbean analysis: (a) the external encounters (which could range from commerce on one hand through technology to diffusion of ideas, warfare and colonialism) between two civilisations across physical space; (b) the encounter of a civilisation with its own past; (c) the continuous internal cultural encountering within borders, i.e. encounters with the interior ethnic or national minorities; and (d) the encounters through trades, personnel, capital and information flows that are triggered by globalisation in the present time. Now we may say that the "trajectory of cultural identity" is no longer merely formed of (caught between) the complex practices and intersubjective meanings of *a single system.* Thus, *Chart II-2* becomes insufficient, and we need to return to the model in *Chart II-1* (block X).

On the first level, it could be said that during the past hundreds of years Europe has hardly systematically absorbed influences or artefacts from "other" cultures. As Vandana Shiva stated,[82]

> Between 1492 and 1992, Europe's meeting with the non-European cultures was actually no real meeting. The interaction by the colonised was always experienced as invasion, and by the colonisers as discovery. The experience of invasion as discovery has been facilitated there through which European men had constructed a world in which evolution was understood to have created two separate minds—one for themselves and one for all others.

Re-realising the course of modern history, we must modify and agree with Needham that, "'the modern' is no longer 'the European' [or Chinese], nor does Europe [or China] have a monopoly on [its own] modernity."[83] The European modernisation, which reveals a tradition of accentuating instrumental rationality (cultural engineering for political economy or scientific and technological development) over the humanistic rationality (natural, primordial needs and life philosophy), is waiting to be reassessed. To a certain extent the Chinese incorporation of cultural modernity may be

---

[82]   See Vandana Shiva, "Traces of Eurocentrism in Current Representations of Science", *VEST*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1995, 85; cited from Aant Elzinga, "Revisiting the 'Needham Paradox', The Multifaceted Nature of Needham's Question", in S. I. Habib and D. Raina eds., *Situating the History of Science, Dialogues with Joseph Needham*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, 73-113, quoted 86.
[83]   Aant Elzinga, op. cit. (1999), 106.

seen as responding to a dynamic assertion of "neo-modernisation", which proclaims adjustments or modifications to the western project of modernity in respect to its cultural trajectory. Indeed, such adaptation of modernity appears to be a better approach than that which anatomises every single Sinic tradition or surrenders to Fukuyama's *The End of History*. [84] Even if we might acknowledge that the seeming inability of China to respond swiftly and creatively in the modern period does reveal the apparent problem of cultural self-sufficiency and stability.

As we have suggested, cultural encounters do not merely happen across spatial boundaries, they also inhabit transverse temporal frames—by this we mean that encounter with others does force a culture to return to its own past. There are always occasions, when external stimulus or challenges cast impacts upon one civilisation, which evokes the feeling for the need to go back to history and search for new inspirations or interpretations through their old experiences, by this we use the term "renaissance". [85] On the same level, the fact that different cultural elements did flow into a "common past" from outside the historical territorial boundaries (such as Buddhism to China and Christianity to Europe) is time and again disregarded. We must no longer overlook these facts. On the third level, in the modern age, national identity as a consolidating force for cultural interpretation of collectivity has been overwhelmingly dominant despite its selective neglect of internal ethnic diversity during the process of integration. The ethnic minority, immigration, and diaspora , which together create the process of *external/internal* culture encounters, have played a crucial role in the formation of an overarching cultural identity. Ethnic interactivities within a cultural system, in the past as well as at the present, therefore serve as another type of cultural encountering, which should be examined closely. Lastly, stepping into a global world of "complex connectivity (a global market-place, international fashion codes, an international division of labour, a shared eco-system), [which] links the myriad small everyday actions of millions with the fates of distant, unknown others and even with the possible fate of the planet," we must realise that globalisation is engrossing all the individual actions within the culturally meaningful context of local, mundane life worlds, in which "cultural actions" become globally

---

[84]   F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London, Penguin Books, 1992.
[85]   Arnold J. Toynbee, op. cit. (1972), 445.

consequential.[86] Therefore, a more appropriate way of understanding cultural identity within a global era will be to pursue the trajectory of a culture within specific historical-social contexts (ethnic, national or statist), whilst always bearing in mind that elements of an external world may silently saturate into individual self-recognition. Europe and China are after all only two cultures, or two families of culture among the human world. It would surely be unwise to identify two pieces of a puzzle as the solution to the whole puzzle without heeding other probable configurations. A comparative framework must also be situated in a global context.

2. 4   *The Constitution of Cultural Identity*

2. 4. 1   **The Primordial Identity Writes Back**

As illustrated in Chapter 1, monolithic, homogeneous and linear notions of identity are seriously questioned in the present period of postmodernism, postcolonialism, post-structuralism and multiculturalism. However, configuring cultural identity, we find it neither reasonable nor practical to negate the whole process of modern identification. Postmodernisation of culture, while effectively attacking the hegemonic fabrication in the "modern" tradition, remains merely a project of deconstruction rather than reconstruction. Claiming a new theory of cultural identity that focuses on fusion, uncertainty, fluidity, and discontinuity is considerably impractical. For only few people would actually choose to identify themselves as rootless, dissected postmodern nomads, or present themselves as "cultural chimera" who are composed simply of a mixture of cultural experiences. Cultural holism or essentialism was not simply invented from nothing. Most people are born "belonging" to a certain racial or ethnic descent, brought up in a certain limited locale, taught by a certain set of beliefs, and socialised by certain cultural practices. In other words, they are acculturated within a specific ethnic community. They therefore prefer one tradition to another, and bear certain elements of ethnicity.[87] People identify, they needed and still need a substantial sense of "sameness" within which to locate themselves. They have always wanted and still want a "past" to associate with.

---

[86]   John Tomlinson, op. cit. (1999), 25-26.
[87]   See S. J. Shennan ed., *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*, London, Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1989, 2.

Similar beliefs and shared values do permeate, and there appears to be no analytical need to negate such an obvious fact. It is simply true that blood, descent, heritage and lands do "live" with people, and again, there is no analytical reason to deny such identification.

As Tomlinson indicates, "we need to see 'roots and routes' as always coexistent in culture and both as subject to transformation in global modernity... a huge proportion of cultural experience is still for the majority the day-to-day experience of physical location, rather than of constant movement."[88] Hence, a better way of dealing with essentialist or primordial concepts of culture is to place them into the broadened and integrated whole way of life framework, which consists of the complex aggregation of daily praxis that one extracts from the interconnected facets of life: the habitual reflection of natural and material space; the encoding of social behaviours through the collective response to the interconnectivity of power, institutions, norms and intellectual discourses; and the intersubjective meaning system converged by the intrusion of mundane, political, economic and cultural values. Through this notion of cultural identity we may see how an individual construes his relationship to the community, and how he considers his community relates to the wider world. Such involves the political, economic, social understandings of individuals and of local collectivity expressed in folk knowledge/folk ideologies.[89] By this, it means that cultural identity is neither simply hybridised nor structurally determined. It becomes a multi-layered system composed of social institutions, knowledge, value and belief system, symbols and signs, and human behaviours and practices, through which people understand and change the conditions of nature and develop the respective virtue, wisdom, aesthetics.[90] Cultural identity has to be realised as a coordination of cultural experiences that collaborates internal plurality through a sympathetic dialogue amongst different ethnic or cultural groups for a compatible common past or "changing-sameness". Within this logic, we must also recognise the existence of contradictory ideas, fragmented cultural memories, and the coexisting homogeneities in every historical context. The boundaries of identities should be kept open and allow

---

[88] John Tomlinson, op. cit. (1999), 29.
[89] See P. W. Preston, *Political, Cultural Identity, Citizens and Nations in a Global Era*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1997, 9.
[90] See Kuo Huong-Chih 郭洪紀, *Cultural Nationalism* 文化民族主義, Taipei, 遠流, 1995, 53. (Title Translated by the Author.)

varieties of cultural encountering, for only new or different ingredients can keep a culture dynamic and competitive in the process of globalisation. In an age that is accentuated by the current of posterity, as used here, there is the substitution of past-oriented "authenticity", for the present-future oriented "compatibility", and this latter becomes the focus of cultural identity.

Based on our present discussion and the counter-modern analysis of cultural identity in Chapter 1, the initial model of cultural identity as expressed in *Chart II-1*, as well as the above "whole way of life" framework, and referring also to Braudel and Chandhuri's *set and sets theory* (which extract the integral logic for the unity and disunity of civilisations through different historical life facets),[91] a contextual model for the historical analysis of cultural identity is summarised below in *Chart II-3: The Constitution of Cultural Identity*.[92] The constituents of cultural identity can be divided mainly into three parts: spatial, temporal and trans-temporal-spatial frameworks (sections I, II and III in *Chart II-3*). The spatial framework includes firstly, constituents of natural and material space (set A), which is comprised of subsets of biological, geographical elements and living styles (as expressed in subsets 1, 2, 3); and secondly, constituents of normative and institutional space (set B) that consists of elements of norms, social, economic and political institutions and their subsets (4, 5, 6). The temporal framework (section II) includes notions of traditions, present recognition and future aspirations of an individual (set C), as well as the random factors in historical contingency (set Y). Amid the temporal and spatial factors are life of routine (set E) and the intersubjective meaning system (set F) that serve as the logics and conjunctions of different dimensions in life, and which are both seen as trans-temporal-spatial elements (section III) that integrates sections I and II into an inseparable whole. We must of course add the overall culture encounters as part of the constituents (set X), for these speeding up in- and outflows of ideas and practices are constantly vitalising the momentum of cultures, and therefore are crucial to the trajectory of cultural identity (set T). Such a constitution of cultural identity concerns what Giddens called the "contextuality" of social life and institutions across

---

[91] For "set and sets theory" please see footnote 22.
[92] By "the constitution of cultural identity", we do not intend to draw up an exhaustive list of cultural elements and claim a formula of a "complete" cultural identity. Rather, what we attempt to achieve is to configure the inner logic of cultural identity, which integrates the spatial and temporal constituents into a whole, through the analysis of the interactive relations between certain cultural elements.

Chart II-3: The Constitution of Cultural Identity

I. Spatial Framework:

> *A) Natural and Material Space: (Also see Chart II-1, block C)*
>> **1.** Biology, Lineage: Race, Body, Gene, Blood, Skin, Colour;
>> **2.** Geography: Climate, Landscape, Demography, Locality;
>> **3.** Living Style: Food, Housing, Clothing, Travelling and Recreation;

> *B) Normative and Institutional Space: (Chart II-1, block D)*
>> **4.** Normative Structure: Religion, Rite, Intellectual Tradition (Book, Canon), Art, Language;
>> **5.** Social Institution: Family, Church, School, Examination System, Working Site;
>> **6.** Political Economic Institution: State, Government, Civil Officers, Military, Law, Measuring System and Industry.

II. Temporal Framework:

> *C) Time: (Chart II-1, arrow GG1)*
>> Past (Tradition, History), Present (Recognition) and Future (Aspiration).

> *Y) Historical Contingency. (Chart II-1, block Y)*

III. Trans-temporal-spatial Elements:

> *E) Multidimensional Interconnectivity: The Whole Way of Life; (Chart II-1, scheme E)*
> *F) Cultural Logic: Intersubjective Meaning System; (Chart II-1, scheme F)*
>> Symbol, Representation, Value, Ideology;
> *X) Overall Cultural Encountering and Globalisation; (Chart II-1, block X)*
> *T) The Trajectory of Cultural Identity. (Chart II-1, curve TT1)*

"time-geography", which "provides an important mode of notation of the intersection of time-space trajectories in day-to-day activity."[93] These set and subset constitutions of cultural identity as presented in *Chart II-3* can also find their conceptual profile in *Chart II-1*.

2. 4. 2   Scope of Investigations

Adopting a combined conceptual and historical approach, the historical aim of this thesis is to compare and rediscover the traditions, ways of thinking, mental vicissitudes and trajectories of European and Chinese societies through cultural history. It intends neither to make a simple description of historical facts, nor to claim a repossession of primordial identity. Rather, the intention, like Liu's, is to utilise

---

[93]   Anthony Giddens, op. cit. (1984), 132.

history as a bedrock and touchstone.[94] Following this theoretical chapter, what Chapter 3 tries to investigate in European and Chinese history is firstly, how people in Europe and China have been engrossed respectively in different ways of life, especially in terms of their interpretation of lineage (the racial or ethnic distributions and blood ties) and geographical conditions (climate, landscape and demography). This involves the description of associated life styles (nomadism, peasantry, and urbanisation etc); social, political and economic institutions (city-state, empire, church, education and civil service system); intellectual traditions and mainstream values or beliefs (Christianity, Capitalism, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism); and manners of their worldviews, which have been influenced by early cultural encounters. Within a comparative framework, it wishes to unpack the conflated meanings and features in the pre-1450 European and Chinese ways of life, and more importantly to grasp their value orientations and cultural logics.[95]

Secondly, Chapter 4 examines the changing economic and political system, living patterns, social movements and mainstream values in post-1450 Europe and China. The chapter attempts to identify those transformations in European and Chinese societies that may be seen as operating or progressing corresponding to changes in the direction of their cultural trajectories. By contextualising our cultural concepts through historical events, it then becomes possible to reconsider and further extend the present theorisation of cultural identity. And by looking into the Chinese and European cultural encounters, it allows us to illustrate that the two cultures were in fact both dynamic, and were responding to the internal and external challenges with different cultural logics.

Chapter 5 aims to modify the initial theory through a dialogic interpretation of cultural history and cultural theory. Instead of focusing (as in this Chapter) on the profile and constitution of cultural identity, the chapter intends to extend the theory

---

[94] Liu Yung-Chieh 劉永佶, *Chinese Cultural Modernisation* 中國文化現代化, Shih Chia Chuang 石家庄, 河北大學出版社, 1997, 109-110.
[95] Dealing with macrohistory or history in a long-term, we are fully aware that it is the tendency, propensity and proportion rather than an absolute fact that we are contending with. However, as quoted by Frank, William McNeill has argued quite rightly that, although "macrohistorians ruthlessly by-pass most details of the available literary record... This does not make macrohistory less exact or well attested... Each scale of inquiry creates its own landscape of significant meanings. Smaller is not closer to reality... It is just different." See Andre Gunder Frank, op. cit. (1998), 39-40.

into the interactive relations of instrumental and humanistic rationalities. It will seek the subjective/objective historical conditions for a successful cultural engineering and possible repercussions. As described in *Chart II-1* and *Chart II-3* and adjacent analyses, Chapter 5 thereby tries to develop an approach that may coordinate the geo-ethnic, social, political, and economic elements of identities with the underlying cultural logics. The purpose for developing such an accumulated approach is to yield a reasonable theory in a compatible and integral context of cultural identity, and to elaborate further on how cultural factors may in turn influence the functions of political economy.

Finally, a modified and extended theory of cultural logics will be tested in a historical case study. Looking into the correspondences and memorials of the Ming officials, Chapter 6 attempts to explain China's close door policy after the 14th and 15th centuries through a cultural (logics) approach. By extracting the set and subsets of underlying cultural logics behind Ming China's internal ruling principles, its coastal, foreign security, financial, and taxation policies, the Chapter aims to illustrate how the moral-ethical-commonsensical-oriented cultural logics of China operate to influence the decision-making within the Ming's political and economic institutions.

Chapter 3   Before 1450:[1] The Formation of an
Integral Cultural Identity

3. 1   *Natural Conditions and Geo-lifestyle*

3. 1. 1   Early Geo-Ethnic Distribution and the Dawn of Civilisation

Even Herodotus could not tell us where the name "Europe" and Europeans came from. He confessed in *The History* that, "about Europe, no one knows whether it is surrounded by water, nor is it known whence came its name or who it was that put the name on it."[2] Whether the so-called "Indo-European" shared one culture and stood for the common ethnic origin of a people remains unclear. To many, it serves more as an ineffective myth or linguistic speculation rather than an established fact. Although based on the excavated evidences, archaeologists have been able to project the westward movements of "Kurgans", the Indo-European origins who migrated from the Pontic Steppes, north of the Black and Caspian Seas into the European continent from 4400 BC.[3] Yet, concepts such as proto-Indo-European, proto-German, -Slav, and -Celts etc,[4] as legends of common ancestors for Europeans are obviously not

---

[1]   We choose the year 1450 for two main reasons. Firstly, it is before the beginning of the intensive contacts of Chinese and European civilisations; and for second, as to be presented in Chapter 5, it is about the beginning of the alleged Chinese withdrawal and European expansion.

[2]   Herodotus, *The History*, Chicago, The University of Chicago, Translated Edition 1987 (by David Grene), 298.

[3]   Marija Gimbuttas proposes the most plausible and comprehensive theoretical framework for Indo-European origin and movement. Based on archaeological evidences, she projects three phases of westward movements into Europe, which are described as the Kurgan migratory waves. Kurgan Wave I is dated at 4400 to 4200 BC; and the second major migration, which apparently began in a slightly different part of the steppes, lasted from about 3400 to 3200 BC; the third Kurgan wave allegedly followed from around 3000 to 2800 BC. For detail discussions on the proto-Indo-European migrations please see Marija Gimbuttas, "The Beginning of the Bronze Age in Europe and the Indo-European: 3500-2500 BC", *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 1, 1973, 163-338; "The First Wave of Eurasian Steppe Pastoralists into Copper Age Europe", Ibid. 5, 1977, 277-338; "The Kurgan Wave #2 (c. 3400-3200 BC) into Europe and the Following Transformation of Culture", Ibid. 8, 1980, 273-316; quoted from V. R. Curtis, *Indo-European Origins*, New York, Peter Lang Publishing, 1988, 23.

[4]   Tracing the origins of Indo-Europeans, Mallory points out that there is clear continuity between Germanic tribes in the first centuries AD and the Iron Age Jastorf culture in present-day Demark and northern Germany (c. the 6th century BC), or the Proto-Germanic in a linguistically meaningful sense. As for Slavs, there existed a geographical centre weighted between the Vistula and Dnieper, which is

"common" enough. People in Europe, today and in history, seem to be concerned more about their "national" or "ethnic" distinctiveness rather than their commonality. Perhaps proving the origins of the Indo-Europeans merely alienates most of the Europeans from their "present homelands", for under such a theoretical framework, all Greeks, Italians Germans and Slavs etc were only waves of "European intruders".

In geographical terms, the dawn of Minoan, Mycenaean, Greek, and later Italian civilisations may be explained by the privileged position of the islands and peninsulas in a part of the Mediterranean where not only the sea borne trade routes, but also technological influences and exchanges from the Near East, Anatolia, Egypt and Phoenicia converged.[5] The sea seems to have absorbed the focus of people's lives as the civilisation initially shaped itself. As J. M. Roberts observes, nowhere "on the mainland of Attica and the Peloponnese… was more than 60 kilometres from the sea. Narrow coastal plains and steep hills encouraged men to look outwards. The Greeks were almost forced to [the] sea."[6] There are close on 68,000 kilometres of European coastline, to which are added 10,000 kilometres on the arctic shores of Russia. In the forefront are Norway (20,000 km), Greece (13,575 km), Sweden (7,624 km), Italy (7,458 km), Denmark (7,438 km), France (5,400 km), Spain and Portugal (4,359 km), and of course the surrounding coast of the British Isles. Clearly the sea had cast a strong impact upon the cultural identity of Europeans. Du Jourdin's observation on the coordinative lifestyle for the sea people is worth quoting here

> The sea was, if one may put it thus, a geometric location, contrasting or connecting ethnically different but analogous populations through the conditions of their existence… mariner societies shared certain rhythms of professional, familial and social life, for example the departure and the return of ships to port following the rhythm of the tide and the whim of the winds… the timing of weddings and births was dictated by that of campaigns at sea; the liturgy of those lost at sea followed the caprices of tempests… sharing of the same problems, seamen used similar customs within the vast sector.[7]

---

most commonly agreed to the Proto-Slavic homeland. For it appears to display a continuity of cultural development from 1500 BC to the historical appearance of the earliest Slavic peoples. General agreement traces the earliest historical Celts back to the La Tène culture in today's north France (c. the 6th century BC), or to its immediate predecessor, the Hallstatt culture. See J. P. Mallory, *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1989, 77, 81, 84-87, 105-106.

[5] See Joseph Fontana, op. cit. (1995), 8; and Peter Rietbergen, *Europe: A Cultural History*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 127.

[6] J. M. Roberts, *A History of Europe*, Oxford, Helicon Publishing Ltd., 1996, 24.

[7] Michel Mollat du Jourdin, *Europe and the Sea*, Oxford UK and Cambridge USA, Blackwell, 1993

66

Of course the mass of the Mediterranean, North Sea and Atlantic Ocean though similar are after all not uniform, each of them has different personalities. The unequal distribution of resources, the outline of coasts, the peninsulas, the considerable number of islands of all sizes, the coastal topography and their contributions to the placement of ports could cause significant diversity from region to region.[8] Thus, obviously the unity and disunity of cultural identity with respect to geographical conditions should not be equated to the superficial personalities of topography; as argued in Section 2.2.2, it must also enclose people's subjective feelings of solidarity, which were generated through intimate exchanges and communications between locales, and through the incessant mutual accommodating process across time. The rhythm of life could also vary hugely in co-ordinance to the specific normative, economic and political background of a society, and its external environment. Such may explain why the Greeks, Macedonians, and to a certain extent the Romans had shown their interests more to the East to high civilisations in Mesopotamia or Egypt, rather than to the northern and western fierce "barbarians". And it is reasonable to project that in 1200 BC, Greece looked much like any Near Eastern society,[9] rather than its continental neighbours.

The pattern of early geo-ethnic distribution and migrations for Indo-Europeans before 200 BC had been a crucial historical experience in explicating the European insistences on ethnic distinctiveness. Settling down one wave after another on the European continent, the warlike and bronze-wielding barbarians, who spoke Indo-European languages, had reached the westernmost confines of Europe (i.e., the Atlantic coast) by about 1700 BC.[10] However, geographical conditions such as the physical separateness of ethnic groups and the marginal position of early Greek and Roman civilisations together made the differentiations of geo-ethnic based identities possible. Apart from the Macedonian eastward expansions, the Greeks, Italians,

---

(Translated by Teresa Lavender Fagan), 7, 55.

[8] Michel Mollat du Jourdin, op. cit. (1993), 21.

[9] As Osborne suggests, the language Mycenaeans spoke was Greek, like several near-eastern neighbours they wrote in a syllabary (so-called Linear B). Although their monuments and figurative art certainly differ in detail from that of their near-eastern neighbours, it is difficult to feel that they differ in kind. See Robin Osborne, *Greece in the Making, 1200-479 BC*, London and New York, Routledge, 1996, 3.

[10] William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West. A History of the Human Community*, New York, Toronto and London, Mentor Books, 1963, 116-117.

Germans, Celts, Balts and Slavs seemed principally satisfied enough to confine (or to be confined) their activities around their respective "European homelands". (See *Map III-1* and in footnote 4.) Although contacts such as trade, wars and diplomatic activities across borders did exist, it is clear that inter-ethnic communications of a pan-European scale were by no means systematic, and major powers in no way were compelling enough to integrate among them a consolidating network. In other words, we see no genuine possibilities or needs for the development of a "pan-European" political and economic system in Europe before 200 BC, let alone a coordinating centre. Geo-ethnic conditions do not seem favourable to generate an interactive framework among European ethnic groups.

The dawn of European civilisation was on a small-scale congregation (compared to that of the Chinese case), and developed from the fringe of the Mediterranean (Aegean Sea) to the landmass of the European Continent. From the third millennium BC, the flowering of Minoan Crete, 'Europe's earliest cradle of civilisation', had formed essential elements of European culture.[11] Between 1200 BC and 800 BC, the Dorian Greeks descended from the north, plundered into Attica and destroyed the Mycenaean Kingdom. Migrations connected with these invasions quickly took the lead in developing the rudiments of a new style of life, which eventually flowered into classical Greek civilisation.[12] By 500 BC they had enjoyed a variety of natural environments in settlements all round the Mediterranean, from Egypt to Spain, from North Africa to southern France or the Adriatic, as well as all four shores of the Black Sea.[13] Speaking dialects of a "common language", worshiping common pantheon Olympic gods with different local cults, and participating in pan-Hellenic festivals like the Olympic games, the Greeks indeed engendered consciousness of a common Hellenism.[14] As Osborne suggests, by "479 BC, after turning back the attack of the Persian Empire on the Greek mainland, the Greek world was extensive and dynamic, complex in organisation, increasing in population, and immensely creative."[15] Greek civilisation successfully disseminated into the Italian peninsula mainly by sea from

---

[11]　Joseph Fontana, *The Distorted Past. A Reinterpretation of Europe*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1995 (Translated Edition by Colin Smith), 7-8.
[12]　William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 213.
[13]　Robin Osborne, op. cit. (1996), 8.
[14]　Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, Revised Edition 1954 (First Published 1942), 238.
[15]　Robin Osborne, op. cit. (1996), 17.

Map III-1: Expansion of the Indo-Europeans

Source: Hermann Kinder and Werner Hilgemann, The Archer Atlas of World History, Vol. I, New York & London, Anchor Books, 1964, 32.

about 200 BC. However, the hardwood forest in central Europe, which was extremely difficult to conquer, hindered the further northward expansion into the continent, hence it physically created a line between the civilised and barbarian.[16] At the same time, the cheap transportation of the sea had attracted the south- and eastward colonial explorations and the development of sea powers. Such geo-economic factors again shifted the focus of civilisations southward to the Mediterranean rather than the land.[17] It was not until the 3rd century that the Roman Empire gradually incorporated the Italians, Greeks, Celts (Gaul), Illyrian and Thracian into its embrace. And with the Germanic invasions in the 4th and 5th century, as well as the Viking and Slavic intrusions in the 7th and 8th century, we begin to see a pan-European political, economic and cultural network taking its shape. In spite of the Empire's fall, the Pandora's box of "civilisation" once opened was unstoppably spread to the northern and western parts of Europe. Only interethnic activities from then seemed to carry on in a mutually-competing rather than hegemonic form in Europe, which would be hard to understand merely in geo-ethnic terms. (See Section 3.2.1)

The significance of geo-ethnic ties and cultural identity become even clearer when we compare it to the set up of early Chinese geo-ethnic distribution. First of all, despite early and rich records of maritime activity in Chinese history,[18] the Middle Kingdom seemed to remain a land- rather than sea-oriented civilisation. China of course is not short of coastline. Its coastal boundary in modern times lies on the West Pacific Rim, which spreads about latitude 20° to 42° N, and longitude 103° to 125° E. Much of

---

[16] Landes argues that the answer for the slow development of European civilisation is geography. Not until people had iron-cutting tools in the first millennium could they clear those otherwise fertile plains north of the Alps. See David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London, Abacus, 1998, 19.

[17] Michael Mann calculates the costs of different forms of transport that the Diocletian's Price enables. He suggests that, if the cost of the sea transport is set at 1, then the cost of inland waterway transport is 4.9 times as great, and that of road wagon is either 28 or 56 times as great (and transport by camel would be 20% less than by road wagon). See Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. A History of Power from the Beginning to A. D. 1760*, Vol. I, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 279.

[18] The first recorded naval confrontation in Chinese history took place in 549 BC when Prince Kuang of Chu State 楚國 sent his fleet to attack Wu State 吳國 from the sea. During the Warring States Period (475-221 BC), the momentum of naval activities was maintained and a navy was regarded as a necessary part of the armed forces of each political unit. In 109 BC, Emperor Wu 武帝 of the Earlier Han Dynasty ordered a fleet of five thousand soldiers to attack Korea, and in 112 BC another fleet with 20,000 marines form Che-chiang 浙江 province to crack down on a rebellion led by Lu Chia in a powerful maritime kingdom of Nan-yu (now Kuang-tung 廣東 province). Records of Chinese maritime activities can be traced throughout Chinese history to the present day. For detailed records of Chinese maritime activities see Gang Deng, *Maritime Sector, Institutions, and Sea Power of Premodern China*, Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1999 (a), 186-198.

70

this coastline has long been part of China's territory before the Tang Period (AD 619-907), and during the Ching Dynasty (AD 1644-1911) China had a land boundary of about 16,000 kilometres *vis-à-vis* a coastline of over 18,000 kilometres (including the territory in the South China Sea region).[19] Nevertheless, a larger-scale ethnic congregation with the dawn of civilisation originated from the centre of the East Asia landmass, which together with the full-ranged river systems had led Chinese to look more toward the land rather than the sea.[20] Despite controversies of its connections to the Near and Middle East civilisations,[21] the comparative geographical isolation from other major civilisations (except Japan) further decreased the motives for maintaining a standing military sea power, particularly after the Chin unified China in 221 BC (see Section 3.2.2 below). After his military conquest of the warring states, Chin-Shih-Huang-Ti had no intention of expanding his empire beyond the coast. The sea had little to offer him.[22] And despite the prosperous offshore commercial activities, short distance maritime activities (at a similar length of the Aegean and east Mediterranean Ocean), which early technology could have achieved, would remain at an intra-cultural rather than inter-cultural level for the Chinese.[23] All these tend to lead China into a land-based civilisation. Of course to say that the Chinese were more inward-looking to the land rather than outward-looking to the sea does not indicate

---

[19] Gang Deng, *Chinese Maritime Activities and Socioeconomic Development, c. 2100 BC-1900 AD*, Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1997, 1.

[20] As Chi summarises, L. Richard, the veteran geographer of China, states that "no country in the world is so well watered as China." K. A. Wittfogel brought out very emphatically the great value of the river system of China by comparing it with that of Egypt and Mesopotamia. He shows that the rivers of China do not flow through oases but are advantageously distributed over an immensely large and continuous land. James Fairgrieve calls China 'The Land of Rivers,' and elaborates his point by saying that "China is specially a land of rivers, not only in the sense that rivers flow through it, but in the sense that its history has been greatly affected by other controlling facts." See Chao-Ting Chi, *Key Economic Areas in Chinese History*, London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1936, 28.

[21] Although by referring to the similar style of horse-drawn chariots, bronze weapons and accoutrements, the compound bow, and a quadrilateral city layout reminiscent of charioteer's encampments, it is speculated that there could be close links between early Chinese civilisation and the Near and Middle East even before 2000 BC. However, due to the lack of excavated evidence in intervening areas, the further discovery of similar artefacts in east China, and the later characteristic development of Chinese civilisation (at least after 1400 BC), Chinese scholars hold strongly now that Shang 商 culture is indigenous. Today on the whole, it is generally agreed that early Chinese civilisation was much isolated from other major civilisations. For discussions on linkage between China and the Middle East see Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, London, New York and Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1954, Vol. I, 156-157; William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 240; S.A.M. Adshead, *China in World History*, London and New York, Macmillan Press LTD, 2000 Third Edition (First Published in 1988), 41; Gordon Childe, op. cit. (1954), 170; Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 181.

[22] Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (a)), 119-120.

[23] Chien Mu 錢穆, *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History* 中國文化史導論, Taipei, 台灣商務 印行, 1993, 16.

that China was ocean-phobic. As Deng argues, the Tang, Sung and Yuan China had certainly welcomed foreign sea traders with open arms, and the Sung government "spared no effort to encourage merchants to build ocean-going ships and undertake foreign trade".[24] Neither was China internally homogeneous. As early as the 2nd century BC, Han historian Ssu-Ma Chien 司馬遷 had recorded the discernable regional differences in China. As he wrote in *The Records of History* 史記, "west of the [Tai-hang] Mountain 太行山 was rich of woods, bamboos, rice and jade, while east of it was full of fish, salt, lacquer, silk, and fabric. South of the Yangtze River, large amounts of Chinese catalpa, ginger, cassia, gold, tin, cinnabar, rhino, turtle, pearls and leathers were produced, whilst in the north, horses, oxen, sheep, wool and firs, and animal horns were abundant."[25] Besides as Chi also suggests, areas like Ssu-chuan 四川, Yun-nan 雲南 and Kuang-tung 廣東, Kuang-hsi 廣西 undoubtedly constituted other major sub-systems in China proper. History of political divisions in Ssu-chuan and Yun-nan clearly shown its easily defended boundaries, while varied resources made it remarkably fitted for an independent and self-sufficient existence.[26]

Analysing the issue of Chinese ethnicity, we must first point out that the stereotype, where China is a homogenised "nation" characterised by a hegemonic majority-minority relation (with the outnumbered "Han Chinese" at the centre assimilating the peripheral barbarian minorities), is very much misleading. The "Sinocentric world order" or Chinese tribute system, suggested by John Fairbank

---

[24] Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (a)), 207-208. Only it should be noted that in comparison to external communications through the land (such as the "silk road"), the sea route was still downplayed by the state even during the Tang and Yuan periods, while the Sung government's emphases on maritime activities may partly be explained by the closure of the northwest land route by Turkestan, and the financial need to cope with the formidable threat from the Mongols in the north. Chen Kao-Hua 陳高華 and Chen Shang-Shen 陳尚勝, *The History of Chinese Overseas Communication* 中國海外交通史, Taipei, 文津出版社, 1997, 42, 83.

[25] Ssu-Ma Chien 司馬遷, *The Records of History* 史記, Vol. 129, No. 69. (Taipei, 臺灣古籍出版, 1996 Reprints.)

[26] First it was Kung-Sun Shu who became king of Ssu-Chuan, ruled that region from AD 25-86. Next came the famous Pei Liu, who founded one of the Three Kingdoms, Shu (221-263). The third was Hsiung Li, who assumed the title of King of Cheng-Tu at the beginning of the third century; the fourth period was that of Chien Wang and Chih-Hsiang Meng during the Five Dynasties (907-960). The fifth was Yu-Chen Ming, the founder of the Ta-Hsia dynasty (1362-1371). Then came the notorious Hsien-Chung Chang at the end of the Ming and the heroic Ta-Kai Shih, who established himself in Ssu-Chuan when the Tai-Ping Empire (1851-1863) collapsed in China. Kuang-Tung and Kuang-Hsi's regional integrity can also be seen from the topography. Encircled by mountains and by the ocean, the cultural life of the region is self-sustained with comparatively few contacts with adjoining provinces. Chao-Ting Chi, op. cit. (1936), 30-34.

whereby "Chinese" posited in the centre of East Asia and formed with the "non-Chinese" (such as Manchu, Mongol, Uighur Turk and Tibetan) around them a concentric hierarchy, is also problematic.[27] It is correct that the formation of Han Chinese proceeded at the geographical centre of China. However, to only look at the result of the seemingly centralised majority-minority relations between Chinese and the non-Chinese after the Han Empire obviously neglects the historical dynamism before 200 BC. It is necessary that we take a closer look at the formation of "Han people" and its mythical integrity.

As far as historical records can project, the distribution of Chinese ethnic groups had already shown an interweaving pattern. Since c. 2600 BC, there had been tribal leagues in the middle and lower Yellow River and Yangtze River sides. Huang-Ti 黃帝, who occupied today's Lu County 鹿縣 in Ho-pei 河北 province, was said to be a leader of six tribes. He conquered the leagues of Yen-Ti 炎帝, Shen-Nung 神農, Chih-Yu 蚩 尤 and other so-called barbarians (Chiu-yi 九夷) within his reign and became the first leader of all tribal leagues.[28] As the leagues system evolved, a new leader Yu 禹 founded a dynastic kingdom Hsia 夏 by passing his throne to his son. Hereditary kingship of Hsia was said to last for seventeen kings of 470 years, and later the Shang Dynasty passed on for another 490 years. Curiously, contra archaeological evidences, which tend to suggest a multi-centred rather than uni-centred origin of Chinese culture,[29] this legendary lineage system from Yen-Ti and Huang-Ti that performed as the symbolic common ancestors of all Chinese, seemed to obtain a much more influential role than any equivalent form that derived from the proto-Indo-Europeans. Perhaps, in a geo-political explanation, all ethnic groups wish to claim their orthodox

---

[27]   John King Fairbank, "A Preliminary Framework", in John King Fairbank, *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1968, 1-19.
[28]   See Chen Ko-Wei 陳可畏, "About the Formational and Developmental Problems of Nations in China 關於中國的民族形成與發展問題", in 中國民族學研究會 ed., *Ethnological Studies 民族學研究*, Beijing, 民族出版社, 1981, 28-36, quote page 29.
[29]   As Tu and Hsu argue, archaeological evidences suggest that Chinese culture did not, as many proposed, radiate from the Yellow River side to the rest of Chinese territory. Rather, during the Neolithic Age there had been several other proto-cultural areas that coexisted with the Central-Field 中原 culture area. These include the Chi-Lu 齊魯 cultural area in east of China, Wu-Yeuh 吳越 cultural area and Chu 楚 cultural area in the south and southeast, and Chin 秦 cultural area in the west of China. All these cultural areas related to the state formulations later during the Spring and Autumn Period, and Warring States Period (770-221 BC). Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明, *Modern Spirit and Confucians Tradition 現代精神與儒家傳統*, Taipei, 聯經, 1996, 387; also Hsu Cho-Yun 許倬雲, *Features of Chinese Ancient Culture 中國古代文化的特質*, Taipei, 聯經, 1988, 21.

status, to deriving their ethnic origins from the geographical centre of Chinese civilisation.

Moving into the era of written history,[30] a historian Po Hsu 伯敍 in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC) recorded in full details that[31]

> the Chou kingdom is comprised of Chi-man 荊蠻, Shen 申, Lu 呂, Yi 應, Teng 鄧, Chen 陳, Tsai 蔡, Sui 隨, Tang 唐 in the south; Kuo 虢, Chin 晉, Wei 隗, Huo 霍, Yang 楊, Wei 魏, Jui 芮 in the west; and Chi 齊, Lu 魯, Tsao 曹, Sung 宋, Teng 滕, Hsuch 薛; Wei 衛, Yen 燕, Ti 狄, Hsien-lu 鮮虞, Lu 潞, Lo 洛, Chuan 泉, Hsu 徐, Pu 蒲 in the north; Yu 虞, Kuo 虢, Chin 晉, Wei 隗, Huo 霍, Yang 楊, Wei 魏, Jui 芮 in the west; and Chi 齊, Lu 魯, Tsao 曹, Sung 宋, Teng 滕, Hsuch 薛, Tsou 鄒, Chu 莒 in the east.

Within which states, Ti 狄, Hsien-lu 鮮虞, Lu 潞, Lo 洛, Chuan 泉, Hsu 徐, Pu 蒲, Wei 隗, Chu 莒, Chi-man 荊蠻, Teng 鄧 (the shadowed areas in *Map III-2*) were ruled by non-relatives of the Chou emperor. Those states, which originally had disparate clothing, languages and lifestyle etc, were conquered by the Chou kingdom, and were defined as barbarians. As shown in *Map III-2*,[32] those "uncivilised" peoples intermingled neatly with the Huan-hsia 華夏 groups (the non-shadowed areas). Not merely so, several "barbarian" tribes existed even within the territory of some Chou feudal states, such as Tsai-yi 蔡夷 in the Chi 齊, Da-jung 大戎 in the Chin 晉 and Wu-jiang 武羌 in the Wei 魏. After the unification of the Chin and Han Dynasties in China (c. 221 BC to AD 200), the barbarians, or more adequately the non-Hua-Hsia peoples, either stayed in the "Central Fieldc (the middle Yellow and Yangtze River area)" and adopted a sedentary life, or moved out to maintain their pastoral life. Those who chose, or were forced to choose to stay in since then became an integral part of the so-called Han people. Summing up, the ethnic origins of Han people in AD 200

---

[30] Although oracle bones and archaeological evidences excavated in An-Yang 安陽 had already proved the existence of the Shang Kingdom since c. 1700 BC, written records merely trace the exact year of Chinese chronicle history back to 841 BC. See Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), 28-29; and Chien Mu 錢穆, *Outline History of China* 國史大綱 Vol. I, Taipei, 國立編譯館, 1995(a) Revised Third Edition (First Published in 1940), 1, 7.
[31] Tsao Chiu-Ming 左丘明, *Records of States* 國語, Vol. 16. (Taipei, 商務印行, 1975 Reprints.)
[32] See Yi Mo-Yuan 易謀遠, "The Ancestral National Formation and Development in China 中國古代民族的形成和發展", in 中國民族學研究會 ed., *Ethnological Studies* 民族學研究, Beijing, 民族出版社,1981, 8-27, quote page 8-9.

Map III-2: Chinese Ethnic Distribution during the Chou Dynasty 1121-249 BC
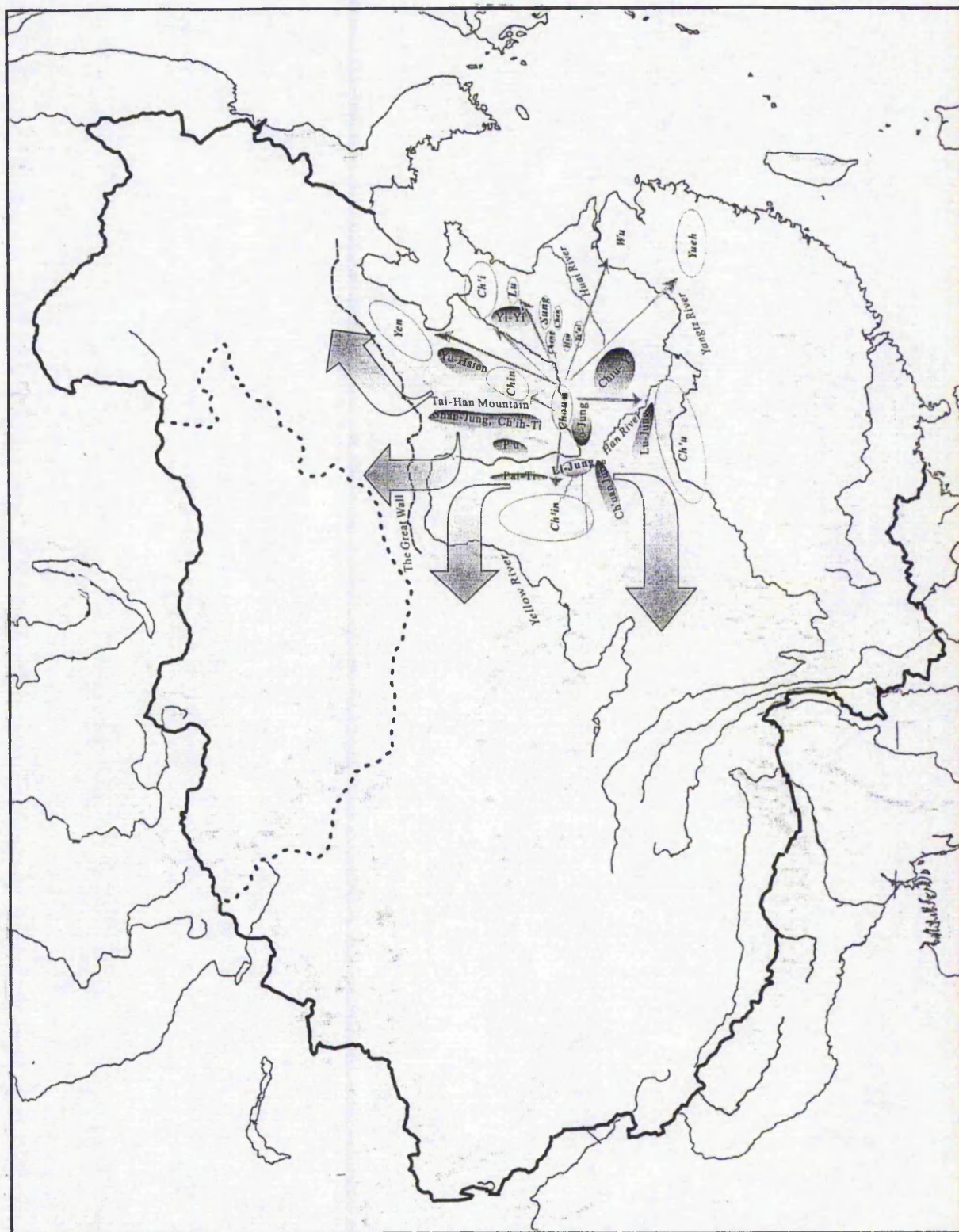
can be traced back to five major groups, which include the Hua-Hsia group (Hsia and Chou familial states); the East-yi 東夷 group (Shang 商 states, Chin 秦 and Shih 徐); the Chi-man 荊蠻 group (Chu 楚 and Wu 吳 states), Bai-Yueh 百越 group (Yueh 越 state, Ming-yuch 閩粤 and South-yuch 南粤) and San-Mio 三苗 group (offspring of Shen-Nung 神農, as well as parts of Chiang 姜 and Jung 戎).[33] It is through more than 2500 years of an interactive process that those non-Hua-Hsia and Hua-Hsia peoples eventually organised among themselves a pan-Chinese political and cultural network. The Hua-Hsia group was far from an "outnumbered" majority with respect to those other four ethnic origins. The complicated genealogical and ethnic ties of the Han people simply made the distinction of a pure ethnicity impossible. China at the beginning of its ethnic formation had to choose another path in ethnic definition or cultural identification—"culturalism", which required or was destined to resort to mutual compatibility rather than racial purity. Such is the way that the "dragon theory" in Section 1.2.1 comes into play, with the intermingled histories, memories and lives, various ethnic groups through a continuous interactive process and a series of adaptation eventually chose to integrate themselves into an inseparable and cohesive cultural community. Such a case seems to suggest that humanistic factors, such as the common cultural belief, may contribute to orient the way of social transformation, and even shift the understanding of cultural origin.

Apart from the already intricate ethnic origins of the Han Chinese, those "ethnic minorities" had constantly "returned" to the Central Field for the rich soil and prosperous society. Incessant "barbarian invasions" occurred first in the Wei, Chin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties 魏晉南北朝 Periods (AD 220 to 580), when minority groups like the Chiang 羌, Wu-huang 烏桓, Hsiung-nu 匈奴, Chieh 羯, Ti 氐, and Hsien-pei 鮮卑 time and again poured into China proper. As recorded in *Book of the Chin 晉書*, "of some one million populations in the Kuan-chung 關中 area, Jung and Ti composed more than half of them." After three hundred years of Tang rule, non-Han groups Tu-po 吐蕃, Sha-to 沙陀, Tang-hsiang 黨項, Chi-tan 契丹, Nu-chen 女真, Meng-ku 蒙古 once again intruded into the Central Field area, and formed periods of minority rules in China. They were named later as Liao 遼, Chi 金

---

[33] See Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), 43.

76

(1115-1234), and Yuan 元 Dynasty (1271-1367), which constitute an authentic part of Chinese history. All these show evidently not only intensive ethnic interactions, but also the common enough reversed minority-majority power relations in Chinese history. And we must again note that, most of those non-Han groups who "invaded" China proper in fact shared, or at least claimed to share, common ancestors with the Han Chinese in the ancient period.[34] For many of them, the Central Field area is not merely a place of a wealthy civilisation, but also their homeland, a place where they lived, ruled and was filled with memories.[35]

Chart III-1: Populations of China Proper and Europe 3000 BC - AD 1500
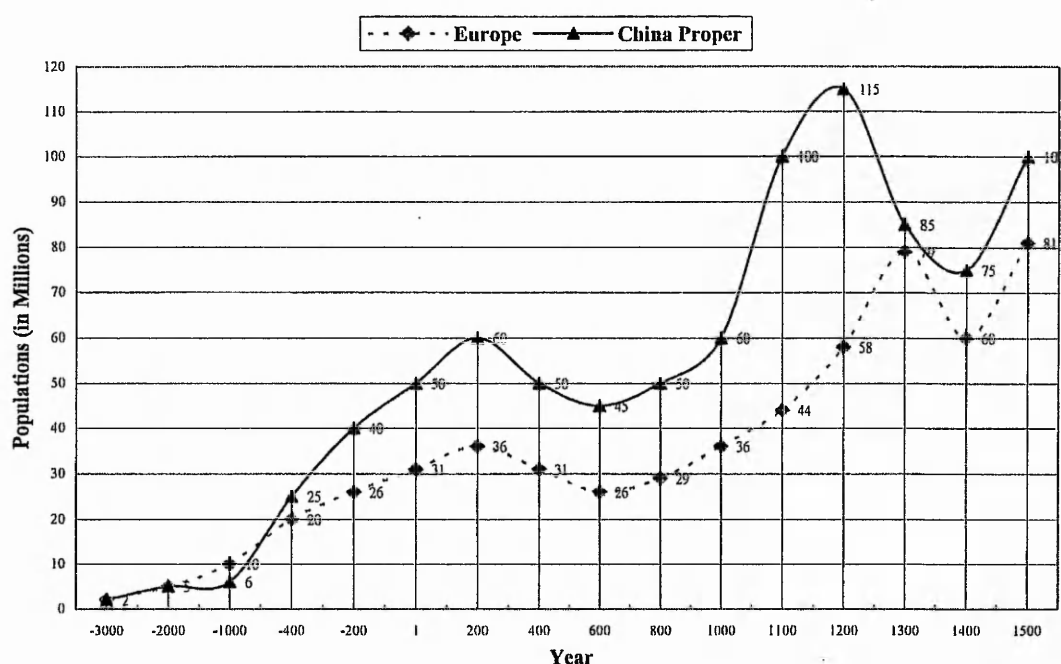
Source: Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1978, 18-27, 166-174. Note: the scale of the X axis is not evenly allocated.

3. 1. 2   Demography, Lifestyles and Cultural Identity

Numbers matter. As Braudel suggests, in "any case number is a first-class pointer. It provides an index of success and failure."[36] The growth of population, the proportion of ethnic groups within a society undoubtedly swing the majority-minority relations,

---

[34]   For instance, Hsiung-nu 匈奴 was originated from Hsia, Hsien-pei 鮮卑 from Yu-hsiung Tribe 有熊氏, Ti 氐 from Yu-hu Tribe 有扈氏, and Chiang 羌 from Chiang Tribe 姜氏. See Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), 133.

[35]   See Chen Ko-Wei 陳可畏, op. cit. (1981) , quote page 32-34.

[36]   Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. The Structure of Everyday Life*, Vol. I, London, Fontana Press, (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds) 1979, 31.

while the quantity of rural and urban, nomadic and sedentary populations shift decisions over issues concerning people's cultural recognition. At many points, the demographical changes in China and Europe provide critical references for our analysis of cultural trajectories. In *Chart III-1 Populations of China Proper and Europe 3000 BC – AD 1500*, interestingly we observe a pretty similar pattern of population vicissitudes in Europe and China proper.[37] However, beneath the similarity of demographical figures, there lie crucial differences between European and Chinese social envelopments. Between 1000 BC and AD 1 with the dawn of Greek and Roman civilisations, the population in Europe tripled from 10 millions to 31 millions. It continued to enjoy a steady growth until about 200 AD, when the Roman Empire began to face Germanic invasions. In China, despite the collapse of the Shang hegemony around 1000 BC and Chou Kingdom around 771 BC, the population in China proper quadrupled between 1000 BC and 400 BC.[38] While the political unification of the Chin empire in 221 BC and later the Han empire, provided a wealthy background for continuing growth; populations again doubled between 400 BC and AD 1 to 50 millions. Curiously, the figure stayed around 45-60 millions thereafter for almost a thousand years, such a performance, which as McEvedy remarks, "matches that of Europe in the late Roman and early medieval periods with an exactness that is hard to explain." Especially, there was no clear demographic growth under Tang rule between AD 618 and 907, which is one of the most powerful, rich and outward-looking regimes in Chinese History. In Europe, numbers followed the economy down since AD 200, with the total dropping to 26m by AD 600. It was not until AD 1000 that, with the agricultural revolution in the High Middle Age and the gradual incorporation of Germanic and Slavish tribes into the sedentary and civilised circle, European population started to grow again and reached its high of 79 millions by 1300. Similarly, in Sung China there came a breakthrough in demographic

---

[37] China Proper is the area where Chinese government was able to claim their sovereignty mostly before 1450, which includes today's provinces Kan-su 甘肅, Shan-hsi 山西, Shan-hsi 陝西, Ho-pei 河北, Shan-tung 山東, Ho-nan 河南, An-hui 安徽, Chiang-ssu 江蘇, Che-chiang 浙江, Chiang-Hsi 江西, Hu-pei 湖北, Hu-nan 湖南, Ssu-chuan 四川, Yun-nan 雲南, Kuei-chou 貴州, Kuang-tung 廣東 and Fu-chien 福建, plus the Kuang-hsi 廣西, Macao and Hong Kong. These provinces constitute an area of 4.0 millions km^2 (9.6 millions km^2 for the whole China). Detail data of population changes outside China Proper before 1450 is scanty, however, estimate figures outside core China is 3 million in AD 1; 6 millions in 1000; and 10 millions in 1500. Europe here is defined as an area west of Ural Mountain and River to Caspian Sea, the same size as the whole China. See Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1978, 18-27, 166-174.
[38] This was partly because of the development of an irrigation system in the Yellow River basin, and the cultivation of the Yangtze valley.

growth around the year 1000. This is due to the fuller exploitation of rice-growing potential of the Yangtze valley and a southward shift of the political centre. The figure reached its 115 millions peak before 1450 in about 1200, and probably fell again due to the Black Death. Such drop again conforms to the European trend later in 1300.

Taking a closer look at the sedentary and pastoral populations, although both groups existed in Europe and China, the ratio of the so-called "civilised" and "barbarian" varied significantly. So did the processes, results and durations in incorporating the nomadic groups. Demographical figures here provide us important clues for analysing how strongly and intensively sedentary people may feel about the impact of nomadic cultures. In 400 BC, the population in Greece reached a total of 3 millions, while another 4 million Roman people conquered the Italian peninsula and created an integral political entity.[39] Were we to take the 7 millions as the "civilised", then there were 13 million "barbarians" in the area of Europe outside Greece and Italy at that time, that is a ratio of roughly 1 to 2. In China, as Chin-Shih-Huan-Ti unified the country in 221 BC there were no more than 3 million nomadic groups remaining around China proper, which was a ratio of 13 to 1 between the sedentary and nomadic populations. The proportion in AD 200, although it drew nearer, was still disparate. The Roman Empire in AD 200 had some 46 millions subjects, including 28m of the 36m people in Europe. With the same formula, it means a ratio of 28 to 6 (or 4.5 to 1) between Roman subjects and the Germanic, Slavic and non-Roman subjects; while in China there were 60 million Han subjects facing still only 3 million Mongolian and Tibetan tribes, that is a ratio of 20 to 1. After the 6th or 7th century, nomadic peoples in Europe (Celts, Germans and Slavs) had become completely assimilated, and stock-raising was absorbed into settled farming.[40] Europe was Europeanised thereafter at least in the "geo-lifestyle sense"—a sedentary way of life was commonly adopted in Europe. In China, animal husbandry, however, was never thoroughly absorbed into the pattern of settled agriculture and remained largely mobile. Politically, as above mentioned nomadic peoples, who insisted on keeping their

---

[39] Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, op. cit. (1978), 19-21.
[40] As Chaudhuri argues, such was made possible by a combination of climatic factors and economic and political developments. The stable rainfall yielded a steady supply of grass and hay. And as agricultural and urban life gradually spread into North and East Europe, there was no real economic incentive or even political possibility for the sheep and cattle farmers to migrate over long distances. K. N. Chaudhuri, *Asia before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 266.

79

pastoral life were still allowed to exist, although they were forced to carry on their own way of life outside China proper. In economic terms, nomadic lives, which closely linked to the history of urban pastoral supply and long-distance caravan trade, had become an indispensable part of Chinese food-production. On the security and military side, although the presence of nomads was considered to be a threat to the state or society, Chinese political authorities only kept up constant pressure to either induce them to settle down permanently, or to expel them beyond the Great Wall and China proper.[41]

It seems that Europe had adopted a much more rigid way of absorbing the nomadic culture. Within one thousand years (between 400 BC and AD 600), sedentary Europe had encompassed at least twice its population's pastoral groups into its cultural circle. In fact, it is even fair to say that nomadic groups in the 4th and 5th centuries merged into the civilised empire, and injected a nomadic ethos into European civilisation. As McNeill argued, the warrior ethos of the Bronze Age, which stemmed ultimately from the style of life befitting warrior-herdsmen of the western steppe had given European society a distinctive and enduring bias. Such warlike spirit that values individual prowess more highly than any other civilised people has remained as a basic part of the European inheritance down to the present day (as also to be shown in Chapter 4, during the process of European expansion in 1450-1900).[42] China on the other hand spent more than 2500 years before setting up a hegemonic cultural entity in China proper. A much higher ratio of the Han Chinese versus nomadic groups since 200 BC was the result of earlier "intensive" (or forceful) mutual interactions, and the acceptance of a more diverse internal ethnic origin. Besides, pastoral life existed around China proper all the time. Allowed to develop as a subsystem and an indivisible part of Sinic circle, it was never fully "tamed" or "conquered" by the civilised culture. Although it is also true that nomadic populations never grew up to a significant proportion despite that they had become part of the ruling groups in China on several occasions. Warrior ethos in China never saturated deep enough into the social, political and economic institutions sufficiently to transform the agrarian based civilisation. Thus, on the whole, it seems fair to state that China in comparison to Europe had adopted a much softer approach towards its "barbaric" neighbours. Such a

---

[41] K. N. Chaudhuri, op. cit. (1990), 267.
[42] William H. McNeill, (1963), 117.

soft approach conformed very much to the principal Confucian strategy toward foreigners: "When people from afar do not succumb, the emperor should cultivate himself by civility and virtue so as to attract them."[43] In other words, parallel to the seemingly objective geo-ethnic and lifestyle factors, there was also the idealistic Chinese cultural belief under function, which prefers to attract the nomadic people to come and be transformed willingly rather than to conquer them through military force. With a different path from that of the Europeans, both nomadic and sedentary lifestyles were networked to the Chinese cultural system without needing to diminish either of them. As to be illustrate later in sections 3.2.2 and chapters that follow, the "civilised" principle of rule that was built upon the moral-ethical system and symbolic familial ties, seemed to constantly occupy a dominant role in the Chinese cultural system.

Turning to the urban figures, despite the shifts of key political and economic areas, what we observe is the steady growth and development of Chinese cities *vis-à-vis* the significant rise and fall of European one before and after the Roman period. Before the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the scale of the largest cities in China and Europe were rather comparable. Athens and Sparta, each had populations of 300,000 to 350,000 inhabitants at the peak of their power (c. 500 to 400 BC), three times the number of their neighbouring cities. Rome at its peak is said to have had 1 million population. However, at the end of the 4th century, towns in Europe had tended to decrease in size, complexity and autonomy, particularly within Latin Christendom. To the year 1000, Europe's five largest cities: Constantinople, Córdoba, Seville, Palermo and Kiev, were all outside this Latin area.[44] Urban life in Western Europe was above all concentrated in Italy, and the population of the largest Italian cities—Venice, Genoa, and Milan—was in the range of 100,000 each in the thirteenth century.[45] Matching up to the Chinese figures, the largest city in pre-500 BC China was

---

[43] See *The Analects* 論語, Section 16. (Taipei, 啟明書局, Reprints.)

[44] Patrick K. O'Brien *et al.*, *Philip's Atlas of World History*, London, George Philip Limited, 1999, 102.

[45] Apart from the Italian towns, in central and eastern Germany, new towns such as Freiburg, Lübeck, Munich, and Berlin were founded in the twelfth century. Further west, small towns like Paris, London, and Cologne roughly doubled in size between 1100 and 1200. Within these, Paris and Bologna gained considerable wealth by becoming the homes of leading universities; Venice, Genoa, Cologne, and London became centres of long-distance trade; and Milan, Ghent, and Bruges specialised in manufacture. See Robert E. Lerner, Standish Meacham and Edward McNall Burns, *Western Civilisation. Their History and Their Culture*, Vol. I, New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, 1993(a) Twelfth Edition, 103, 291-292.

probably slightly smaller than that of Athens and Sparta in demographic terms, although large-scale cities tended to distribute more evenly "nation" wide. Big cities in Shang and Chou Dynasty were estimated to have more than 100,000 populations, and there were about 70 cities with populations of more than 10,000.[46] After the unification of the Chin and Han Periods, the scale and number of big cities expanded swiftly. According to the record in *Book of the Han*, Chang-An in AD 2 had 682,468 people;[47] and a similar scale was kept up to the 7th century.[48]

In an overall comparison, as shown in *Chart III-2*, the populations of the ten largest cities in AD 800 China reached roughly twice the size of the European ones. Such comparative urban prosperity was kept up to 1500, when Europe again started to reveal signs of recovering. (The exception of the year 1000 can be explained by the political division of China, as it was only thirty some years after the Sung reunified China after the fall of the Tang). Moreover, as *Chart III-2* also illustrates, eight out of the ten largest cities in 800 China appeared again in the lists of 1000, 1300 and 1500 (note: Chang-an was renamed into Hsi-an), while in Europe only Constantinople and Seville remained to be the on the lists of 1000, 1300 and 1500. Such a consistent pattern of urban development in China suggests that sense of stability and continuity derived from the urban image would be far easier for Chinese people to trace, whilst an impression of change and instability could have put forward to Europeans due to the frequent shifts of urban centres in Europe. We do not intend to assess the overall economic performance simply from the urban populations in Europe and China, as the size and composition of "towns" and "cities" could be diversely designed, and they may perform disparate political, economic and cultural functions in different social systems. However, the aggregations and developments of urban lives did carry important messages, which composed the images of social stability and prosperity that people were able to *feel* and grasp, and passed on as *cultural memories*, especially through the dynastic histories of China. Such memories contribute as parts of the long-term Chinese and European cultural logics and trajectories, here in the sense that Europe was marked by rigorous social rise and fall, and speedy shifts and mixtures of

---

[46] See Feng Erh-Kang 馮爾康, *Introduction to the Studies of Chinese Social History* 中國社會史研究概述, Taipei, 谷風, 1988, 83.

[47] Pan Ku 班固, *Book of the Han* 漢書, Vol. 28, No. 1.

[48] Ann Paludan, *Chronicle of the Chinese Emperors*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1998, 30, 106.

Chart III-2: Largest Cities of China and Europe between AD 800 and 1500

(Population in thousands)

800				1000				1300				1500			
Chinese Cities	Population	European Cities	Population	Chinese City	Population	European City	Population	Chinese City	Population	European Cities	Population	Chinese Cities	Population	European Cities	Population
Chang-an 長安	600	Constantinople	300	Kai-feng 開封	400	Cordova	450	Hang-chou 杭州	432	Paris	228	Beijing 北京	672	Constantinople	200
Lo-yang 洛陽	300	Cordova	160	Hang-chou 杭州	90	Constantinople	300	Beijing 北京	401	Venice	110	Hang-chou 杭州	250	Paris	185
Ssu-chou 蘇州	84	Rome	50	Tsin-chou 荊州	85	Seville	90	Kuang-chou 廣州	150	Constantinople	100	Kuang-chou 廣州	150	Andrinople	127
Wu-chang 武昌	84	Thessalonica	40	Ssu-chou 蘇州	78	Palermo	75	Hsi-an 西安	118	Sarai	100	Nan-ching 南京	147	Venice	115
Cheng-tu 成都	75	Seville	35	Nan-ching 南京	70	Kiev	45	Nan-ching 南京	95	Granada	90	Hsi-an 西安	127	Naples	114
Hang-chou 杭州	70	Pliska	34	Wu-chang 武昌	-	Venice	45	Ssu-chou 蘇州	91	Seville	90	Ssu-chou 蘇州	122	Milan	89
Kai-feng 開封	55	-	-	Nan-ning 南寧	58	Ochrida	40	Kai-feng 開封	90	Genoa	85	Cheng-tu 成都	86	Ghent	80
Kuang-chou 廣州	-	-	-	Lo-yang 洛陽	50	Thessalonica	40	Yang-chou 揚州	85	Milan	60	Fu-chou 福州	83	Florence	70
Nan-ching 南京	-	-	-	Chang-an 長安	50	Amalfi	35	Wu-chang 武昌	84	Florence	60	Kai-feng 開封	80	Prague	70
Nan-chang 南昌	-	-	-	Yang-chou 揚州	45	Rome	35	Chuan-chou 泉州	80	Cologne	54	Wu-chang 武昌	64	Granada	70

Source: T. Chandler and G. Fox, *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth. An Historical Census*, New York, St. David's University Press, 1987, 70-75, and 528-530; and Paul M. Hohenberg and Lynn Hollen Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe 1000-1950*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, Harvard University Press, 1985, 11.

lifestyles; and China was seemingly accustomed to a gradual but steady growth with strong awareness of continuity.

3. 2   *Political Economy: Power, Institutions and Identity*

Although there existed rather similar designs, or at least terms, of political and economic institutions in pre-1450 Europe and China (such as "city-states", "feudalist kingdoms" and "empire"), yet while sketching the dynamic power structures of European and Chinese political economy we also find rather dissimilar spirits in the institutional operations. The different political and economic understandings of people over a long course may, too, determine the character of an integral cultural identity.

3. 2. 1   The case of Europe

The Greeks invented "politics", however, Greek city-states were by no means "the origin" of the European polity. In fact before 1200 BC, everywhere in Europe was occupied by Celtic, Germanic, Slavish and Mycenaean warrior kings. Archaeological evidences such as the prominence of weapons, armours and Mycenaean towns that were dominated by strong fortification, clearly show that warriors rather than city-states ruled at Mycenae. [49] It is not until 1200 BC, when Dorian descended from the north of Greece and destroyed the kingdoms that "the self-governing *polis*, territorial state of city and agricultural hinterland" began. And within the *polis* it was claimed that every male landowner, aristocrat or peasant, born in the territory possessed freedom and citizenship.[50] What followed the founding city-states were two major wars between the Greeks and the Persians in 492-490 BC and 480-479 BC, and the Peloponnesian War in 431-421 BC and 414-404 BC. Interestingly, despite the open rivalries and divisions between Athens and Sparta, [51] those struggles strengthened rather than mitigated the Greekness among the Greeks. Perhaps wars, which entangled with intriguing political and economic interests and ethnic-geographical components, had weaved among them a sense of commonness

---

[49]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 210, 213.
[50]   See Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 197.
[51]   Although most Hellenic cities had joined forces to oppose aggression by non-Hellenic powers like the Persians and Carthaginians, yet even in old Greece, there were cities that supported Darius and Xerxes. Gordon Childe, op. cit. (1954), 238.

84

and feeling of belonging to one community. Facing the life-threatening Persians, the Greeks had constructed an image of civilised against barbarians, or liberty against slavery. It is such an emotional rather than rationalistic attachment that shaped a consciousness of "east-west antagonism", and which thereafter radiated to a pan-European scale. Although city-states and the Athenian democracy did not survive, the east-west complex became a recurrent theme in European history.[52]

Greek city-states ended up accepting the tyranny of Philip of Macedon and of Alexander. Alexander realised the great dream of conquering the Persian Empire, but at the cost of the Greek cities renouncing their independence. Democracy was gradually destroyed by the alliance of the higher Greek classes, first with the Macedonians and later with the Romans. However, for the first time Europe had a pan-European inter-ethnic framework in dealing with economic and political affairs. Unlike the case of China, the pan-European framework started with a conquering empire without much coordinative experiences. As Toynbee rightly stated, the "secret of Roman government was the principle of indirect rule." For apart from Italy, the Roman Empire was established as an association of self-governing city-states with a fringe of autonomous principalities in the regions.[53] The policy followed by Romans was to offer the various polities they subdued, or allied with, a republican constitution modelled upon their own, and to then take the urban centres as the contact points for tribute collection to support the superstructure—the army and the civil service. To ensure effective control, the Roman Empire had to incorporate barbarian tribes as constituent *civitates* by enlisting the existing local elites to fulfil the role of local *senators*, *curiales* or *decuriones*.[54] According to Grant, under the emperor Septimius and Caracalla, out of 479 senators whose origins are known, 204 were Italians, representing only just over 40% of the total and including very few survivors of the 43 patrician families that had existed a century earlier.[55] Roman government released

---

[52] J. M. Roberts, op. cit. (1996), 29.
[53] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History, London*, Thames and Hudson, 1972 One Volume Edition, 278.
[54] Alex Woolf, "Romancing the Celts. A Segmentary Approach to Acculturation", in Ray Laurence and Joanne Berry eds., *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 111-124, quote page 112.
[55] Originally the six hundred Roman senators had all been Italians, and under Vespasian (AD 69-79) over 80% were still Italian origin. But Trajan (98-117), himself from Spain, admitted provincials as often as Italian; and soon after his death Italy provided not much more than half the senate's total strength, with Africans now becoming members alongside Gauls and Spaniards. Under Septimius and

a high proportion of central and provincial official posts to non-Italian nobles. It is even said that, what kept the "Roman Empire united was not the efficiency of the administration, nor the might of the army, but the community of ideas and interests, which existed between the Roman aristocrats and the local nobles, by the mediation of whom the provinces were governed."[56]

The political map of Europe after the year 500 revealed major divisions. Germanic tribes of Anglo-Saxons extended their rule on the island of Britain. The kingdom of the Franks lay in the northern part of Gaul, around Paris and east to the Rhine. South of the Franks stood the Visigoths, who ruled the southern half of Gaul and most of Spain. South of them were the Vandals, who ruled throughout previously Roman Northwest Africa. In all of Italy were the Ostrogoths. At Constantinople, the East Roman Empire began to face the Slavs from the northeast and Muslims from the south, however it managed to last to the middle of the 15th century with a well-established bureaucracy and military support from the West. Byzantine officialdom regulated many aspects of life, far more than we would think proper in the modern era. Bureaucrats helped supervise education and religion and presided over all forms of economic endeavour. Urban officials in Constantinople, for example, regulated prices and wages, maintained systems of licensing, controlled exports, and enforced the observance of the Sabbath. Bureaucratic methods too helped regulate the army and navy, the courts, and the diplomatic service.[57] In Western Europe, the empire died during the dark ages. After the sixth century, despite the effort of Charlemagne, "the three social forces, the church, the aristocracy and the merchants, which in China were harnessed to empire," tore up the imperial power structures and built up "a community of a bureaucratic church, aristocratic monarchies and commercial republics."[58] What followed was a series of conflicts between the Popes and the Monarchies. Between 955 and 1057 German emperors deposed five and named twelve out of twenty popes, yet the church gradually asserted control over the

---

Caracalla these tendencies increased. Out of 479 of their senators whose origins are know, 204 were Italians, representing only just over 40% of the total and including very few survivors of the 43 patrician families that had existed a century earlier. Throughout the third century, Italian membership remained static at the same percentage. See Michael Grant, *The Climax of Rome*, London, Phoenix, 1968, 71-72

[56] Josep Fontana, op. cit. (1995), 12-13.

[57] Robert E. Lerner, Standish Meacham and Edward McNall Burns, op. cit. (1993(a)), 218-219, 239.

[58] S. A. M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 110, 121.

monarchies in the 11th and 12th century. Gregory VII (1073-1085) excommunicated Henry IV and suspended him from all his powers as an earthly ruler when Henry refused to accept the appointed prelates; Innocent III (1198-1216) disciplined the French King Philip Augustus for his marital misconduct, and levied the first income tax on the clergy to support a crusade to the Holy Land.[59] It was never conceivable for the Chinese that a pope, a religious leader, dared and was able to dismiss an emperor, and that religious institutions obtained the right and power to levy tax, and regulate, if not govern, the society. The church was certainly an indivisible part of European political economy in the pre-1450 period. By and large, with the emergence of the merchants and the monarchical recognition that the international trade activities needed more military protection, "a mixture of economic, military, and ideological forces pushed into prominence a set of 'coordinated,' centralised, territorial states" between 1155 (beginning of the reign of English King Henry II) and 1477 (the collapse of the last great alternative "feudal state", the Duchy of Burgundy). Central states (normally monarchies) in cooperation with the merchants, pushing outward from the core role as guarantor of rights and privileges, became the coordinator of the main activities in their territories. Whilst local and transnational forms of Christian and "feudal" regulation started to show signs of decline in the face of national political regulation.[60]

Two points can be made from the above accounts. First of all, in respect of political economy, a European identity (such as there was) would have seemed to be founded upon a dynamic concept of "unity within diversity", which was held together by the mechanism—"balance of power". As Michael Mann argues in his "power – resource" theory, as early as the Hellenic period Greece itself was "a diplomatically stabilised multistate organisation in which no polis had the resources to incorporate the others, the mother city-states lacked the resources to re-conquer a rebellious colony." Including the Roman Empire, there was no single political unit in the European continent, which was forceful enough to regulate the interactivities at a pan-European scale before 1450. The history of the medieval period shows that all power actors had autonomous spheres. The lord, vassal, town, church, and even peasant village, had

---

[59] Robert E. Lerner, Standish Meacham and Edward McNall Burns, op. cit. (1993(a)), 318-321.
[60] Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 416, 427.

their own resources to contribute to a delicate balance of power.[61] Such a contest of power in European societies helped give rise to the specifically European phenomenon of the semi-autonomous cities.[62] Lacking a centralised coordinative institution did not stop Europeans from developing similar political and economic systems and cultures. As Toynbee wrote, "at the earliest stage of Hellenic history of which we have any record, there is a sharp contrast between the cultural unity of the Hellenic World and its political disunity." Even wars could not inhibit all agents from forming similar cultures.[63] The competitive or conflicting power relations had surprisingly prepared the ground for a distinctive mechanism that maintained the unique dynamism among European political and economic entities. The spirit of insistence on particularity and autonomy had permeated throughout varied political and economic entities, and it is in this sense that cultural unity was able to assert itself among diversified power agencies. Like everywhere else, Europe did not lack despotism. After 404 BC, victorious Sparta intervened in the affairs of other cities even more highhandedly than Athens; and Thebes and Macedon later did likewise. The cases of Macedonia and the Roman Empire show that intentions of monopoly abounded in Europe too.[64] What is more crucial here however is that the despotism was "mitigated by law, by territorial partition, and within states, by the division of power between the centre (the crown) and local seigniorial authority." To us, the "check and balance" mechanism seemed less a result of conscious design or cultural engineering from the elites, but an outcome of the division among different agents and their insufficient power and resources. Europeans simply "adopted" a law in operation.

The second point has much to do with the notion of "civil society", a concept that may be traced back to the Greek "phalanx". As McNeill pointed out,[65] the phalanx confirmed the ideal of self-identification with and dedication to the polis, for the hoplites, who defended their city on the battlefield could hardly be excluded from

---

[61] Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 205, 397.
[62] David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 35-36.
[63] Arnold J. Toynbee, op. cit. (1972), 55.
[64] William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 283.
[65] Solon's laws, for example, gave the class of hoplites the right to act as a court of appeal from the judicial decisions of the aristocratic magistrates; and in Sparta the Lycurgan constitution gave the assembly of citizen-hoplites power to elect all magistrates. See William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 218-221.

Chart III-3: Diagram of a Typical Manor in Europe

WASTE

WOOD LOT

AUTUMN PLANTING

FALLOW

SPRING PLANTING

VILLAGE

CHURCH

PARSON'S HOUSE

Parson's Fields or God's Acre

COMMON PASTURE

MILL

BARN

OVEN

POND

MANOR HOUSE

LORD'S CLOSE
Showing parcellation

MARSH

MEADOW
Showing meadow lots

Glebe lands of parish church in open fields

Lord's demesne in open fields

Strip fields of a single peasant
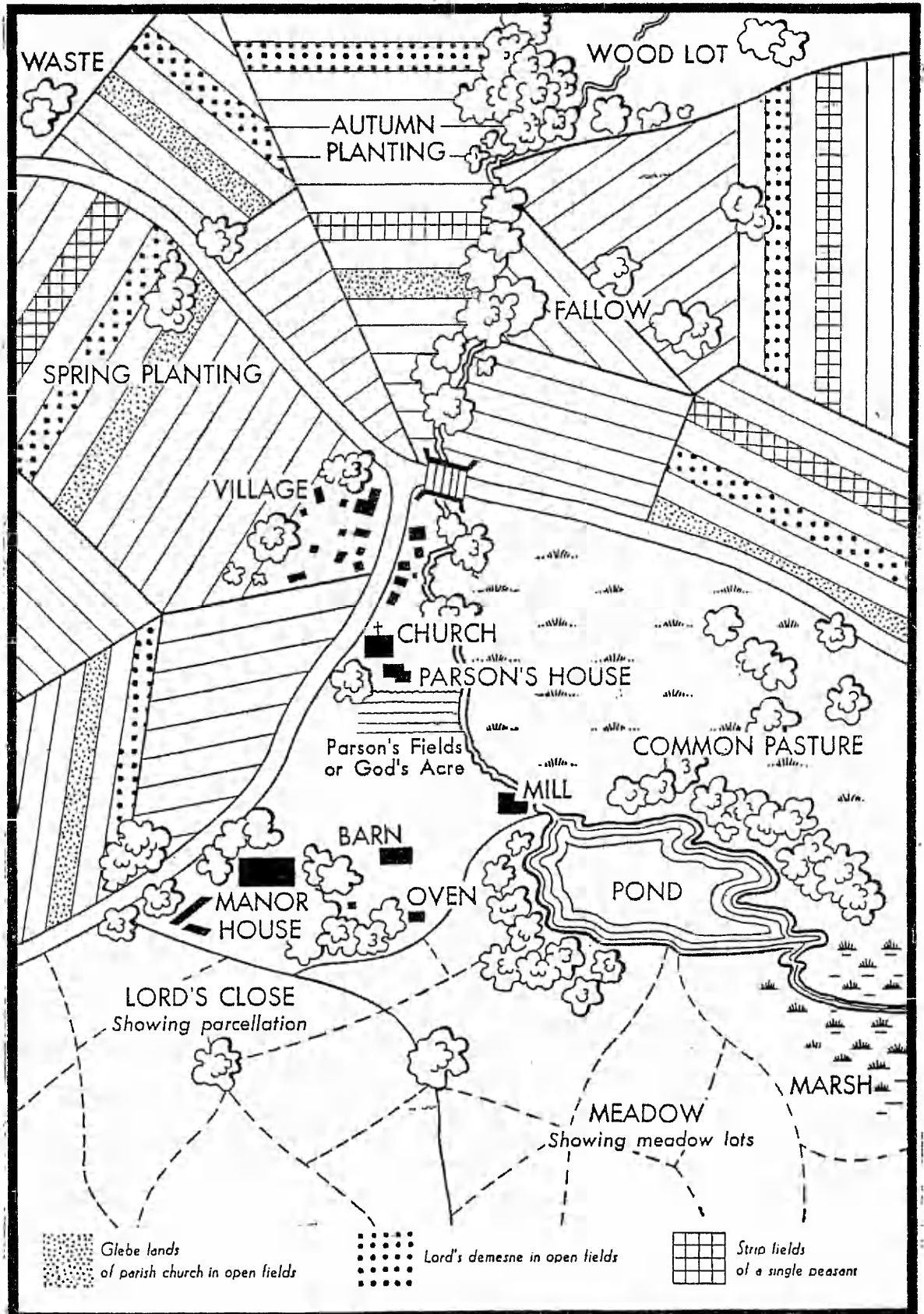
Source: See Footnote 67.

participating in civil affairs. Civil life in Europe did not fade away with the collapse of the West Roman Empire. Such a notion evolved on from the periods of the Roman Empire to the medieval age, and contributed to confer the "social status and political rights—rights crucial to the conduct of business and to freedom from outside interference"—to the residents of both the manor villages and the cities.[66] In the heartland of the 8th and 9th century Frankish kingdom (the region between the Loire and the Rhine), basic features of the European peasantry were still discernible. From the High Middle Ages onwards the three-field system (the cultivation of acreage in a three-year cycle of winter planting, summer planting and then allowing ground to lie fallow), the commons ordinance with manorial lordship and the hide offered for communal utilisation became the hallmarks of the European villages (see *Chart III-3 Diagram of a Manor*).[67] The essential relations of feudalism in Medieval Europe may be defined as an arrangement of society on the basis of contract. Within the basic feudal organisation (the manor), the status of a person depended in every way on his position on the land, and on the other hand, land-tenure determined political rights and duties that were stipulated explicitly or implicitly within the contract.[68] Such an agrarian system established within village communities their various rights of administrative autonomy, which spread across the major parts of Europe including Britain, France, Germany and Italy. With some delay, it also extended to marginal regions of Europe, such as Scandinavia and the Baltic.[69] As Alan Macfarlane argues, from this well-defined contractual right and privilege of every single individual (or peasant), there emerged the European individualism—the view that "society is constituted of autonomous, equal, units, namely separate individuals, and that such individuals are more important, ultimately, than any larger constituent group." In reverse, the individuality of a person is reflected in the "concept of individual private

---

[66]   David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 35-36.
[67]   We agree with Burns that, it should be borne in mind when writing about manorialism based on a 'typical manor', we are resorting to a historical approximation: no two manors were ever exactly alike; indeed many differed enormously in size and basic characteristics. Moreover, in those parts of Europe farthest away from the original centres of Carolingian settlement between the Seine and the Rhine, there were few, if any, manors at all. In Italy there was still much agriculture based on slavery, and in central and eastern Germany there were many small farms worked by free peasant. Robert E. Lerner, Standish Meacham and Edward McNall Burns, op. cit. (1993(a)), 283.
[68]   H. M. Gwatkin, J. P. Whitney, J. R. Tanner, and C. W. Previté-Orton eds., *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Cambridge, Vol. III, The Cambridge University Press, 1957, 458, 472.
[69]   Werner Rösener, *The Peasantry of Europe*, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, Blackwell, Translated Edition 1994 (by Thomas M. Barker, First Published 1993), 21-22.

property, in the political and legal liberty of the individual," and later in the 16th century, in the idea of the individual's direct communication with God.[70]

The significance for the formation of a law-based civil society in Europe could be found from Michael Mann's observation on "citizenship". As Mann argues,[71]

> The two fundamental notions [for citizenship] were citizen equality among landowners and *commitment and loyalty to the territorial city, rather than to family or lineage*...[my emphasis] Thus 'tribes' (*phylai*) seem to have been originally a military band, a voluntary association of warriors. Later in Athens (as in Rome) tribes were recreated on the basis of locality. Similarly, 'brotherhood' (*phratra*), as in most Indo-European languages, *did not mean a blood relationship but a social group of confederates*.[my emphasis]

In other words, the development of citizenship in Europe had oriented the European society from the familial and lineage based cultural system into an individual, legal, contractual and territorial based society.[72] Such notions of citizenry and territorial state, as argued in Section 2.3.2, tend to associate the social membership with the pragmatic code of political and economic interests and rights, which are regulated by the legal and bureaucratic institutions. They therefore permeate the European political economy a pro-instrumental cultural logic, which dwells less on humanistic cultural traits (i.e. traits of emotionally attached cultural sentiments) such as lineages, moral-ethical ties of families, traditions, symbols, and shared memories. Taking our theory of cultural trajectory in Section 2.3.4, it thus can be argued that for European cultural system the equilibrium points between the axes of practice and meaning (as expressed in *Chart II-2*) seems to incline more to the instrumental side (i.e. to the axis of practice) within the dialogic framework of practice and meaning. This contrasts evidently with the extended familial organisations of China. (See Section 3.2.2)

---

[70] As Macfarlane distinguishes, the English peasantry by the 16th century had differed from peasantry, or traditional peasant society, in the rest of the world by the criteria that in England the basic unit of production was a manor or estate rather than an extended household, and that the ownership of land was an individual rather than a village household or community. The head of a family, as an individual of his own rather than a representative manager of the family, enjoy a "complete, absolute, and exclusive private ownership" of the land. Alan Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1978, 5; and Alan Macfarlane, *The Culture of Capitalism*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1987, 9.

[71] Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 197.

[72] Hsu Cho-Yun 許倬雲, op. cit. (1988), 11.

3.2.2   The case of China

The above two points provide a useful point of entry for our comparative analysis of Chinese political economy. Firstly, the dynamism of the Chinese political and economic system differs from the principle of a "balance of power". Such pattern can be analysed with two main adjusting mechanisms: (a) a "self-restraining" coordinating centre (the central government); and (b) the fluctuating governmental control and occasional minority rules.

As already illustrated in the section concerning early Chinese ethnic distribution, China too had city-states in the pre-Chin 先秦 Periods. Where the Chinese multi-states system differs from the Greek and those in Medieval Age Europe, however, is that there was mostly either a tribal league leader (such as the Yellow Emperor) or a Hegemonic Feudalist State, which performed as the coordinating centre overseeing the inter-state political and economic relations on a more or less pan-Chinese scale. Under the Chou house (1027-221 BC), China had established a feudal-aristocratic system governed by the King. To protect the reigning house and to facilitate the rule of the King, thousands of vassal states or principalities were created and nobles were put in charge of them.[73]   Those vassal states then conquered or assimilated other states around them and extended the territory of Chou to the extent of China proper. Upon the accession of King Ping to the throne in 771 BC, the Kingdom of Chou weakened, and vassal states or principalities became increasingly powerful and independent. In place of the Chou, hegemonic duchies such as Chi under Duke Huan 齊桓公 and Chin under Duke Wei 晉文公 became the new centres of the interstate relations. As shown in *Chart III-4*, eight of the major feudal states merged from 1 to 37 vassal states and became major players of the Later Chou Period.[74] We must note that such a process does not merely stand for a political or military conquest. As argued by Tang,

---

[73]   Under the system, five orders of nobility were introduced, which includes *Kung* 公(dukes), *Hou* 侯 (marguis), *Po* 伯(earls), *Tsu* 子(viscounts), and *Nan* 男(barons).

[74]   Of the 1,773 states or principalities set up in the area where the House of Chou established their power, only about 170 were left after 722 BC, and of this number only twelve were of any significance. The twelve states includes Lu 魯, Cheng 鄭, Wei 衛, Sung 宋, Chi 齊, Chen 陳, Tsao 曹, Tsai 蔡, Chin 秦, Yen 燕, Chin 晉, Chu 楚, and Chou 周. See Gerald Chan, "The Origin of the Interstate System: The Warring States in Ancient China", *Issues & Studies*, Vol. 35 No. 1, 1999, 147-166, quote page 151-154; and Ssu-Ma Chien 司馬遷, *The Records of History* 史記, The Chronicle Table of Twelve Dukes 十二諸侯年表.

it has to be seen as the "racial regrouping under cultural pluralism",[75] which gradually consolidated various ethnic Chinese into one integral cultural system via political and economic means. After five hundred years chaos, Chin-Shih-Hung-Ti finally vanquished other independent states between 230 and 221 BC. He abolished the aristocrat-feudal system, and unified the currency, the writing system, measuring system, as well as the width of wheel system. Hereafter, China became a politically unified Middle Kingdom with a centralised government that was supported by the civil service system. The government mobilised and allocated resources around the country, and extended its branches (local governments) into the provinces and counties.

Chart III-4: Conquest and Absorption of City-States during the Spring and Autumn Period (722- 481 BC)

State	Rank under Chou System	Number of States Conquered or Absorbed
Lu 魯	Marquis	11
Sung 宋	Duke	8
Wei 衛	Marquis	5
Chi 齊	Duke	12
Chin 秦	Earl	31
Chu 楚	Viscount	37
Wu 吳	Viscount	6
Yueh 越	Earl	1

Source: Gerald Chan, "The Origin of the Interstate System: The Warring States in Ancient China", *Issues & Studies*, Vol. 35 No. 1, 1999, 147-166, quote page 151.

The end of the aristocrat-feudal system in Chin could be a very crucial factor for the political and economic integration in later China. As in the case of Europe, having to make a living through the rented or allocated land for the farmers and tenants meant the attachment of person to soil; while the emphasis on loyalties of tenants to landlords, and free individuals and landlords to the vassal aristocrats on the other hand indicated the personal attachment to hereditary nobility. With the increasing economic and military power and deepening local or regional loyalties of people to the vassal states, it seemed inevitably that the aristocrat-feudal system was to bring about a weakened central government in a long run. Such was the case of Chou feudalism.

---

[75] Tang Te-Kang 唐德剛, *Seventy Years in the Late Ching Period (I) The Transformation of Chinese Society and Culture* 晚清七十年(壹). 中國社會文化轉型綜論, Taipei, 遠流, 1998, 17.

Acknowledging the divisional experiences and the possible disintegration of his empire in the future, Chin-Shih-Hung-Ti made a radical change in the political system by adopting a centralised government and civil service system, which detached the civil officers and military generals from the localities by shifting their post every few years.[76] The later Chinese dynasties basically adopted this centralised government and rotation system, which significantly decreased the opportunity of local divisions. Varied from the Roman case, a long-term interstate or interethnic communicative experience before the Chin and Han Periods had accumulated a fundamental basis for an integral political entity in China. Although unlike the Chinese model, European feudalism came after the fall of the Roman Empire; it seemed well to be the case that the principle of "balance of power", which reinforced by the land and personal attachment to multiple centred vassal aristocrats, had superseded a powerful central authority and fostered the divisional conditions. The aristocrat-feudal system and division of power between merchants, churches and the monarchies in the post Roman Europe without a following hegemonic power seemed to have led the continent into an irrevocable separation thereafter.

A coordinating centre or centralised government should not be equated to despotism. We do not intend to defend the power-concentrated characteristic of the centralised government, which varied significantly from that of a multi-centred Europe. Governmental mobilisation of resources and manpower for large-scaled military constructions and infrastructures (such as the Great Wall in the Chin and Han Dynasties, and the Great Canal and irrigation systems in the Sui and Tang Dynasties) had evidently been "advertised" as major accomplishments in official histories. Nevertheless, governments in China did show a peculiar characteristic of self-restraint that could hardly be found in Europe. Such a self-restraining feature was also reflected on Chinese states' idealistic governing principle, which Confucius termed "the rule of virtue 為政以德". By this he meant that instead of using political interests and criminal punishments as the standards of governance, the rulers or politicians

---

[76] The collapse of Chinese aristocrat-feudal system and the maintenance of an integral political empire must also be understood together with the social mobility (see Section 3.3.1) and ideological control (Section 3.3.2) before and after the Chin Empire, for such were compact factors, which could not stand apart from one another.

should "guide people with virtue, and rule them with rites or courtesies".[77] The Confucian doctrine was employed later by the leading Confucian Tung Chung-Shu 董仲舒(179-104 BC), a prime minister in the Earlier Han Dynasty, whose political philosophy tied the "Mandate of Heaven" (the "way of *tien* or nature") closely with the behaviours of the rulers (action of humanity). "If the committing of evil and crimes by monarchs brings calamities to the people, Heaven will deprive the monarchs of the power to rule," Tung argued in his *Many Dewdrops of Spring and Autumn* 春秋繁露.[78] With the institutionalisation of Confuciansim as the dominant political ideology (see Section 3.2.3 below), the rule of virtue thus became a central governing principle in China especially after the Han. Such a principle emphasised the ethical ties and moral commitments between the rulers and the ruled, whilst connected the occurrences of warfare and natural disasters tightly with the misrules of the emperors.[79] Over-exploiting the people was deemed as immoral, and political none-doings in contrast would allow people to prosper naturally. It was based on such a moral-ethical oriented cultural logic that the Chinese central bureaucracy adopted a policy of least intervention on many historical occasions. Three historical examples may illustrate the point.

The first example is the period of "Great Peace of Wei-Chun Reign 文景之治" (180-141 BC) in the Earlier Han Dynasty. The two emperors Wei and Chun adopted an eclectic Confucian and Taoist philosophy as the guideline for governance, which stressed the minimum disturbance of the people rather than intensive mobilisation of power and wealth.[80] To show his adherence to such a principle of moral rule, the Emperor Chun reduced the land tax from 1/15 to an unprecedented low rate of 1/30. The state gave up the opportunities to accumulate more wealth and material resources not because it lacked efficient institutions, but because the emperor and civil officers

---

[77] *The Analects* 論語. Section 2. (Taipei, 啟明書局, Reprints.)

[78] Quoted from Gang Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy: Structural Equilibrium and Capitalist Sterility*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999 (b), 109.

[79] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *The Origins of Modern Chinese Thought—The Evolution of Chinese Political Culture from the Perspective of Ultrastable Structure (Vol. I)* 中國現代思想的起源—超穩定結構與中國政治文化的演變, Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chinese University, 2000, 61. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[80] For instance *The Analects* put it that "The one who can rule with [political] non-doings is really the great ruler Shun.無為而治者其舜也與" *Lao-Tsu* on the other hand wrote that "To practice non-doings, and everything will fall into place.為無為則無不治" See *The Analects* 論語, Section 15. (Taipei, 啟明書局, Reprints.); and Lao Tan 老聃, *Lao-Tsu* 老子, Section 3, (Taipei, 時報文化, 1987 Reprints.)

deliberately chose a different set of cultural values, which celebrated the ideal of virtue, social stability and tranquillity. Another example is the period of "Great Peace of Chien-Kuan Reign 貞觀之治 (AD 627-649)" in the Tang Dynasty. The prime minister Wei Cheng 魏徵 wrote in clarity that "the Sui Dynasty was in jeopardy because of its intention to mobilise the country toward wealth and power; our state on the other hand is peaceful because we tranquillise it with a policy that is content of scarcity and weakness."[81] For many historians, periods like these had become the most highly evaluated reigns and were taken as the model for later rulers to follow. Lastly, according to Wang's calculation in *Book of the Han*, there were thirty-three instances in which the Han emperors promulgated the "edict of self-punishment 罪己詔" and admitted their own ill-governance in order to pacify the natural disasters and political unrest.[82] Such self-degrading Edicts and rule of virtue show a spectacular Chinese way in governance, that of not only pursuing the material richness of the country, but also the spiritual satisfaction of people through moral mobilisation. This self-restraint has to be seen as part of a self-adjusting mechanism for Chinese political economy, because it represents a distinct form of cultural dynamism.

Looking at the civil service system, as early as the Han Dynasty China had started to develop a central and local bureaucracy, which was supported by the recommendation and examination system. Each year, hundreds of "Filially Pious and Incorrupt 孝廉" were recruited from different prefectures. As Bielenstein comments, in spite of flaws, "Han civil-service recruitment provided the government with sufficiently competent candidates for office, and at the height of Former and Late Han the officials fulfilled their duties efficiently and well."[83] With continuous improvement in the Wei-Chin, Sui and Tang Periods, the civil service system became the bedrock of Chinese bureaucracy. However, taking a look at the figures of Chinese bureaucrats (see *Chart III-5*), we find that the ratios of the civil officer and clerks occupied only from 0.26%

---

[81] See Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1995 (a)), 390-391, 297.
[82] Huang Jen-Yu 黃仁宇, *Discussing Chinese History at the Hudson River Side* 赫遜河畔談中國歷史, Taipei, 時報文化, 1989, 63, 98.
[83] It is regulated that a county (or prefecture) should recommend one Filially Pious and Incorrupt for each 200,000 inhabitants annually. Units with less than 200,000 inhabitants should recommend one man each second year, and with less than 100,000 inhabitants one man each three years, was increases to 250-300 men per year. See Hans Bielenstein, *The Bureaucracy of Han Times*, Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney, Cambridge University Press, 1980, 134-135.

to 0.54% of total populations in different periods, which is in fact not high at all. Compared to the number of priests and monks in medieval Europe (who were the major resources of bureaucrats in the manorial states and monarchies), which roughly maintained at a ratio of 0.5% to 0.6% of European populations,[84] such ratios are even slightly lower. The figures again do not seem to support a rigid governmental control in China, but rather, a reflection of its self-restraining feature.

Chart III-5: Figures of Civil Officers in pre-1450 China[85]

Dynasty	Number of Officers	Number of Officers and Clerks	Estimated Population	Officers and Clerks Ratio in Estimated Population
Former Han Dynasty (Figure in Emperor Ai's time) (r. 7-1 BC)	--	*130,285	(1 BC) 50,000,000	0.26%
Late Han Dynasty (AD 25-220)	*7,567	**152,986	(AD 200) 50,000,000	0.31%
Chin 晉 (265-420)	*6,836	--	(300) 55,000,000	--
Chi 齊 (479-502)	*2,103	--	(500) 50,000,000	--
Sui Dynasty (581-618)	*12,576	**195,937	(600) 45,000,000	0.44%
Tang Dynasty (618-907)	*18,806	*368,668	(900) 75,000,000	0.49%
North Sung Dynasty (960-1127)	**24,000	**536,000	(1100) 100,000,000	0.54%
Yuan Dynasty (1206-1367)	#22,490	--	(1300) 85,000,000	--

Source: "*" Tu Yu 杜佑, *Trans-dynastic Records* 通典, Vol. 19. (Taipei, 商務印行, 1987 Reprints.); "**" Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *Prosperity and Crisis* 興盛與危機, Taipei, 風雲時代出版公司, 1994(a), 49, 105; "#" Hsiao Chi-Ching 蕭啟慶, "Ethnic Policy and Ethnic Relations in Yuan Dynasty 元朝的族群政策與族群關係", in History Monthly 歷史月刊 ed., *Three Thousands Years Ethnic Integration 族群融合三千年*, Taipei, 歷史智庫, 1996, 121-136, quote page, 126. Estimated population derives from the above McEvedy figure.

Very much an irony, the other major self-adjusting mechanism that stabilises the "internal dynamism" of China is the recurring rebellions and minority "returns". What used to follow the insufficiency of a Chinese government's effective responses to famines, floods and external attacks, or cases of corruption and excessive exploitation were commonly plebeian rebellions that exacerbated the difficulties of governmental control. The eventual collapse of a corrupt government then brought about a new established dynastic regime. Such is the reason why to Chin, Liu, and Deng, farmer

---

[84] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *Prosperity and Crisis 興盛與危機*, Taipei, 風雲時代出版公司, 1994(a), 73.
[85] The system and figures of civil officers and clerks in different or even the same Chinese dynasty could vary disparately. Here we use the highest figure available in different dynasties to have a general calculation.

rebellions are taken as important "self-fixing devices" or "self-adjusting mechanisms" that had from time to time restored the Chinese dynastic institutions, and that had periodically reinstated the dynamic equilibrium of China.[86] Besides, it is also significant to recognise that beneath such self-adjusting mechanisms there was the supporting inner cultural logic. Confucianism, as a device that was designed also for the ruled, actually endorsed the right of the plebeian to rebel against the corrupt government and to restore the political order. As Deng points out, "because of the lack of law to control state corruption, when the ruling class failed to represent desirable moral and policy standards, the ruled were entitled to rebel and replace unpopular regimes at the people's wills." This moral justification for peasant rebellions had become a common belief at the grass-roots level of Chinese society, and in a deteriorating socio-economic situation plebeian uprisings were almost expected to occur. This attitude towards mass rebellions, which again reveals a heavy humanistic intervention of in Chinese political economy, would have been almost unimaginable in Europe.[87]

Indeed, farmer riots and nomadic invasions in China often caused periods of disunity (such as the cases of Wei, Chin and South and North Dynasty after the Han Empire, and Five Dynasties and Ten States 五代十國 at the end of Tang). Such fluctuations of governmental control reflected clearly in the variations of Chinese bureaucrats and the records of official census. As shown in *Chart III-5*, the figure of central officers altered from 2,103 in the Chi Period to 24,000 in the Northern Sung and Ming Dynasties. While in *Chart III-6* we also note the dramatic rises and falls of populations in the records of Chinese official census. The curve of the official census at many points differs enormously from the estimated demographic figures. It is problematical to believe that Chinese populations did decrease from 60 millions to 21 millions between AD 1 and 26, and rose again to 56 millions in another one hundred years time (even though the period did conform to the collapse of the Earlier Han

---

[86] As Deng argues, "during the lower ebbs of socio-economic performance, deviations were, under normal circumstances, detected and corrected by the Chinese state to avoid crises simply in the state's interests. If this device failed, a peasant rebellion would reset the clock for the structure. Although unintentionally, the alien invasion and conquest of the nomads reinforced the structure... Instead of gloating over the ruins of the Chinese trinary structure, the indigenous peasantry and alien nomads participated actively in its maintenance." See Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (b)), 298; and Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (b)), 200-201.

[87] Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (b)), 242-245, quote page 242.

Dynasty, and that wars and famines could reduce the figure significantly). Rather, it seems more reasonable to assume that the government had lost its control in registering its subjects during that period, and thus the official figures are periodically wildly inaccurate. Similar assumptions can be put forward to periods of AD 158 to 280 (the end of the Later Han Dynasty), 740 to 821 (the weakening of the late Tang Dynasty), and 1109 to 1195 (the collapse of the Sung Dynasty). Less registered populations means less revenue and less manpower the government was able to recruit, while poor governmental control in turn stands for less intervention from the state and more liberty people were able to maintain.

Chart III-6: Comparisons between Estimated and Offical Census in China
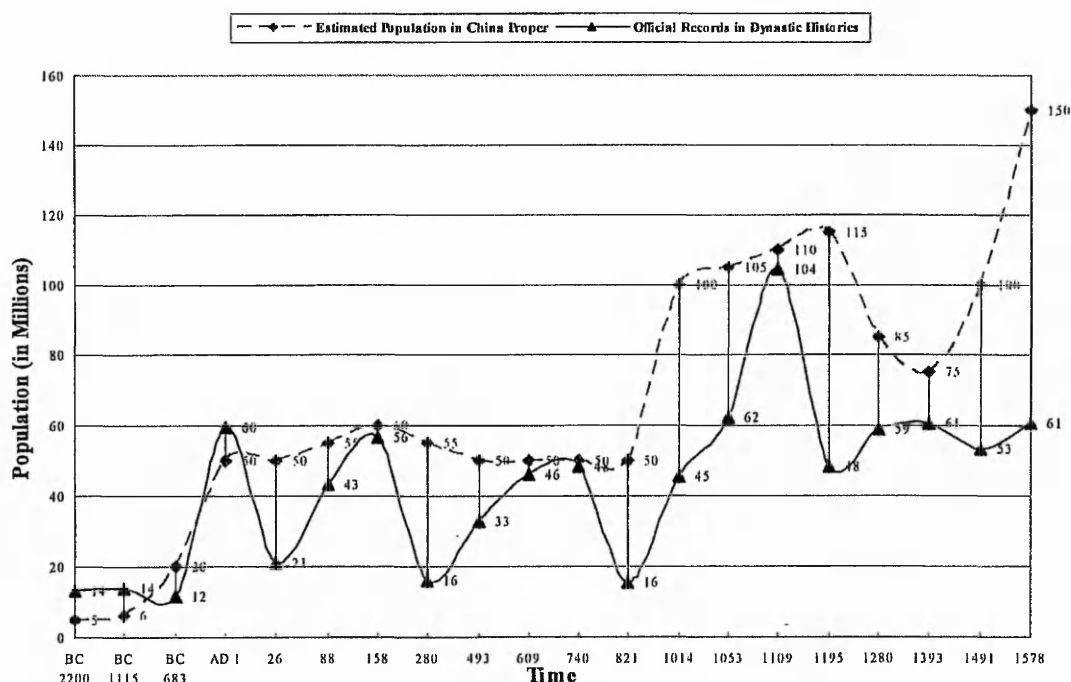
Source: Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1978, 18-27, 166-174. *Book of the Han* 漢書, Vol. 28, No.2; *Book of the Late Han* 後漢書, Vol. 19, No. 1; *Book of the Chin* 晉書, Vol. 14; *Book of the Sui* 隋書, Vol. 29; *The Old Book of the Tang* 舊唐書, Vol. 16; *The New Book of the Tang* 新唐書, Vol. 37; *History of the Sung* 宋史, Vol. 8, 85; *History of the Chin* 金史, Vol. 46; *History of the Yuan* 元史, Vol. 58; *History of the Ming* 明史, Vol. 77. The official figures are drawn from the Twenty-four Dynastic History of China in the electronic database of *Scripta Sinica* 漢籍電子文獻資料庫, which is open to public access on the website of Academia Sinica of Taiwan (http://www.sinica.edu.tw/ftms-bin/ftmsw3); and Tu Yu 杜佑, *Trans-dynastic Records* 通典, Vol. 7. (Taipei, 商務印行, 1987 Reprints.)[88]

---

[88] The official figure before AD 1 was based on the speculation of the government rather than real census. The total populations that were recorded in official records of Sung dynasty (1014, 1053 and 1109) are also problematic. Many speculations have been raised, such as people forged the number to avoid tax; female populations were excluded; or they only registered those adult males. The figures used here are the records of official households times 5 (mouths), that is an average figure in a Chinese family in late Tang dynasty. For explanations of Sung population please see Yen Shou-Cheng 閻守誠,

Recruiting civil officers whilst disregarding the ethnic backgrounds of candidates had created an image of internal fluidity for Chinese cultural identity, while periods of minority rule intensified the feeling of inner diversity. According to the genealogical analysis of all prime ministers in different Chinese dynasties up to the Tang Period, there were 23 out of 369 (6.2%) who were of non-Han ethnic origins. Although in periods of the Han people's rule, the ratio of non-Han ethnic prime ministers had been low (0.96 % in the Former Han; 0.21% in the Late Han; 3.9% in the Tang; 0.61% in the Northern Sung; 0 % in the South Sung; and 0.79% in the Ming Period),[89] however, the period of minority rules since the unification of Chin in 221 BC to the end of Ching Dynasty in AD 1911 occupied some 500 out of 2100 years, that is nearly 1/4 of the time span. Within periods of minority rules, for instance the middle of Yuan Dynasty, with less than 1% of the total population within China, the Mongolian civil officers occupied a ratio of 30.12% in the bureaucracy, which had certainly reversed the minority-majority relations.[90] We are not arguing that there had been a representative government in pre-1450 China as that is obviously not the case. Nevertheless, these figures do give us some indication as to how intensive the processes of continuous internal cultural encounters (see Section 2.3.5, level (c) of cultural encounters) have been within the developing course of Chinese history. It seems fair at least to state that ethnic minorities in China had ample participation, if we take the time span of minority rules into account. Few would disagree that ethnic groups such as Mongolian, Tibetan and Manchurian had occupied critical historical positions in the Chinese cultural system.

Secondly, differing from the overall development of civil societies in Europe, China seemed to have chosen another path in consolidating its civilians. For several reasons, notions like loyalty to the territorial states in exchange for freedom and political rights to the residents were unfamiliar to people in pre-1450 China. As already mentioned, the soft rule and decreases of governmental control in periods of disunity provided people considerable spaces for their daily lives. Moreover, it is generally agreed that

---

History of Chinese Population 中國人口史, Taipei, 文津, 1997, 211-224.

[89]   Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1995 (a)), 448.

[90]   Hsiao Chi-Ching 蕭啟慶, "Ethnic Policy and Ethnic Relations in Yuan Dynasty 元朝的族群政策與族群關係", in History Monthly 歷史月刊 ed., *Three Thousands Years Ethnic Integration* 族群融合三千年, Taipei, 歷史智庫, 1996, 121-136, quote page, 122.

since Chin and Han Dynasty China had established a free trade system for land, while landlords, free peasants and tenants continued to be the main actors of the agrarian economy.[91] As Deng argues, the landholding and landowning free peasantry (a landholding system that conforms exactly what Macfarlane terms "absolute land ownership by individuals"), together with the agricultural dominated economy and the centralised physiocratic or "agro-centric" government, formulated the "trinary structure" of Chinese socio-economic system:[92]

> First, as the dominant sector in the economy, agriculture provided the majority in society with the basis for a livelihood; the peasantry in turn provided agriculture with manpower, social interest and attention. Second, agriculture provided government with resources whereby revenue was tapped on a regular basis; in turn the government provided agriculture with political protection... Third, the peasantry provided the government with the basis of mandate to rule, sources of personnel for the bureaucracy and soldiers for the army; the government in turn provided the peasantry with political protection and public goods such as law and order, transportation, communication, land acquisition and distribution, and disaster management like famine relief and water control.

As a macro-institution, such an interlocking structure was featured by its supra-stability and continuous efforts in maintaining self-equilibrium for nearly two thousand years. And differing from the Macfarlanean "origins of European individualism", such a structure "was designed to equalise social and private costs and to balance social and private benefits, and thus to reward both individuals and society at the same time."[93] Within the firmly integrated socio-economic framework, the education, civil service and examination system on the other hand offered a semi-institutionalised apparatus for social mobility that we shall discuss later in Section 3.3.1. Here, we want to bring up another structural feature of traditional Chinese political-economy, that is the "extended familial ties". Since the Chou Period, feudalist society was closely associated with the blood-tie based "descent-line system." The "great descent-line 大宗" and "small descent-line 小宗", which developed from the feudal state system had established an order that regulated the rights and responsibilities among the emperor and feudal lords.[94] Such orders in

---

[91] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994(a)) , 27.

[92] Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (b)), 122-124.

[93] Ibid., 152, 298.

[94] Accordingly, the emperor was the son of heaven and the parent of all Chinese, his families were

101

political and economic terms composed the well-known design in early China—the "well-field system 井田制度", with the emperor located at the centre and feudal vassals distributed around its territory. (See *Chart III-7*) Feudal lords, who paid the tributes annually, received the vassals from the emperor, and had the responsibility to protect the

Chart III-7: Diagram of Chinese Well-field System

Feudal Lord	Feudal Lord	Feudal Lord
Feudal Lord	***Chou Emperor***	Feudal Lord
Feudal Lord	Feudal Lord	Feudal Lord

imperial kingdom.[95] Following the Confucian assertion, these notions of "loyalty to relatives, even of the second or third degree, stood high in the scale of Chinese virtues; and widely ramified family cliques formed the basis of much Chinese political activity."[96]

The descent-line system is an extension of the paternal familial leadership, which in combination with the political organisation, familial temple and rituals of ancestral worshiping, build up a symbolic kinship and blood-tie based interpersonal social network.[97] Such a system sets up the responsibility, power relations and ethical orders among the emperor, aristocrats, civil officers and common people. Although the feudal system collapsed after the fall of the Chou Kingdom, however, the descent-line system and the order of symbolic kinship among the emperor, the civil officers and common people passed on. Throughout the Han, Wei-Chin, Sui, Tang Periods, and later after the Sung and Yuan this formula, although slightly weakened, was transplanted into the plebeian stratum and emerged as the main feature of the Chinese social structure. That is the reason why county mayors and local magistrates were

---

called the "great descent-line 大宗", and the emperor passed his thrown to his agnate son. The emperor designated the feudal lords around his own kingdom, and "offered" them the family names. The feudal lords composed the so-called "small descent-line 小宗" (with respect to the emperor), while within the Feudal kingdoms, those Feudal lords become the "great descent-line 大宗" to its subjects and designated its own feudal vassals. Familial temples were kept by both the emperor and feudal lords for ancestor worshipping and the commencing of major ceremonies.

[95]   Yang Kuan 楊寬, *History of Western Chou Dynasty 西周史*, Taipei, 商務印行, 1999, 403.

[96]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 357.

[97]   See Kung Peng-Cheng 龔鵬程, *Thinking and Culture 思想與文化*, Taipei, 業強出版社, 1995, 41, 125, 139-142, 186.

called "parent officers 父母官" in China.[98] As illustrated earlier, civil officers in China only occupied less than 0.5% of total population, which means the extend of bureaucrats can merely reach down to the level of the county. Hence, to enforce efficient control at the lowest level of the society, the bureaucracy must connect itself with the familial villages. This intermediary role was often played by the official-gentry 紳 or scholar-gentry 仕, who either held titles or local civil examination degrees but did not hold an official post, or who had retired from civil offices.[99] (Also see Section 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 below.) They cooperated with the bureaucracy and administered local affairs such as collecting revenues, mediating civil disputes and engineering public constructions. The scholar gentry were usually the head of familial villages, and often maintained similar Confucian ideology. They therefore became the non-bureaucratic social mechanism, which in place of the bureaucracy rooted into the lowest base of society and served as a powerful consolidating institution.[100]

The warm relations between the political, economic institutions and Chinese family system can be further exemplified through the typical design of the inundation system around the familial villages, which composed the basic social units in the rural areas. As shown in *Map III-3: Typical Inundation Canal System in North China*,[101] most of the dikes and canal systems were named after the surnames of the familial villages (for instance the Canal of Chen Family 陳家灘渠, Canal of Lo and Lee Village 羅李村渠, and Canal of Hsi Family 席家堡渠 etc). Vertically, the top-down interrelations between the government and families again disclose the pivotal role that familial loyalties and symbolic kinships must have played in Chinese political economy. For naturally these dikes and canals had to be built up and maintained by labourers recruited from the self-organised familial villages, perhaps with subsidies from the local or central bureaucracy. Horizontally, the familial villages had also established intimate life communities among them, as at times of floods, the collapse of one dike would inescapably cause disasters to adjacent villages. In this case, the vertical and horizontal connections weaved a strong network among Chinese political and

---

[98] Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, *The Essence of Chinese Culture 中國文化要義*, Taipei, 里仁書局, 1982 First Edition, 80-86.

[99] See Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China. Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse*, Taipei, SMC Publishing Inc., 1994, 8.

[100] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994(a)), 55-56.

[101] Map from Chao-Ting Chi, op. cit. (1936).

Map III-3: Typical Inundation Canal System in North China
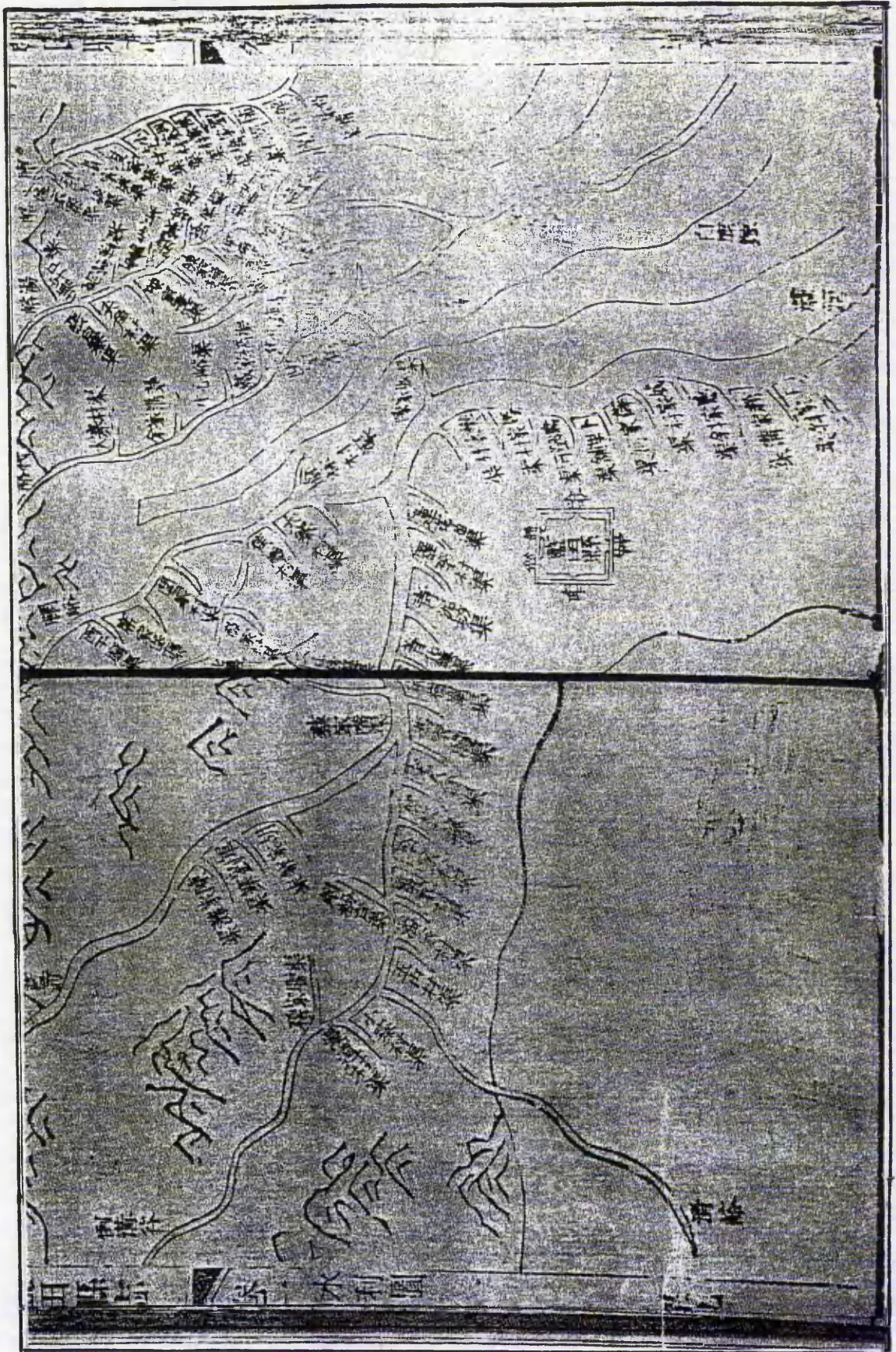
Source: See Footnote 101.

economic institutions. Compared to the European manorial lordship and three-field system, similar monotonous agricultural life however reveals disparate images and styles. Chinese institutions appealed strongly to the rule of ethical and symbolic blood ties rather civil rights and laws. There was no clear concept of contractual citizenship in China. The notion of "citizen" in the Greek, Roman and Medieval periods Europe was unfamiliar to pre-1450 Chinese, as those who came into China and adopted Chinese rituals would be considered as of one family.[102] The feeling, or cultural sentiment, of being part of the "national-family 國家" outweighed the concept of citizen became the criterion of political membership, and formed the integral cultural logic of the Chinese cultural system. Such was absent from the European society, where a comparatively radical individualism prevailed, and private persons confronted the state institutions with remarkably few and weak familial linkages. To bring our theory of cultural trajectory of Section 2.3.4 into play, it can be argued that the cultural trajectory of China (again as expressed by the equilibrium points between the axes of practice and meaning in *Chart II-2*) seems to incline more to the humanistic side (i.e. to the axis of meaning) within the dialogic framework of practice and meaning.

3. 3   Normative Structures: Social Orders and Intellectual Traditions

3. 3. 1   Social Strata

Aristocracy and slaves existed in both Europe and China, and social strata subsisted in both societies without doubt. However, it seems apparent that social mobility between different strata in Chinese society had been far more flexible with comparison to pre-1450 Europe. Needham's observation on Chinese social structure below conforms to the mainstream arguments of Confucian scholars in China:[103]

> Although there are many differences of interpretation among scholars, I feel quite satisfied on the broad principle that during the past 2,000 years, roughly speaking, China did not have feudalism in the aristocratic military Western sense... Sometimes I have been tempted to regard it as a

---

[102]   Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明, op. cit. (1996), 86.
[103]   Joseph Needham, "The Past in China's Present", in Joseph Needham, *Within the Four Seas. The Dialogue of East and West*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1969, 31-88, quote page 32-33.

disappearance of all intermediate feudal lords at an early stage in the unification of the empire (after the time of Chin-Shi-Huang-Ti in the third century BC), and the rule of the country by only one feudal lord, namely, the emperor, operating and exploiting by means of a hypertrophied instrument, the non-hereditary civil service, the bureaucracy, the mandarinate, recruited from the "scholar-gentry".

We agree with Needham that since 221 BC, there were basically no hereditary aristocrats in China. Although on many occasions lordships were given to the relatives of the emperor in China, the number of nobility after the collapse of the Chou was so limited and their status too unstable to really compose a stratum.[104] As Liang pointed out, those lords received their titles, but did not rule the people; they received salary from the government but did not really own the vassal kingdoms. Moreover, the titles did not pass on to their sons.[105] The family trees of Emperor Kuang-Wu 漢光武帝, Liu Shiu 劉秀, gave an evident case of rigid up- and downward social mobility of Chinese aristocrats. The ancestor six generations before Liu Shiu was a feudal King of Chang-sha, named Fa, who was the son of Emperor Chun in the Earlier Han Dynasty. The chart however illustrates that his ancestors later descended from the Earl of Chun-Ling, Magistrate of Yu-Lin and Chu-Lu Mayor of Nan-Tun, to a plain civilian. When Shiu Liu was young, he was too poor to go to school and he had to borrow money from his classmates to buy a donkey. With the donkey he could then earn some money by carrying goods for people (see *Chart III-8: Geneology System of Liu Family in Nan-yang 157 BC - AD 57*).[106] Similar cases could easily be found in different periods of Chinese history, such as the king of Shun, Liu Bei (r. 221-223), in the Three Kingdom Period and Chu Yuan-Chang (r. 1368-1398), the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty.[107]

---

[104] For instance there were still "lordships" given to his brothers or sons by the emperor in the Han period, however after two major aristocratic revolts (the "Rebellion of Seven Kingdoms 七國之亂" and "Rebellion of Eight Lords 八王之亂") were pacified, those so-called feudal kings (or lords) in later dynasties became merely given in name. Also see Hsu Cho-Yun 許倬雲, op. cit. (1988), 54.

[105] Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, op. cit. (1982), 156.

[106] See Huang Jen-Yu 黃仁宇, op. cit. (1989), 78, 81.

[107] As recorded in *Records of the Three Kingdom*, the king of Shu, Bei Liu had to go sale shoes and straw carpet with his mother to survive. And according to History of Ming, "the parents of the First Emperor both died when he was seventeen, yet he was too poor to bury them. His neighbour Chi-Chu Liu offered him a land for burial. The emperor was alone without any relatives, and therefore went to become a monk in Huang-Chueh Temple." See Chen Shou 陳壽, *Records of the Three Kingdoms 三國志*. Vol. 32. Vol. 32 (Taipei, 商務印書館, 1981 Reprints.); and Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al eds., *History of the Ming 明史*, Vol. 1. (Taipei, 中華書局, 1981 Reprints.)

Chart III-8: Geneology System of Liu Family in Nan-yang (157 BC-AD 57)

景帝
(Emperor) Chun

（長沙王）發
(King of Chang-sha) Fa

（舂陵侯）買
(Earl of Chun-ling) Mai

渠
Chu

仁
Jen

利
（蒼梧太守）
Li
(Magistrate of Tsang-wu)

憲
Hsien

慶
Ching

嘉
Chia

順
Shun

堅
Chien

敞
Chang

祉
Chih

張
Chang

玄
（勇始帝）
Hsuan
(Emperor Keng-Shih)

外
（鬱林太守）
Wai
(Magistrate of Yu-lin)

回
（鉅鹿太守）
Hui
(Magistrate of Chu-lu)

欽
（南屯令）
Chin
(Mayor of Nan-tun)

良
Liang

演
Yin

仲
Chung

元
Yuan

秀
（光武帝）
Hsiu
(Emperor Kuang-Wu)

Source: See Footnote 106.
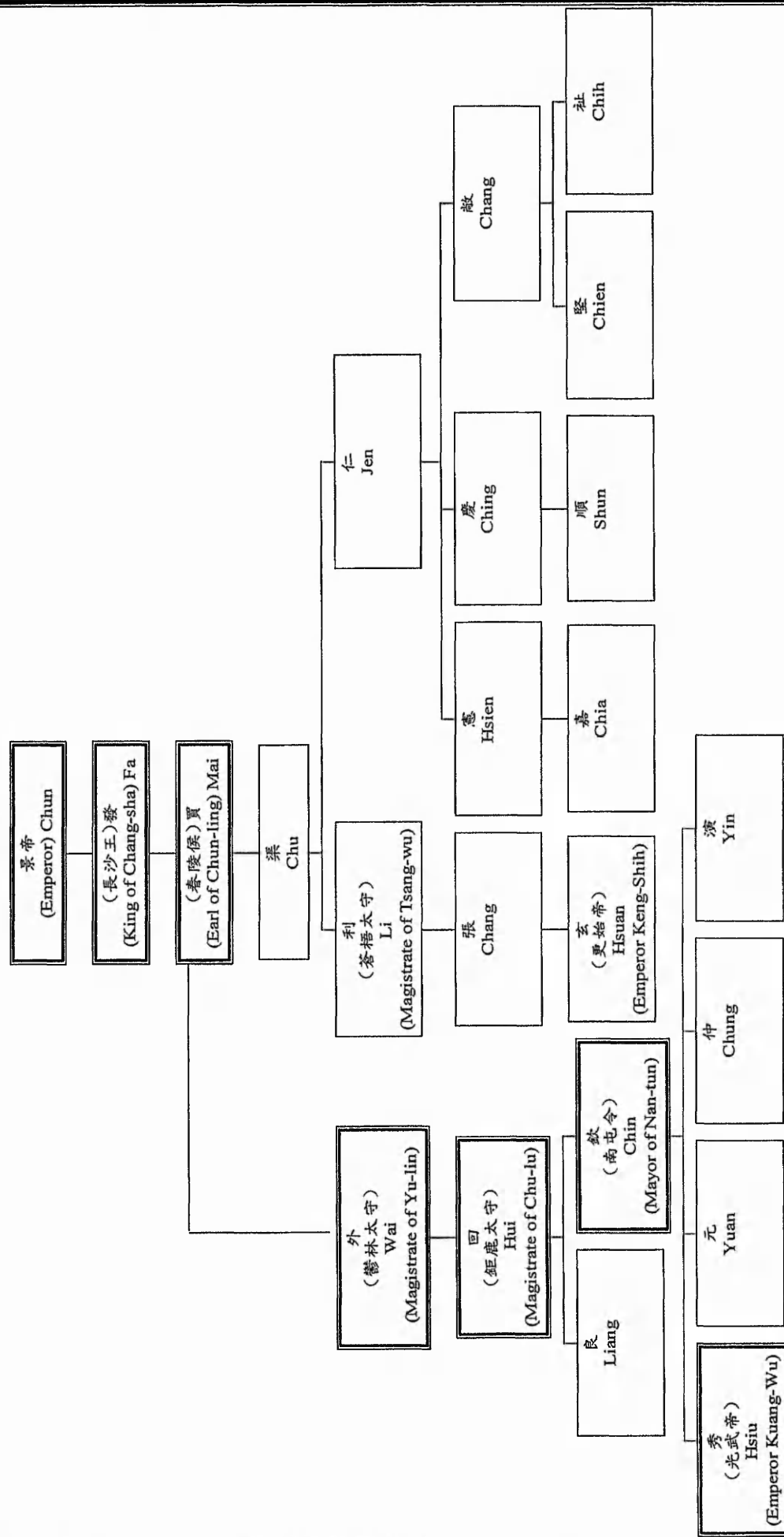
A more peculiar social stratum in China is that which was transformed from the Chou feudal aristocracy that was called "*shih* 士", or later in a broader sense the Chinese intellectuals.[108] "*Shih*" was originally the lowest rank aristocrat in the Chou feudal system (right above plebeian). In the Warring States Period, many of them performed as "guest thinkers", who were supported by the aristocratic families and travelled around different feudal states for diplomatic jobs. As the feudal system disintegrated and mandarins or bureaucrats emerged, the aristocratic *shih* closely associated with the mandarins (who had or had not an official post) and local gentry, and seemed to composed a new social stratum. Yet, we must note that such a stratum was by no means new hereditary nobility. As Liang argued, *shih* or mandarins were like the other three major occupation groups in traditional China—farmers, artisans and merchants, a social division based on profession rather than economic and hereditary social status.[109] Although Chinese mandarins did obtain more political power and enjoy a higher social status than farmers, artisans and merchants,[110] it was mainly due to people's respect for knowledge, official powers, social values and moral guidance rather than subjection to their inherited status. As already mentioned, Chinese government since the Han Period, had moved towards the direction of recruiting civil officers from intellectuals in the plebeian stratum through public examination rather than inherited warriors, nobles or aristocrats. After the Tang Dynasty, all plebeians (except women and traders) were eligible for participation in the official examination without any recommendation. By the end of AD 1000 some 400,000 candidates sat exams each year, sometimes with hundreds of aspirants chasing an official post.[111] Cases of plebeians, who got ahead and became central and local civil officers through the examination system, were uncountable. In the examination lists of 1148 and 1256 over 50 percent of the successful candidates had no father, paternal grandfather or paternal great-grandfather in the bureaucracy. While between 1368 and 1496 over half

---

[108]   See Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, *The History of Chinese Shih Stratum—Ancient History* 中國之士階層 史論-古代篇, Taipei, 聯經, 1980, 10, 76-77.
[109]   Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, op. cit. (1982), 159.
[110]   As banned in the Edict of Emperor Chun in 87 BC (景帝後元二年), people who registered as merchants were forbidden to become civil officers; and in the Edict of Sui Emperor Wen in AD 587 (隋 文帝開皇七年) that artisans and merchants were excluded from civil service system. See Tu Yu 杜佑, *Trans-dynastic Records* 通典, Vol. 13, 14. (Taipei, 商務印行, 1987 Reprints.)
[111]   Patrick K. O'Brien etc. eds., *Philip's Atlas of World History*, London, George Philip Limited, 1999, 86.

the degree-holders came from families without previous record of elite membership.[112] Hence, apart from the descended aristocracy, the emerging intellectual stratum together with the civil service and examination system seemed to have institutionalised a dynamic system for social mobility in China. It is doubtless that those images of plebeian emperor, common originated high-ranking officers and degraded aristocrats must have cast a strong impact upon people's attitudes, values, judgements and social understandings towards their own cultural recognition. To a certain degree, a realistic hope of upward social mobility through education and official examination had also reinforced people's impression concerning the internal cultural dynamism.

Slavery is another good entry point for the comparison of Chinese and European social strata. Like the European case, there was probably a similar vast proportion of slaves in the feudal Chou China, which mostly came from military conquest. Cases like the war with Kuai-fang 鬼方 in which 13,081 people were enslaved in a single conquest were nothing abnormal.[113] However, the number of slaves decreased significantly after the fall of the feudal system in 771 BC. According to Chien, at the end of the Former Han Period, there were no more than two million slaves in the whole country, which is about 1/30 of the total population.[114] Other statistical data on Han slaves varied from 2.5%, 3.85% and 10% of contemporary populations,[115] which on the whole were still incomparable to that of Greek and Roman times. The number of Athenian slaves in the 5th century BC has been put as high as 365,000, four times the citizen population. Or as Child argued, a lower figure of 115,000 is more probable, which however still represented almost 1/3 of the Athenian populations.[116] Estimates for Roman Italy at the height of slavery in the late first century BC vary between 30 and 40 % of the total population. Data on other Roman provinces are sketchy, but the slave proportion was almost certainly much less. Slaves remained at about this level from about 50 BC to AD 50 or 100 and then their number declined as conquest ceased.[117] Statistical data shows that slaves and serfs occupied more than 70% of 1.5

---

[112]   S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. 2000, 117, 177.
[113]   Kuan Yang 楊寬, op. cit. (1999), 271-273.
[114]   See Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), 231.
[115]   Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994(a)), 131.
[116]   Gordon Childe, op. cit. (1954), 209.
[117]   Michael Mann, op. cit. (1986), 260-261.

to 1.8 million populations in 1085 England (citizens and freeman 15%; and aristocrat 4 %).[118]

The "social pyramid" in Greek and Roman times was much higher and sharper than that which most Europeans are accustomed to today. In the Roman Empire the highest government appointments were almost always held by peers or their relations. For the two highest Roman classes, from which all senior army officers and high officials were drawn, there was a definite minimum property qualification (in the time of Augustus, 1,000,000 *sesterces*, or 250,000 times the daily wage of a workman for Senatorial and 400,000 *sesterces* for Knights). Membership of the senate had to be secured by holding certain official positions in the imperial services, while the entry to the imperial service was given by the emperor's nomination. As for the 'knightly' class, it was initially conferred by the emperor's nomination, but thereafter was hereditary.[119] In the medieval age, unlike the case of Han China, European aristocracy did not disintegrate with the Roman Empire. Despite the division into hundreds of political and economic units, hereditary aristocrats still retained their rights of legislation and revenue collecting in various European kingdoms, while feudal lords in the self-sustaining manors claimed the land, serfs as their own property.[120] Although bureaucrats could be recruited from the church, no institutionalised mechanism of social mobility for plebeians seemed to be satisfactory in Europe before 1450. We agree that the rigidity of social strata and figures of slaves should be dealt with under specific historical and social contexts, and can only be understood within the contemporary political and economic conditions. Yet, in a conflated picture of people's cultural image, strong senses of inflexibility of social mobility and high proportionate slave populations would inevitably serve as symbolic indicators for social confinement and disparity. The atmosphere of historical disharmony, which resulted from political and economic manipulations, could accumulate forces for cultural repercussion or momentum for social restructuring in the later periods.

---

[118] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994(a)), 131.
[119] A. R. Burn, *The Government of the Roman Empire. From Augustus to the Antonines*, London, Historical Association, 1952, 8-9.
[120] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994(a)), 41.

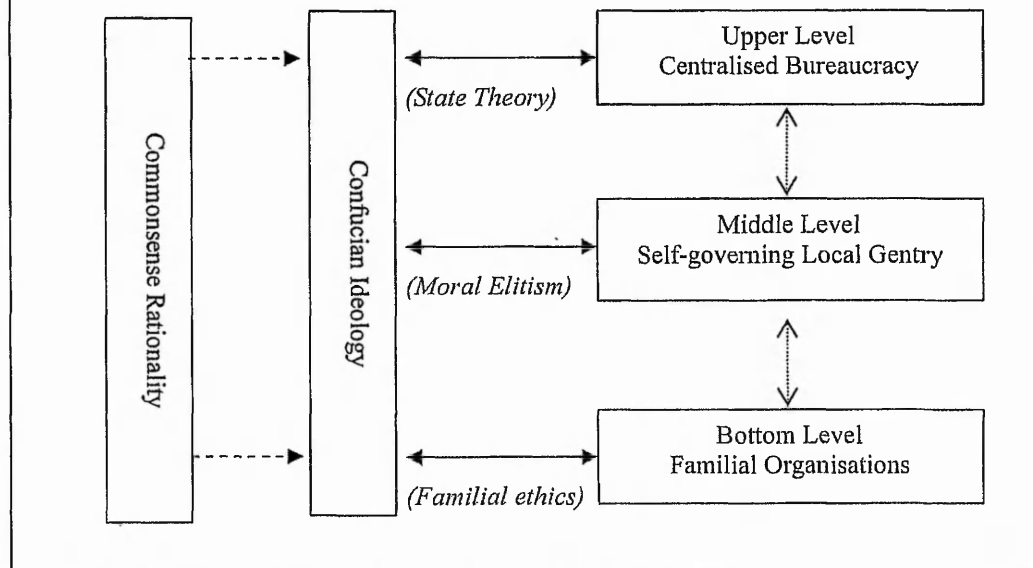### 3.3.2   Intellectual Traditions: Ethics and Religion

The earliest records for the Chinese education system can be traced back to the Shang Dynasty (c. 1520-1030 BC). As written on the oracle bones, "children of aristocrats had to leave home for schooling". However, a more systematic education was developed in the Chou Period, which already divided the learning process into the elementary education 小學 and higher education 大學 ("大學" is also the origin of "university" in Chinese language).[121] The education system and learning processes were basically followed by governments and educators in later China, except that private schools and teachings prospered with the Chou aristocrats descendents (Confucius was one of them), and education became popular for common people. Accompanying the competitions of feudal lords in the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods, hundreds of schools of political, economic and philosophical thinking blossomed and vied with each other for a dominant position. As diverse as the varied doctrines were the languages, although similar but not unified writing systems had already existed.

Abrupt changes occurred after 221 BC. In order to realise a centralised government, Chin-Shi-Huang-Ti unified the writing system, which eventually enabled intellectuals from different regions to understand one another. Moreover, to control the thinking of people, he forbade private teachings and burned all the books and historical records of other pre-Chin states (apart from those belonging to the officers).[122] Dissidents were prosecuted and many killed by the Legalist government. In the Han Period, with a softer approach, however, a policy of constructing an authentic ideology and controlling the intellectual traditions was maintained. Proposed by Chung-Shu Tung, the government set up the "Great Public School 太學" in the capital, within which the emperor designated National Doctors 博士 to teach the Confucius doctrines in the five great canons: *The Book of Ode* 詩經, *The Book of Ancient History* 尚書, *The Book of Rites* 禮記, *The Book of Changes* 易經 and *The Spring and Autumn* 春秋. The number

---

[121]   Accordingly, children at the age of 6-9 were taught arithmetic, place names and calendar at home. Between 10-15 they went to the elementary school and learnt clerking, music and dancing. At age of 15 they then joined higher education and learnt arching, horse riding as well as cart driving for another five years. Only to their 20th, men become adults and started to learn sophisticated rituals. Kuan Yang 楊寬, op. cit. (1999), 629-630.

[122]   Ssu-Ma Chien 司馬遷, *The Records of History* 史記, Vol. 6.

Char III-9: The Structure of Chinese Cultural Rationality

Commonsense Rationality	Confucian Ideology	*(State Theory)*	Upper Level Centralised Bureaucracy
		(Moral Elitism)	Middle Level Self-governing Local Gentry
		(Familial ethics)	Bottom Level Familial Organisations

of students in the Great Public School 太學 expanded swiftly from 50 in 136 BC, to 30,000 in AD 146,[123] which became a major source of civil bureaucrats from the Han government onwards. Confucianism was "institutionalised". Public schools and universities continued to prosper in the Sui, Tang and Sung Periods, in AD 1109 there were a total of 167,622 students in the central and local Public Schools, while the Confucian canons became the main texts for civil examination.[124] With the inventions of paper and printing, the literacy rate in the Tang Dynasty is estimated to be 15-20 %, in comparison to contemporary Europe's 10 %.[125] Confucianism in collaboration with the civil service system became the authentic ideology of the state, and formed the basic principals of political governance for all civil officers. Although private teaching resumed again from the Han Period and lasted to 1450, Confucianism had become *the text* that every intellectual needed to equip himself with. Thus, as argued in Section

---

[123]   Han Yang-Min 韓養民, *Cultural History of Chin and Han Dynasties* 秦漢文化史, Taipei, 里仁書局, 1986, 27-28.

[124]   Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994(a)), 97.

[125]   We agree with Goody that while the evidence of literacy rates is extremely unsatisfactory, we must class the high cultures of India and China along with that of Greece on grounds of qualitative criteria such as the existence of universities, libraries, public inscriptions and village schools. Yet, in a pan-European scale, especially after the fall of the Roman Empire, it is reasonable to believe that China before the middle of the 15th century had enjoyed a relatively higher literacy rate than that of Europe. S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 70; and Kathleen Gough, "Implications of Literacy in Traditional China and India", in Jack Goody ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968, 70-84, quote page 72.

2.3.2, it was through a series of political mobilisation of material and human resources, as well as the institutionalisation of Confucian canons by the elite that a particular way of thinking, here the Confucian ideology, became dominant in the Chinese cultural system, although such Confucian ideas complied to a great extent with the existing social values and people's emotional attachment to the existing way of life.

It seems evident that Confucianism had been serving as the mainstream ideology in China by the establishment of the Han Empire (as Christianity was in Europe in the Roman period), corresponding to the transformations of social, economic and political institutions. Chin and Liu depict the structure of Chinese cultural rationality, which links the Confucian moral and ethical system tightly to Chinese social and political institutions. As illustrated in *Chart III-9*, the integrative structure of cultural rationality can be divided into three stylised levels, which support the three interlocked layers of social and political institutions respectively. At the bottom level, the familial organisations are regulated by the familial ethics and moral values. The Confucian teaching defines the relationships between father and son, husband and wife, and senior and junior and performs as the guidance of the most basic units of Chinese society. In the middle, the self-governing local gentry, whose thought complies primarily with moral elitism, compose the intermediary institution of society and serve as the conjunction between the central bureaucracy and familial organisations. The centralised bureaucracy on the top, which is mainly guided by the state theory, conducts the political orientation and behaviours from the emperor to minor civil officers.[126] However, we must also note that the content of the Confucian cultural logic was not left untouched. Nomadic "returns" between AD 304 to 577, and minority rules in the Liao, Chi and Yuan Dynasties between 1115 and 1367 had entailed a series of internal cultural changes that should never be overlooked.

Similar to the German case in the 5th and 6th centuries, in order to ensure an efficient political control, adaptations of institutions or social customs (including interethnic marriages, changes of family names, clothes styles and languages etc) were inevitable. Yet, the minority emigrations in China proper did also bring up a series of wars, social chaos and political disunities, which distributed in the society at the same time a

---

[126]   See Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), 13, 21, 159.

feeling of "out-worldliness". This attitude of social out-worldliness may be best represented by two major cultural trends, namely the in-coming transmission of Buddhism, and the emergence of the "mysterious philosophy 玄學" in the Wei-Chin Period. As documented in the *Book of the Wei* 魏書, the number of Buddhist temples in north China increased from 6,478 in AD 477 to some 30,000 in AD 534, while the figure of monks raised from 77,258 to over 2 millions.[127] Well-known intellectuals, who felt frustrated and retreated from the political platform (such as the "Seven Sages in the Bamboo Woods 竹林七賢"), embraced the in-coming Buddhist and the revived Taoist philosophy and discarded the Confucian moral-ethical based worldview. Theories of "inner-emptiness", "political none-doings", leisure dialogues, mysterious discourses, religious self-cultivations and even superstitious pursuing for longer lives gained ground during this period and replaced the idea of active involvment in political economy.[128] Xenophobic thoughts also appeared in the wake of "barbarian" rule. Writing after the fall of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty, Fang Hsiao-Ju asserted of barbarians that[129]

> to elevate them to a position above the Chinese people would be to lead the world to animaldom. If a dog or a horse were to occupy a human's seat, even small boys would be angry and take a club to them...why? Because the general order would be confused?

The new intellectual trends seriously devastated the existing social orders regulated by the Confucian moral and value system, which strongly required reinterpretation. Nevertheless, what we observe later was not an expected breakdown of the existing ethical system. Rather, after the political reunification of Tang and Sung Periods, the Confucians responded to such challenges with a rationalistic transformation, which incorporated what Chin and Liu call the "commonsense rationality" (as drawn on the left-hand bloc of *Chart III-9* above). Such rationality complemented the intellectual moral elitism with a sense or spirit of commonness. It regarded the spirit of common judgements and emotional attachment of human beings as a "natural" or

---

[127]   Cited from Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1995(a)), 369.

[128]   See Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1995(a)), 360-361; Chou Shih-Fu 周世輔, *History of Chinese Philosophy* 中國哲學史, Taipei, 三民書局, 1990 (Revised Sixth Edition), 222-225.

[129]   Fang Hsiao-ju, "Shih Tung 釋統" and "Hou Cheng-Tung Lun 後正統論", quoted from John Fincher, "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation: Notes on Fang Hsiao-ju's Discussion of Dynastic Legitimacy", in David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote eds., *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture*, Hong Kong, Cathay Press Limited, 1972, 59-69, quote page 59.

"taken-for-granted" cultural logic, and believed that there was no need to pursue the causality behind natural phenomena or commonsense. In addition, Chinese intellectuals also absorbed the Buddhist way of self-cultivation, and self-transcendence. Such cultural reconfiguration eventually posited the commonsense rationality side by side with the "inner-worldly" social responsibility of Confucian cultural logic, and integrated them into a new cultural rationality. The successful "rationalistic philosophy 理學" in the Sung and Ming Periods further confirmed this distinct Chinese way of thinking, which has been labelled the "rationalisation of Confucianism".[130]

Buddhist influence decreased significantly after the Tang Period, while Buddhism itself was gradually Sinicised and accommodated in China.[131] The cultural rather than biological based definition of identity as the main stream strengthened in the process, despite the vigour of certain reactions. Such a position was stated with unusual clarity in the early Sung Dynasty by Chen An 陳黯 in an essay entitled Hua-hsin 華心 (The Chinese Heart):[132]

> In terms of geography, there are Chinese and barbarians, but in terms of ethics are there Chinese and barbarians? The difference between Chinese and barbarians is to be found in the heart. To find out the difference in heart, one has to ascertain in what direction a man inclines. Some people are born in the centre they are Chinese in appearance but barbarians at heart. Some people are born in barbarian lands but their actions are in harmony with rites and righteousness. In that case they are barbarians in appearance but Chinese at heart.

Within five hundred years time (between the 3rd and 8th century), Confucianism reversed the otherworldly and secluding attitude of the mysterious philosophy and Buddhism into a revised or more flexible "inner-worldly" cultural logic; whilst Buddhist and mysterious philosophy to a certain extent provided Chinese civil officers

---

[130] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), chapter 2 and 3.

[131] According to Book of Wei, there were 30,000 Buddhist temples and a total of two millions monks and nuns in China at the end of Wei period. Under the reign of Tang emperor Wu, 4,500 temples were torn up, and 260,500 monks were forced to go back to normal life. Estimation showed that there were 350,000 monks, who owned only 4 per cent of the cultivated area of China under the Tang. Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1995(a)), 279-280, 283; S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 57.

[132] Quoted from John Fincher, "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation: Notes on Fang Hsiao-ju's Discussion of Dynastic Legitimacy", in David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote eds., Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture, Hong Kong, Cathay Press Limited, 1972, 59-69, quote pages 63-64.

and local gentry an "intellectual escape" from the strangling ethical and moral responsibilities. Such is the reason why political retreats and at times social seclusions were considered as an intellectual glory for Chinese scholars. "Neo-Confucianism" after the Tang and Sung era had become so different from the canon teaching of the Han Period; in place of religion and church, the private Confucian schools and libraries had rooted into the lowest level of society and counteracted with the upper political bureaucracy.[133] Thus, the rationalised Confucian moral and ethical system not only overtook the consoling functions of a religion, but also served as the idealistic guide for the three-layered socio-political institutions.

In Greece all teaching was private. Although it was recommended by Aristotle in the 4th century BC, the Athenians never developed a system of public education.[134] In Plato's time (c. 427 BC), long after the widespread use of the alphabet in the Greek world, many of the characteristic institutions had appeared. There were schools for children from the age of six; and professional scholars and philosophers, such as the Sophists, had replaced the traditional expounders of the noble families of the past.[135] Governmental control of intellectual speeches, prosecution of dissidents and book burning were not unfamiliar to the Roman Empire. In the first half of the 1st century AD, Augustus moved to suppress the lesser scholars by collecting and burning more than 2,000 Greek and Latin prophetic writings. Under Tiberius, literary treason continued to be prosecuted as a major offence. After designating Christianity as the official belief, the Christian emperors soon decided not to tolerate discussion of religions any further. On Constantine's orders, the works of men like Porphyry were publicly burnt.[136] Similar to Han China, official ideology was soon erected. Bowen pertinently remarks that the "considerable advantages freedmen could gain from infiltrating the imperial bureaucracy were achieved at a price. *Libertini* were rarely critical and came to constitute a reliable and docile civil service."[137] Nonetheless, differing from the Han Empire, no public education was established. As mentioned in Section 3.2.1, The Roman Empire adopted a policy of indirect rule, which was an association of Roman aristocrats and the local nobles from the various polities they

---

[133]   Chien Mu 錢穆, op. cit. (1993), chapter 9.
[134]   James Bowen, *A History of Western Education*, Vol. I, London, Methuen & Co Ltd., 1972, 91.
[135]   Jack Goody and Ian Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy", in Jack Goody ed., op. cit. 1968, 27-68, quote page 49.
[136]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 87.
[137]   James Bowen, op. cit. (1972), 207-208.

subdued. Lack of public education for commoners made the government unable to prepare the ground for a civil service system that was based on talents and knowledge of a candidate rather than the favour of the emperor.

Illiteracy rate rose to the historical height in the 4th and 5th centuries, as the barbarians settled within the lands of the Empire. Without schools for its dissemination the *lingua Latina* lost its universality and developed in the regions of the Empire into a variety of vernaculars. From 600 to about 1200 there was practically no literal laity in Western Christendom, although lay literacy did play an important role in the Byzantine East.[138] Virtually the sole centres of learning were the monasteries, which rested upon a tradition that was itself ascetic and non-speculative in nature. The monks and the priests were almost the only ones in Europe who could read and write. Even the educational ideal of Charlemagne was clearly based on a Christian way of life, since a better understanding of Holy Scripture would lead to a morally better and civilised behaviour, hence increase the control of the government. Much varied from the Chinese style, higher education at Charlemagne's time inherited the Greek and Roman traditions, which divided the seven *artes liberals* into the *trivium*, namely the triad of grammatica, rhetorica and dialectica, and the *quadrivium*, that is the foursome of arithmetica, geometrica, astronomia and musica.[139] The empire of Charles the Great did not last long, with the rise of the merchants and new cities that were based on the craft practice, the teachings of the schoolmasters in the cathedrals were obscured. Merchants organised themselves into guilds (the term in medieval Latin was *universitates*), whose early intention probably was to regularise their instruction and to ensure maintenance of adequate standards on the part of students seeking admission to the society of masters. By the twelfth century, universities began to appear in Europe. Paris with its cathedral school origins turned out to be the centre for philosophical and theological studies; and Bologna, which was stimulated by the social forces in commercial Italy, led students to seek appropriate professional training.[140]

Since the 4th century, the barbarian migrations not only destroyed the West's system of

---

[138]   Robert E. Lerner, Standish Meacham and Edward McNall Burns, op. cit. (1993(a)), 239.
[139]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 94-95, 97.
[140]   James Bowen, op. cit. (1975), 103, 109-110, 257, 319.

civil authority, but also largely eliminated any higher cultural life. Especially after the Islamic expansion, Arabs had cut off access to the original Greek texts. Everyday life was gradually structured under the Church's rules. The intellectual energies were preserved only at the level of the leading monks, who "were absorbed in meditation upon Holy Scripture, whereby the mind could grasp the spiritual meaning of the word, moving the soul toward mystical union with the divine."[141] Almost all sorts of advantages were accorded to the new religion and its followers, and elements of the older cultures were adapted to conform to Christian standards in the interest of cultural unity. As Rietbergen wrote,[142]

> The Christian world was one, in belief, liturgy and institutions. The laws of the Church, or Canon Law, evolved out of Roman law, contributed to a way of thinking on the legal relations between the individual and state government which soon was proclaimed to be universal, transcending all local customs. The Christian calendar structuring the year around the major feastdays of the Church, the many saints' days and the accompanying rituals, regulated everyone's daily life... It called itself universal as, indeed, it was in about 1500 because all people in western and central Europe were still Catholic. This Church actually tried to govern the very essence of the lives of Europeans, their action but, even more important, for guiding those actions, their deepest thoughts. Every community had a church as its visual anchor, its social and cultural centre.

It was not until around the year 1000, with Europe finally attaining a measure of political security after centuries of invasion and disorganisation, that cultural activity and contacts with the neighbouring Islamic and Byzantine cultures started to grow.[143] A rather dissimilar worldview, which revived from the Hellenic tradition, gradually reformatted itself in Europe during the medieval age. The religious-based social order and intellectual tradition began to merge with, if not give way to, the highlighted practical knowledge. Since the later Greek time, the pursuit of abstract knowledge for its own sake or as the "greatest purification" had begun to pave the way for specialisation. The atomists created the atomic theory that proved such a superb instrument of discovery in modern chemistry and physics.[144] Except in the domains of agricultural and military engineering, natural philosophy became increasingly

---

[141] Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, London, Pimlico, 1991, 171-172.
[142] Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 70, 142-143, 163.
[143] Richard Tarnas, op. cit. (1991), 173.
[144] Between 500 and 420 BC, Leukippos (of Miletus) and Demokritos (of Abdera) set out to resolve external nature into discrete indivisible bits or particles (atoms), just as the new currency resolved wealth into discontinuous particles – coins. Gordon Childe, op. cit. (1954), 224 233.

divorced from practical life as the Greek cities grew richer, wealth more concentrated, and slaves more numerous. Such a rational logical, almost experimental way of looking at the world passed on in the Roman times and to Asia Minor, while it later transmitted back to the European universities side by side with Arabic sciences through contacts between Christian scholars and the Islamic universities of the Iberian peninsula in the 8th century. A scientific culture, together with the structure of curricula and teaching methods were gradually built into the university in medieval times.[145] The study of law and medicine, of logic and theology, received a new and powerful impetus. In contradistinction to the universities of the north, which grew up out of cathedrals based on principles of philosophical theology, the secular Italian universities and guilds witnessed the thirst for knowledge and the renaissance of European mind in the twelfth century. As Fisher remarks, we "may smile at this mediaeval medicine. It was devoid of the faintest knowledge of experimental anatomy. It was combined with astrology. It was prefaced by a careful study of the writings of Aristotle. Yet this is the principal root from which the science of the Renaissance was destined to grow."[146] The scientific spirit differs significantly from Chinese ethical, moral and commonsensical based intellectual traditions. As Needham noted, "the 'value-free science' was 'a kind of escapism', because it erected water-tight compartments, allowing scientists to shrug off all responsibility for the applications which were made of their discoveries and inventions."[147] Nevertheless, by contrast, an over burdened-moral responsibility, which saturated into the education and civil service system, seemed to deviate China from pursuing abstract or pure scientific knowledge without paying due attention to its moral connotation.

---

[145]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 152-153.

[146]   H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*, London, Edward Arnold & Co., 1936 (Complete Edition in One Volume), 245-246.

[147]   Joseph Needham, "Science, Technology, Progress and the Break-through: China as a Case Study in Human History", in Tord Ganelius ed., *Progress in Science and Its Social Conditions*, Oxford, New York, Toronto, Sydney and Frankfurt, Pergamon Press, 1983, 5-22, quote page 21.

Chapter 4   1450-1900 Modernisation and Cultural Identity: Continuity or Change?

In Chapter 3 it is suggested that before 1450, seemingly interconnected and intersubjective cultural logics had began to take their shapes in both Europe and China. Already there had emerged increasing pan-European and pan-Chinese political, economic and social institutions, as well as cultural strands, which orchestrated European and Chinese societies respectively into an integrated, yet characteristic cultural network. Although such cultural logics may not had been explicitly, and were only under limited experiences of cultural encounters tested and accepted for granted, this did not stop people in different parts of Europe and in China responding respectively with a distinctive rhythm, and shaping a different way of life. To analyse history in comparative terms, especially when dealing with direct cultural encounters after 1450, it is very easy to be "trapped" by dedicating oneself to measure the superiority of military, political, and economic powers, or the advance of scientific and technological development in different societies. Controversies about the status of Europe and China in the post-1450 world have long been debated among social, economic and intellectual historians. Landes, for instance, believes firmly that the exceptionality of European culture (in the sense of inner values and attitudes) guided Europe to become the *winner* of the world economy (although no substantial cultural links have been incontroversially established). For him, it is the *build-up*, or the accumulation of knowledge and know-how, which formed the critical, distinctive sources of success, and which when reaching and passing certain thresholds resulted in European *breakthrough*.[1] Frank, in contrast, abhors the Eurocentric interpretation of the global economy and holds that Europe succeeded, only temporarily, by climbing up on Asian shoulders. To Frank, Europe's backwardness provided the incentive, and it was the supply of American money that permitted Europeans to

---

[1] Landes stresses three distinctive European sources of success, which include: (a) the growing *autonomy* of intellectual inquiry; (b) the development of unity in disunity in the form of a common implicitly adversarial *method*, that is, the creation of a language of proof recognised, used, and understood across national and cultural boundaries; and (c) the invention of invention, that is, the *routinisation* of research and its diffusion. See David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London, Abacus, 1998, 200-205, 512-524.

pursue economic advantages in Asian market. In the "absence of that economy or its dynamic in Asia, Europe would not have gone or gotten anywhere!"[2] Similarly, Pomeranz emphasises the importance of the extra-continental resources such as precious metals (silver and gold), labour- and land-intensive raw materials (cotton, sugar, wool), and slave trade, which the New World provided to Europe. For it is such "added on resources" that abolished the land constraint for the development of European capital- and energy-intensive industrialisation.[3] Inkster, on the other hand, suggests an "accidental" European success before the 18th century rather than any argument in terms of the common mode of three Rs (Renaissance, Reformation and Scientific Revolution) explanation. Only the 18th century acceleration of technology and information transfers, and a subsequent unplanned operation of a culture of *machinofacture* (i.e. metallurgy served, workshop technologies in industry) sustained European industrial economy, and lead Europe over other advanced cultures.[4] In Braudel, *the world-economy* was eventually dominated under the distinct European commerce, market, material, and profit based capitalist personality. This differed greatly from the inferior Chinese economic structure, which was blocked by an imperial administration and a merchant class that was diverted from profits by vanity and a love of literature.[5] All above approaches doubtless contribute to the

---

[2]   Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, California, University of California Press, 1998, 356.

[3]   Pomeranz argues, even though the extra-continental profits was described as a 'relatively small free lunch' (as O'Brien concedes less than 7 percent of gross investment by late eighteenth century Britons), it together with the resources could be critical to relieve Europe from ecological constraints and contribute to the great divergence between Europe and China in about 1800. Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, New Jersey, 2000, 186-188, 264-285.

[4]   Inkster raises several questions concerning the three Rs approach, and suggests that the rise of Europe maybe a result of a series of accidents. The questions include: (a) the naval technologies such as the so-called Portuguese *caravel* were at most only partially "European". They were rather a confused product of Atlantic and Mediterranean shipping traditions, in which the components of the latter were themselves derivatives of cultural passages between the Eastern and Western Empires over a considerable time, and in which influences from Arabia and Asia intermingled; (b) there is very little evidence that expansion called upon the resources of the Three Rs to any great extent. The Iberian centres of expansion, the cities of Lisbon and Seville, were hardly centres of new thought or new aesthetic or intellectual products; the capital and the adventurers of such places were escaping from the Renaissance rather than representative of it; and (c) there is very little solid evidence of a sustained "clash" of Civilisations. The most global and profound of events were the retreat from the Indian Ocean of Ming China by the enactments of 1433, 1449, and 1452 just prior to the explorations of Vasco da Gama. See Ian Inkster, "Accidents and Barriers: Technology between Europe, China ad Japan for 500 Years", *Asia Journal of International Studies*, Vol. I No. 1, July 1998 (a), 1-37.

[5]   Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. Vol. III, The Perspective of the World*, London, Collins, (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds) 1984; Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilisations*, London, Allen Lane and The Penguin Press, 1987 (Translated Edition 1994, by R. Mayne), 194-195; and Ian Inkster, "Pursuing Big Books. Technological Change in Global History",

comparative analysis of social, political, economic, and institutional mechanisms of European and Chinese societies. However, such comparisons seem to focus on, or even celebrate, certain set of values that prioritise the measurement of wealth, material power, technological progress, and institutional efficiency. Some of the economic analyses are even applied in turn to indicate the superiority or inferiority of a civilisation.[6] Culture, under such narratives, seems to have lost its significance and meaning beyond wealth and power, and remains only a reflection of the material value and institutional structure. It has no inner logics of its own. We disagree.

It is true that numbers are critical in the analysis of cultural logic. However, as already suggested in Section 1.1.2, it must be emphasised again that there is such a thing as the "incommensurability" of culture. To put it in another way, the priority and weight of certain values in different cultural systems cannot be understood and evaluated purely in a material or in institutional terms. Culture as the complex practices of all life facets encompasses also interpretation of meanings, and the organic (or humanistic) feelings, moral-ethical logic and compassion, and intuitive sensitivity of men and women towards "nature" inside all individuals. Hence from a cultural perspective, to simply judge which culture is more materially advanced or institutionally superior without taking their inner cultural logics into account could be very misleading.[7] This is particularly so as criteria like powerful institutions, wealth, and advanced scientific knowledge were essentially modern European oriented cultural logics, which by contrast might have been marginalised deliberately in China. For comparative cultural analysis, numbers, wealth, and the efficiency or powerfulness of political and economic institutions if to be significant, would have to be posited within the context of a meaning-practice-weighing-system. Only such meaning-practice interactive processes may explain why and how certain weight and

---

History of Technology, Vol. 22, 2000(b), 233-253.

[6] For instance Braudel wrote in his *A History of Civilisation* that "Her [China's or Chinese civilisation's] inferiority lay in her economic structure, her market outlets and her merchant middle class," and that Chinese entrepreneurs were not eager to make profits. "All the descriptions of merchants' lives that we find in folk tales from the Sung dynasty show that their aim was to make enough money to lead a comfortable life, fulfil their moral and social duties, and above all to discharge their obligations to their parents and their whole family." Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 194-195.

[7] Landes even challenges the very notion of "multicultural history" and "relativistic values", and accuses the "anti-Eurocentric" thought and the non-Europeans' efforts of interpreting history in accordance with their own cultural values or historical goals as "anti-intellectual". See David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 513-514.

priority were granted to those social, political and economic praxes. Numbers therefore matter in the sense that they provide referential evidence for the meaning or deciphering of historical occurrences. Our following analysis is ready to accept the quantitative results from many socio-political-economic historians, and will leave the judgment of pure statistical and institutional performances to them.

Based on the pre-1450 settings of natural and geo-ethnic conditions, political, economic institutions and normative structures in Europe and China in Chapter 3, this Chapter aims to extract the logics or motives for the transformed or transforming cultural trajectories. The main concern here is to try to figure out why and how certain cultural logic, or set of logics (e.g. the pro-humanistic or moral-ethical-commonsensical based logic in China and the pro-instrumental or goal-interest-calculating oriented logic in Europe), had continued or discontinued to alter, jointly with the material and institutional cultural structures (if not to guide), the trajectories of both societies. It is held that this seemingly subjective element nonetheless will need to stand with and be extracted from the objective historical conditions. As to be shown later, the changes and continuities of cultural logics and practices are very much determined by the "desirability" (by which we mean the possibility of being accepted as granted as part of their lives) of people within a society, or in other words, they are affected by the propriety and justification of certain cultural values rather than others in a society. It is through judgements based on both rationalities of the instrumental and humanistic levels that these cultural values diffused into the very basis of daily life and influenced the continuities and changes in the socio-political-economic practices of the post-1450 era.

4. 1   *Natural Conditions: Cultural Logics in Space*

Basic natural landscapes in Europe and China maintained their long-standing constraints and functions in characterising the contours of both civilisations. As Braudel argues, man has been a "prisoner of climate, of vegetation, of the animal population, of a particular agriculture, of a whole slowly established balance from which he cannot escape without the risk of everything's being upset." The movement of flocks in the lives of mountain people, the permanence of maritime life that was

rooted in particular coastal configurations, the way the sites of cities endure and the persistence of routes and trade all show the amazing fixity of the geographical setting of civilisations.[8] What was fostered, however, was a series of collective mental qualities, which people engraved into their natural surroundings by the accumulative labours and reflexive perceptions, and through which, as argued in Section 2.2.2, there generated feelings of intimacy to a specific landscape Hence, patterns of ethnic distribution in post-1450 Europe and China, though they presented rather similar outlooks, had nevertheless carried within them very disparate self-comprehensions. In Europe, although a shorter yet more drastic process of ethnic interactions before 1450 brought Celts, Germans, Italians, Greeks, Slavs, Vikings and even Turks into an interconnected cultural network, nonetheless maintained within it were higher ethnic distinctions. The subsequent persistence of ethnic boundaries in the western parts of the Continent after 1450, however, was founded basically upon the misfortunes of the Eastern peoples. For it was people in the Balkan peninsula who created a buffer zone for the westerners, and stopped the penetration of the Turks and Arabians from the southeast after the 15th century (and slightly earlier the Mongols from east of the Volga in the 12th and 13th centuries). Absorbing more and more nomads from the eastern steppes, "civilisation" did manage to reach and convert isolated, backward regions of Europe, linked them to its cities, exploited their resources,[9] and incorporated them into a integrated life network. Yet, unlike the Chinese case, contacts and wars, which accompanied trade and governance, were posited under a competitive system of power and balance-seeking rather than one single synthesising centre. Thus, despite the already complex interactivities between the Celts, Germans, Slavs, Italians and the Greeks, and despite the countless definition and redefinition of political boundaries in the 16th to 20th centuries (between the English, Scottish, Welsh; between the Spanish, Basques, Valencians, Catalans; between Flemish, French and Walloon; between Croatian, Slovenian and Slovakian; and between Poles, Ukraine and Russian etc), the already blurring and indistinguishable ethnic boundaries had never lost their perpetual clarity inside the Europeans' minds and memories.[10]

---

[8] Fernand Braudel, *On History*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, (Translated Edition by Sarah Matthews) 1980, 31.
[9] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 161-162; Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1979), 96.
[10] The notion was derived from Chaudhuri's description of "perpetual memory" and the perpetuation of social traditions. See K. N. Chaudhuri, *Asia before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, 376

Managing to live with their "European homelands", grouping and regrouping, division and subdivisions among and inside ethnic and later national communities had constituted a powerful humanistic logic for sustaining ethnic particularity.

The latecomers added more colours to the ethnic puzzle. The Ottoman Empire seized Constantinople in 1453, and stretched its claw from the Balkans, Algeria, to Hungary, Crimea, and the Caspian between the 17th and early 20th centuries. It ushered in not only more Muslims, but also a wider and dispersed settlements of Jews and Gypsies after the 14th and 15th century. Gypsies, for instance, entered western Byzantine territory through Hindu Kush and the South Caucasus from the 11th century. Following the Turkish expansion, the Turkish drove them onwards through the Near East and across the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles into Thrace and the Greek mainland. In the 15th century, Gypsies moved into Western Europe and appeared first in the Holy Roman Empire, then in France and the Low Countries, Italy and Spain. Recent Gypsy population estimates for Europe as a whole vary from about three million to six or even eight million or more. Jewish people, on the other hand, had emigrated to northern European cities between the 6th and 11th centuries, by which time numerous communities had dwelt on the Garonne, Loire, Rhône, Seine, Rhine, Elbe and upper Danube, with some scattered settlements in England. Under the increasing persecution of Jews in the late Middle Ages, Jewish settlement shifted eastward into the central and eastern Mediterranean, Poland and the region of the lower Danube. In the early 15th and 16th centuries they returned or re-emerged in small numbers in France, the Netherlands, England and most of the formerly inhospitable parts of western Germany.[11] The dispersed ethnic groups no doubt complicated the historical borders of ethnic communities. Equally significant were perhaps the European expansions and its new primitives from the sea particularly after 1492: American, Asian and African slaves and immigrations again enriched the mosaic map of ethnic distribution, while emigrations later extended European empires to almost three quarters of the world continents. It is surprising that the post-Enlightenment scientific rationality failed to make Europeans realise that "purity of race" or "ethnicity" (such as Pure Arian, German or Slav nations) was never a

---

[11] Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, *The Times Guide to The Peoples of Europe*, London, 1997 Revised Edition (First Published in 1994), 208, 399-403, 405-408.

belief possible again, once the European cultural system was so newly interconnected.

The sea still preoccupied the Europeans. Europe, with its initial intention of taking hold of its surrounding seas to exploit all shores, had connected the North, the West and the South maritime sector. As Du Jourdin observes, the maritime element proved to be a source of profit and an arena of power, which led the seamen to voyage ever further. The European powers exploded from within the Continent, were quick to extend the field of their activity across the oceans. Terrestrial states, driven to increase their authority, expanded their powers outwards, which at the same time renewed and increased competition and conflicts inherited from earlier centuries. Whether they were individual or collective initiatives, mercantile and political enterprises encouraged the expansion of influence over neighbouring seas and ultimately extended their hold over all the oceans.[12] Supremacy over the Atlantic and Indian Oceans enlarged vastly the scope of European "warlikeness" after 1500. The warrior ethos (which found its roots in the medieval survival of military habits among the merchant classes, aristocrats, and territorial lords of less degree), though transformed partly into a respectful chivalry spirit, stayed relentless and barbaric outside European territory. Raid and run, exploitation in avoidance of tending, managing, and responsibility was exactly the logic of European colonialism. As McNeill suggests, a formidable combination of European warlikeness and naval technique swiftly transformed the cultural balance of the world.[13] Columbus linked the Americas with Europe in 1492, and the Spaniards proceeded to explore and conquer the New World with extraordinary energy, utter ruthlessness, and an intense missionary idealism. Cortez, for instance, destroyed the Aztec state in 1519-21; Pizarro became master of the Inca empire between 1531 and 1535. Portuguese expanded into the Indian Ocean even faster. After Vasco da Gama's first voyage to India (1497-99) and the decisive Portuguese naval victory of Diu in 1509, the Portuguese quickly captured Goa in 1510 and Malacca in 1511. These gave the Portuguese the necessary bases to "participate", with the backup of warships, in the trades of the Indian Ocean. English, Dutch and French caught up during the 16th century. Following the Dutch revolt against Spain in

---

[12] Michel Mollat du Jourdin, *Europe and the Sea*, Oxford UK and Cambridge USA, Blackwell, 1993 (Translated by Teresa Lavender Fagan), 101.
[13] William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West. A History of the Human Community*, New York, Toronto and London, Mentor Books, 1963, 623.

1568, English defeated the Spanish armada in 1588. Soon, the Hollander established a base in Java (1618), captured Malacca in 1641 from the Portuguese, and seized the most important posts of Ceylon in the Indian Ocean by 1644, while English traders also gained a foothold in western India during the same decades. In the meantime, English (1607), French (1608), and Dutch (1613) colonised the mainland North America, and seized most of the smaller Caribbean islands.[14] By 1800, Europeans controlled over 35% of the continents of the world; in 1878, the ratio had expanded to 67%; and in 1914, it rose to the highest of 84.4%.[15] Only the sea, which proved too deep and too wide an arena for European competitions, turned out to be relatively free of the effort to discern or compete. The ease of European internal contest was "vastly facilitated—perhaps made possible—by the fact that Europeans were able to direct their restless energies outward East and West, overland and overseas."[16] Through the "Columbian exchange", the New World contributed not only to the Europeans but also to the whole Old World. Animal species like turkeys, and vegetables like sweet potatoes, squash, beans, and especially potatoes and maize vastly increased cropping and survival possibilities in Europe and China. The growing of sweet potatoes was recorded in the 1560s in China, and maize became a staple food crop in the 17th century. Today, 37 percent of the food that Chinese eat is of American origin, and after the United States, China is the world's second largest producer of maize.[17]

The Chinese on the other hand seemed to show more mental quality of self-restraint. Comparing to its Tang, Sung and Yuan predecessors' open door trade policy, the Ming and Ching Chinese appeared to turn more inwards to the land rather than outwards to the sea. Ascending to the throne, the Ming emperor Tai-Tsu commanded to seal off China's coastline and forbade all private maritime activities to adopt an isolationist policy. Despite ongoing private maritime activities that were carried out in the form of smuggling operations, China's overseas activities suffer substantially from the governments' periodic ban on the sea during the Ming and Ching (see Section 6.1).

---

[14]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 623-630.
[15]   Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *The Origins of Modern Chinese Thought—The Evolution of Chinese Political Culture from the Perspective of Ultrastable Structure (Vol. I)* 中國現代思想的起源—超穩定結構與中國政治文化的演變, Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chinese University, 2000, 165. (Title Translated by the Author.)
[16]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 711.
[17]   Andre Gunder Frank, op. cit. (1998), 60, also see footnote 78 below.

Officially, the eunuch admiral Cheng Ho's 鄭和 did take seven major naval expeditions between 1405 and 1431, with fleets consisted approximately of 317 vessels and carried 28,000 men. The fleets were well equipped with charts and compasses, and their captains were knowledgeable about metrological and hydrological conditions. The biggest ship was of about 400 feet long, 160 wide, and with nine staggered masts and twelve square sails of red silk. Yet, in contrast to the European states' expansive and colonialist approach overseas, Ming and Ching China had adopted a far more passive non-mercantilist strategy in their government trade policy and military defence.[18] As to be illustrated in Chapter 6, Cheng Ho's valuable commodities such as silks, porcelain, bronze coins, were for exchange in the context of gift giving: tribute from the "barbarians" and "benevolence" from the Chinese. Whilst many of those he brought back—zoological specimens (giraffes, zebras, ostriches), jewels, wild animal, vegetable, and mineral substances, were in one word "exotics", which though they beautified the life in palaces, were after all unsuitable for the ordinary markets.[19] Moreover, despite the fact that the expeditions may not have cost the state so dearly, the psychological or potential threats from the Mongols and Tibetans (together with the cultural ideal of virtuous rule and the inward-looking cultural logic)[20] still oriented the terrestrial empire towards the inland. Indeed, with respect to the China's long-term maritime policy history, the time span of the Ming and Ching governments' maritime ban can be seen as only a "short-term twist" of premodern Chinese Empire history (about 230 out of 2,000 years between 221 BC and AD 1911).[21] Nonetheless, such a short lived state ban on maritime activities alongside a reactive overseas policy, which were carried out at the critical junctures of European expansion and Sino-European encounters, had contributed directly to the weakening of China's sea power and loss of sea control in the centuries that followed.

Turning to the inland, unlike the European case, the mountain and pastoral people were never completely tamed in China. The so-called Han Chinese waged an

---

[18] Gang Deng, *Maritime Sector, Institutions, and Sea Power of Premodern China,* Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1999 (a), 207-208.
[19] David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 93-95; Patrick K. O'Brien etc. eds., *Philip's Atlas of World History,* London, George Philip Limited, 1999, 139; and Huang Jen-Yu 黃仁宇, *China: A Macro History* 中國大歷史, Taipei, 聯經, 1993, 219-220, 254-255. (Title Translated by the Author.)
[20] For a more detail discussion on the Ming's virtuous ruling principle, its "inward-looking" cultural logic and non-aggressive overseas policy see Chapter 6.
[21] See Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (a)), 137.

unceasing war against their stock-raisers and wild population; innumerable raids and clashes recurred brutally until the end of the 18th century. Following Ming's drive-out of the Mongols in 1368, and burning of their great centre at Karakorum in the Gobi Desert; Beijing nevertheless was captured again by the Manchu in 1644 and started another two hundreds seventy years minorities rules of China. It was not until the end of the 18th century that the Ching Empire expanded from the Great Wall to the Gobi Desert in the north and Tibet in the southwest and eventually marked the end of the nomads' great career. In all, there had been 1,109 main military conflicts between the Chinese and the northern nomads from 215 BC to AD 1684. The impacts of these conflicts were by no means trivial, as huge numbers of people and animals were killed, vast areas of cultivated land abandoned, and farming equipment and facilities destroyed.[22] The nomadic groups no doubt had left continuous marks throughout Chinese history. To judge from its inland expansions, the early Ching Period was actually an era of supremacy. Chien-Lung 乾隆 (r. 1736-1795) ruled over more territory than Hsuan-Tsung of the Tang 唐玄宗 or Mao Tse-Tung 毛澤東. China was paramount from the Caspian to the Sea of Japan, from the Stanovoi Mountains to the Bay of Bengal. Without, the Ching had solved the Inner Asian problem, which had baffled the Han, the Tang, the Sung and Ming China. Within, they provided some of the best government in Chinese history, and also the peace that allowed the society to indulge in an unparalleled increase in population within China proper.[23] Non-Han Chinese occupied roughly 11% of total population in 1500, and decreased to only 3% in 1800 (both counted 10 millions). It then recovered to 5% (25 millions) in 1900.[24] As Braudel remarks, gunpowder had triumphed over speed. "The nomads, condemned to stay at home, appeared in their true colours: a poor section of humanity, put in its place and from now on accepting it."[25]

"The end of the nomads' great career" certainly does not mean a proper settlement of the minorities but rather that they succumbed temporarily to the Ching rule, which drew new territory into the political map. Never should one assume that pastoral and

---

[22] Kent G. Deng, "A Critical Survey of Recent Research in Chinese Economy History", *Economic History Review*, LIII, 1, 2000, 1-28, quote page 7.
[23] S.A.M. Adshead, *China in World History*, London and New York, Macmillan Press LTD, 2000 Third Edition (First Published in 1988), 279.
[24] See Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1978, 168-173.
[25] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1979), 64, 96-98.

mountain peoples had been thoroughly assimilated culturally. Even for the years after the 18th century, John Fairbank's Sinocentric picture of Chinese ethnic distribution is too much simplified.[26] The boundaries among ethnic groups in the two great isles that extend from the Central Field area in China are by no means clear-cut. Together with the Han people, the two sides of the Ho-hsi Isle 河西走廊 (locates at the west of upper Yellow River) were intertwined with ethnic minorities like the Mongols, Sa-la 撒拉, Yu-ku 裕固, Tu 土, Chun-ko-erh 準喀爾, Hazak 哈薩克, Huai 回, Tibetan 藏, and Tung-hsiang 東鄉 peoples, whose borders was geographically impossible to split. As for the Southwest Valley Isle 河谷走廊 (which was formatted by rivers that penetrate in the southwest mountain area of China 東南縱谷) the situation is even more complicated. Ethnic groups such as Ti 氐, Chiang 羌, Jung 戎, Chu 楚, Tien 滇, Yueh 越, Kun 昆, Yi 夷, Pu 濮 etc through thousand years of historical interactions had grouped and regrouped among them into Tibetan 藏, Chiang 羌, Pai 白, Na-hsi 納西, Su-su 傈傈, Pu-mi 普米, Tu-lung 獨龍, Nu 怒, A-chang 阿昌, Ching-po 景頗, La-du 拉枯, Ha-ni 哈尼, Tai 傣族, Ka-wa 佧佤, Ben-lung 崩龍, Pu-lang 布朗, Miao 苗 and Yao 瑤 peoples throughout this area. Chinese minorities today are found dispersed over different parts of China. While fifty-five officially recognised ethnic minorities make up only 8% of the total population, the 120 million lives in absolute terms have composed eleven linguistic communities and are distributed in 60% of China's territory. The Yao 瑤, for instance with a population of 2.15 million in 1990, are not concentrated in one place but are dispersed widely in the provinces Kuang-tung 廣東, Kuang-hsi 廣西, Hu-nan 湖南, Chi-chou 冀州, Ssu-chuan 四川, Yun-nan 雲南 and Chiang-hsi 江西. Even in one region, different ethnic groups may scatter vertically at different heights of a mountain or at riversides, resulting in an indistinguishable pattern of ethnic mosaic.[27] Such an interweaving distribution of Chinese ethnic

---

[26]   John King Fairbank, "A Preliminary Framework", in John King Fairbank, *The Chinese World Order. Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, Cambridge and Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1968, 1-19.

[27]   See Hsieh Chien (Hsieh Jiann) 謝劍, "Cultural Identity, Ethnic Identity and Nationalism: Taking the Diversity of China as a Case Study 文化認同, 族群認同與民(國)族主義: 以中國的多元性為例", Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰 ed., *民族主義與中國現代化 Nationalism and Chinese Modernisation*, Hong Kong, 中文大學出版社, 1994, 159-176; Hsieh Chien (Hsieh Jiann) 謝劍, "China is One Nation. Discussion on the So-Called 'Tibet Problem' 中國當然是一個民族. 並論所謂'西藏問題'", *香港社會科學學報 Hong Kong Journal of Social Science*, No. 14, 1999, 201-227; and Jiann Hsieh, "China's Minorities

groups and frequent nomadic returns again reflects the fact that (or to argue vice versa, contributes to explain why) China had held up to its initial path of adopting a non-exclusive cultural identification, which, as argued in Section 1.2.1 and 3.1.1, tended to resort to mutual compatibility of ethnicity rather than racial purity. This shows the reciprocity of humanistic and instrumental factors.

Chart IV-1: Populations of Europe and China Proper 1400-1950
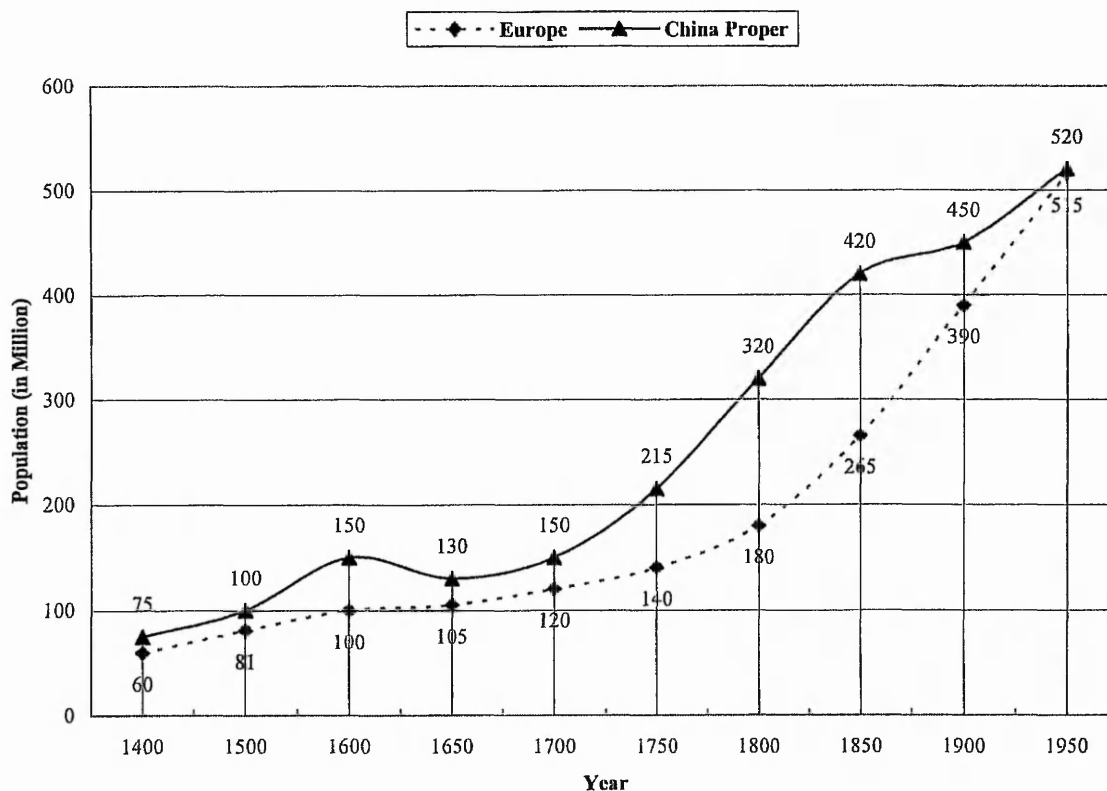
Source: Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, op. cit. (1978), 26-30, 172-173.
Note: the scale of X axis in the illustration is not evenly allocated.

Taking a look at the demographic figures again, as shown in *Chart IV-1*, the 15th century saw recovery become general throughout Europe. From 80 millions in 1500 there was sustained growth to around 100 millions in 1600, and 120 millions in 1700, except during the period of Thirty Years War (1618-1648). The next 100 years period number kept its pace with the industrial and economic growth and went up by 80% - from 140 millions in 1750 to 250 millions in 1845. It is far higher than any ever experienced before. The increase rate did not reveal signals of slowing down, in the

seventy years from 1845 to 1914 it kept up with a similar growth rate as had in the preceding ninety-five years period: 80%. The actual increment was 200 millions, and the final total 450 millions. Similar population growth occurred in China as well, even though there was no scientific and industrial revolution as such. As the growth was resumed in the late 13th century it was sustained: a benign and orderly government encouraged the philoprogenitive Chinese to give full rein to their reproductive talents and the population doubled in the course of the next two centuries. On the eve of the Manchu invasion there were around 150 millions in China proper. The Manchu conquest cost China roughly 25 millions people. By 1700 this loss had been made up and in the political calm of the 18th century a population surge carried the total population to the 300 millions mark. This rate of growth was 100% in 100 years. A series of peasant revolts overtook China in the second half of the 19th century, of which the most famous and most damaging was the Tai Ping rebellion of 1850-1865. Such internal revolts combined with external imperial colonialism did cause serious political and social disorder and slow down China's demographic increase. It converged with the European figure at the 520 millions mark in 1950.[28]

Despite similar curves of European and Chinese population growth in 1450-1950, there were again significant differences underlying the pattern of demographic distribution. As Pomeranz and Wong both observe, in China population growth especially after 1750 was heavily concentrated in less-developed regions. The ideal of providing land to peasants as a means of securing them a livelihood continued to be a theme in Chinese political economy in the Ming and Ching Dynasties. The Ching government favoured population growth in less-developed regions not only as a way of maximizing the number of ordinary households prosperous enough to pay their taxes reliably, but also as parts of a cultural ideal, an ideal of equal distribution. Long-distance migrations to underdeveloped and depopulated parts of China during the late 17th and 18th centuries alone easily surpassed 10 millions, with most of the colonists establishing freehold farms, and almost always became free tenant. The state encouraged migration to less-populated areas by providing travel costs, start-up loans, infrastructural investment, seeds, help in obtaining plough animals, basic information, and grants of land. Such underdeveloped regions then had smaller surpluses of grain,

---

[28]   See Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, op. cit. (1978), 26-30, 172-173.

timber, raw cotton, and other land-intensive products to trade with resource-hungry cores; and since part of the increased population of these peripheral areas went into proto-industry, they also had less need to trade with core regions.[29] Thus, in China the increase after the 16th century was mainly micro-urban; it involved a rise in the percentage of the rural population. The significant expansion was not at the apex of the urban pyramid but at the base. During the Ching many new towns were founded in frontier provinces like Ssu-chuan 四川, Kuei-chou 貴州, Yun-nan 雲南, Taiwan and Hsin-chiang 新疆. The number medium-sised market towns in China increased from 2,500 in 1700, to 6,000 in 1800.[30] *Chart IV-2* confirms a similar observation. The fourteen largest cities in China kept their scale merely in slight growths before 1800, which indicates the tripled population were located in places other than existing major cities. Although, in absolute terms, the scale of Chinese cities were still comparable to the European counterparts prior to 1800, the demographic sum for those cities made up merely 2% of the population of China proper in 1500, which decreased to 1.49% in 1600, and then to a even lower 1.29% in 1900.

Such ratios certainly contrast with the European ones: as shown in *Chart IV-3*, the population sum of the fourteen largest cities in Europe made up 1.70% of total European figure in 1500, which increased to 3.84% in 1700, and almost doubled again to 6.36% in 1900. There was certainly no real counterpart to the Chinese state's repeated efforts of facilitating mass migration to less-developed areas on terms that allowed cultivators to remain independent in Europe. On the contrary, it was largely areas that were already relatively advanced and densely populated that had large population increases between 1750 and 1850. Most of Eastern Europe, for instance, only began to experience rapid population growth after 1800, and southern Europe began to catch up even later.[31] The increase in Europe was macro-urban, which involved a fall in the percentage of the rural population. The significant urban expansion was not in the foundation of new towns but the enlargement of existing

[29]   See R. Bin Wong, "Chinese Understandings of Economic Change: From Agrarian Empire to Industrial Society", in Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong eds., *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern Asia*, Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 1999, 45-60, quote page 49; Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 13, 250.
[30]   For example, in Chin-tang district in Ssu-chuan 四川 on the edge of the Cheng-tu Plain 成都平原 the number of small market towns increased form four in 1662, to thirteen in 1875 to thirty-two in 1921. S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 256-258.
[31]   Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 84.

Chart IV-2: The Fourteen Largest Cities in China, 1500-1900

(Population in thousands)

1500 City	1500 Population	1600 City	1600 Population	1700 City	1700 Population	1750 City	1750 Population	1800 City	1800 Population	1850 City	1850 Population	1900 City	1900 Population
Beijing 北京	672	Beijing 北京	706	Beijing 北京	650	Beijing 北京	900	Beijing 北京	1,100	Beijing 北京	1,648	Beijing 北京	1,100
Hang-chou 杭州	250	Hang-chou 杭州	270	Hang-chou 杭州	303	Kuang-tung 廣東	400	Kuang-tung 廣東	800	Kuang-tung 廣東	875	Tien-tsin 天津	700
Kuang-tung 廣東	150	Nan-ching 南京	194	Kuang-tung 廣東	200	Hang-chou 杭州	340	Hang-chou 杭州	387	Hang-chou 杭州	434	Shanghai 上海	619
Nan-ching 南京	147	Kuang-tung 廣東	180	Hsi-an 西安	167	Hsi-an 西安	195	Ssu-chou 蘇州	243	Ssu-chou 蘇州	330	Kuang-tung 廣東	585
Hsi-an 西安	127	Hsi-an 西安	138	Ssu-chou 蘇州	140	Ssu-chou 蘇州	173	Hsi-an 西安	224	Hsi-an 西安	275	Han-ko 漢口	450
Ssu-chou 蘇州	122	Ssu-chou 蘇州	134	Nan-ching 南京	140	Wu-chang 武昌	136	Ching-te-chen 景德鎮	164	Cheng-tu 成都	200	Hang-chou 杭州	350
Cheng-tu 成都	85	Cheng-tu 成都	100	Wu-chang 武昌	110	Ching-te-chen 景德鎮	136	Wu-chang 武昌	160	Tien-tsin 天津	195	Cheng-tu 成都	300
Fu-chou 福州	83	Kai-feng 開封	80	Ching-te-chen 景德鎮	100	Nan-ching 南京	100	Tien-tsin 天津	130	Wu-chang 武昌	185	Ssu-chou 蘇州	280
Kai-feng 開封	80	Fu-chou 福州	78	Ning-hsia 寧夏	90	Ning-hsia 寧夏	90	Fu-chou 福州	130	Shanghai 上海	175	Nan-Ching 南京	270
Wu-chang 武昌	64	Wu-chou 吳州	75	Hsu-chou 徐州	75	Fu-chou 福州	83	Fu-shan 釜山	124	Fu-chou 福州	175	Ning-po 寧波	257
Tai-yuan 太原	61	Ching-te-chen 景德鎮	75	Tien-tsin 天津	70	Tien-tsin 天津	80	Cheng-tu 成都	97	Fu-shan 釜山	170	Fu-chou 福州	250
Chuan-chou 泉州	60	Hsu-chou 徐州	65	Chin-chiang 晉江	68	Fu-shan 釜山	80	Lang-chou 蘭州	90	Ching-te-chen 景德鎮	100	Hsi-an 西安	250
Yang-chou 楊州	60	Yang-chou 楊州	58	Fu-chou 福州	67	Chin-chiang 晉江	80	Shanghai 上海	90	Chang-sha 長沙	100	Wu-his 無錫	200
Hsu-chou 蘇州	55	Chuan-ciou 泉州	56	Chang-sha 長沙	60	Kai-feng 開封	78	Chang-sha 長沙	85	Lang-chou 蘭州	90	Fu-shan 釜山	200
(%) in Total Population	2.02%		1.49%		1.49%		1.34%		1.20%		1.18%		1.29%

Source: City population from Tertius Chandler, *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth. An Historical Census*, New York, St. David's University Press, 1987, 76-80; Total population from Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1978, 172-173.

Chart IV-3: The Fourteen Largest Cities in Europe, 1500-1900

(Population in thousands)

1500 City	1500 Population	1600 City	1600 Population	1700 City	1700 Population	1750 City	1750 Population	1800 City	1800 Population	1850 City	1850 Population	1900 City	1900 Population
Constantinople	200	Constantinople	700	Constantinople	700	London	676	London	861	London	2,340	London	6,480
Paris	185	Paris	245	London	550	Constantinople	625	Constantinople	570	Paris	1,314	Paris	3,330
Adrianople	127	Naples	224	Paris	530	Paris	556	Paris	547	Constantinople	785	Berlin	2,707
Venice	115	London	187	Amsterdam	210	Naples	310	Naples	430	St. Petersburg	502	Vienna	1,698
Naples	114	Venice	151	Naples	207	Amsterdam	219	Moscow	248	Berlin	446	St. Petersburg	1,439
Milan	89	Adrianople	150	Lisbon	188	Lisbon	213	Lisbon	237	Vienna	426	Manchester	1,435
Moscow	80	Seville	126	Rome	149	Vienna	169	Vienna	231	Liverpool	425	Birmingham	1,248
Ghent	80	Prague	110	Venice	1433	Venice	158	St. Petersburg	220	Naples	413	Moscow	1,120
Prague	70	Rome	109	Palermo	125	Rome	146	Amsterdam	195	Moscow	373	Glasgow	1,072
Florence	70	Milan	107	Moscow	114	Moscow	146	Berlin	172	Glasgow	345	Liverpool	940
Granada	70	Palermo	105	Milan	113	Dublin	125	Madrid	169	Birmingham	294	Constantinople	900
Genoa	62	Lisbon	100	Madrid	110	Berlin	113	Dublin	165	Dublin	263	Hamburg	895
Bruges	60	Moscow	80	Vienna	105	Palermo	111	Rome	153	Lisbon	262	Budapest	785
Rouen	60	Madrid	79	Adrianople	85	Milan	110	Venice	146	Amsterdam	225	Ruhr	766
(%) in Total Population	1.70%		2.47%		3.84%		2.63%		2.41%		3.17%		6.36%

Source: City population from Tertius Chandler, *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth. An Historical Census*, New York, St. David's University Press, 1987, 488, 490, 528-530; total population from Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1978, 26-30.

centres, particularly capitals. Inhabitants of London tripled between 1600 and 1700, and tripled again between 1800 and 1850, and 1850 to 1900. Paris had 245,000 inhabitants in 1600, and doubled to 540,000 in 1700; it grew again from 547,000 in 1800 to 3,330,000 in 1900. Similar increases can be found in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vienna and Berlin (see *Chart IV-3*). The reshuffle of macro-urban concentration in Europe, especially after 1750, redefined at the same time the new pre-eminent area of Europe—England, Holland and France.[32] What can be drawn here is that Chinese and European natural landscapes had begun to bear traits of their disparate inner cultural logics: a more or less self-contained territorial boundary, a synthesising ethnic recognition, a steady growth of population and equal distribution policy of China all suggest the maturity of a corresponding idealistic inward-looking, moral-ethical and commonsense based rationality, as well as heavy humanistic intervention for the geo-ethnic distribution. In contrast, the explosive overseas expansion, distinctive ethnic perceptions within similar pattern of ethnic distribution, a macro-urban concentration of population, and a shift of new prominent centre to the Protestant northwest by power competition in Europe all together imparted the facilitation of a specialised and instrumental based rationality, as well as an outward-looking and interest-calculative logic of free market decision. As Hsu explains, it seems clear that the further history develops, the deeper humanistic factors begin to show their impact on natural conditions. Amid the seemingly objective natural environments there penetrate the free will and choice of human beings. Natural landscapes therefore also reflect the cultural mentalities of various civilisations.[33] Behind the geo-ethnic conditions of Europe and China lie disparate human engagements and philosophies.

4. 2   *Political Economy: Power, Wealth and Institutions*

4. 2. 1   The Case of Europe

States in Europe, building on the foundations laid down from the 12th century onwards, started to take their modern shapes during the 15th and 16th centuries. As Rietbergen suggests, in a "process of, alternatingly, violent and bloody interaction or peaceful

---

[32]   S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 256-258, 261-262.
[33]   Hsu Cho-Yun 許倬雲, *Features of Chinese Ancient Culture* 中國古代文化的特質, Taipei, 聯經, 20-21.

negotiation between the rulers, the various aristocratic power groups and the patrician elites of the major towns, most states developed into complex, centralised, bureaucracies, as much a 'work of art'." [34] Later historians have named the phenomenon of the centralised, competitive states and the elaboration of law as some of the most important formative elements in establishing the "wonder" that spread from Europe into the wider world. Within their natural boundaries, Spain, Portugal, England and France in forms of monarchy had already looked like their modern equivalents on the map in 1500. Portugal had its own king, and Spain at that time divided into the Kingdom of Castile and Aragon, which extended from the Iberian mainland to Sardinia and Sicily. England had conquered Wales long before, but still had an independent neighbour at its north, Scotland. Although French kings were effectively the overlords of most of modern France, some eastern areas, notably much of Burgundy, Savoy, Alsace and Lorain, had not yet been brought under their rule. Outside those four countries, and sometimes as enclaves within them, lay hundreds of little fiefdoms, republics and free cities. "National feelings" as the consolidating forces of a political identity had not yet transcended the personal ties, family and dynasty completely. The two greatest medieval political institutions, the papacy and the Holy Rome Empire, were still important players of diplomacy. The Catholic Pope, ruled one of Italy's major states, also had rights of lordship, jurisdiction and dependency in many other countries. He still possessed disputed but immense authority as the head of the Universal Church. Germany, where most of The Holy Roman Empire lay, was a chaos supposedly united under the emperor. Lying nominally under Habsburg suzerainty, there were 100 princes and more than 50 imperial cities, all independent, while another 300 or so minor statelets and imperial vassals completed the patchwork of the medieval empire. Holland's federal form of government was derived from a league of autonomous medieval towns, while the federal league of urban and rural Swiss cantons also combined outward archaism with an unusual inner flexibility. Further east, the aristocratic republic of Poland exercised superficial sovereignty over much of Eastern Europe, which turned its back upon French models of modern government by weakening royal power with each election to the throne. The territory of today's Russia fragmented into zones that were controlled by the Prince of Moscow, the Republic of Pskov, the Golden Horde, the

---

[34] Peter Rietbergen, *Europe: A Cultural History*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 195-196.

Krim Tatars and many other conquerors from the Eurasian steppe.[35] Following the fall of Constantinople the rest of the Christian Orthodox Balkans quickly fell into the Ottomans' lap. In addition to Bulgaria, they conquered Serbia (minus Belgrade) and mainland Greece in 1456-1459, Bosnia in 1463, Albania in 1467-1479, Hercegovina in 1482-1483, Montenegro in 1499 and Belgrade in 1521. On the Balkan mainland only the Austrian-ruled Slovenia, the Republic of Ragusa and the Venetian-ruled Dalmatian and Albania ports remained effectively outside Ottoman control.[36] Thus many variants—city-states, empires, federations, republics, centralised kingdoms and loosely knit elective monarchies—all prospered somewhere in Europe and each enjoyed considerable distinctness and autonomy, very different from the Chinese case indeed.

The history of the European Continent in the first half of the 17th century was dominated by a series of bloody conflicts that have come to be known collectively as the Thirty Years War, which was settled in 1648, the Peace of Westphalia. In general terms, this was a civil and religious war fought by the Holy Rome Emperor and his Catholic supporter against Protestant princes for control of the empire. Such was an unprecedented event, as: (a) it was the first war that involved all the major powers on the Continent that was fought to further assure the mechanism of "balance of power"; and (b) differences of religious doctrine nearly ceased to be a cause for war after 1648, which, as Fox argues, was not the result of any lessening of faith (there was in fact an important religious revival in this century, and few societies yet enjoyed internal religious toleration,) although there "did come to be a general acceptance of a variety of established churches among the different political units of the European world."[37] What could be seen was that both the Protestant and the Catholic Reformations contributed directly to the advance of the secular power at the expense of the papacy and of the empire. Protestant rulers confiscated much ecclesiastical property and often reduced the clergy to the status of salaried appointees of the state. Even in Catholic countries, where the Church retained most or all of its possessions, the papacy was

[35]   J. M. Roberts, *A History of Europe*, Oxford, Helicon Publishing Ltd., 1996, 240-241; Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492-1992*, Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell, 1993, 23, 30; and William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 635-637.
[36]   Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change*, New York and London, Routledge, 1998, 69
[37]   Edward Whiting Fox, *The Emergence of the Modern European World*, Cambridge USA and Oxford UK, Blackwell, 1991, 4, 7.

forced to concede very wide-ranging powers to local rulers in matters such as ecclesiastical appointments, taxing powers over Church property, and judicial authority over clergymen. As a result, fairly distinct national or state churches tended to form even with the universal frame of Catholicism.[38] The Church seemed to have faded away from its thousand-year-old role of a "Universal" European political institution, what was kept was its still influential force over the private sphere. In Mann's terms, Christianity had transformed from an "authoritative power" into a "diffused" or "extensive power", which was by no means less influential, but just functioned in another subtle way.[39]

The consolidation of the state accelerated as the French Revolution spelled out in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and marked the age of constitutional republics in Europe since 1789. The French Estates-General, having transformed itself into the National Assembly, set out to embody these rights in a new constitution.[40] Democratic revolution that was embarked in the British colonies of North America since 1776 was transferred across the Atlantic and planted in the very heart of Western Europe. As McNeill sees it, thereafter, until World War I, "the major agenda for European politicians was to adjust inherited political varieties to the eternal verities newly discovered in France, i.e., to secularise, rationalise, and reform existing institutions in the light of democratic principles."[41] The 19th century was an era of nation building, which was conducted within an effective system of balance of power that was labelled as the "Concert of Europe". Aside from Great Britain, French expansionism had been checked after the defeat of Napoleon; the Kingdom of the Netherlands had been created; Swiss neutrality had been given; and an independent Belgium emerged in 1830-1839. In the east Russia, her frontier in Poland pushed further west than even before.[42] After the Crimean war (1854-1856), Austria lost her hegemony both in Germany and in Italy. Otto von Bismarck consolidated the German states under a union of German Empire in 1871. Under the leadership of Mazzini, young idealists and Italian soldiers occupied Rome in 1870, and made it the capital of

---

[38]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 645.
[39]   Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. A History of Power from the Beginning to A. D. 1760*, Vol. I, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, 8.
[40]   Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 329.
[41]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 811.
[42]   See M. S. Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe 1815-1914*, London and New York, Longman, 1985 Second Edition (First Published in 1972), 1-27.

the united Italy kingdom in 1871.[43] Nationalism did not become a potent factor within the Ottoman Empire until its disintegration in the 19th century. Curiously, before then few Bulgarians, Serbs, Albanians, Greeks, Armenians, Kurds, Arabs or even Turks had developed a sense of cultural or ethnic identity that was *national*."[44] New national states only became established in Serbia, Greece and Rumania by 1870. Bulgaria and Montenegro emerged in the 1870s. In 1905, Norway was to separate itself from Sweden peacefully and by agreement, and Albania for the first time made its appearance on the map in 1913.[45] Europe in the 19th century invented nation and nationalism. Nationalism as "the spirit of the age"[46] became an ideological instrument used to reconcile the disparate and often conflicting socio-cultural elements and regional identities within the European states. Agents of central governments involved themselves as never before in promoting the priority of a single version of national culture in the form of language, communication, high arts, education and political belief.[47] As Gellner noted, culture and social organisation are universal and perennial, but nationalism and states are not.[48] However, during the 19th century, cultural notions were increasingly linked with politics in an attempt to achieve a sense of identity and thus of unity. For what states needed was a general feeling of community among the people that would support the rulers' claims to sovereignty and power to lead the nation. Rietbergen is right that govern-ability requires controllability. "It was assumed that controllability was most easily achieved if a single system of norms and values were imposed on society. It was thought to be even more effective if it caused people in such a community to feel that those norms and values really formed their own specific identity"[49]

Apparently, state formation, the reassurance of a competitive inter-national power system, together with the capitalist industrialisation, had composed the most salient features of European political economy in the post-1450 era. Governmental economic policies were usually inspired by fiscal and military ends, and war, as always, was

---

[43] See Robert E. Lerner, Standish Meacham and Edward McNall Burns, *Western Civilisation. Their History and Their Culture*, Vol. II, New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, 1993(b) Twelfth Edition, 793-799.
[44] Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, op. cit. (1998), 97.
[45] J. M. Roberts, op. cit. (1996), 397.
[46] AnthonyD. Smith, *National Identity*, London, Penguin books, 1991, 71.
[47] Charles Tilly, op. cit. (1993), 30.
[48] Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism*, London, Weidenfeld &Nicolson, 1997, 5.
[49] Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 350, 355.

economically destructive. Yet, by the 17ᵗʰ century, European statesmen had firmly grasped the notion that a flourishing commerce and industry was a direct asset to the state, while the means to achieve such flourishing commerce were often by force. Power and wealth became the dominant logic of political and economic elites across the European Continent. The expansion of states began with the inflation of war and its costs by the creation of large, well-equipped and publicly financed standing armies were drawn from its own populations and from its Asian, African and America colonies. The general wealth of Europe increased to a point where tax income could pay and equip comparatively large and formidable standing armies and professional navies. The newly expanded financial devices, like the British national debt and the Bank of England (chartered 1694) further enabled mobilisation of economic resources on a new scale by tapping private capital for state uses.[50] To look deeper inside this whole process, it involves, as Michael Mann suggests, at least three interlinked major features of political and economic modernisation between 1700 and 1914, namely: (a) specialisation and professionalism in public administration and bureaucratisation; (b) capitalist industrialisation, which boosted the size, the scope of functions and infrastructural powers of states, as well as their national economic integration; and (c) struggles over political representation and national citizenship, which finally reached an institutionalised citizenship.[51]

Firstly, the specialisation in public administration and bureaucracy started with the 16ᵗʰ and 17ᵗʰ centuries. At that time, even the most absolute monarchs were obliged to accommodate their conduct to the interests of towns, provinces, chartered companies, guilds, the Church and other privileged corporations at home. Nonetheless, as Tilly observes, the consolidating modern state had moved gradually from indirect to direct

---

[50] William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 638, 641.

[51] The struggles for representation as Mann argues are usually separated from the three administrative and institutionalising processes. They are assumed to constitute a single, overall modernizing process occurring more or less continuously over a long period of time. Mann subdivides the process of state modernisation into three phases: phase 1, the dynastic monarchy and military state between 1700-1780, which was formally above local-regional society with the administration of royal household, private domains and armed forces all belonged to the absolute monarch; phase 2, struggles over political representation and national citizenship that were led by political reforms and revolutionaries between 1780-1850; and phase 3, states greatly increased their civilian scope, "institutionalised citizenship, and capitalist industrialisation boosted their infrastructural powers, national economic integration, and corporate business models of bureaucracy" between 1850-1914. Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. The Rise of Classes and Nation-states, 1760-1914*. Vol. II, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 358, 447-475.

control:[52]

> Instead of relying on largely autonomous intermediaries such as great landlords, churchmen, city councils and merchants to govern on their behalf, rulers created state apparatuses that reached down into communities, even into individual households, by means of taxation, conscription, population registration, public education and other forms of control. Agents of central governments circumscribed the resources – capital, labour, commodities, money, technologies – within their national boundaries, controlling their movement over frontiers defined with increasing precision by geographers, generals and politicians, devising national policies to affect their employment, coordinating their uses and asserting the priority of the state's claims on these resources over all competing claims.

These territorial States were served by "functionaries" or "officers", all of whom were servants of the State.[53] They became largely bureaucratised after 1700, earlier in the state military and later in the civilian administration. State employment (not including the military) at all levels for Austria-Hungary as percentage of its total population in 1760 was 0.17%, which increased to 0.37% in 1830, 0.45% in 1850, 2.92% in 1890, and 3.15% in 1910. Similar percentage rise occurred also in other European countries: state employment at all levels made up 0.29% total population in 1780 France, which increased to 0.84% in 1850, 1.83% in 1890, and 2.14% in 1910; in Great Britain, the figure is 0.41% in 1850, 0.99% in 1890, and 2.60% in 1910.[54] Obvious rulers of states found it wise to widen the scope of professionalism, which could be trusted to work effectively within well-worn and familiar paths. The operation of state bureaucracy linked closely to specialised social professions and urban middle class. "Professional lawyers, doctors, merchants, courtiers, landowners, bureaucrats, army officers, and by the 18th century, even writers, trained in the techniques and conformable to the conventions of their calling, remoulded the life of Europe bit by bit as the decades advanced."[55] Storekeepers, merchants and financiers, factory owners and genteel renters acted as the principal transmission belt between government and wider public together performed "a revolution in the control of administration".[56] In promoting "special expertise the new formats also stimulated the growth of professionalism and

---

[52]   Charles Tilly, op. cit. (1993), 29-30.
[53]   Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 323.
[54]   Michael Mann, op. cit. (1993), 393.
[55]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 635-636, 818-819.
[56]   Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations,* Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell, 1986, 131.

the formal scientific career." The universities and institutes trained specialists were later employed in government departments and in a variety of industries such as chemistry, metallurgy, mining, and electricity. Specialisation and professionalism were developing aspects of the scientific associations,[57] which at the same time became salient characteristics of modern Europe.

Alongside the specialising and expanding state bureaucracy was the growing size and scope of state function. Such rapid growth was accelerated by the Industrial Revolution that centred in England in the 18th century, and spread there in unequal fashion to the countries of Continental Europe.[58] The industrial and governmental bureaucracies overlapped extensively. Public servants then managed railroads, mines, telegraph, and telephone services in the European states, while the pervasive benevolence of most governmental officials toward private corporations reached its culmination in the active and close collaboration between key industrial suppliers and state bureaucrats.[59] The 19th century states expenditures grew enormously in monetary terms: in 1760, the British central state spent 18 million pounds, in 1850 55.5 million pounds, and in 1911 almost 160 million pounds. This eightfold increase also occurred in France, while Austria and Prussia-Germany grew even more. The growth rate became more moderate if we control for inflation and population growth. Central government expenditure as percentage of national income in Britain was 22%

---

[57] For instance, in Britain, the tripling of the number of scientific professorships between 1810 and 1860 took place alongside a rapid growth of specialised scientific forums for the presentation, dissemination or popularisation of knowledge. In Germany, the society of German Naturalists and Natural Philosophers from 1822 had proclaimed expertise by restricting its membership to those who had published. Ian Inkster, *Science and Technology in History. An Approach to Industrial Development*, London, McMillan, 1991, 93-94.

[58] As Landes argues, in the eighteenth century, a series of inventions transformed the British cotton manufacture and gave birth to a new mode of production—the factory system. (By factory is meant a unified unit of production (workers brought together under supervision), using a central, typically inanimate source of power. Without the central power, we have a manufactory.) At the same time, other branches of industry made comparable and often related advances, and all of these together, mutually reinforcing, drove further gains on an ever-widening front. The abundance and variety of these innovations almost defy compilation, but they fall under three principles: (1) the substitution of machines—rapid, regular, precise, tireless—for human skill and effort; (2) the substitution of inanimate for animate sources of power, in particular, the invention of engines for converting heat into work, thereby opening an almost unlimited supply of energy; and (3) the use of new and far more abundant raw materials, in particular, the substitution of mineral, and eventually artificial, materials for vegetable or animal substances. These substitutions made the Industrial Revolution. David S. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus. Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1969; also David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 187.

[59] William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 809.

in 1760, 37% in 1810 and 9% in 1900; Prussia-Germany spent 35% of its national income in 1760, 17% in 1830 and 6% in 1910; while the expenditure stood for 12% of France GNP in 1760, 7% in 1830, and 11% in 1910.[60] The scale, which European states were able to mobilise far surpassed their Asian contemporaries since the middle of the 18th century (to be further discussed in Section 4.2.2). As Landes remarks, Industrial Revolution "transformed in the span of scarce two lifetimes the life of Western man, the nature of his society, and his relationship to the other peoples of the world."[61] It also transformed the balance of political power between nations, and between civilisations and as much changed ways of thinking as ways of doing.

The other major transformation in European modern political economy was the institutionalisation of citizenship and the state's enlarged civilian roles. The formation of vast military forces and inflating central state bureaucracies had a whole series of unintended but fundamental consequences. Moving states from indirect toward direct controls over stocks and flows of labour, capital, and commodities within national borders involves rulers in extended struggles and bargaining with their subject populations. Unprecedented obligations came to bind states to citizens and citizens to states stronger and stronger. Such process "broadened popular politics and created the opportunity for interest groups to demand services and protections from the state in the form of economic infrastructure, policing, courts of law, education, welfare and much more." With the expansion of those two-sided obligations, definitions of citizenship expanded and various kinds of representative institutions were reinforced. Europeans created a kind of citizenship that extended to most of the population.[62] The 18th century states suddenly became massive in relation to their civil societies. State functions shifted from their traditional narrow military crystallisation toward enlarged civilian roles such as the new material and symbolic communications infrastructures, increased state intervention in the economy, and social welfare. The traditional state functions had been overtaken everywhere by two principal growth areas, education and transport, followed by two lesser ones, postal and telegraph services and "other economic services" – principally environmental activities and agricultural and industrial subsidies. The percentage of all government budgets allocated for civil and

[60] Michael Mann, op. cit. (1993), 366-367.
[61] David S. Landes, op. cit. (1969), 187.
[62] Charles Tilly, op. cit. (1993), 32, 34-35.

military expenditure in Austria was 28% civilian and 51% military in 1780; 34% and 47% in 1850, and 60% and 16% in 1910; in Britain the ratio was 7% civilian, 66% military in 1780, and 22% and 27% in 1850, and 47% and 40% in 1910. Together these enlarged civil roles clearly mark the transition toward a new civil state.[63] Citizenship under what Weber labelled "the modern occidental rationalisation of law" and codified systems that was handled by a rationally trained bureaucracy and officialdom,[64] began to acquire something like the means today's Europeans assign to it. Those civilised and civilising elements has for long become what Europe prided itself on culturally.

The logic, which shaped the post-1450 European political and economic context revealed obvious continuity to the existing understanding of power interaction. Or to put it in another way, the way of perceiving the political and economic situations and the recognition of an appropriate pattern for power operation (i.e. the balance of power) in post-1450 Europe did not deviate from its ongoing trajectory. The pro-instrumental cultural logic that emphasised the pragmatic code of political and economic interests and individual legal rights now reached its institutionalised form of citizenship and constitutional states. Notions of liberty and continuous accumulation of power and wealth became even more dominant under the competitive process of capitalist industrialisation and overseas expansion, whilst the specialisation and professionalism in public administration helped to increase the capacity of state control enormously. Only the modern State now recognised no authority higher than its own – "neither the Holy Roman Empire, increasingly ignored by its own Princes, nor the Papacy, whose moral and political authority had once been immense. Every state wanted to be isolated, uncontrolled and *free*: reasons of State became the ultimate law."[65] The growing "emancipation of market forces and the state from religious presuppositions weakened the powers and roles of churches, and in some cases led to their disestablishment. Religious organisations lost many of their political and educational functions and much of their lands and wealth," as the state bureaucracy and political leaderships expanded the scope of their operations.[66] The

---

[63] Michael Mann, op. cit. (1993), 358-395.
[64] Max Weber, *The Religion of China. Confucianism and Taoism*, New York, The MacMillan Company, Translated Edition by Hans H. Gerth 1964 (First Published in 1951), 149.
[65] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 323.
[66] Anthony D. Smith, op. cit. (1986), 158.

pre-1450 era, as argued in Chapter 3, did not invent the "balance of power"; neither did the 19th century originate "the Concert of Europe". The "European balance of power" was not the result of careful calculation by diplomatists or conscious engineering. However, unlike the initial case discussed in Chapter 3, the mechanism first shaped by the factual division among different agents and their insufficiency of power and resources had gradually internalised as part of European cultural logic. It is true that the mechanism does not seem to encourage homogenous unity in Europe; nonetheless all of Europe has long been absorbed into this same political system, from which no state could escape. Thus viewed, the spirit of unity in diversity maintained as it had long been held. We agree with Toynbee that within the last five hundred years the work of a number of separate rival local European states and their competition with each other has been one of the major driving forces behind the West's expansion. And "political divisiveness has been one of the salient features that the process of Westernisation has imposed on the political landscape of the globe."[67] Yet, was not such diversity and distinctiveness itself another cultural construction? To look beyond the borders, apart from a unified central government of a pan-European scale, Europe was no less a "homogenous" culture than China.

4. 2. 2   The Case of China

If the post-1450 European political economy persisted with its existing cultural logic, it was even more so for the case of China, at least to the end of the 18th century. The term "state formation" after the post-1450 era does not contain such significant connotations to people in China, as the political and economic power and institutional consolidations were basically achieved very early on in Chinese history. Since the unification of the Chin (221 BC), the civil bureaucracy had controlled directly from the central to the local provincial and county governments, and established a centralised bureaucratic polity at a pan-Chinese scale. One needs only to look into the demarcation of the Chinese local administrative system to soon realise its stability and early maturity. In the Earlier Han Period, the government divided the whole country into 1,577 counties. Despite change of powers, political divisions and occasional minority rules, such number of local county government maintained at a very close

---

[67]   Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1972 One Volume Edition, 316.

1,305 to the Period of the Ching, which clearly revealed the polity's historical continuity, at the very difficult local administrative level.[68] Apparently, post-1450 China stayed fast to its own adjusting mechanism: the self-restraining coordinating centre, which at times adopted a policy of introversion and least interference; and the fluctuating governmental control with still recurring minority rule. (As argued in Section 4.1, there had been 1,109 main military conflicts between the Chinese and the northern nomads from 215 BC to AD 1684, while as many as 225,887 armed rebellions were recorded between 210 BC and AD 1900.)[69] Such "weak" governmental control (with respect only to the modern European states) was more than ever before assisted by the closely linked local gentry and familial society in consolidating its increasing subject population. The political and economic norms persisted, and hardly was there any motives for a structural change. It was not until the early 19th century, when the European powers "proved" in relentless guns and warships that their consolidating state institutions, navies, and the "logic of power and wealth", mobilised more intensively and efficiently within and without their territories, that Chinese then realised that changes in political and economic institutions and even cultural logic were no longer a simple question of "choice", but of the "freedom to choose" and survive. Only if they could survive and guard the Europeans from manipulating the will of Chinese could they again possibly pursue their own way of life.

The beginning of Ming rule showed another good example of self-restraining and inward-looking government. After expelling the Mongolia from power, Chu Yuan-Chang 朱元璋(r. 1368-1398), the first emperor of Ming, declared his resolution to his sons and grandsons that the empire should never expand again. The emperors should only manage the "inlands" or "existing territory" of China so as to avoid further disturbances. Fifteen countries were proclaimed that would never be invaded again. (For detailed rationales see Section 6.1)[70] The proclamation announced on December 12, 1370 shows that the Board of Revenue had respectfully received an

[68] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *Prosperity and Crisis* 興盛與危機, Taipei, 風雲時代出版公司, 1994 (a), 57.
[69] Kent G. Deng, op. cit. (2000), 7.
[70] Chun Yuan-Chang 朱元璋, "The Royal Ming Ancestral Instructions 皇明祖訓", in *Literature on the Foundation of Ming Dynasty 明朝開國文獻*. d 1368-1398. (Taipei, 學生書局, 1966 Reprints.); also Huang Jen-Yu 黃仁宇, op. cit. (1993), 219-220, 211-212.

imperial edict, which stated a consistent inward-looking policy to the emperor's declaration:[71]

> The officials of the Board of Revenue will take notice that although the country is now at peace the government has not yet secured accurate information about the population... You, officials of the Board of Revenue, will send out proclamations ordering the provincial and local authorities to get all the population within their respective jurisdiction officially registered... *Since my powerful troops are no longer going out on campaigns, they are to be sent to every county, in order to make a household-to-household check of the returns* [Italic my emphasis].

Cultural logics did not determine the historical development. The self-restraint policy proved to depend also on the goodwill of the rulers. The third emperor Cheng-Tsu 成祖 (r. 1403-1424) attempted to achieve quite the opposite. As Huang suggested, the lavish expense and outward expansion of Cheng-Tsu (without substantial reward from overseas) may have surpassed the financial capacity that government could afford: military invasion to Vietnam; five major northwards attacks to Mongols with 100,00 to 500,000 soldiers each; the extravagant palace constructions that took 10,000 artisans and nearly one million labourers twelve years to complete; reconstruction of the canals; plus the well-known Cheng Ho maritime expeditions, left his successors little choice but to adopt an even more introspective policy.[72] As Adshead rightly observes, the Ming state under Wan-Li 萬曆 (1573-1620) had two outstanding characteristics: lightness and introversion. By the late 16th century, in the face of society's resistance to the earlier over mobilisation, Ming had become a physiocracy in the sense of a state minimising its activities. In 1400 with a population of, at most 100 million, the expenditure of the Ming state amounted to 100 million taels. In 1600, with a population of 150 million with a higher per capita income, expenditure had fallen to 50 million taels or less.[73] The expansive maritime aggression had long been abandoned since Cheng Ho's last voyage in 1433. From 1436, requests for the

---

[71] The proclamation of 1370 and the original form of the household certificate are found in two rare local histories, *Hsing-Hua-Tsun Chih* 杏花村志(1685 ed.), II.Ia-2b, and *Pu-Chen-Chi-Wen* 濮鎮紀聞 (1787 ed., Ching manuscript). The text is cited from Ping-ti Ho, *Studies on the Population of China, 1368-1935*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1959, 4-6, also footnote 3.
[72] Huang Jen-Yu 黃仁宇, op. cit. (1993), 219-220, 254-255; and Yang Kuo-Chen 楊國楨 and Chen Chih-Ping 陳支平, *The New Compiled History of the Ming* 明史新編, Taipei, 昭明出版社, 1999, 77-79.
[73] S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 185-186.

assignment of new craftsmen to the shipyards were refused. By 1500, anyone who built a ship of more than two masts was liable to the death penalty, and between 1521 and 1525 coastal authorities were enjoined to destroy all ocean-going ships and to arrest their owners.[74] The high seas fleets since Cheng Ho's time were allowed to crumble in the Nan-ching 南京 dockyard (see Chapter 6 for further analysis). The culmination of the introversion policy was the decision by Chang Chu-Cheng 張居正 in 1571 to handle the new Inner Mongolian confederation of Altan Khan by appeasement rather than by force, and the army was reduced from over 3 million to 845,000 effectives. Between 1368 and 1620, 18 major construction projects were carried out to overhaul the 6,700 kilometres of the Great Wall,[75] which "isolates" the Heavenly Kindgom from unnecessary foreign contacts. It was not until the early Ching Period that China again moved off such introspective extreme.

The Manchu took over China in 1644, and began a 267 years minority rule. Again the reversed majority and minority relation was reflected clearly in the ratio of Manchu and Han civil officers. Although the Manchu constituted less than 5% of Chinese population, the ratio of Manchu and Han ethnic general magistrates 總督 was 1 to 0.75 in 1840, and the figure of magistrate of the prefecture 巡府 1 to 2.3. It was not until the Tai Ping rebellion that such ratios began to change dramatically: the ratio of Manchu and Han ethnic general magistrate became 1 to 6.5 in 1866, and prefecture magistrate 1 to 12.[76] However, as already mentioned in Section 4.1, the early Ching was actually an age of supremacy in terms of its border settlement. Accordingly, through a long series of difficult campaigns, Chinese administration was extended to Tibet, Mongolia, and Chinese Turkestan between 1688 and 1757, which solved the thousand-year-old problem of nomadic raids in the use of force. In the effort of Ching, diplomacy rarely had to be backed by military action to forestall threats from Southeast Asia or Korea (except for Burma, 1765-70). Most of these states then maintained a tributary relationship to China—i.e., a ceremonial recognition of dependence.[77] Indeed, despite the political instability of the 17th century when the

---

[74] David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London, Abacus, 1998, 96-97.

[75] Patrick K. O'Brien etc. (eds.), op. cit. (1999), 139.

[76] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *Transformation in Opening Up 開放中的變遷*, Taipei, 風雲時代出版公司, 1994 (b), 89.

[77] Since Chinese protocol classified any diplomatic or trading relationship as "tribute", the term was

government made serious efforts to stop the commercial activities from the sea, Chinese again involved heavily in overseas trade. However, maintaining its inward-looking principle and moralist ideal, and differing from the European case, the Chinese state had no interest in directly providing military and political backing for its subjects' overseas forays (not even in the case of Cheng Ho's expeditions). Even where rates of profit may have been unusually high, the Chinese state did not use force to promote Chinese commerce overseas. As Pomeranz argues, such policy "allowed Dutch and Spanish colonial authorities to prevent the large Chinese merchant communities of Manila and Batavia from buying land, to periodically encourage angry 'natives' to vent their discontent in massacres of the Chinese, or to perpetrate such massacres themselves." Political and military power, rather than superior commercial organisation, seemed to have also been the way in which European merchants wrested control of some (though still by no means all) trades from Chinese merchants in the Philippines.[78]

European capitalist firms seemed to have no unique advantage in competing with Asian and Chinese merchants even in the 18th century. Ming China had a virtual monopoly in porcelain and other ceramics (still called china to the present day) on the world market. China's exports of silk, porcelain, quicksilver, and after 1600, tea and the source of zinc and cupronickel (both were used as alloys for coinage elsewhere) all occupied a dominant position in the world market. Frank's analysis of the production and flow of silver around the world showed that China had literally become the ultimate sink of world silver between the 16th and 18th century. Europe had produced nothing that Chinese wanted, and could only trade in silvers, which they robbed from the Americas, for the exchange of ceramic, silk and tea products. Frank moves on to argue that[79]

---

very elastic. Burma continued to be officially regarded as tributary despite the Chinese military defeat of 1769; and Britain fell into the same class. The Russians alone, heirs to former empires on China's northwest frontier with which the Chinese had been compelled to deal as equals, escaped this classification. William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 774.

[78] Batavia in 1740 and Manila in 1603 and 1764 are especially notable examples. Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 173, 182, 202, quote page 202.

[79] As Frank argues, American produced 17,000 tons silver in the sixteenth century, almost all of which were shipped to and remained in Europe. For the seventeenth and eighteen centuries, American production of 37,000 and 75,000 tons respectively, of which 27,000 and 54,000 tons were shipped to Europe, for a two-century total of 81,000 tons. Of these European receipts of silver, about half (or 39,000 tons) were in turn remitted onward to Asia, 13,000 in the seventeenth century and 26,000 in the eighteenth. This silver ultimately went predominantly to China. Moreover, between 3,000 and 10,000

Europeans were outcompeted by the Chinese, whose shipping between 1680 and 1720 increased threefold to Nagasaki and reached its maximum at Batavia, when the 1740 massacre of Chinese took place... In 1700, Chinese ships brought over 20 thousand tons of goods to South China, while European ones carried away 500 tons in the same year. In 1737 it was 6 thousand tons, and not until the 1770s did European transport 20 thousand tons.

Frank's concluding remark that Europe succeeded by "climbing up on Asian shoulders" may be over simplified as the European internal economic growth and overall scientific diffusion, and industrial and institutional developments had been left out of account. Yet, in 1793 Emperor Chien-Lung wrote to King George III through his English ambassador George Lord Macartney that[80]

The Kingdom of Heaven is so rich of commodities and products that it has everything. There is therefore no need to import any manufactures from outside barbarians in exchange. As regards that the Heavenly Kingdom's tea, ceramic and silk products are necessities of the western countries, thus at my grace and sympathy, it was allowed to establish foreign companies in Macao for obtaining those necessities and make from them some small profits.

Such a statement did represent the emperor and to a large extent the central bureaucrats' understanding of, and confidence in, the "moralised" economic conditions of contemporary Chinese society. Even if it had been due to insufficient knowledge of Britain and of Europe as a whole, it is also true that European societies had not yet been able to *prove* by economic, political, scientific and military forces that they were prosperous or powerful enough to motivate Chinese intellectuals to change, let alone to take Europe as a model of political and economic reform. In short, China had been proceeding in its own trajectory, and abiding by its pro-humanistic logic of culture. (Also see Section 4.3.3 and 4.4.)

Apart from the continued self-restraint and at times introversive character of Ming

---

tons, and maybe up to 25,000 tons, were also shipped directly from the Americas to Asia via the Pacific; and almost all of this silver also ended up in China. Additionally, Japan produced at least 9,000 tons of silver, which were absorbed by China as well. Therefore over the two and a half centuries up to 1800, there had added up to 60,000 tons of silver for China or perhaps half the world's tallied production of about 120,000 tons after 1600. See Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, California, University of California Press, 1998, 147-148.

[80] Quoted from Kuo Ting-Yi 郭廷以, *The Guideline History of Modern China 近代中國史綱*, Taipei, 曉園出版社, 1994, Vol. I, 46.

and Ching China, the government as a nationwide coordinating centre had also kept, or still being trapped within, its pattern of fluctuating control. Basing on the estimated population and census data of the official records in *Chart IV-4*, it shows that the Ming government was able to register nearly 81% of its population in 1393, which quickly fell to roughly 53% in 1491, and then to its lowest of 40% in 1580. The ability of population monitoring began to recover after the Manchu came into power. The figure rose to about 53% in 1661, and reached almost 95% in 1764. It only began to weaken again in the 1850s when the Tai Ping rebellion (1850-1865) decreased the ratio to about 71%. The government revenue and figures of civil officer provide more clues for our comparative analysis. During the Ching Period (1644-1911), the total revenue income of the government stayed at about 2-4% of GDP in China. Even under the most prosper Period of Ching, the revenue that the government was able to mobilise was still less than 5.6% of national agricultural production.[81] Such a figure seems to show a far lower ratio with respect to the above European figures (Britain's 37% of national income in 1810, and 9% in 1900; and France's 12% of GNP in 1760 and 11% in 1910).

Chart IV-4: Estimated and Official Populations in post-1450 China

Time	Estimated Population in China Proper	Official Records in Dynastic Histories	
1393	75,000,000		60,545,812
1491	100,000,000		53,281,158
1580	150,000,000		60,692,856
1661	130,000,000	(19,203,233 *3.57)	68,555,542
1711	150,000,000	(24,621,324 *3.57)	87,908,837
1764	215,000,000		205,591,107
1799	320,000,000		296,960,545
1849	420,000,000		412,986,649
1875	435,000,000		322,655,781

Source: *History of the Yuan* 元史, Vol. 58; *History of Ming* 明史, Vol. 77; *Draft History of the Ching* 清史稿, Vol. 120. The official figures are drawn from the Twenty-four Dynastic History of China in the electronic database of Scripta Sinica 漢籍電子文獻資料庫, which is open to public access on the website of Academia Sinica of Taiwan (http://www.sinica.edu.tw/ftms-bin/ftmsw3). Estimated population derives from the above McEvedy figure. The figures

---

[81] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (b)), 94; Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), 227.

of official records in 1661 and 1711 include only taxpayers, or adult male aged between sixteen and sixty. The number had to be multiplied, assuming that they represent 28% of the total population that was under Ching governmental control.[82]

Chart IV-5: Figures of Civil Officers in post-1450 China

Dynasty	Number of Officers	Number of Officers and Clerks	Estimated Population	Officers and Clerks Ratio in Estimated Population
Ming Dynasty (Figures for 1506-1521)	24,000	211,972	(1500) 100,000,000	0.21%
Ching Dynasty (Figures for 1851-1865)	22,000	150,000	(1850) 430,000,000	0.03%

Source: Ming figure from Chien Mu 錢穆, *Outline History of China* 國史大綱 *Vol. II*, Taipei, 國立編譯館, 1995 Revised Third Edition (First Published in 1940), 703; Ching Period from Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (a)), 56; Estimated population derives from the above McEvedy figure.

Additionally, the percentage that civil officers represented in the Chinese population as a whole had decreased enormously during the post-1450 period; the fivefold increase in population from the Tang to the Ching was not accompanied by a corresponding expansion of the county-level bureaucracy. Consequently, and as shown in *Chart IV-5*, the number of civil officer during the Ming made up only 0.21% of total population, which had been twice below the pre-1450 average of roughly a ratio of 0.4% to 0.5% (see *Chart III-5*). While during the Ching, the percentage dropped to an ever-lower ratio of 0.03%; that is certainly pretty "abnormal" even in the context of the Chinese institutional tradition. Even if we add the number of local Chinese gentry, whose number was 1.1 to 1.4 million in 19th century (see Section 4.3.1), it would still make up only 0.33% of China's total population. To juxtapose it with its contemporary counterparts, such figures of Ming and Ching state-employments had suddenly fallen far below the European level especially after the 1850s (see Section 4.2.1, Austria-Hungary's ratio of 0.37% in 1830, 0.45% in 1850, and 2.92% in 1890; and France's 0.29% in 1780, 0.84% in 1850, and 1.83% in 1890). All these figures seem to suggest a rather "weak" Chinese governmental institutional control, particularly after 1850. Specialisation and professionalism in civil service did not occur in China before 1911, the system held fast to its moral and ethic based personnel selection policy. Confucian cannons such as the *Four Books* and *Five Classics*, and the stylistic answers written in "eight-legged essay 八股文"

---

[82] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1979), 40.

remained the basic content and format for most of Ming and Ching civil examinations. Although major reforms such as adding sessions testing discourses addressing practical questions of government policy and concrete themes dealing with state institutions in 1663 (rescinded in 1668 due to contention), and examining policy questions on world politics in 1901 did take place, such changes proved to be insufficient to cope with the changing overall internal and external conditions, and could only lead to the final abolishment of the Chinese traditional civil examination system in 1909.[83]

As Tsai and Tu both note, even judging from the ethical-based cultural logic, the then rigid examination convention and the "centralised" or "officialised" ideology stance held by the examinees since the middle of the Ming era showed that the Chinese civil examination system had kept merely the form rather than its original ideal of moral rules, while self-profit, privilege and power seemed to gradually become the main concern of the candidates for Chinese civil officers.[84] To understand the cause for such a change, we must look into another important *semi-civil* and *semi-official* mechanism for political and economic mobilisation in China, i.e. the intimate relations between the government, civil officers and local gentry. Differing from the European case, such close government, gentry and local familial ties in place of the legal obligation and citizenship had not only continued, but to an even wider and deeper extent served as a critical and characteristic institution for Chinese state and civilian consolidation. As already argued in Section 3.2.2, the Chinese civil bureaucrats could only reach to the level of a county. The drastic population increase in the Ming and Ching Periods without being accompanied by a corresponding expansion of the county-level bureaucracy meant that the five civil bureaucrats in county government would have to be responsible for the administration of an average of 250,000 people during the Ching era.[85] The task of imposing and collecting taxes, and implementing infrastructures below the county level was, however, beyond the

---

[83]   Benjamin A. Elman, "The Evolution of Civil Service Examination in Late Imperial China", *Newsletter for Modern Chinese History* 近代中國史研究, Vol. 11, 1990, 65-88.
[84]   Tsai Hui-Chin 蔡惠琴, "Studies on the Mentality of *Shih* who Participated in the Civil Service Examinations of Mid- and Late-Ming Period (Chia-Ching—Wan-Li)明代中晚期(嘉靖—萬曆)士人科舉心態之探討", *Fu-Jen History Newsletter* 輔仁歷史學報, Vol. 9, June 1998, 113-135; Tu Feng-Hsien 杜奉賢, *The Developmental Theory of Chinese History: A Comparison between Marx and Weber's Theory on China* 中國歷史發展理論: 比較馬克思與偉伯的中國論, Taipei, 正中書局, 1997, 152.
[85]   Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), 227.

capability of the magistrates' office, and would have to be accomplished through the assistance of the non-bureaucratic "liturgies" (most gentry were degree holders or local elites, such as big landlords and wealthy merchants) and the familial organisations, at the expense of direct control over local administration.

Chart IV-6: Occasions of Imperial Honours for Local Administration in Hu Nan Province in Ching Dynasty

Subjects	Guarding Local Security	Pacified Miao and Yao	Promoting Didactic Education	Charitable Funds	Encouraging Agriculture	Local Infra-structures	Virtue and Integrity	Arbitration and Purification of Folk Customs
Total Occasions	83	28	211	91	34	34	60	90
Percentage	13.13%	4.44%	34.44%	14.42%	5.39%	5.39%	9.51%	14.26%

Source: Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (b)), 60.

With 1.3 to 1.9% of total population (including all their families, see Section 4.3.1),[86] the local gentry in the Ching era received 23% of national income, of which 18.75% came from their official of semi-official posts, 29.53% from performing communal services for the local populace, such as serving as local consultant, creditors and arbiters; contributing to public works and charitable funds; engaged in didactic lectures and community compacts, and organising religious and kinship associations. Most extended families or familial groups had collective income of their own, which was spent upon public affairs, ancestral worshipping, tomb maintenance, subsidies for education, and charity funds for poor and old.[87] Wealth and resources did not all lie directly under state control, local infrastructure and social welfare made more sense in a communal or extended familial context. In order to mobilise the very base of agrarian society, the Chinese central government did its best to promote cooperation between the civil bureaucracy and local gentry. As shown in *Chart IV-6*, through honouring local bureaucracy, the imperial court of Ching encouraged events from "promoting didactic education", "guarding local security" to "arbitration and purification of folk customs" at a local scale. All such subjects conformed to the main

---

[86] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (b)), 38.

[87] See Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China. Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse*, Taipei, SMC Publishing Inc., 1994, 71-73; and Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (b)), 40, 62, 67.

activities and functions of the local gentry, and this required close cooperation between government, gentry and their familial villages. Therefore, although it is true that military expense occupied more than 63% of central and local government's annual expenditure (22,400,000 taels out of 35,323,000 in 1765),[88] the local gentry did certainly supplement civilian functions.

As local gentry were indivisible from their enlarged families, it is important to explore the development of Chinese familial villages after 1450. Doubtless, the extended familial ties continued to prosper in the Ming and Ching periods. Only unlike their ancient counterparts in the feudalist Chou Period, lineages in the Ming and Ching no longer owed their existence to the state, but were institutionally dissociated from it more then ever before. Despite having undergone a series of lineage (or descent-line system) restructuring and regrouping after the Sung Period,[89] familial villages in China traced their common ancestors with the same family names for hundreds or even thousands of years, and congregated themselves into self-sustaining and self-sufficient economic unities. In the 18th century, it was so common that familial villages with from hundreds to some ten thousand households gathered together, and composed one or more villages among them. Such "natural communities" took the family names as the name of the villages distributed from the southern provinces like Chiang-su 江蘇, Chiang-hsi 江西, Che-chiang 浙江, Kuang-tung 廣東, Kuang-hsi 廣西, Hu-nan 湖南, Hu-pei 湖北 to northern provinces such as Shan-tung 山東, Shan-hsi 山西, Shan-hsi 陝西, Ho-nan 河南 and Ho-pei 河北 etc with hardly any

---

[88] Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990 (Fourth Edition), 63.
[89] As discussed in Chapter 3, since the Northern Sung there had been a "cultural repertoire" of institutions—ancestral hall, the descent-line system, offerings at the graves of stirps, charitable estates, family instructions, and genealogies—whereby the sense of descent and kinship ties could be strengthened. However, they were not considered "standard" features that a lineage must have, and there was no clear concept of what constituted a lineage. By the late sixteenth century, there were at least three major types of lineages: the "north China" type, the "Lower Yangtze" type, and the "south China" type. Despite these general distinctions, one can find large lineages with the substantial corporate estates characteristic of China in all areas. In the mid-seventeenth century there was no consensus either in theory or in practice on the proper way to organise a kin group, especially as regards the questions of the scope of the lineage and of the fundamental ancestral rite for the entire lineage. But there was a growing tendency among the Confucian elite to consider that a lineage capable of binding kin effectively could not do without a free-standing ancestral hall for the entire lineage, a genealogy, often some corporate estate, and occasionally a lineage school. See Kai-wing Chow, op. cit. (1994), 75-76, 86.

Map IV-1: 1568 Gazette of Hu Pei and Hu Nan Irrigation System

exception.[90] These, as illustrated in the map of 1568 gazette of Hu-pei and Hu-nan irrigation system (see *Map IV-1*, each lake-bottom and river-bed dike was usually of one familial village),[91] lasted to even the present day. Thus, the familial villages together with the communal services that were carried out by the gentry became the organisations and networks, which constituted the "cultural nexus" of the Chinese society. Through this cultural nexus the gentry obtained legitimate leadership and control at the local level on the one hand, while familial villages, on the other hand, attained certain autonomy and power in establishing local social order. Again what must also be noted is the gentry's common tie with the state and the Confucian culture, for it was through Confucian ideology and the civil service system that China bound the local gentry, familial villages, and the state bureaucracy into an interlinked social, political and economic network.[92] The diffused power (as depicted in Section 2.3.2) of the interconnective cultural nexus should never be underestimated. As not only that this extensive power had derived its source from the natural and moral understanding of the most common practices in Chinese society (i.e. the practices of family life), but also that the cultural nexus had connected the very basic social units of China closely with its central political institutions.

Returning to the question why profit and previlege rather than moral ideals seemed to gradually become the concern of the candidates of civil officers, one should note that another crucial aspect of the Ming and Ching familial system and bureaucracy was their increasing engagement in trade. Since 1449, due to the financial crisis, the Ming Dynasty began to allow local or provincial degree holders to enter the National University 國子監 by contributing certain amounts of agrarian crops. As students in the university may occasionally be granted minor official or clerk posts, sons of merchants were able to obtain official positions through this system. In the Ching Dynasty, the rule for the exchange of official positions became even looser. According to the "Records of Manchu and Han Civil and Military Officers 滿漢文武官生名次錄" of 1798, the court sold some 1,400 low ranking official posts in the capital and

---

[90] Chang Yen 張研, *The 18th Century Chinese Society 十八世紀的中國社會*, Taipei, 昭明, 2000, 203-204, 225.
[91] From Chao-Ting Chi, *Key Economic Areas in Chinese History*, London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1936.
[92] See Kai-Wing Chow, op. cit. (1994), 71-73, 76.

more than 3,000 posts at the provincial and local level during that year.[93] Besides, as Chow suggests, at the end of the 16th century, it became a fashion among both acting and retired officials, especially in Chiang-su 江蘇, to engage in business. The majority of gentry families in Chiang-su established family textile workshops. Officials not only invested in and operated commercial enterprises but also sought to control major production, transaction, and transportation facilities. Accordingly, after the Wan-Li reign, irrigation works, watermills, ferries, and markets came to be owned by powerful gentry.[94] In Ching Period, 17.6% income of the Chinese gentry came from commercial activities, while another 34.1% was obtained from their own lands.[95] Guilds or commercial institutions became heavily involved with family organisations in the city and local familial villages, while the practices of ancestral worship, ancestral temple, and estates were then closely associated with commercial institutions. What made the nexus even more complicated was that although those merchants and enlarged family enterprises organised their own guilds, they would still need the admission and some times protection of the local bureaucrats. This built up among the local gentry, familial villages, commercial guilds, and the civil bureaucracy an entwined network of vertical and horizontal interdependency.[96] Hence, Weber was quite right as he wrote that this "firm cohesion was in its way religiously motivated and the strength of the truly Chinese economic organisation was roughly coextensive with these personal associations or associations affiliated with or modelled after them."[97] Only Weber overestimated the "religious motives" of such cohesion, as the practices of common ancestral worship in the commercial associations were symbolic expressions rather than substantial mysterious needs for the extended blood-ties and common hometown-ship. It was the latter rather than the former, which actually built up the trust among the merchants and bonded them together. (Also see Section 4.3.3)

[93] Liu Kuang-Ching 劉廣京, "The Second Preface: Modern Institution and Merchant 後序:近世制度與商人", in Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, *Chinese Modern Religious Ethic and Merchant Spirit 中國近世宗教倫理與商人精神*, Taipei, 聯經, 1987, 31-32.

[94] See Kai-wing Chow, op. cit. (1994), 16.

[95] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (b)), 67.

[96] Liu Kuang-Ching 劉廣京, op. cit. (1987), 35-36, 40, 52; Chang Yen 張研, op. cit. (2000), 358.

[97] Max Weber, op. cit. (1964), 236.

4. 3   *Social Order, Intellectual Trends and Cultural Logic*

4. 3. 1   Social Strata and Social Mobility

Although maintaining a higher proportion of aristocrats, larger amounts of serfs (in East Europe) and slaves from new colonies than that of China, Europe in the post-1450 era started to build up its own path of social mobility through the gradually specialised professions and via accumulation of wealth. The Portuguese had no qualms importing black slaves for domestic service or for labour in the cane fields of the coastal plain; apparently some 10 percent of the population of Lisbon in the mid 16th century was black.[98] As Braudel observes, before the 17th century, the lord continued to enjoy superior rights over the land, and could recover his oppressive powers if the time, the place, and the circumstances were right:[99]

> The history of peasant revolts is the proof of that: the *Jacquerie* in France in 1358, Wat Tyler's rebellion of workers and peasants in 1381, the sudden vast rebellion of the German peasants in 1524-5, or – in France again – the repeated peasant uprisings in the first half of the 17th century. Every time, these risings, these 'general strikes', were put down. Only the ever-present threat of them helped the peasants to retain part of the liberties and advantages that they had earlier acquired.

However, as mentioned in Section 4.2.1, in the course of the 16th and 17th century the old aristocracy could no longer be the principal carrier of the "new" bureaucratic, centralised states, which needed new means for the effective exercise of that power. "The connection between growing state power and an economy increasingly tied to the state was reflected in the fact that both successful entrepreneurs and powerful government officials now mainly came from the middle class."[100] By their growing wealth, merchants' sons entered the royal service and rose to high positions, professions like lawyers, doctors, accountants, bankers and artisans gained their power through specialised knowledge, while many impoverished noblemen "swallowed his pride to marry a well-dowered banker's daughter. In ways like these,

---

[98]   David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 69.
[99]   Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 3117-318.
[100]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 325, 331.

the gap between merchants and aristocrats was bridged."[101] Till the end of the 18th century, some 400,000 nobility of France constituted 2 percent of the country's population of some 20 million souls. Surrounding them were of course, armies of servants and also the French state's top bureaucrats. Things happened differently in central and east Europe, where a "second serfdom" occurred in the 16th century. The highest percentage in Europe was to be found in Poland, where the nobility represented 8 to 10% of the population, although many of them were indeed very poor whose standard of living hardly differed from that of the peasant.[102] In general terms, a new bourgeoisie began to take shape in European society, whose number was increasing in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, and by 1800 they already made up some 10 percent of the European population.[103] Such increasing possibility of upward social mobility was achieved not simply by the improved material life and needs for specialised knowledge, but as will be argued later, very critically through people's changing attitude and ethical justification for the pursuing of power, wealth and knowledge. Yet it must be noted that an increasing possibility of upward social mobility (at least in Western Europe) does not guarantee social equality. In fact, images of social differences, which remained so distinct in Europe, were stirred up again and again, and kept people always alert through massive events like the 1789 and 1848 Revolutions.

China on the other hand still kept its proportion of aristocrats far lower than Europe. However, its semi-institutionalised system for social mobility, the civil service and examination system, did encounter problems in satisfying the drastically growing literati demands. Despite the factual increases of successful candidates from different social backgrounds (as shown in *Chart IV-7*, between 1371 to 1643 about a third of

---

[101]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 638.
[102]   As Braudel wrote, the "second serfdom" or "refeudalisation", was the fate in store for the peasantries of East Europe who were still free in the 15th century but saw their lot altered in the sixteenth. After this, huge areas moved back into the age of serfdom: from the Baltic to the Black Sea, the Balkan, the kingdoms of Naples, and Sicily, and from Muscovy by way of Poland and Central Europe as far as a line running approximately from Hamburg to Vienna and Venice. In Poland, in about 1500, compulsory labour was insignificant; the statutes of 1519 and 1520 fixed it at one day a week, that is 52 days a year; in 1550 or so, it was increased to three days a week and in 1600 to six days. The same thing was happening in Hungary: one day a week in 1514, then two, three days, presently one week in two, and finally all regulations were suspended and compulsory labour was to be determined entirely by the good will and pleasure of the lord. In short, although it might be organised differently or mitigated here and there, the rule of six days a week unpaid labour was tending to become established everywhere without exception. Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1979), 265-267, 470-471
[103]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 326.

Chart IV-7: Chin-Shih from Special Statuses, 1371-1643[104]

Status	1371-1445	1448-1484	1487-1523	1526-1562	1565-1604	1607-1643	Total
Ju (Scholar)儒	79	34	18	15	7	7	160
Chun (Soldier)軍	250	1,010	1,339	1,149	1,185	676	5,609
Kuan (Army Officer)官	18	165	222	197	204	99	905
Yen or Tsao (Salt Producer)鹽漕	7	51	82	79	94	75	388
Chiang (Artisan)匠	29	161	198	211	189	66	854
Chai (Postal Service)差	3	3	9	6	0	1	22
Mu-so (Horse Breeder)牧守	0	0	0	4	2	2	8
Tai-yi (Medical Official)太醫	0	10	8	8	4	2	32
I (Private Medical Practitioner)醫	3	17	18	7	4	2	51
Chin-tien-chien (Offical Astronomer)欽天鑑	0	2	3	0	0	0	5
Yin-yang (Private Astronomer)陰陽	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Fu-hu (Rich Family)富戶	5	15	4	3	1	0	28
Kuang-lu-ssu-chu (Officiial Cook)光祿寺廚	0	1	0	4	1	0	6
Pu-hu (Hunter)舖戶	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Shang (Salt Merchant)商	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tsung-shih (Imperial Clansman)宗室	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Total (Special Status)	394	1,469	1,902	1,684	1,691	935	8,075
Total (All Chin-shih)	1,465	3,588	4,311	3,999	4,674	4,567	22,577

Source: Ping-Ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China. Aspects of Social Mobility 1368-1911*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1962, 68.

chin-shih 進士 degree holders originated from families of special statuses like soldier, artisan, postal service, hunter, medical practitioner, astronomer and merchant), and further important reforms of abolishing restrictions on candidates' social status (after 1763, candidates were no longer required to include information about the social status of their fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers when they registered forexaminations),[105] China's demographic realities simply made the actual odds for

---

[104] For the three examinations of 1418, 1421, and 1427 no family statuses are given. The numbers of chin-shih of these years are excluded. It ought to be mentioned that the number of special statuses as recorded in Ming *chih-shih* 進士 lists far exceeds that shown in the table. For example, there are at least five or six subcategories of soldiers, including non-commissioned officers and widow-households of the Nan-ching 南京 imperial gendarmerie, which in the table are included in *chun-chi*. Salt merchants were not specially registered until 1600, when *shang-chi* 商籍, literally "merchant statuses", was created for salt merchant of Che-chiang 浙江. This status never applied to merchants in general. See Ping-Ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China. Aspects of Social Mobility 1368-1911*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1962, 68-69.

[105] Benjamin A. Elman, op. cit. (1990), quote page 85.

passing the civil examinations more and more prohibitive. As already mentioned, population in the empire had reached more than 450 million in 1850 with no commensurate increase in the number of government positions available to deal successfully with the increase in graduates. In the Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127), the national average candidate success ratio was 10.2 to 1, while the estimated ratio of the Ching Dynasty was far poorer, varying between 30 to 1 and 100 to 1. The long-term pass rate in the examinations is estimated as less than 10 percent of all candidates. Thus, the majority of the Chinese literati had to, and did, make a living outside officialdom (as local gentry), which although it benefited the social economy with quality human capital[106] and literati control, decreased significantly the function of the thousand-year-old official ladder for upward social mobility. The number of Chinese gentry in 19th century was about 1.1 to 1.4 million, which made up 0.3% of total population. Even if their families were also included, the number would merely rise to 5.5 to 7 million, that is 1.3 to 1.9% of total population. To an agricultural society of 350 million population, within which the farmers constituted more than 80 percent of the population, and the other 20 percent of the population, who lived in the urban areas and represented a composite stratum of scholars, gentry, officials, and absentee landlords, artisans, merchants, militaries etc,[107] people definitely need a wider path to get ahead. The 19th century Chinese society had accumulated more than enough energy for another dynastic change, if not for adopting fundamental social structural transformations.

4. 3. 2   Social Order and Intellectual Trends in Europe

As mentioned in Chapter 3, since the Roman Empire to the Medieval age, European societies were principally religious-based cultural systems, where Christianity served as a mainstream ideology and the source of law, calendar, custom, morality, belief, intellectual institutions and even people's everyday practices. Such religious based social order, although signalling a weakened control of the intellectual institutions from the 12th century when the universities with the recapitulated scientific spirit started to take their shape, was nonetheless still the dominant basis that guided

---

[106]   Kent G. Deng, op. cit. (2000), quote page 20.
[107]   Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, op. cit. (1990), 70.

163

people's way of thinking and response to their lives. The above-mentioned fading away of Christian Churches from European political economy (in Section 4.2.1) by no means suggested an end to the potent existence of this social order, at least not before the 17th century. To use Weber's words, "the Reformation meant not the elimination of the Church's control over everyday life, but rather the substitution of a new form of control for the previous one." The rule of Calvinism, as it was enforced in 16th century Geneva and Scotland, at the turn of the 16th and 17th century in large parts of the Netherlands, in the 17th century in New England, and for a time in England itself "was the most absolutely unbearable form of ecclesiastical control of the individual which could possible exist."[108] It was true that a series of social and intellectual trends, which started from the Renaissance and culminated in the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment did mark a considerable break away from the religiously derived moral-ethical rationality, and shifted its weight to a more material, calculative, and empirical oriented instrumental rationality. However as Braudel argues, Western Christianity was and remained the main constituent element in European thought – including rationalist thought, which although it attacked Christianity was also derivative from it. "To direct one's thoughts against someone is to remain in his orbit. A European, even if he is an atheist, is still the prisoner of an ethic and a mentality which are deeply rooted in the Christian tradition."[109] Europeans were thinking, arguing and behaving under the same cultural logic.

Since the 8th century, contacts of Christian scholars and Arabic and Jewish scientists reintroduced the once weakened Greek knowledge into European universities, and resulted in the fusion of Christian theology and Aristotelian philosophy. Two integrated levels of cultural encounters may be clearly identified during centuries that followed. Firstly, there is the encounter of European culture with its own past (i.e. the Greek knowledge, see Section 2.3.5, level (b) of cultural encounters), which, interestingly, was made possible by the second level of cultural encounters—the contacts of Europeans and Arabic and Jewish scholars (Section 2.3.5, level (a) of cultural encounters). By the 13th century, two consciously rival intellectual traditions gradually shaped their dialectical relations and constantly vied for a wider recognition.

---

[108]   Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Surrey, Routledge, 1930 (Translated, Second Edition 1992, by T. Parsons), 36-37.
[109]   Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 333-334.

The Christianised-Aristotlianism preserved the central Christian doctrine and trusted enthusiastically in reason insofar as it did not contradict Christian truth. The medieval hierarchy of the sciences were integrated by logic and theology into a coherent world-view. The Christianised-Aristotlianism re-established a unity of the world order where every being had its natural place, and should remain permanently at rest. Such was the settled position of the Earth at the centre of the Cosmos and its successive spheres. The Aristotelian unity asserted the superiority of revealed truth over any mere human reasoning, and held that certain part of Christian doctrine could not be demonstrated but had to be put into the context of faith.[110] The Aristotelian unity of world order, however, was constantly challenged by the associated reawakening humanism and restless scientific spirit from the 13th century onwards.

In the 14th and 15th centuries, with the capital generated by Mediterranean trade and a flourishing manufacturing sector, many wealthy Italian cities were interested in sponsoring artistic and scholarly culture, while learning and the learned began to acquired more and more prestige and status. Artistic phenomena in Italy spilled over the borders of countries from Florence or Milan to Dijon and Paris. An age of rebirth was marked after the probably exaggerated "darkness" of the preceding centuries: the "Renaissance". Thereupon, a more individualistic view of man was systematically developed and conceptualised. It "no longer saw man as an anonymous member of the mass of God's obedient creatures, but as a unique being, supreme in his rational and creative capacities which marked him as an individual."[111] The growth of European individualism, which rooted early in writings of classical times (such as the atomist theory of the Greek times that sees human being as the atom of social structure), the (Germanic) nomadic groups' liberal attitude towards life (see Sction 3.1.2),[112] and as Macfarlane argues, in the well-defined contractual right and individual ownership of land of English peasantry (see Section 3.2.1), intensified in the 15th and 16th century through the Renaissance, Reformation and the Enlightenment.[113] Although not necessarily in direct conflicts Renaissance humanists did embark on a critical swing of the basis of the existing rationality from that of God to that of men. In his *The*

---

[110]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 602; Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 366-367.
[111]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 178, 184.
[112]   Aaron Gurevich, The Origins of European Individualism, Oxford, Blackwell, 1995, 2, 16.
[113]   Alan Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism*, Oxford, Basil Blacewell, 1978, 196.

Religious Banquet Erasmus wrote, surely "the first place is due to holy scripture, but sometimes I find some things said or written by the ancients, by pagans and poets, so chaste, so holy, so divine, that I am persuaded a good genius enlightened them."[114] Human reason, as well as the assertion of individuality was no longer necessarily God inspired.

Here the attention must be directed to the religious reform, or the Reformation, itself to grasp a more holistic picture of the transforming European cultural logic. The 15th and early 16th centuries had been a time of religious upheaval. However, before these, the Church's teachings and its political and moral pretences had long been criticised. The papacy of the early 16th century was only one step ahead of bankruptcy, and the burden of supporting an elaborate administrative organisation was passed from the higher clergy to the laity in form of higher charges by the parish clergy for everything from burials and the probate of wills to administration of the sacraments themselves. Questions about the Church tithes and the sale of indulgences to the faithful were the best illustrated.[115] Since the 1520s, movement for religious reform developed, starting in the name of the German theologian, Martin Luther (1483-1546), but spreading swiftly. John Calvin, who taught in Geneva, quickly announced new views of theology and Church organisation. In those countries that remained faithful to Rome, similar religious anxiety aroused a Catholic reform, which most historians call "the Counter-Reformation". Catholic and Protestant were thus divided. Focusing on the movement of the Protestant reform, Weber ascribed the causes of capitalism (though not thoroughly) to the new Protestant ethic, or more specifically, a spirit of hard work for the inner-worldly ascetic man of a vocation, and his rational economic activities (i.e. the rational utilisation of capital and capitalistic organisation of labour).[116] As Yu clearly illustrated in his *Chinese Modern Religious Ethic and Merchant Spirit*, all these elements had not been difficult at all to find counterparts as in China since the Tang and Sung Periods. A spirit of hard work and inner-worldly asceticism could easily be pinpointed in most writings and teachings of the Sung and Ming Neo-Confucian literati without even needing to resort to the "calling" of God, but to a

---

[114] Quoted from John Hale, *The Civilisation of Europe in the Renaissance*, London, Harper Collins Publishers, 1993, 198.

[115] E. Harris Harbison, *The Age of Reformation*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1955, 38-39.

[116] Max Weber, op. cit. (1930), 58.

highly rationalised and humanist based self-respect and responsibility. Such an ascetic and hard working spirit was held not by Chinese intellectuals generally, but also by merchants.[117] (See Section 4.3.3.) Regarding rational economic activities, Chinese accounting, as Pomeranz notes, "was far more sophisticated than Weber supposed; it also turns out that remarkably few Western firms adopted the most 'rational' of Western accounting systems until large 'managerial' firms came to the fore in the *late* 19th century."[118] Moreover, as already argued in Section 4.2.2, European rational commercial organisations did not seem to be superior in their competition with the Chinese sib trade organisations even in the 17th and 18th centuries. Therefore, what seemed more relevant and critical in Weber's *Protestant ethic* was in fact an unexpected consequence, or the "side effect" of Reformation, that is a subsequent "ethic reform".

As Weber argued, an attitude of absolute and conscious ruthlessness in acquisition had not generally been ethically justified and encouraged before the Reformation, but was only tolerated as a fact in the normal attitude of all (European and non-European) ethical teachings and as expressed in practical action. (This is true in the sense that Confuncian teaching emphasised the equal distribution rather than accumulation of wealth.)[119] Yet, the protestant reform inclined to direct men's economic activity toward profit alone as a calling, which the individual feels himself to have as an ethical obligation. The "man of a vocation neither inquires about nor finds it necessary to inquire about the meaning of his actual practice of a vocation within the world, the total framework of which is not his responsibility but his god's."[120] It was this idea, which gave the way of life of the new capitalist entrepreneur its ethical foundation and justification. However, the victorious "spirit of capitalism", which since rests on such justification, needed no longer a religious support.[121] What

---

[117] See Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, op. cit. (1987).
[118] Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 167-168.
[119] As *The Analects* wrote, "I have heard that rulers of states and chiefs of families fear not that their people and wealth should be few, but that the population and wealth should be unequally distributed; they worried not of poverty of the states, but that their people are not contented with their lives. 聞有國有家者，不患寡而患不均，不患貧而患不安。" *The Analects* 論語, Section 16. (Taipei, 啟明書局, Reprints.)
[120] Max Weber, op. cit. (1930), 173.
[121] By the spirit of capitalism Weber meant "the religious valuation of restless, continuous, systematic work in a worldly calling, as the highest means to asceticism, and at the same time the surest and most evident proof of rebirth and genuine faith, must have been the most powerful conceivable lever for the

superseded was a mechanism of rationalisation in the field of technique and economic organisation in the 18th century (as well as the state bureaucracy and the specialised social profession as mentioned in Section 4.2.1). The religious roots died out slowly and gave way to utilitarian worldliness. Braudel is right that the "natural order" for the famous rational process of the market went far beyond individual calculations, which cannot be the same thing as the rational behaviour of the individual entrepreneur who seeks the path of maximum profit to himself. For "no wisdom or human knowledge" could possible undertake this task.[122] Thus argued, the ethical reform of the Protestant, as an unintended consequence, accidentally rationalised or morally justified an ethic that could be underpinned by *a value and faith unburdened logic* for the new groups of commercial agency. No longer needing to load his career with social responsibility and moral justification, the specialist worked in a way that was freed of ethical judgement even though their profession may contribute indirectly to non-ethically justified profit making, or his forms of human alienation. Specialisation was achieved at the cost of the fragmentation of a coherent social wholeness and natural order. The cultural logic of separating knowledge from the Christian based ethical rationality not only became dominant in European social order from the 17th and 18th centuries, but also in European intellectual trends (see below). In fact, such was revealed exactly in Weber's own conclusion as he wrote, it might well be truly said that at the last stage of this cultural development, the society was of "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart," which brings us to the world of judgments of value and of faith, and with which Weber's "purely historical discussion need not be burdened."[123] We are not arguing that the Reformation had caused European Capitalism.[124] The significance here is that the unforeseen and even unwished cultural consequences of the Reformation did bridge a critical ethical gap for a calculative and profit-centred

---

expansion of that attitude toward life." Max Weber, op. cit. (1930), 70, 72, 75, 172.

[122] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1979), 576-577.

[123] Once and for all it must be remembered that programmes of ethical reform never were at the centre of interest for any of the religious reformers (among whom, for out purposes, we must include men like Menno, George Fox, and Wesley). They were neither the founders of societies for ethical culture nor the proponents of humanitarian projects for social reform or cultural ideals. The salvation of the soul and that alone was the centre of their life and work. Max Weber, op. cit. (1930), 89-90, quote page 181-182.

[124] As we noted arguments as Walker's that, the reformation was not the cause of capitalism; rather it was the result of needs created by capitalist advance at a particular lace and time. The Reformation had just played an indispensable part, amongst other factors in the triumph of European capitalism over difficulties. See P. C. Gordon Walker, "Capitalism and the Reformation", in Lewis W. Spitz ed., *The Reformation: Basic Interpretations*, Lexington, Massachusetts Toronto, 1972 (The Second Edition), 60-74.

rationality. There was nothing equivalent in contemporary China. The value-free knowledge was almost inconceivable to the Ming and Ching Chinese thinkers, most of them were dominated by a non-religious moral-ethical based cultural rationality.

Another crucial aspect that grew out of the twin movements of Renaissance and Reformation was an increasingly conscious interweaving of humanism and science. Michelangelo's words in 1538 illustrated precisely the master's perception of the juxtaposition of the humanist arts and the scientific spirit:[125]

> We call good painting Italian, which painting, even though it be done in Flanders or in Spain (which approaches us most) if it be good, will be Italian painting, for this *noble science* [my emphasis] does not belong to any country, as it came from heaven; but even from ancient times it remained in our Italy more than in any other kingdom in the world, and I think that it will end in it.

Sciences, in collaboration with the new arts also began to dissolve the harmonious world of the Aristotelian system. The restless investigations of natural philosophers such as astronomers, geographers, biologists, physicians, chemists and moral philosophers in the wake of one another started to formulate a new way of looking at the world. By Galileo Galilei's time (1564-1642), the creation of a new framework of ideas about man, society and nature had challenged the existing conceptions rooted in a traditional world-view and dominated by Christianity. Such a framework seriously shattered the Church's authority and its monopoly over information. [126] The phenomenal successes of rationalistic thought and of natural science in the 17th and 18th centuries partly explained this altered intellectual climate. René Descartes (d. 1650) initiated a program for escaping unreliable and accidentally acquired conviction, or rather, a program for man's "liberation" from culture. For Descartes, "culture is a kind of systematic, communally induced error", and the essence of error is communally induced and historically accumulated. Such a scheme was perpetuated by others and reached its peak in the 18th century with David Hume and Immanuel Kant.[127] The contemporaries of Descartes, Baruch Spinoza (d. 1677) and Thomas

---

[125] Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 187-188.

[126] Peter Ha-milton, "The Enlightenment and the Birth of Social Science", in Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben eds., *Formations of Modernity*, Cambridge, The Open University, 1992, 17-70, quote page 23.

[127] Ernest Gellner, *Reason and Culture: The Historic Role of Rationality and Rationalism*, Oxford and

Hobbes (d. 1679), were fascinated by the same certainty and precision of mathematical reasoning, and were both gripped by the vision of a world subject to laws and regularities that could be grasped by the power of human reason. Isaac Newton's *Philosophae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) set forward the great strength of Newtonianism and "dethroned" the Aristotle system. It enforced empirical validation with simplicity and reduced the movements of the planets to mathematical formulae and physics. Newton confirmed what many had already suspected, or feared: God does not continuously interfere in man's life. Accordingly, creation, which is built up of atoms, was a dynamic mechanism that worked in accordance with a simple law of nature, once God had brought in into existence. What philosophers had long sought to prove now seemed to have been verified: "law, simple, clear, and beautiful in its mathematical precision, did indeed govern the universe, a law so ineluctable and universal that it controlled alike the future movements of the heavenly bodies and of cannon balls."[128] Although the Aristotlean unity still dominated Europe until the 17th century, from the 16th century, European intellectuals, natural scientists and technicians in particular seemed to feel content with striving to understand only a small segment of reality at a time. Specialised, materialist, and in many cases, empirical investigations had led European intellectuals to leave the great questions of religion and philosophy to one side. By the 18th century, the "enlightened" leaders of Europe tended to concentrate their attention on science and rationalistic philosophy, or a qualitatively new mode of thought about man and society rather than on theology. They no longer concerned themselves overmuch with making the conclusions conform to a coherent natural world-view.[129] Scientific and calculative rationality transcended political and national barriers and preoccupied the whole Europe, yet, was by no means absolute. For instance, Romanticism, which denounced the so-called Enlightenment's "dehumanising tendencies" and sought to reunited nature and culture (rather than religious doctrine) again found its foothold in late 18th century.[130] The "*Naturphilophie*" added a new dimension to the unbalanced dialectical relations between science and religion, i.e. a new dialecticism between reason and culture or humanistic feelings. It acted against Cartesian individualist rationalism and the

Cambridge, Blackwell, 1992, 3, 13.
[128]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 650.
[129]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 742-743; Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 366-367; and Peter Ha-milton, op. cit. (1992), 36.
[130]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 318.

liberation of man from culture, which claimed that "collective and customary is non-rational, and the overcoming of unreason and of collective custom is one and the same process."[131] Such dialecticism found collaborators in the 19th century. Such as Charles Darwin, Freud and social theorists like Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche arrived quite independently at a similar alienation of men and denigration of rationality, which together contributed to a seemingly dethronement of reason.[132]

The movement of ideas and people, and development of academic institutions should not be overlooked, for such diffusion and institutionalisation of knowledge was probably requisite for the concerted transformation of European cultural currents, especially after the 17th century. Different types of travellers moved across political boundaries. The number of people who went on pilgrimage was gigantic. In the Holy year 1600 at least half a million pilgrims arrived from all over Europe to Rome. Merchants and bankers such as the Fuggers and their clerks operated supranationally, and formed a network of offices that stretched from Warsaw to Lisbon, from Rome to Antwerp. Through diplomatic trips of the ambassadors and politicians, a relatively large part of the future leadership came into contact with various aspects of foreign court culture. Norms, ways of behaving and other cultural expressions observed abroad were consciously or unconsciously taken over. Above all, students, scholars and artists were undoubtedly the most important for the formation and transmission of culture. Established scholars travelled the same roads as students to the nearest or to the most famous academies. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the combination of the diplomatic and educational trip developed into a phenomenon that could be called a European cultural constant: the Grand Tour, in a sense that it was meant to influence the education of the European elite in a cosmopolitan-culture. All these led to a creative interaction among European intellectuals and contributed to the flow of

---

[131] Ernest Gellner, op. cit. (1992), 3.
[132] By reducing human beings to the level of other animals, subject to the same laws of natural selection and struggle for survival Charles Darwin (d. 1882) seemed to have undermined, not only the very foundation of religion and of the social order, but all refinement of human culture as well. Freud concluded that the ruling drives of mankind resided in an unconscious level of the mind. Consciousness accordingly became superficial, a distorting and distorted mirror of the reality beneath, its faculties and skills used as often to hide as to reveal the truth. Such views did indeed link men with beasts and lower forms of life, as Darwin had done. They collided frontally with the optimistic estimate of human nature and rationality, which the Democratic Revolution had proclaimed and assumed. See William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963), 831-832.

thoughts and ideas around Europe.[133] As Inkster argues, the built up of mental capital, or effective transfer and diffusion of knowledge and information through scientific communities and academies, had generated within Europe a particular cultural milieu that was inductive to scientific and technological inventions and innovations in the 18th and 19th century. Public lectures and forums for intellectual debates, such as the Boyle lecture and The Oratory during the 1730s prospered in London. Journals, transactions, newspapers, associations and academies within a nation became conduits for the diffusion of scientific knowledge. In Britain, the provincial movement took the form of small, informal coteries and the "Literary and Philosophical" societies of the second half of the century. In France, the academy prospered against the backdrop of a foundation of no less than 100 academies between 1700 and 1776, including such distinguished centres as Bordeaux (1712), Rouen (1716, 1735, etc.), Dijon (1740), Lille (1758) and Mulhouse (1775). Similarly, the work of the Berlin Academy was boosted by the formation of a series of provincial academies in each of the German States. Between 1692 and 1792, 11 towns in Italy formed scientific academies, including that of Turin (1759). Throughout Europe, the "ancillary" academies played important roles. The emphasis upon communication of knowledge was marked: 75 percent of the academies published proceedings, and nearly all of these devoted their pages to translation, summarisation and popularisation of the advances in knowledge. From about 1780, the movements of the scientific enterprise towards popularisation, provincialism and specialisation all accelerated, and the links between science utility were strengthened. Of a total of 1052 scientific journals and transaction identified for 1665-1790, 20 percent originated in the decade 1770-79, 40 percent in the decade 1780-89.[134] The engine builder could draw on earlier scientific acquisitions, both substantive and methodological.

The case of James Watt (1736-1819) made the point. His master and mentor Joseph Black (1728-1799), Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh, did not give him the idea for the separate condenser, but working with Black gave him the practice and method to probe and resolve the issue. Watt associated closely with professors in Edinburgh and Glasgow, eminent natural philosophers in England, and with scientists abroad.

---

[133]   Peter Rietbergen, op. cit. (1998), 260-277.
[134]   Ian Inkster, op. cit. (1991), chapter 2 and 4.

Watt's mathematics, systematic experiments, and calculation on the thermal efficiency of steam engines illustrated the role of accumulated knowledge and ideas in advancing technique.[135] The superstructure of the scientific enterprise: upon elite scientific programmes, universities, societies and publications; and the infrastructure: those institutions concerned with education, training, diffusion, adaptation and application of knowledge, together had weaved European scientific culture. We agree that whilst "breakthrough technology requires spurts of insight and creativity and serendipity, the sustained progress of industrialisation, the achievement of total economic systems, requires the systemic repetition of the everyday, the pragmatic, the honest, the mundane."[136] This diffusion of *scientific institutions* and a consequent routinisation of *scientific culture* were not found in contemporary China (although other forms of academic institutions were). Literacy rate provides a general mapping of the diffusion of popular education in China and Europe. In Europe, especially the northwest, the 18th century saw a literacy breakthrough from town to country, from elite to masses. In Normandy literacy rates rose form 10 percent for men and 7.5 per cent for women in 1700, to 80 percent for men and 65 percent for women in 1800. In China, on the other hand, the 18th century saw a literacy breakdown. By the 19th century, literacy rate were down to 50 percent in the town, 25 percent in the countryside, which, give an optimistic urban/rural ratio of 1:4, would produce an overall literacy rate of 30 percent;[137] although one should note that the European figure here represent only the most advanced part of the Continent, whilst the Chinese figure is an overall mapping.

4. 3. 3   Social Order and Intellectual Trends in China

Post-1450 Chinese intellectual trends certainly showed a very contrastive picture. In Section 3.3.2, it had been argued that a moral- and ethical-based "commonsense rationality" was formulated in the Sung and Ming Periods, which was based on the Confucian tradition and absorbed the Buddhist way of self-cultivation, Taoist mysterious philosophy, and a nomadic or peasant spirit of commonsense. The Sung

---

[135]   David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 206.
[136]   Ian Inkster, "Motivation and Achievement: Technological Change and Creative Response in Comparative Industrial History", *The Journal of European Economic History*, Vol. 27 No. 1, 1998(b), 29-66, quote page 45.
[137]   S.A.M. op. cit. (2000), 258-259.

scholars associated the Confucian concept of "benevolence 仁" with the Taoist metaphysic concept of "Tao 道" and "universe 宇宙", which connected the nature of human reason with the law of natural phenomena, and injected moral and ethical meanings into the natural law. Representative figures like Chou Tun-Yi 周敦頤 (1017-1073), Cheng Yi 程頤(1032-1085), Cheng Ying 程穎(1033-1107), and Chu Hsi 朱熹(1130-1200) advocated the principle of "unity of the nature and humanity 天人合一", which affirmed the union of natural order and life philosophy in Chinese worldview, and provided the basis for all interpersonal relations. Neo-Confucian scholars in the middle and late Ming Period extended this moralised natural law even further. Lu Hsiang-Shan 陸象山(1139-1193) and Wang Yang-Ming 王陽明(1472-1528) asserted that human emotion, consciousness and common feelings of the people should be taken as the basis of an ethical system, for "goodness" and "sincerity" in fact came from the inner heart of every human being. In this sense, virtuous sages or holy men rather than God, spiritual ideology, or supernatural powers, became the models for people to follow. The Sung and Ming intellectual traditions provided solid philosophical ground for three analytical levels of the so-called "commonsense", which in turn became the basic resources of Chinese cultural rationality. Such levels included a) the common or intuitive knowledge and obvious natural laws within the universe; b) the common feelings of people or human emotions; and c) the inner consciousness or sense of morality within a moralised world.[138] Thus it is important to note that, "natural laws" or "natural science" in China differed hugely from those of the European tradition, for morality, ethics and human feelings or "nature" under the principle of "unity of the nature and humanity" was indivisible from the "ethic-freed or -neutralised natural world" at the very first instance. Chinese intellectual traditions up to the late Ming Period had been highly "rationalised".[139] Only such unification of humanistic and instrumental rationality operated in a very different "natural context", which saw the wholeness of the natural world, ethics and humanity, not as a burden of knowledge but an inborn and requisite integrity.

Confucianism, although it contained mysterious or metaphysical interpretations of

---

[138] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), chapter 3.

[139] Tu Feng-Hsien 杜奉賢, op. cit. (1997), 133-134.

nature and life, was nonetheless not a religion. Weber was very right in taking Christianity, a religious belief, as the critical conjunction for the changing European cultural rationality in the 15th and 16th centuries. Yet, he misperceived or miss-estimated the role of Confucianism, which although it served certain religious functions (such as organising the ritual of ancestral worship), was after all not operating in a religious way. To put it more correctly in a Chinese context, Confucianism and/or Neo-Confucianism was a representative cultural logic that synthesised not only Buddhist and Taoist life philosophy, but also most bureaucratic, intellectual, peasant and even barbaric ways of thinking.[140] It integrated far deeper and stronger with the human feelings of people in China, through all sort of daily practices in the familial system and social, political institutions, rather than simply a mysterious or irrational religion without systematic or rational practices of art, theology, medicine, science, and technology.[141] Weber overestimated the mysterious elements and underestimated the (commonsense based) rational elements of Confucianism, hence halted him from realising that a humanist, intuitive ethical logic had long replaced a religious derived moral-ethical system in China.[142] Such a humanistic-based moral system in Confucianism unlike the religious derived moral system in Europe had never been directly challenged: not by any artistic renaissance, not by any sort of religious reforms, not by the scientific disproval of the Earth as the centre of the Universe, and not even by the doubt of God's existence. Under such a cultural framework, ethics and morality were the ultimate concern of a society, which left the acquisition of wealth and all sorts of specialised knowledge not much ground for an ethical justification, let alone a break away from moral burden. All knowledge and professions were subordinated to the ethical rationality.

Perhaps, the best terms to convey the character of the knowledge project in which Chinese intellectuals (of Ming and Ching especially) were engaged are "*ching-shih chih-yung* 經世致用", which means to manage the world or the age through classic learning so as to elaborate its pragmatic efficacy. Such terms express the Confucian

---

[140] Wei E 魏萼, *The Wealth of Nations: A Chinese Version. A Third Hand in Economic China* 中國國富論:經濟中國的第三隻手,Taipei, 時報, 2000(b), 54. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[141] Max Weber, op. cit. (1964), 151-152.

[142] Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, *The Essence of Chinese Culture* 中國文化要義, Taipei, 里仁書局, 1982, First Edition, 306.

commitment to apply practical solutions for improving the world, while carrying "simultaneously a moral orientation, a repertoire of practical activity, and a category of knowledge."[143] Cultural logic in the sense of ethics, righteousness, hard working and benefiting others, performed as an "invisible hand" in Chinese social and political economy.[144] As Brook argues, the ideals of "agrarian self-sufficiency, price stability, fixed residency, social harmony/hierarchy, and the restriction of commerce to the circulation of basic necessities... came largely to define what might be called the Confucian vision of the economy" during the imperial era. Profit-making although not necessarily disapproved, had to conform to the Confucian principle of social justice and righteousness. Quoting the scholar merchant in the late Ming and early Ching Periods Wang Feng-Ling 汪鳳齡(1583-1667), who instructed his eight merchant sons in his family teaching that "It is good that you have the ambition to conduct trade activities around the country. However, do hold up to principles of courtsey and righteousness, and bring no shame to the scholarly learning. In this way, my wish will be fulfilled." Chou Shih-Tao 周世道(1722-1786), a salt merchant in the Ching period on the other hand instructed his son to "take filial piety and benevolence as the basis of family life, and espouse harmony and peace as the guidelines of participating in public activities." Such instructions provide clear examples of how the moral and ethical worldview of Confucian teachings had saturated into the thinking of Chinese merchants.[145] Of course this is not to say Chinese have pursued righteousness rather than profit over the last two thousand years, but they had to do so within a cultural framework that preferred praising moral reciprocity to profit taking.[146] For most Chinese intellectuals and even merchants, there was something more important than wealth and power.[147] Even if it meant to adjust oneself to the world rather than to master the world, it was certainly rational under humanistic logic. The process of a

---

[143] Timothy Brook, "The Milieux of Scientific Activity in Ming China", paper presented in the Conference on Regimes for the Generation of Useful and Reliable Knowledge in Europe and Asia 1368-1815, Windsor Great Park, 14-16 April, 2000.

[144] Wei E 魏萼, *The Wealth of Nations: A Chinese Version. The New Wealth of Nations with Chinese Characteristics* 中國國富論: 一個富有中國特色的新國富論,Taipei, 時報, 2000(a), 45-48. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[145] See *Collected Manuscripts of the Familial Village of Mei* 梅家村藏稿, Vol. 52; and "The Familial Biographies of Chou Chun-Tan 周君坦之家傳"; both quoted from Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, op. cit. (1987), 130.

[146] Timothy Brook, "Profit and Righteousness in Chinese Economic Culture", in Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong eds., op. cit. (1999), 27-44, quote page 31.

[147] Tu Feng-Hsien 杜奉賢, op. cit. (1997), 90.

rationalised Confucianism evolved in and reached its maturity in the late Ming and middle Ching Period. Although such social and intellectual traditions began to reveal signals of rigidity after the late Ming era, it was not until the mid 19th century, when European military threats directly diverted such cultural rationality, that it had to deviate, temporarily and unconvincingly, from its own trajectory.

The political intervention of the Ming court and the anxiety of a Manchu minority regime had an enormous impact on the thinking of Chinese intellectuals. The emperors of Ming and Ching had both been suspicious of civil officers. Secret police or guards organised by eunuchs were called to investigate central bureaucrats in the Ming, and corporal punishments were employed to torture suspicious intellectuals. Ching emperor Yung-Cheng 雍正 sent intellectuals into jail on the basis of any minor evidence of disloyal writings, while Chien-Lung 乾隆 burned in his reign twenty-four times the prohibited books with a total of 13,862 volumes, and ordered the *kou-tou* 叩 頭 rituals to humiliate all central civil officers. The idea was to utilise the talent or knowledge of the literati, while suppressing their power and self-esteem at the same time, and keep them under strict control.[148] After the collapse of Ming, the need to express Chinese identity through ritual practices fuelled the growth of ritualism 禮教 and purism 樸學. Rituals, ancestral worships became a powerful symbol for the continuity of Chinese identity, and to practise them was to show defiance of Manchu authority. Moreover, belief in the universality of Chinese culture and one's commitment to preserving it under an alien regime could help mitigate the sense of guilt of those Chinese literati, who served the Manchu government. Hence, ritualism became one of the dominant trends in Ching Confucian thought.[149] Apart from these pragmatic factors, the early Ching scholars such as Ku Yen-Wu 顧炎武(1613-1682) and Wang Fu-Chih 王夫之(1619-1692) reacted vigorously against the abstract, idealist and highly metaphysical intellectual trends of the Ming. On the contrary, they created a new climate of learning, which stressed the study of the old classics, and textual research based on extensive evidence from the Han, as well as the practical application of knowledge to society. Such was labelled the School of Empirical

---

[148] Chien Mu 錢穆, *Outline History of China 國史大綱 Vol. II*, Taipei, 國立編譯館, 1995(b) Revised Third Edition (First Published in 1940), 666, 681, 697, 832-833.
[149] See Kai-wing Chow, op. cit. (1994), 44-45, 69.

Research 考據學. The empirical research re-examined almost every aspect of Chinese cultural heritage with thoroughness, objectivity and alertness. Although the core of study was still the classics, scholars of this discipline did extend their activities into fields such as traditional linguistics, phonology, history, astronomy, mathematics, geography, government institutions, and artefacts. The School of Empirical Research reached its zenith during the middle Ching Period and dominated the intellectual horizon. Scholars employed the inductive method of investigation, collecting evidence from a wide range of sources and testing their various hypotheses.[150] As Chin and Liu argue, the empirical research movements tried to test the original meaning of a text against the logic that was derived from the above mentioned repository of commonsense, and provided the text with new connotations. Despite its stress mainly on Confucian classics rather than on science and technology, such activities precisely expressed the internal transformation and dynamism of Chinese intellectual traditions, and marked the zenith of the commonsense rationality in the middle Ching Period.[151]

Although there was not an open diffusion of scientific knowledge and academies in China as such, a centralised bureaucracy together with the local gentry did serve similar functions to the European scientific communities. A frequent change of serving localities for civil officers was the common feature for Chinese governments of all dynasties. The statistical data for the movements of 53,270 civil bureaucrats at the county level in the Ching Period provides strong evidence for such high degree mobility. Accordingly, 74.1% of prefecture magistrates 知府 and 78.8% of county magistrates 知縣 in Ching local governments served a term of less than three years, and nearly half of them stayed less than one. Within such position changes, 50% were simply swaps of serving localities.[152] As Wong pointed out, when officials moved to new posts, information about crops and agricultural techniques successful in the former jurisdictions were taken to their new ones, with the hopes of persuading peasants to adopt them. Irrigation projects specifically and water control works more generally were intimately enmeshed within particular ecologies. Handicraft

---

[150] Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, op. cit. (1990), 83-89.
[151] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), 210.
[152] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (a)), 50-51.

technologies were also promoted. Chen Hong-Mou, for instance, promoted sericulture in mid 18th century Shang Hsi by establishing "silkworm bureaus" in the provincial capital and a number of prefecture to demonstrate silk weaving techniques.[153] Based on such a powerful bureaucratic organisation, China was able to overcome many difficulties with the process of knowledge diffusion and sustain a remarkable level of scientific and technological development in many areas (such as agriculture, manufacture and astronomy) before the 17th or even the 18th century. The state alone promoted a great extent of scientific and technological inventions and innovations, especially those that were conducive to unite the empire. As shown in *Chart IV-8*, technology under the category of "requisite for unification"—i.e. communicative technologies (transportation, cultural exchanges and dissemination), military technology, calendar and astronomy, technology for land measurement, cartography, and the design or construction for palaces and significant architectures—made up 24% to 59% of major technological inventions in the politically unified regimes.[154]

Chart IV-8: Category Break up of Ancient Chinese Technology (%)

Dynasty / Category	Spring and Autumn 春秋	Warring States 戰國	Chin 秦	Earlier Han 西漢	Later Han 東漢	Wei and Earlier Chin 魏西晉	Northern and Southern Dynasties 南北朝	Sui 隋	Tang 唐	Northern Sung 北宋	Southern Sung 南宋	Yen 元	Ming 明	Ching 清
Agricultural	16	26	1	5	4	12	13	1	4	2	7	12	6	2
"Requisite for Unification"	13	12	59	24	41	12	13	58	32	53	43	28	34	40
Manufacture	40	43	40	63	47	35	45	27	47	43	39	37	45	46
Medical	20	18	0	8	8	41	10	14	16	2	10	3	13	12
Other	11	1	0	0	0	0	19	0	1	0	1	20	2	0

Resource: Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤, Fan Hung-Yeh 樊洪業, and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, "Cultural Background and the Structural Changes of Science and Technology 文化背景與科學技術結構的演變", in Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *Questions and*

---

[153] R. Bin Wong, "The Chinese State and Useful Knowledge: Criteria, Intentions and Consequences", paper presented in the Conference on Regimes for the Generation of Useful and Reliable Knowledge in Europe and Asia 1368-1815, Windsor Great Park, 14-16 April, 2000.

[154] In their comparative analyses of the structural changes of Chinese and European science and technology, Chin, Fan, and Liu selected some 2,000 major scientific and technological findings in European and Chinese history (between the 6th century BC and AD 19th century), and categorise them into the five headings in *Chart IV-8*. However, apart from the percentage figures that are given in the table, those selected findings are not listed in further details. See Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤, Fan Hung-Yeh 樊洪業, and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, "Cultural Background and the Structural Changes of Science and Technology 文化背景與科學技術結構的演變", in Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *Questions and Methodologies 問題與方法集*, Taipei, 谷風, 1986, 157-239.

Similar to the humanist intellectual tradition, Chinese science and technology had long been formulated under the context of an ethical and moral based logic and commonsense rationality. Resembling the case of perceiving one's interpersonal relations by extending his/her inner feelings, or ethical natures to the social and political roles (from father and son to emperor and officers), traditional Chinese scientists attempted to realise the natural world through similar intuitive logic and straightforward observation. For those natural phenomena that could be explained through intuitive logical deductions or direct observations of daily experiences, Chinese ancient sciences had given very detailed and shrewd descriptions. For instance Wang Chung 王充 used the breath of the sun to explain the rise and ebb of tides, while similar ways of explication were applied by many other scholars to the construction of the model of the universe, shooting stars, rainbow, and fossils. As for areas that were beyond intuitive deduction, Chinese scientists inclined to employ ambiguous, abstract, yet, subtle metaphysic analogies, such as *ying* 陰 and *yang* 陽, *chi* 氣 and *li* 理 etc for conceptual interpretation. As Chin remarks, such ways of thinking, although they avoided many possible rigid mistakes in theorising the natural phenomena, were nevertheless extremely difficult to establish as accumulative and testable mechanisms. Moral and ethical based cultural logic and commonsense rationality as a guiding principle built up an organic view of nature in China, within which every substance was able to sense and perceive one another through the extension of inner feelings or sensitivities. Under such ethic-centric ways of thinking, it is difficult to surpass the ultimate principle of value and moral judgment, and comprehend the natural world as an impartial existence. Science and technology was not an end of its own, but a mean to contribute to the ethical-moral based social order. As the major figure of the School of Empirical Research, Tai Cheng 戴震(1722-1777) clearly pointed out, the innovation of calendar and astronomy was not that which was important, what matters was the utilisation of such knowledge to reconstruct a more systematic understanding of the old classics. Chien Ta-Hsin 錢大昕(1728-1804) made it even clearer that "mathematics is merely one of the six major skills. To illuminate

Tao through such skill is the main objective for all literati." [155] As Braudel suggests, there was such a thing as Chinese science, whose "wealth, precociousness, ingenuity and even modernity are coming to light more and more every day". And it is certainly worth noting, whether as Braudel and Joseph Needham both shared, that the Chinese "organic" conception of the world, in contrast to the Newtonian mechanistic view, which prevailed until the end of the 19th century, was precisely that to which present-day science is turning.[156]

To conclude, Chinese intellectuals and civil officers in the Ming and Ching Periods had become far less critical than ever before, and played a more limited role in the central polity. Under a hostile and distrustful political milieu, many Chinese intellectuals refused to serve in the bureaucracy, or turned to dedicate themselves in empirical research concerning ritualism and classic learning. Many who served in the bureaucracy were simply unlearnt and flattering. It had often been criticised that intellectual currents in late Ching China became a simple mechanic or didactic replication of ethics and courtesy, which only kept the rigid format of knowledge and had lost the sympathy and essence of the classics (such as "eight-legged essay").[157] To combine these with the gradual blurring boundary between the traditional *shih* 士 and merchant strata since the 16th century due to the growing wealth of Chinese merchants[158] (see Section 4.2.2), it seemed that Chinese intellectuals, especially in the late Ching era, had gradually shifted away from an idealistic moral and ethical based rationality toward a more "secularised" cultural logic. As to be shown in Section 4.4, such changes of "cultural logic" were as critical as the real movements of people, ideas and establishment of scientific communities etc in launching the late 19th century Chinese scientific and technological reforms. For under the existing cultural rationality, the establishment of scientific academies and all sorts of institutional reforms could hardly take place in China, before an ethical and commonsense-based cultural logic was temporarily undermined by the international military threats.

[155] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (1994 (a)), 436-441; and (2000), 216.
[156] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 198.
[157] Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟, op. cit. (1982), 141.
[158] Yu Ying-Shih 余英時, op. cit. (1987), 98.

4. 4 Euro-Chinese Encounters and Cultural Logic: to Change or not to Change?

Major European and Chinese encounters since the 16th century may provide a clearer picture of the timing and motives for the late 19th century Chinese reforms and correspondent changes of its cultural logics. Why didn't Chinese learn from Europeans in the early 16th century? The question seemed to be self-evident if one looked into the history of Euro-Chinese contacts. The discovery of the America, the New World, and the conquest of Asia no doubt fostered the feeling of superiority amongst the Europeans. Their arts, their languages, their political and economic institutions, their powerful navies, and among many other things their religion all seemed so different and thus unique to the primitives or uncivilised. Nothing less was true in China, where the Middle Kingdom, with a well preserved dynastic history of two thousand years, seemed beyond compare. Exceptionality and superiority was exactly where clashes came from.

The Portuguese did not have the chance to meet Cheng Ho's fleets, yet, they did meet his successors in the 16th century. The Portuguese first arrived at a small islet outside Kuang-tung 廣東 in 1514, and then 1516 and 1517 under Fernão Perez d'Andrade and Tomé Pires in the name of tribute, while applying at the same time for trading permission. The first Portuguese embassy to Beijing in 1520 under Tomé Pires was not a success. The Ming government demanded the evacuation of Malacca, which was then a tribute state to China. On Pires' refusal to discuss the question, he was imprisoned in Kuang-tung (until he died in 1524), and Portuguese were expelled by Ming navies in 1522. It was by informal agreement, paying bribery and full customs dues (20,000 taels per year) to local government that Portuguese ships were allowed to unload and dry their cargoes in Macao. In 1557, as a reward for services against pirates, Portuguese were eventually permitted to "occupy" the Macao peninsula, where unlike other parts of their thalassocracy they could not raid or obtain goods as security payments, but must trade. And they traded in silver since they had no other marketable commodity.[159] On similar grounds, the Dutch were refused to trade with

---

[159] Kuo Ting-Yi 郭廷以, op. cit. (1994), 17-18; and S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 204-205.

China in 1601. Yet, they soon came with navies in 1607, and were quickly driven back. In 1622-1624, the Ming imperial navy twice defeated the invading Dutch fleets (with the help of the Portuguese, Spanish and the Jesuits) off China's south coast at Macao and Amoy, and off the Pescadore Islands near Taiwan.[160] The Hollanders reluctantly turned to Taiwan, but nonetheless were ousted again by Cheng Cheng-Kung 鄭成功 in 1662 after naval battles. It was not until 1729 that they were finally allowed to trade inside Kuang-chou 廣州 by paying tribute every five years, which was deemed as a reward of helping the Ching government "recover" Taiwan. All these cases, as Pomeranz remarks, cast serious doubt on any claim that "the Chinese" were intrinsically "unsuited to, or technologically ill-equipped for a European-style combination of armed trade and colonial/maritime expansion."[161] In our argument, at least by the early 16th century, it was rather the ideal or an inward-looking policy that kept China from overseas expansions (see Chapter 6). And before the 18th century, in military or technological terms, the Europeans could hardly pose any serious threats to the Chinese bureaucracy; there seemed little real challenge to the Middle Kingdom. Simply looking at Chien-Lung's letter to King George III in 1793 (in Section 4.2.2) one soon realises that there was little motive and momentum to change.

The Jesuit activities in China may serve as an important indicator for the European impact on Chinese cultural logic. By the middle of the 17th century, among 15,000 of those who operated over 500 institutions – parishes, schools, seminaries and mission stations – in nearly every country of the world, the China mission was the most prestigious mission field, and the one most demanding intellectually.[162] Chinese intellectuals, though they did not consider science and technology as a major component in the cultural system, were after all not indifferent to it. Michael Ruggiero arrived in Macao in 1579 with clocks, and Matteo Ricci arrived in China in 1582, introducing astronomy, mathematics, physics, and geography to the Ming court. The Ming officials Hsu Kuang-Chi 徐光啟 and Li Chih-Tsao 李之藻, who worked

---

[160] Patrick K. O'Brien, op. cit. (1999), 139; Kang Chih-Chieh 康志杰, "Reasons Why the Jesuits in Ming and Ching China Defied the Dutch 明清之際在華耶穌會士抵制荷蘭的原因", 歷史月刊 *History Monthly*, May 1999, 103-110.
[161] Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 204.
[162] S.A.M. Adshead, op. cit. (2000), 240, 242.

intensively with the Jesuits not only improved the Chinese calendars, but also translated many of the European scientific works (such as Euclides's geometry and Archimedes's physics) into Chinese. Ching emperor Kang-Hsi learnt mathematics from the Jesuits, and even asked T. Pereyra and J. Bouvet to give him lectures in person.[163] Nonetheless, nothing was ever simply a matter of diffusion of knowledge. The Catholic priests who brought them these machines and knowledge were salesmen of a special kind. "They sought to convert the Chinese to the one true Trinitarian God of the Roman Church, and the clocks served a twofold purpose: entry ticket and argument for Christian superiority."[164] Against the Christian doctrines, Nicolas Longogardi, Emmanuel Diaz Junior, and Jean Adam Schall von Bell helped the Ming court build fire weapons and cannons in Beijing, and were directly involved in the wars with the Dutch.[165] During the early Ching Period, the Jesuits even engaged heavily in the palace politics. Despite the early success, the effectiveness of Jesuits mission was suddenly paralysed from home because of their acceptance of Chinese family rites and beliefs for honouring ancestors, and their Sinicising of Christian teaching after Matteo Ricci. Such accommodations prompted the papal condemnation in 1704 (by Pope Clement XI), and later in 1715 and 1742 of "improper flexibility in 'accommodating' Christian teaching to Chinese custom."[166] Missionary influence decayed drastically in the 18th century. As already argued in Section 4.3.3, cultural and moral supremacy was then an unquestioned part of the mental world of the educated Chinese. The contradiction with such fundamental Chinese cultural logic could only result in the emperor Kang-Hsi's decree (in 1710) that "all missionaries must accept the Jesuit view or leave the country." Following his father, and unsatisfied with the Jesuit's interferences for his succession, the emperor Yung-Cheng's 雍正 banned Christianity strictly in 1723. All priests and missioners were expelled from China.[167] Ostensibly, it was not that the Chinese intellectuals or even emperors had no curiosity for European science and technology, but rather that the European traders and missionaries in China never kept power, warlikeness, and their superior religion out of the realms of knowledge. Despite the Renaissance, Reformation and Scientific

---

[163] See Li Kuo-Chi 李國祁, *Chinese History* 中國歷史, Taipei, 三民書局, 1986, 304.
[164] David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 337.
[165] Kang Chih-Chieh 康志杰, op. cit. (1999), 103-110.
[166] J. M. Roberts, op. cit. (1996), 289.
[167] Chen Chia-Yen 陳嘉言 and Yang Ching-Hsien 楊靜賢, *Chinese Modern History* 中國近代史, Taipei, 大中國圖書, 1988, 7-8.

Revolution, the Europeans were not powerful enough yet, or at least unable to prove themselves superior enough for Chinese to instigate a fundamental change from the persisting cultural form. China before 1800 was very little influenced by European political economy, by science and technology, and by Christianity. It held itself pretty well until early 19th century.[168]

Truly, with the 19th century everything changed. A hundred year of closure from 1710 secluded China from a systematic diffusion of European knowledge. The Opium War of 1840 to 1842 and the following two British and French military coalitions of 1857 to 1860 relentlessly taught the Chinese a lesson. That was that power and wealth was going to dominate the arena of survival, of deciding the way of living and thinking, just in the way that nomads had been "triumphed". Response and changes were inevitable, but how remained to be argued. The first main issue to be reconsidered in the cultural system was the marginal position of science and technology (concerning military industry mainly), which soon formed the focus of the Self-Strengthening Movement 自強運動 (1861-1895). Literati and bureaucrats such as Wei Yuan 魏源, Feng Kuei-Fen 馮桂芬, Tseng Kuo-Fan 曾國藩, Tso Tsung-Tang 左宗棠, and Li Hung-Chang 李鴻章 etc believed that to strengthen the existing "self-sufficient" and ethical-moral based Chinese society with Western warships and cannons would be sufficient to cope with the foreign threats. Thus, the strengthening movement was generally conducted under the concept of "Chinese system with Western means 中體西用", and "utilising the barbarian techniques to counteract the barbarians 施夷之長技以制夷"[169] In 1861, the Department for Administration of Foreign Affairs 總理各國事務衙門 was established to conduct a series of "foreign technique" reforms: (among many others) the Interpreters College 同文館 and a gun factory was created at Beijing and Shanghai 上海 in 1862; Chiang-nan Arsenal 江南機器製造局 was set up at Shanghai; Fu-chou Dockyard 福州造船廠 was established at Ma-wei 馬尾 in 1866 and Nan-chiang Arsenal in 1867; Bureau for Kai-ping Coal Mines 開平礦務局 was established at Tien-Tsin 天津 in 1877; a telegraph line was inaugurated between Ta-ku

---

[168] Chien Mu 錢穆, *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History 中國文化史導論*, Taipei, 台灣商務印行, 1993, 211-214.

[169] Hsueh Hua-Yuan 薛化元, *晚清「中體西用」思想論 1861-1900 The Late Ching Thoughts on "Chinese System with Western Means" 1861-1900*, Taipei, 稻香出版社, 1991, 47-66.

大沽 and Tien-tsin in 1879; a naval academy was established at Tien-tsin in 1884, and North Sea Fleets in 1887; and Han-yang Ironworks 漢陽兵工廠 was inaugurated in 1890. In the mean time, officials and students were sent abroad to learn shipbuilding and navigation.[170]

Despite the establishment of all such institutions, it should be noted that the Self-Strengthening Movement was in two senses, a very marginalised reform. Firstly, it was conducted by a new established department of *foreign affairs*, which was meant to seclude the Western influences deliberately from the Chinese intellectual orthodoxy. Secondly, the movement was much confined to the level of technique reform. Very little was allowed to be touched in respect of cultural and social institutional restructuring, let alone the integral natural, ethical, and humanistic-based cultural logic. The following cases exemplify our points. During the process of reform, the so-called Pragmatic School 務實派 for instance proposed to affix a department of astronomy and mathematics within the Interpreters College in 1866, and aimed to recruit degree holders of the Ching court to enhance the "Western Studies" through examinations. This was however seriously opposed by the so-called Moralist Faction 道德派 or Idealistic School 清議派. Wo Jen 倭仁(1804-1871) for example stated his reason of opposition that[171]

> The founding basis of China is after all courteousness and righteousness, not power and trickery; and the root of motivation is in the inner heart of men rather than insignificant techniques... Never had I heard that a country could strengthen itself from weakness simply by owning petty technical skills... Hereby, urging those intelligent and excellent degree holders, who the state trained and reserved for right purposes, to adopt the barbarian way, the righteous spirit will soon be diminished and the devil prospered.

In short, the concern was that Western science and technology may jeopardise the inner moral understandings of Chinese intellectuals, which was obviously the bottom line of any technique reforms. The result of the recruitment was miniscule. Within half a year, only ninety-eight persons applied, none of them degree holders, and of the

---

[170]   Chen Chia-Yen 陳嘉言 and Yang Ching-Hsien 楊靜賢, op. cit. (1988), 133-138; and Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, op. cit. (1990), 282-287.
[171]   Quoted from Sun Kuang-Te 孫廣德, *The Debates on Tradition and Westernisation in the Late Ching Period 晚清傳統與西化的爭論*, Taipei, 台灣商務印行, 1982, 40.

thirty recruited, twenty of them were dropped out in half a year due to their insufficient basic knowledge.[172] On the issue of warship building and arsenal construction, Fang Chun-Yi 方濬頤, for instance, objected resolutely. As he stated[173]

> They [the Westerners] are peoples of no rituals, no courtesies and no musical cultivation; they had no institutionalised canons, classics and no cultural traditions. What they concern was nothing else but profit. They are men of warlikeness and of relentless fighting, who only rely on trickery techniques and taking these [the warships] as the means for power and wealth.

Fan went on to argue that, Chinese tradition always treated people as its foundation, and held virtue as the principle of ruling, thus there was no need to care about the insignificant machinery and techniques. In other words, techniques, machinery and warships, although they might ensue in "power and wealth" for the country, were after all not what Chinese wanted and needed. At least, they were not to be prioritised. It was not that Chinese intellectuals (including Wo and Fan) did not recognise the advantages, which western science and machinery might bring about, as many did take these into account and actually applauded them. What is significant here is that the existing cultural logic (or in a broader sense cultural identity) had certainly drawn a line for Chinese industrial and technological reforms before the 1860s. Grounded on a balanced "rational basis" (humanistic and instrumental), Chinese intellectuals were on the whole not convinced that Western culture and society was in its powerful, scientific and wealthy logic, more superior. They were still unwilling to give up the wholeness of culture, which integrated things, men, nature and the ultimate moral-ethical concern together. At least not before the industrial and technique reforms were further tested in later military engages.

The supremacy of cultural wholeness and moral-ethical insistence was, however, shattered, as more and more military defeat came about, treaty ports opened, and unequal treaties signed. A changing cultural orientation began to come into view. Such was clearly reflected in the composing structures of the above two opposing schools. In accordance to statistics, in the early 1860s almost 95% of the Idealistic School members were high-ranking civil officers and degree holders of the Ching court. Yet,

---

[172] Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), 254.
[173] Quoted from Sun Kuang-Te 孫廣德, op. cit. (1982), 50.

after the defeat of the Sino-French war in 1884 and the humiliating failure of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, only 23% of central officers still opposed an overall reform and remained in the Idealistic School. Many of them such as Chang Chih-Tung 張之洞 and Chang Pei-Lun 張佩綸, the leader of the Idealistic School, altered their positions drastically and turned into radical reformers.[174] The 1895 Sino-Japanese War sentenced the first failure of Chinese reform under classic learning based on "*ching-shih chih-yung*" and the principle of "Chinese system (or spirit) with Western means". Intellectuals in late 19th century China, unconvinced morally, ethically and culturally as they were, realised that they had to leave cultural conviction aside, at least temporarily, and face the solemn problem of survival. For then, powerful political-economic institutions and efficient mobilising of wealth, military force, and technology were no doubt the propositions for any possible persistence of cultural logic and identity. It was against this background that such moral-ethical based cultural rationality became temporarily undesirable (temporarily because it recurred again and again in later processes of Chinese reforms) for Chinese intellectuals. An instrumental rationality was justified in the context of securing Chinese culture. The logic of developing military and industrial power therefore superseded the traditional coherent worldview and moral concerns provisionally, and became dominated after the 1880s. The 1898 Reform Movement and 1911 Revolution soon marked an end to the two-thousand-years old Empire, and wholesale political, economic institutional reforms were inaugurated without much internal opposition.

Misfortune of China it was, as the European culture, science and technology especially, were *diffused* (if it is still a appropriate term) to Ching China in such a coercive and forceful way. Drawing from our theorisation of cultural identity in Section 2.3.1, the humanistic logics such as feelings, emotions, tastes, and sense of moral-ethical attachment to mundane factors, when act as a form of cultural resistance, may repulse quite unperceivably and extensively. Such humanistic reasons may easily spill over to the high politics and affect the instrumental decisions. To a great extent these spillover effects may explain the reactive Chinese responses during the 19th century Sino-European cultural encounters. Humanistic rationality, as illustrated in the arguments of the so-called Idealistic School, had indeed played a significant role in

---

[174]   Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, op. cit. (2000), 266-269.

Chinese intellectuals' decision-making within the Self-Strengthening Movement: anger, fear, distaste, humiliation, abhorrence, and unwillingness to give up the existing moral-ethical based cultural values emerged from the deepest heart to influence their pragmatic rationality. "Resistances" we agree that there had been, yet, it was partly because the historical circumstances had left the Chinese no ground and no time to receive European knowledge in an objective mind. It was under the challenge of Western gunboats that Confucian values (as a representative cultural logic of China) temporarily subsided beneath the surface of Chinese political economy and social institutions in the early 20th century. However, to us, such fading away of Confucian tradition meant not the elimination of the moral or ethical influences over the contemporary Chinese political economy, but rather the beginning of the substitution of a new form for the previous one. Only the challenge China faces now is unprecedented. As Hill suggests, the Western cultural context of values implied stocks of knowledge that were alienated from the traditional stocks of knowledge into which the technologies were introduced. The invading technologies were capable of eroding the cultural salience and authority of traditional knowledge and its meaning within the daily practices of the society.[175] This is exactly the issue, which Chinese intellectuals have to deal with—to reconcile the recurrent moral-ethical-commonsensical cultural logic with the implanted scientific knowledge, and the intrinsic values that were carried within the newly diffused Western institutions and technologies.

---

[175]   Stephen Hill, *The Tragedy of Technology*, London, Pluto Press, 1988, 75-76, 86.

Chapter 5   The Logics of Culture: Theory and
History Revisited

5. 1   Culture: The Soft Way and Hidden Factors

Chapter 3 and 4 provided a brief historical mapping of Chinese and European cultural development, literally from the dawn of the civilisations to their close encounters in the last five hundred years. The aim of the long-term historical accounts, as made clear at the beginning of the thesis, is to provide a context for reconfiguring and rediscovering the cultural connotations in the so often economically and politically centred narrations of history. In Chapter 2, it is argued that culture may be realised through two analytical levels: a) an objective existence of institutions and the natural world, or the spontaneous flow of "commonsensical knowledge", beliefs as well as the mundane and fragmentary experiences of life; and b) a subjective interpretation of meaning, the deeper structure of a signifying-system, or the informing spirit beneath a society, which associates closely with the authoritative mobilisation and manipulation of culture. A potential problem for such an analytical division, as raised in Chapter 2, is that while developing a dialectic or integrated theory, most attempts involve at first the "subjective" emotional and primordial factors, which are then articulated with the "objective" epiphenomenal social stimuli. This dialecticism often leads to an unproductive, sometimes false, dualism between the primordial and affectual based cultural beliefs on the one hand (which are often labelled as "irrational" or "non-rational"); and the specific economic and political goal-oriented "rational" behaviours on the other (see Section 5.2.1). Culture thus is taken as either something coercively given, which cannot be changed; something sacred or emotionally embraced, which cannot be logically argued against; or something passively laid down, which can only wait to be manipulated and engineered. While in many cases this rational-irrational dialecticism may appear to be useful, the oppositions alone fail to provide any adequate approach to construe the reciprocal relations among different elements of culture. To us, the reason for this failure is that the dualism reflects only

partly the way people actually think and behave. Above all, it overlooks the fact that there is in reality the coexistence and interdependency between what are termed "humanistic rationality" and "instrumental rationality", which in their integrated form compose what we call "cultural logic" or "cultural rationality" (see Section 5.3.1). An alternative, as proposed in Chapter 2, is to re-conceive humanist and instrumental rationality as mutually indispensable and indivisible parts of day-to-day life in the very first instance, and try to establish the dialogic connectivity among the multi-dimensional life experiences.

Thinking along such lines, the succeeding historical narrations (in Chapter 3 and 4) avoid any deliberate determinist conclusions, and adopt a more neutral, or at least, proportionally balanced historical approach with respect to the natural (ethnic, material, geographical and demographical), institutional (political, economic and social), and idealistic (intellectual) facets of a cultural system. Of course, to say the historical accounts adopt a more neutral stance is not to say that they cannot be specifically extracted and further interpreted to elucidate our central argument—how cultural logics, which operate as the linkage and motivating force of social practices, may also actively orient the path of Chinese and European social, economic, and political transformations. Nonetheless, several methodological points need to be raised before the theory of cultural logic is carried one step further. It is fully noted that adopting a cultural argument, an extensive, gradual, and some times indirect approach may easily be accused of being ambivalent and non-conclusive, especially in its attempts to establish the cause-effect links between cultural ideas and political or economic practices.

The non-immediate or indirect explanations for social transformations certainly do not satisfy the positive social scientists, such as Karl Popper, who believed confidently that the researches of social and historical sciences could and should be conducted as the same way that the natural sciences are.[1] Similarly, Levi-Strauss asserted that the human mind has the same laws of physical reality, and the structuring activity of mind is what gives origin to culture. The anthropologist held strongly that the study of a culture, like positive science, consists of "mental phenomena which can be analysed

---

[1] Karl R. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*, London, Routledge, 1957, 5.

by formal methods similar to those of mathematics and logic."[2]

To us, this focus on "direct and evidential" causality requires some caution, as focusing on the observable cause-effect links alone may easily miss other hidden factors, which although seemingly indirect and gradual at the first glance, are after all co-related and essential. What is more inspiring, however, is what Inkster terms "the doctrine of proximate causation", as he suggests that the[3]

> doctrine of proximate causation is surely relevant here. A causal statement should say something as to the timing and exact character of the 'explicandum', and this will not be convincing if the supposed explanatory element was one existing in its essentials long prior to the event. Causal lags which extend over many generations of experience and motive seem unconvincing. Otherwise, and at best, culture becomes a facilitating factor in the economic change we attempt to elucidate – a *dormant resource* which may be called into effect when other dynamic elements 'require' it... In this case the dynamism belongs to other factors which are measurably changing in quantity or quality.

Although it remains disputable whether the gradual approach of culture makes it at best a "facilitating" factor in the dynamics of political economy (see Section 5.3 and 5.4), by bringing the time dimension ("causal lags") into play, we potentially open up the interpreting power of cultural discourses in their relation to the of procedure of historical causality. In other words, apart from the imminent and direct causal evidence, one must also take into account those "unseen" or "unforeseen factors", which when taking a closer look, or in time, may turn out to be indispensable, and even responsible for the occurrences of the observable and immediate causes. This is in Inkster's term the "dormant resource". Hodgson's remarks strengthens our point here: coincidences of various sorts may accumulate to the point that, "though any one of them might be due to chance, together they point to a single hypothesis." Much of the recognition for these matters must depend upon "points seemingly incidental to

---

[2] See Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1969 (Translated Edition by T.H. Bell and T.R. von Sturmer under R. Needham's Editorship, First Published in 1949), 451; Ino Rossi, "On the Assumptions of Structural Analysis: Revisiting Its Linguistic and Epistemological Premises", Ino Rossi and Contributors, *The Logic of Culture: Advances in Structural Theory and Methods*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1982, 3-23, quote page 18-19; and Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, USA, Basic Books, 1973, 12.
[3] Ian Inkster, *The Japanese Industrial Economy. Late Development and Cultural Causation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2001, 83.

192

the matter at issue, which enter into the accumulated chain of coincidences."[4] (The notion of "unintended consequence" will be further explored in Section 5.2.2). Unfortunately, this gradual or non-immediate way that has so often been discredited, is very much how cultural theorists visualise history operates. No wonder Schafer has to argue so strongly that it is never possible to know all the myriad relationships among all components of a society within the complex interconnections. "Any attempt to establish direct and complete correlations between particular needs and particular cultural elements is foredoomed to failure."[5] Correspondingly, Van Deth and Scarbrough insist, culture in the form of values do not determine the courses of action, the loose articulation of the elements in cultural discourse suggests there are the needs for "substantive interpretation of constraint" before a pattern becomes intelligible.[6] Even more systematic is Geertz's interpretation of the logic of culture:[7]

> Referring as it does both to formal principles of reasoning and to rational connections among facts and events, "logic" is a treacherous word; and nowhere more so than in the analysis of culture. When one deals with meaningful forms, the temptation to see the relationship among them as immanent, as consisting of some sort of intrinsic affinity (or disaffinity) they bear for one another, is virtually overwhelming... when we try to treat these properties as we would sweetness or brittleness, they fail to behave, 'logically,' in the expected way... One cannot run symbolic forms through some sort of cultural assay to discover their harmony content, their stability ratio, or their index of incongruity; one can only look and see if the forms in question are in fact coexisting, changing, or interfering with one another in some way or other.

The methodological incongruities between those of the positive social scientists and those of the hermeneutic cultural theorists (if we can so divide them) are more than obvious. It was only that the "scientific mode of thinking" and the "technological mode of functioning", which heavily permeated the social sciences at the expense of the humanistic, historical and critical approaches, have become the distinguishing characteristics of Western societies.[8] To us, this difference is exactly the reflection of the above-mentioned disparity between the humanistic and calculative articulation of

---

4   Marshall G.S. Hodgson, op. cit. (1993), 260.
5   D. Paul Schafer, *Culture: Beacon of the Future*, England, Adamantine Press, 1998, 69.
6   Jan W. Van Deth and Elinor Scarbrough, "The Concept of Values", in Jan W. Van Deth and Elinor Scarbrough eds., *The Impact of Values*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1995, 21-47, quote page 42.
7   Clifford Geertz, op. cit. (1973), 404-405.
8   Ino Rossi, op. cit. (1982), quote page 3.

rationality. Such an unbalanced conceptualisation of human rationality demands a new way of contextualising. History of a *longue-durée*, as sketched in Chapter 3 and 4, not only provides a wider framework for us to trace the existence of the underlying "cultural logics", their endurances and recurrences within Chinese and European societies, but also offers the co-related, non-related, and counter-related experiences of historical events. For instance, there were the co-related institutions such as the civil examination system in China, which reinforced the functions of the Confucian ethics; there were non-related or random factors such as the occurrences of the Black Death in the 13th and 14th century, which although they had been significant historical events, cast little impact on the contemporary Chinese or European cultural logics (this somehow also show the limits of a pure cultural explanation); and there were counter-related events such as the activities of European natural philosophers in the 16th and 17th centuries, which had on the contrary challenged the medieval Aristotelian worldview relentlessly. Those "extra-proximate" causal elements compel one to reconsider the interrelations among different explanatory factors, and look for a broader theoretical framework that may encompasses as many of these conjunctions into play. Again, our position is that numbers and statistical data do matter, but they require adequate cultural interpretations to make full sense to the transformation of a society.

Here, in attempting to grasp the more exact nature of culture and establish a clearer cause-effect interpretation between cultural theory and political economy, several key concepts need further elucidation. It is intended through a) a direct illustration and elaboration of the historical events and data that were developed in Chapter 3 and 4, and b) the cross reference of the concepts "cultural engineering", "instrumental rationality", and "humanistic rationality" that the idea "cultural logic" and "cultural rationality" will be crystallised. The aim of this chapter is to continue the inquiry of Chapter 2 regarding how objective and subjective cultural factors may converge into sufficient conditions for a successful social transformation. And under what circumstances the manipulation of the power elite may incur an extensive cultural resistance. The theorising of the "cultural logics" will then be applied and tested in Chapter 6 in order to explicate the alleged Chinese withdrawal and European expansion around the year 1450.

5. 2   *Engineering Culture: Regulating the Historical Contingency*

5. 2. 1   The Instrumental *vis-à-vis* Humanistic Rationality

Human rationality is the key to perceiving social progression. The pictures of historical development one conceives determine the questions one asks and the way concepts will be framed. Questions set the range within which one looks for data, and to which the answers of objective and persistent inquiries will come. In Chapter 4, it is suggested that the political and economic centred interrogations of history tend to incorporate qualitative and non-political-economic phenomena by either "subordinating them to quantitative, economic ends, or by relegating them to a secondary rather than primary role in the development process."[9] The focus of history is often about wealth, material growth and the institutional mobilisation of resources and power of a society. Under this proposition, cultural traits are usually considered as passive stocks, resources, or capital that can be controlled, engineered, guided, mobilised, selected, or even invented by social elites, which then become dominant to meet the strategic needs or interests of a society. Among many others (Section 1.1.1 and 2.3.2), the most systematic theorisation of "cultural engineering" is Inkster's account of Japanese industrialisation. As he suggests, a more convincing cultural argument is not to focus on the *uniqueness* of some long-existing cultural assets of a society, but to realise the "cultural selection procedure (the search for appropriate fragments) directed firmly and narrowly at the actions, policies and agenda statements of the elite." In other words, the key to the success or failure of social transformation (in this case, Japanese and Chinese industrialisation) is the mechanism of social filtration (i.e. the social, political and economic institutions), whereby a certain cultural trait was "called up" as a dominant one when needed by the system, and through which the teleology was smuggled into historical interpretations without notice of intent. The combined impact of cultural engineering, the costly investments in human capital formation (i.e. the training of skill workers, artisans, and different levels of intermediate education, of professional societies and voluntary associations and of publications etc), and the curtailments of cultural opposition, therefore, were fundamental to the harnessing of the existing (Japanese) cultural stock to the

---

[9]   Marshall G.S. Hodgson, op. cit. (1993), 255.

modernist programme of industrialisation.[10] Thus viewed, tradition and its manipulation becomes a tool of change, "but change incorporates cultural selection as certain key values and institutions are preserved and highlighted by system builders." Culture, hence, is both a resource and a product.[11] Tracing the argument for the theory of cultural engineering, there seems to underlie the proposition that a seemingly smooth social transformation required the conscious design and insightful selection of culture by the power elite in the case of Meiji Japan. That is to say, the success of cultural engineering is very much based on deliberate control by the elite.

It is difficult to not discern strong logical similarities between the cultural engineering arguments concerning the selection, deliberate control and filtration of cultural traits in the modernising process and Weber's definition of rational behaviour, in the sense that for cultural engineering theorists, the humanistic aspect, the internal dynamism, and the logic of culture are less the centre or ends of investigation, but assets that may be harnessed to fulfil the programme of industrialisation. This coincides with Weber's criteria of rationality, which argues that human behaviour is rational in so far as (a) it is oriented to discrete individual ends, which are clearly formulated and logically consistent; (b) the means, alternatives, and the secondary results are all taken into full account and weighed, according to the best available knowledge, adapted to the realisation of the goal.[12] Weber even suggested that one of "the most important aspect of the process of 'rationalisation' of action is the substitution for the unthinking acceptance of ancient custom, of deliberate adaptation to situation in terms of self-interest."[13] As argued in Section 3.3.2 and 4.3.2, such a definition, whose historical origin may be drawn from the evolutionary three Rs (Renaissance, Reformation and Revolution) processes in Europe, is however the reflection of an unbalanced relation between human reason, nature and culture. The rationalistic

---

[10] Ian Inkster, op. cit. (2001), 84-85, 100; Ian Inkster, "Motivation and Achievement: Technological Change and Creative Response in Comparative Industrial History", *The Journal of European Economic History*, Vol. 27 No. 1, 1998 (b), 29-66, quote page 53; Ian Inkster, *Science and Technology in History: An Approach to Industrial Development*, Hampshire and London, Macmillan, 1991, 55, 101.

[11] Ian Inkster, "Cultural Resources, Social Control and Technology Transfer: Industrial Transition Prior to 1914", in Ian Inkster and Fumihiko Satofuka eds., *Culture and Technology in Modern Japan*, London and New York; I. B. Tauris, 2000(a), 45-64, quote page 51.

[12] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, (translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons), London, Edinburgh and Glasgow, William Hodge and Company Limited, 1947, 104-105, 110; Talcott Parsons, "Introduction", in Max Weber, op. cit. (1947), 13-14.

[13] Max Weber, op. cit. (1947), 112.

thought and scientific spirit in Europe, which revived in the 12th century and culminated in the 17th and 18th centuries Enlightenment, "liberated" Western thinking from the confinement of religious and cultural traditions. Such a way of thinking has since then permeated European society. A calculative and empirical logic, which justified the "dehumanising tendency" by praising human rationality in pursuing profitable goals with practical means, such as the overseas expansions after the 15th century, thus was often labelled as "instrumental". It instigated a moral- and ethical-free knowledge and seemingly value-free logic in Europe that was supported by the disinterested new commercial agencies and specialised institutions. Under this very process, the concept "rationality" became more and more, "identified with interest—concern with a thing or person only in so far as it or he may be usable as a means or should be taken account of as an intrinsically relevant condition."[14] This ideal type of pure rational action (*zweckrational*) falls neatly into the category of "instrumental rationality": a logic that asserts human behaviour to be based on goal-achievement, profit or interest calculation, and/or scientific and logical deduction and induction. Overall, it was mainly pragmatic factors (such as material resources and interests, power relations, legal institutions and abstract knowledge) that seemed to absorb more attention from the European politicians, merchants, and intellectual elites, who therefore gave more weight to the instrumental facet of rationality. It thus can be argued that the cultural trajectory (or the equilibrium points between the axes of practice and meaning in *Chart II-2*) of Europe seems to incline more to the instrumental side (i.e. to the axis of practice) within the dialogic framework of practice and meaning (Section 2.3.4).

The criticisms of this instrumentalist conceptualisation of rationality are two fold: a) the discourse embraced within it a dehumanising tendency, and b) it results in a false dualism between calculative (or goal-oriented) and commonsensical rationality. The dehumanising tendency becomes explicit as Weber argued that all the affectually orientated elements of behaviour, especially emotionally determined by the specific affects and states of feeling of the actor, as well as the traditionally oriented elements of behaviour (that is through the habituation of long practice, and everyday action to

---

[14] Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*, New York and London, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1937, 660.

which people have become habitually accustomed), are both understood as "non-rational" or "irrational" elements. The affectually and traditionally orientated behaviours are behaviours, which deviate from pure rational action. Such emotional reactions "as anxiety, anger, ambition, envy, jealousy, love, enthusiasm, pride, vengefulness, loyalty, devotion, and appetites of all sorts," and all conducts that grow out of them are irrational because they might hinder the rational pursuit of a given end. Although Weber did postulate another type of action, *wertrational*, as rational—the behaviour oriented by a conscious belief in the "absolute value" of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, entirely for its own sake and independently of any prospects of external success[15]—his later analyses nevertheless tend to treat this ultimate value as an absolutely irrational force, in so far as it cannot simply be used as a means.[16]

The rationale for Weber to exclude the absolute value oriented human behaviour from the initial category of pure rationality is exactly that which we suggested in Section 5.1, that is, the inadequate definition of (ir)rationality, and the consequent false dualism between the rational and the so-called irrational behaviours. Parsons is correct in pointing out that since the value and affectual elements are treated by Weber as deviations from rationality, the tendency is to create an improper or theoretically unwarranted antithesis. Elements, which may well in some empirical cases be integrated with the rational elements in a system, are pushed into conflict with it. One should note that as an integral part of human reason, the outline of the structure of the individual personality is relevant to ordering the actor's orientation. And included in this is the fact that we treat people as not only having goals, and interests, but also emotions, needs, and feelings. The basic value-orientations that individuals have, and that are institutionalised in the society, are part of the action system to which the criteria of rationality must apply. Although these elements are not rational in the instrumental sense, it does not make sense either to speak of them as irrational.[17] The danger for the process of rationalisation is, as Weber himself recognised, that it could

---

[15] The action of persons who, regardless of possible cost to themselves, act to put into practice their convictions of what seems to them to be required by duty, honour, the pursuit of beauty, a religious call, personal loyalty, or the importance of some 'cause' no matter in what it consists. It always involves 'commands' or 'demands' to the fulfilment of which the actor feels obligated. It is only in cases where human action is motivated by the fulfilment of such unconditional demands that it will be described as oriented to absolute values). Max Weber, op. cit. (1947), 83-84, 105-107.

[16] Talcott Parsons, op. cit. (1937), 660.

[17] Talcott Parsons, "Introduction", in Max Weber, op. cit. (1947), 13-14.

proceed in a direction which is at the expense not only of custom but also of emotional values and any belief in absolute values.[18] Such danger provides sufficient grounds for us to consider the conducts, which are based on many of the "commonsensical" orientated human needs, desires, emotions, feelings, intuitions, and moral, ethical, aesthetic, and religious values as an integral part of human reason, which we term "humanistic rationality".

In the context of rational action, the humanistic rationality places less stress on the objective goal, profit orientations, or the scientific logic of human behaviour. Rather, as the case of the Neo-Confucianism rationalisation in China first in the Sui and Tang eras, and later in the Sung and Ming Periods, deliberately emphasised the spirit of commonness, the self-generating moral senses, and the spontaneous flow of human emotions. Differing from the Weberian model, such a process prioritises not the calculative, scientific or logical articulation of interest for an individual or a specific group, but a general and sympathetic understanding of human desires, minds and feelings as a whole. The route of rationalisation in China is not the substitution of the unthinking acceptance of tradition, by the deliberate adaptation to a situation in terms of self-interest. Rather, the basis of the "commonsensical rationality", as argued in Section 2.3.1, is to take into account, or even prioritise, the way of thinking and doing things that common people hold to be both relevant and taken-for-granted within their experiences of routine. Extended from these taken-for-granted bases, Chinese intellectuals from Chu Hsi 朱熹, Lu Hsiang-Shan 陸象山 to Wang Yang-Ming 王陽明 further developed a solid philosophical ground for the three-layered commonsense rationality (i.e. intuitive knowledge, common human feeling, and natural sense of morality), which through the dissemination of civil officers and local gentry was accepted by ordinary people in general (see Section 3.3.2, 4.3.3, and 5.3.2 the fourth case of intersubjectivity). This humanistic course of rationalisation that consciously denied the "intellectual escape" of pure reason from its integral moral-ethical traits, was certainly no less a thoughtful process of human action. Only it was conducted in an "inner-worldly" approach that emphasised the fusion of the natural, moral giveness of humanity on the one hand, and the pragmatic profit calculation on the other in order to seek balance between the two sides. This humanistic rationality varies from

---

[18]   Max Weber, op. cit. (1947), 112.

199

the dominant instrumental view in Europe,[19] and grounds human reason on the commonsensical logics, whose extensive being or general acceptance by common people is in itself an important purpose rather than merely a mean. The diffused power of this humanistic logic had appealed to Chinese people time and again at both pragmatic and emotional levels. Thus, it can be said that the cultural trajectory of China (again as expressed by the equilibrium points between the axes of practice and meaning in *Chart II-2*) seems to incline more to the humanistic side (i.e. to the axis of meaning) within the dialogic framework of practice and meaning.

5. 2. 2   Historical Contingency: The Limits of Rationality

History is not merely the accumulation of pure rational actions, especially not the sum of instrumental behaviours. In fact, a closer analysis of the concepts of "historical contingency" and "unintended consequences" would suggest that the so-called proximate causation that is derived directly from calculative and purposeful human actions alone, explains only a part of historical causality. Firstly, there are the unexplained factors, or what Hodgson named the "extra-historical events"—matters of climate, geography, and of disease mutations as such, which exist before the very beginning of human civilisations and cannot be fundamentally changed.[20] Such factors that had significantly affected, and will keep affecting the course of European and Chinese historical developments, unfortunately were not thoroughly subject to human control. Who is to decide that the "Kurgans", or the proto-Indo-European was to originate geographically from the narrow and unfertile Pontic Steppe north of the Black Sea? What if the hardwood forest in central Europe did not physically separate the Greeks and Germans before the first millennium, and the cultural and economic conditions had made it much cheaper for the Greeks to act northwards rather than

---

[19]   We agree with Rossi that the humanistic and critical approaches, which have produced distinguished thinkers such as Max Weber, Karl Marx, William I. Thomas, Alfred Schutz, Pitirim A. Sorokin, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Gian Battista Vico, Robert Redfield and many others are still alive in contemporary European social sciences. Such thinking can still be seen in the work of phenomenologists, ethnomethodologists, Marxists and dialectical anthropologists. However, even within this humanistic paradigm, the "rationality" still seems to be heading for a very different direction in Europe. As Rossi himself concludes in *The Logic of Culture*, the "observable and conscious levels of phenomena are useful only as a starting point to inquire about their constitutive principles; the task of the structuralist is to discover the logical principles of classification which organise and underlie cultural reality; Structuralists should aim at formulating the mathematical laws of the organisation and combination of these principles." Ino Rossi, op. cit. (1982).
[20]   Marshall G.S. Hodgson, op. cit. (1993), 263.

across the Mediterranean Sea? (See Section 3.1.1) And what if the proto-Chinese were not secluded from other civilised neighbours by the Gobi Desert to the north and the Himalayas to the southwest, and the cradle of the civilisation were not supported by rich soils and the full-ranged Yellow and Yangtze River systems? The subsequent patterns of ethnic interaction in Europe and China could have been utterly different. Besides, no one was to expect the sudden outbreak of the Black Death to decrease substantially in the populations across Europe (dropped from 79 to 60 million between 1300 and 1400) and China (dropped from 115 to 60 million between 1200 and 1400, see Section 3.1.2). Such disasters must have significantly weakened the administrative authorities of the Byzantine and Sung and Yuan governments. Yet, factors like these can only be explained, at least to date, as historically contingent, and are literally out of the hand of both instrumental and humanistic explanations.
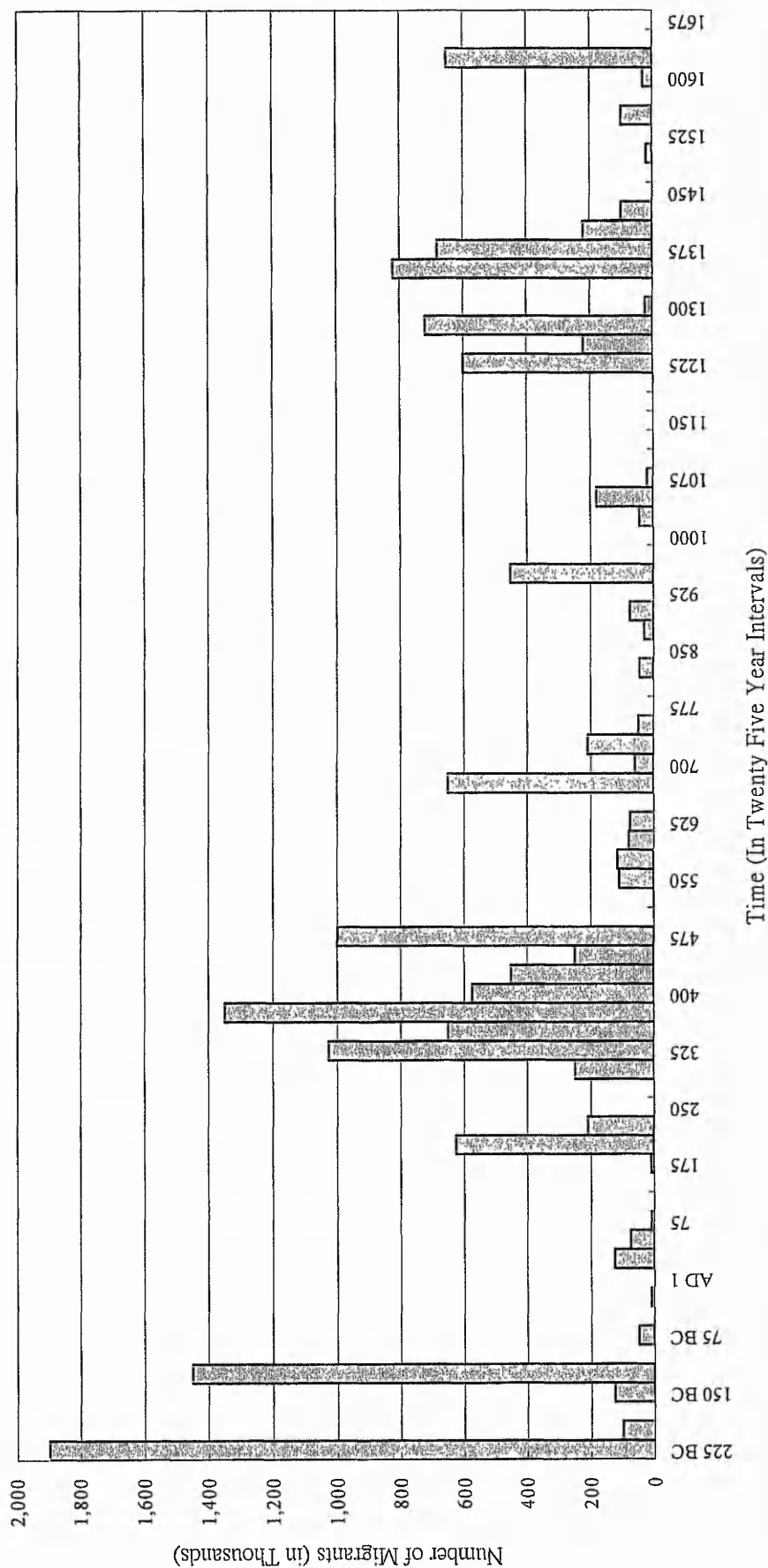
One might want to argue that the extra-historical factors, which once laid down the limits or conditions for cultural developments, became overt factors, and would be taken into account fully during the process of decision-making. Or since they are out of human control, they could only be excluded from the variables of human reasons. However, neither had been the case in the development of history. Rather the arguments merely direct one to consider another aspect of historical accident and unintended consequence, that is, the "semi-historical" or half-conscious level of human activities. This second aspect of contingency can be realised as the unforeseen or unplanned consequences of human actions, in the sense that such events are the combined results of partly conscious human behaviour and unanticipated historical factors. Cases like these can usually be located in a large-scale history, such as the changes in cultural geography resulting from long-term human activity and patterns of ethnic distribution due to large-scaled migrations.[21] As indicated in Section 3.1, the dense forest at the centre of the European continent, a fully acknowledged natural condition of cultural development, had kept the ethnic communities relatively small and separated before the Romans. A later interconnected pan-European ethnic network (after BC 200) and a lower population ratio of the civilised to the nomadic groups (about 1:2 in the Greeks times, and 4.5:1 in the Romans; comparing to the Chinese figures of 13:1 in BC 200, and 20:1 in 200 AD) resulted in a more rigid process in

---

[21] Ibid.

incorporating the nomads. All these were consecutive human activities carried out by unrelated elites in varied ethnic groups according to their migrant policies. They were therefore not subject to deliberate human control. Yet, in the long run these half-conscious human activities still demarcated the boundaries of different ethnic and cultural groups clearly enough to make an integral cultural identity across Europe unlikely. In the case of China, an unplanned intermingling pattern of ethnic distribution since BC 2500 made the distinction of a pure ethnicity impossible (see Section 3.1), while later large-scale state migrations further contributed to the shaping of a cohesive identity. The equal distribution of population (a steady growth of population in less developed areas and a stable ratio of urban population, See Section 4.1 and *Chart IV-2* and *IV-3*) was neither simply a natural process of demographic change, nor a pure designed human behaviour. Here, the constant government initiatives, encouragements, and aids did constitute one of the distinctive characteristics of Chinese migration. To a degree, unequaled elsewhere, massive and recurrent state movements of people had facilitated cultural interchanges among different ethnic groups. As shown in *Chart V-1*, instances of planned long distance migration from 225 BC to 1650 AD suggest the magnitude of this sustained policy. The chart clearly demonstrates the flow of demography, and its fixed directional character under the idealistic cultural guidance. Throughout Chinese history the regimes repeatedly used emigration as a major tool to further their political and social integration, economic development, popular relief, and control of the rich and powerful.[22] By means of the large-scale movement of people over and over again, it eventually become a catalyst for subsequent acculturation and assimilation. Yet it should also be noted that none of these—the patterns of European and Chinese ethnic distribution and the sense of ethnic particularity or integrity—were achieved plainly by the engineering of culture, but as a result of long-term interactions between half-formalised human actions and extra-historical conditions. As argued in Section

---

[22]   Thus in 221 BC Chin-Shih-Huang-Ti ordered over five hundred thousand military colonists south to modern Hu-nan, Chiang-hsi, Kuang-hsi, and Kuang-tung to settle on unoccupied land, and live among the various Yueh peoples, the native inhabitants of that area. In 120 BC, Emperor Wu of the Former Han evacuated seven hundred twenty-five thousand people from present-day Ho-nan, Ho-pei, and Shan-tung. Of these, one hundred fifty-five thousand went south to Chiang-ssu and northern Che-chiang; the other five hundred eighty thousand were sent to Kan-ssu, Ning-hsia, and Inner Mongolia. To finance this massive evacuation the emperor created a new tribute tax, levied on all nobility, called the "white deerskin money". See James Lee, "Migration and Expansion in Chinese History", in William H. McNeill and Ruth S. Adams eds., *Human Migration: Patterns and Policies*, Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press, 1978, 20-47.

Chart V-1: Planned Migrations in China, 225 BC-AD1650

Number of Migrants (in Thousands)

2,000
1,800
1,600
1,400
1,200
1,000
800
600
400
200
0

225 BC
150 BC
75 BC
AD 1
75
175
250
325
400
475
550
625
700
775
850
925
1000
1075
1150
1225
1300
1375
1450
1525
1600
1675

Time (In Twenty Five Year Intervals)

Source: James Lee, "Migration and Expansion in Chinese History", in William H. McNeill and Ruth S. Adams eds., *Human Migration: Patterns and Policies*, Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press, 1978, 20-47, Figure 1 and 2

4.1, the further history evolves, the bigger the role humanistic factors come to play, and the deeper the impact they would cast upon the surrounding natural environment. Natural landscapes therefore reflect the personality of a civilisation. Nevertheless, events like those cannot be explained solely by a given set of purposeful social actions that "are shown to be carried on in an intentional way, for certain reasons, within conditions of bounded knowledge ability," but must be taken as the accumulation of enduring intentional actions with unforeseen consequences.[23] It makes more sense to attribute such a long-term, but gradual, change to the functioning of the non-immediate, yet, recurring cultural logics.

Thirdly, on a more strictly historical level, there are the undesired, unwanted or even opposite reactions of conscious human behaviours, which are the diverse effects resulting from the "complex interweaving" of social, economic and political institutions. For instance, a widespread cultural trait may be saturated with religious beliefs among one people and function as an important aspect of their religion. In another area, or in a different period of time, it may be wholly a matter of economic transfer and be therefore an aspect of their commercial arrangements.[24] This, as argued in Section 4.3.2, was precisely the case during the 16th century European Reformation. Originally as a religious reform, the Protestants aimed to overturn the corruption of the Church by instigating a spirit of hard working and inner-worldly asceticism. The idea was to transform people into men of vocation, who seek their salvation through the acquisition of wealth in the honour of God, rather than in buying indulgences. Yet, such an ethical justification for the pursuing of wealth under a religious motivation coincidently met the needs of the commercial entrepreneurs. It facilitated, if not triggered, a subsequent value-and-faith-unburdened ethical reform for the relentless acquisition of power and wealth among the new groups of commercial agency, particularly after the religious roots of reformation died out in the 17th and 18th centuries. In this sense, the actions of a religious intention accidentally caused, or at least helped to cause, an unintended or even undesired consequence, which deviates significantly from its original purpose. As Popper wrote, "*only a minority of social institutions are consciously designed while the vast majority have*

---

[23] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1984, 294.
[24] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1961 (First Published 1935), 26-27.

204

just 'grown', as the undesigned results of human actions. [Italic as quoted.]" The existence of those unforeseen factors were exactly the reason why the positive social scientist added the term "piecemeal" or "utopian" before every possible plan of "social engineering" or "social technology".[25] Looking into those uncontrolled factors, we have to agree with Shils that[26]

> It is beyond human powers to conduct an elaborate system of free institutions—comprising a parliament, a system of parties, a free system of public opinion, the rule of law, voluntary associations for civic and private purposes—simply on the basis of rational calculation... That rational decision, calculations of interest, and the equilibrium of powers have a substantial and a crucial value in the institutional system of liberty is undeniable, but they are inadequate alone.

Cultures may change by becoming adapted to changing conditions, but they rarely change by consciously planned action.[27] All the unintended consequences above are partly unforeseen, and no lines can very strictly be drawn among them. Nonetheless, those unplanned factors do mark the limit of human reason, especially under a pure instrumentalist view. They demand that we interpret historical causality within a broader perspective. Such a repositioning of rationality should enable one to consider those *non-imminent* or *yet-to-be-identified* factors in a relatively unconventional, yet, sensible way. We need an innovative understanding of human reason that departs from the instrumental definition, to realise the functional role of the hidden factors and to decrease the mysterious power of historical accidents. This requires further theoretical and historical elaboration.

5. 3 *Cultural Logics: An Integral Rationality*

5. 3. 1 The Blending of Reasons as Human Motivations

Having had these two strands of reason and their limits clarified, we now have a better chance to grasp a more realistic picture of human reason and behaviour that we term

---

[25] Karl R. Popper, op. cit. (1957), 64.
[26] Edward Shils, "Tradition and Liberty: Antinomy and Interdependence", *Ethics. An International Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy*, Vol. 68, No. 3, Apr. 1958, 153-165, quote page 157.
[27] Bert F. Hoselitz, "Tradition and Economic Growth", in Ralph Braibanti and Joseph J. Spengler eds., *Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1961, 83-113, quote page 98.

"cultural rationality". It should be pointed out again that the pivotal point to reinterpret or rediscover the causalities and conditions of Chinese and European social transitions in a cultural perspective, is not how the two poles of human reason are categorised, divided and put into conflict. Rather it is more about how they interact, compromise and complement each other through a negotiating process. Only by positing human emotions, feelings and value orientations back within a neutralised, "(humanistically) natural" process of reasoning, and by putting the false dichotomy into a mutually compatible and indispensable position can we capture the way human beings actually carry out their thinking and behaving. It helps to explain the reciprocity of the instrumental and humanistic rationality by returning to the very basis of human thought—*logic*. Logic is about the way of thinking. However, it not merely describes the ways one thinks, but also tells him/her how he/she *ought to* think. In a more specific term, logic is the systematic attempt to set up a standard, against which people may judge or *justify* the correctness of an argument, and assert its truth and validity.[28] The problem is that logic defined as such does not reflect the way people usually think. We usually think in a rather haphazard way tending in some general direction but often stopping here and there and going off in various new directions, sometimes to return to the old, sometimes not. The "natural" thought in the "stream of consciousness styles" does not follow the logical rule strictly all the time.[29] Moreover, there are complicated abstract components such as paradox, metaphor and analogy, which cannot be solved or reduced easily by simple logical deduction and induction. Similar conditions may be applied to human behaving. People do not always behave in a *rational* way (in the instrumental sense), at times we tend to act in a seemingly *irrational* manner, which cannot be explained in a pure goal-interest-calculating logic. This is not because most people lack the ability to think and behave logically, but there exist occasions that human decisions have to be made under extreme pressure. And there are circumstances in which people are trapped in a moral dilemma, emotional conflict, or verdict involving aesthetic and ethical judgment, in which it make more sense for them to resort to individual intuitions, feelings, and compassions. In addition, it is important to recognise that

---

[28] See W. H. Newton-Smith, *Logic: An Introductory Course*, London, Melbourne and Henley, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985, 1, 3; and Samuel D. Guttenplan and Martin Tamny, *Logic: A Comprehensive Introduction*, New York, Basic Books, 1978 (First Published in 1971), 3-4.
[29] See Samuel D. Guttenplan and Martin Tamny, op. cit. (1978), 4.

human beings are capable of making "conceptual leaps" that save, or at times omit, large numbers of steps as compared with computers, which operate by the stepwise use of explicit rules. People are able to choose whether to behave by explicit logical rules, or to act in accordance with the implicit yet compelling human impulses. This ability and tendency of making conceptual leaps is significant because it allows one to behave under a humanistic mandate without necessarily giving the actual account of his "stream of thought", but rather a justification that conforms to the instrumental rationality for the action concerned.[30] Such a blending of the humanistic and instrumental rationality does not need even to be conducted on a conscious level.

The argument of a mixed attribution for human motivations that is based on both the "cognitive" and the emotional and psychological traits, finds its support in Leon Festinger's *dissonance theory*. Festinger asserts that human beings are inclined to strive toward internal harmony and consistency in dealing with their cognition, that is, any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, or about one's behaviour. As new events may happen or new information may become known to a person, there could arise logical inconsistency and perception that contradicts with past experiences or cultural custom, and creates at least a momentary dissonance. Such a cognitive dissonance, as it conflicts with one's existing knowledge, opinion, behaviour, attitude, and social value, will generate the psychological discomfort (i.e. inconsistence, hunger, frustration or disequilibrium) and motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance.[31] That is to say, human behaviour and thinking are in effect not only cognitively and logically motivated, but also emotionally and morally driven. Human motives in their established forms, like Schutz argued, can be articulated in two different sets of strands: a) the "in-order-to motive" that refers to the state of affairs and the end, which is to be brought about by the action undertaken; and b) the "because-motives", which refers from the actor to his past experiences that have determined him to act as he did. This latter indicates that only by turning back to his accomplished act, to the past initial phases of his still ongoing action, or to the once established project, which anticipates the act *modo futuri exacti*, can the actor grasp retrospectively the because-motive that determined him to do what he did or what he

---

[30] Ibid., 5.
[31] Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1957, 1-5, 14-16, 18.

projected to do.[32] The unconscious and retrospective explication of motives makes the humanistic and instrumental rationality behind a social action almost indistinguishable. Therefore, when probing into the causalities of a historical event, it is necessary that one look not only into the instrumental or humanistic motives that an acting agent provided, but also the socio-political institutions and contemporary cultural currents, in which the agent situated.

A spontaneous fusion of the humanistic and instrumental logics in human motivations leads to the critical implication that human behaviours, although they may appear to be pursuing an instrumental end, are by no means emotion and value free. Cultural traits, in this sense, as the longstanding accumulation of human thinking, actions, and practices of the customs, values, and traditions at a collective level, surely carry with them certain qualities of human feelings and mentalities. In other words, they are not always pure *objective devices* that may suit to any blueprint of the elite; rather they embrace inside themselves certain "characters" or "dispositions". This is not to say that cultural values or traditions can think or feel as human beings, or may grow like a organism as such, but once created by human beings they embrace with them specific meanings and standards, which in Parson's words, perform as "a logical device for... the articulation of cultural traditions into the action system."[33] Values or beliefs induce in a person "a certain distinctive set of dispositions (tendencies, capacities, propensities, skills, habits, liabilities), which lend a chronic character to the flow of his activity and the quality of his experience." Since all human reasons no matter whether they are interests, profits, values or cultural traditions are indivisible from desires and emotions, they are not free in terms of energy, but only vary in intensity. And since the cultural trait in any forms of value and tradition contains certain standards or meanings, it thus maintains itself a directional cast, or "vectorial quality".[34] This integrated human interest, desire and value standard composes the motivation for human behaviour. Indeed, the cultural trait once created by human beings sustains a logic of its own, and tends to structure human behaviours actively. As argued in Chapter 2, a cultural trait exists longer than its creators, and through the operation of institutions, it may in time become itself pointing to a certain course, or

---

[32] Alfred Schutz, op. cit. (1973), 22.
[33] Talcott Parsons, op. cit. (1951), 12.
[34] Clifford Geertz, op. cit. (1973), 95.

gravitating towards certain consummations. What is "logical" about culture is that it expresses "the outcome of the system's nature, as a released spring expresses the energy stored up within it."[35] Such a logic of culture will keep "a persisting tendency, a chronic inclination to perform certain sorts of acts and experience certain sorts of feeling in certain sorts of situations,"[36] until otherwise shifted or proved as undesirable.

Building again on Inkster's "engineering" and "resisting" model, which identifies the resistances to cultural engineering on three levels: a) the resistance of the vested interests of labour and capital that associates with the protection of the value of private assets for particular groups; b) the resistance of the intellectuals, who may react to protect their principles, organisations, interests and careers; and c) the resistance of culture itself, which can be seen as a wholesale confrontation of a cultural system, or opposition from a complexity of institutions, ideologies and norms.[37] Indeed, many of the reactive responses, which are categorised in the first two levels, are opposing actions engendered by a specific group of people (merchants or intellectuals), who tend to resort to the calculation of individual interests, profits and principles. Yet analysing in a cultural (logic) sense, clearly, none of the reactive behaviours can exclude the involvement of human feelings, emotions, and the idealistic principles that one adheres to. In many cases (as to be illustrated in Chapter 6), such protection of individual principles have less to do with one's interests, career or assets, but more with the value and belief that one intuitively follows. Particularly at the third level, it seems to make perfect sense to draw the sources of the resistance not only from the unknown complexity, which incurs the emotional and wholesale ideological and institutional confrontation by mysterious causes, but the internal dynamics and the *yet-to-be-identified* logics of culture. Cultural traits must carry with them certain standards, weights, and momentum, to be able to "resist" or "assist" the mobilisations of social elites. To us, only by taking into account the internal dynamics that the cultural traits derive from human emotions, desires, and feelings, and the directional cast embraced in the moral and ethical values, does the notion "cultural

---

[35] Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Nature and Logic of Capitalism*, New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, 1975, 25.
[36] Clifford Geertz, op. cit. (1973), 96-97.
[37] Ian Inkster, op. cit. (2001), 95-100.

resistance" make full sense. For human beings often channel their feelings and desires such as humiliation, guilt, or pride as the motivating or mitigating power for instrumental actions, and they tend to adhere to existing cultural values as the taken-for-granted guiding principles of decision-making until such values are proved to be undesirable for the changing society (see Section 5.3.2).

5. 3. 2   The Reciprocity of the Humanistic and Instrumental Rationalities

At this point, the question comes to be how we can contextualise the interaction of the humanistic and instrumental rationalities in Chinese and European history, and under what circumstances the two different logics of human reason will complement, contradict, or compromise each other in initiating a human action. Building on the historical narrations of Chapter 3 and 4, we may illustrate five different modes of intersubjectivity between the instrumental and humanistic rationality. The reciprocal processes suggest that the blending of the two aspects of human reason is not merely an analytical tool for depicting the motives of human actions, but that these two traits indeed intertwine, and constantly strengthen or mitigate each other in an integrated meaning-practice-weighing-framework. The causality of all historical events or the formation of a political, economic and social institution can only be explicated jointly by both facets of human reasons. That is through the examination of the intersubjective relations between the elite's cultural engineering measures and the internal logic and dynamic of culture itself.

The first possible case, as expressed in *Chart V-2* (bloc A1), a human action or institution may be motivated by a humanistic logic initially, which however soon becomes institutionalised and turns into an instrumental mechanism. Such mechanism then begins to regulate the later social or political practices, with or without needing to attach to the initial humanistic needs or desires any further, hence giving birth to a new instrumental rationality. This is very much the case of the formation of Chinese socio-political institutions, that is, the self-restraining Confucian civil service system and the extended familial villages. As pointed out in Section 3.2.2, the root of the Chou feudalist system was the extended familial relation, which associated closely with the blood-tie based "descent-line system". It can be said that the foundations for this political mechanism were the humanistic notion of symbolic kinship, the

Chart V-2: The Intersubjectivity of Humanistic and Instrumental Rationality

		A) Complement	B) Contradict
Humanistic + Instrumental Logics	**1**	Humanistic Motive ↓ Institutionalisation ↓ New Instrumental Rationality	Instrumental Motive ↓ Cultural Engineering ↓ New Instrumental Rationality
	2	Instrumental Motive ↓ Routinisation ↓ New Humanistic Rationality	Instrumental Motive ↓ Cultural Repercussion ↓ New Humanistic Rationality
	3	Humanistic = Instrumental Mixed or Shifting Rationality	

extended familial love and loyalty, and the sense of right and responsibility between remote relatives. In the Han Period, in order to maintain a centralised government developed in the Chin and to "harmonise" people's way of life and thinking, the state adopted Confucianism as the authentic ideology. The "Great Public School 太學" was set up in the capital, and students within became the major source of civil bureaucrats. Since the Han, the Confucian canons grew to be the key texts for civil examination up to the Tang, Sung, Ming and Ching Periods. Thus viewed, the humanistic logics of blood-tie and symbolic kinship were "institutionalised" through the elite's political design without much resistance; whilst the instrumental mechanism in turn not only regulated the later power relations and ethic orders between the emperor and the civil officers, but also among the plebeian strata. They formulated the consolidating social institution of China at the local level—the familial villages. The emphasis on political self-restraint and minimum intervention of the state did not emerge from an abstract construction. Arguably, the family ties and the moral-ethical based logic can be seen as the underlying beliefs that fostered these characteristic features of the Chinese polity. As a paternal familialised political system, it demanded a coordinating centre that appeals to virtuous values and spiritual mobilisation rather than the contractual and stipulated legislation. Meanwhile, the effective Confucian ethical discourses and well-defined responsibility for the three-layered socio-political institutions (see *Chart III-9*) constituted a well-established social order in the cultural system. The function of Chinese political economy was deeply embedded in the beliefs of maintaining harmony and cohesion among members of a familial organisation, which

disseminated throughout the "national family" a feeling of shared symbolic kinship. Nevertheless, experiences of the late Ming and Ching Periods also suggest that the institutionalised humanistic logic may lose its initial attributions in the long run after being habitually practiced. The cultural ideals of the expanded kinship and moral rules that constituted the Chinese civil examination system obviously lose their spirit in the Ching examinee's "eight-legged essay" of Confucian classics (see Section 4.3.3). The selling of official positions to the rich and the unthinking practice of ritualism indicate that the humanistic ideals had turned into a new instrumental rationality without ascribing to its earlier ethical rationale.

Secondly, a human action may be motivated essentially in an instrumental context (be it in full or half conscious) at the first instance. However, such an instrumental practice or mechanism in time, and through a routinising process, may generate a psychological need within a society and spill over from its originally functional role to a new taken-for-granted humanistic logic (bloc A2). The typical example is the operation of the political and economic principle in Europe—the "balance of power". As argued in Section 3.2.1 and 4.2.1, the origin of the "European balance of power" was an unplanned or even unwanted division among different economic, political and religious agents after the fall of the Roman Empire (due to their insufficient power and resources in reuniting the Continent). Nonetheless, after centuries of real practice, such an instrumentalist principle of check and balance was gradually habitualised by the incessant interactions among merchants, religious agents and bureaucracies, through their diplomatic, commercial and legislative activities. It is under this routinising process that the logic, within which each political and economic group accumulated its own interest, power and wealth and pursued its selfish ends, became widely accepted. The repeated practices by both the elite and people in common turned the mechanism into a new matrix of norms, beliefs and perceptions (that Bourdieu termed "*habitus*", see Section 2.3.3), which made up the motivating structure of later actions. Such a pragmatic principle saturated rather unnoticed into the way of response for most of the European politicians and became, as Braudel wrote, "the outcome of a spontaneous, instinctive sense of equilibrium, of which statesmen were only part aware."[38] Ideas and values are indivisible from the

---

[38] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1987), 416.

institutional structure. As cultural ideals together with interests and power flowed in and out of the process of institutionalisation, they as a whole composed the taken-for-granted economic and political landscape of Europe. In the 19th century, the state bureaucracies expanded their authority and superseded the Pope, the Princes, manor lords, and semi-autonomous commercial cities as the main actors of the European platform. Yet, the new political mechanism (the "Concert of Europe") still conformed to this instinctive sense of balance. European politicians needed not much training, they knew just which side to take part in to avoid creating an absolute hegemony. Thus realised, the original instrumental design (although only half conscious) seems to have transgressed its functional position, and transformed into a collective mentality that intertwined tightly with the humanistic beliefs and emotions. Was the humanistic idea that evolved from the pragmatic instrument no more a powerful force than the political mechanism itself? "Balance of power" after being created from its specific historical context had seeped deeply into the European mind. The system of competitive states, as the political and economic conventions, had generated a strong sense of cultural belonging among the Europeans. It bore the image and natural flavour of power equilibrium, and became an important symbol of collective identity. Wong is right that, "institutional patterns and habits of mind can indeed be changed, but, however much people declare their intent to break radically with the past, they rarely achieve a thorough rupture. Connections among institutional practices and individual norms of behaviour are culturally constructed."[39]

The third circumstance is that a human behaviour or historical event can be instrumentally initiated. However, this may contradict fundamentally with the existing humanistic logic, and generate a strong dissonant feeling among individuals within the society. Only through the elite's cultural mobilisation and reforming measures is the humanistic discomfort eventually pacified or repressed at least temporarily (bloc B1). This, as a sample case of cultural engineering, can be seen in the late 19th century Self-Strengthening Movement of the Ching regime. As has been explicated in Section 3.2.2, instances such as the "Edict of Self-punishment" promulgated by the Later Han emperors reveal that Chinese governments held virtuous and soft rule as the central

---

[39] R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997, 288.

213

principles of state administering. Under such humanistic logic, science, technique and machinery were deemed as marginal, and the relentless acquisition of power and wealth were taken as immoral. The 19th century reforming movements happened to contradict with these humanistic logics. Foreign threats (since the Opium War 1840-1842) firstly stimulated a small group amongst the social elite in China (such as Tseng Kuo-Fan), and led them to recognise the power of wealth and of effective state institutions. The subsequent Self-Strengthening Movement (1861-1895) conducted a series of "instrumental measures", and ushered in a series of weaponry and institutional reforms in order to oust the "barbarian" invasions. Nevertheless, as the pragmatic reforms conflicted with the existing "hierarchy of cultural logics" (also see Section 5.4), they incurred huge resistances from the bureaucrats and intellectuals from the Idealistic School (like Wo Jen). The recruitment of degree holders to conduct the Western Studies was miniscule. And the reason, as illustrated in Section 4.4, was exactly the insistence on this moral and ethical supremacy. To resist the changes, instead of giving substantial disadvantages for the new-founded institutions and western technologies, the opponents appealed to anger, fear, humiliation, and adherence to the wholeness of Chinese culture. Only the subsequent reforming measures of the Pragmatic School (from the establishment of gun factories, arsenals, dockyards, coal mines, to naval academies and military fleets), which in company with further military defeats (particularly the 1895 Sino-Japanese War) and the following unequal treaties, eventually shattered the humanistic logic. The opponents were turned into radical reformers, and a wholesale political and economic institutional reform was carried out (including the 1898 Reform Movement and the 1911 Revolution). Thus, it can be argued that through the elite's cultural engineering, an instrumental rationality (of establishing efficient political, economic and technological institutions and powerful military forces for the purpose of national survival) finally outweighed the existing moral and ethical based humanistic logic in China. Despite the feelings of being emotionally, morally and ethically unconvinced, the embedded humanistic logic was repressed by the new formulated instrumental rationality, and became, at least temporarily, undesirable for most Chinese intellectuals after the 1880s. These humanistic and instrumental interactions therefore demonstrate what was argued in Section 2.3.2, that cultural identification in the public sphere engages political and economic pragmatism, and that the way things are done involves not simply people's organic and natural loci such as feelings, sense of

belonging and emotional attachment, but also political processes of negotiation and transaction (of interest), as well as imposition and resistance (of values).

The fourth possible case, opposite to the third one, is that an instrumental measure of the elite may invoke excessive humanistic dissonances, which prove to be insurmountable by policy makers and leads to an extensive repercussion from the society in general (bloc B2). Good examples were the farmer rebellions against the early Ming government's attempts to implement a series of military expansions and large-scale public constructions. As argued above, the soft rule and least intervening state had been a taken-for-granted humanistic logic in China. Such a principle of the self-restraining centre, which was based on the embedded belief of political non-doings, familial benevolence and harmony, after undergoing long-term enculturation was generally accepted by not only political elites but also people in common before the Ming Period.[40] As recorded in *Chuang-Tsu* 莊子, there was the direct testimony of a farmer Shan Chuan 善卷, who addressed his firm belief of the "ought-to-be" weak form of state control. "I cultivate [in the field] as the sun rises and rest as the sun sets. I live on freely between the heaven and the earth, and my mind and will fly without restraint, so what is Tien-Hsia [or the emperor] to me," Shan confidently expressed.[41] A similar view was reflected later in the Chinese saying that "The sky is high, and the emperor is far away." In other words, strong governmental interferences of people's social life were unwelcome. Such a wide-ranging perception among folk people again testified the taken-for-granted notion of the state's functional role, that is, to adhere to the principle of minimum intervention. Under such extensive social expectations, government taxation rates were set by officials, who believed that light taxation would allow the people to prosper. And since a prosperous people were expected to be a contented and peaceful people, light taxes had their own self-serving political logic for officials.[42] Thus, any acute rise of taxes and overexploitation of

---

[40] The soft control of Chinese states may be clearly observed from the comparative figures of government revenue and civil officers, particularly in the last two centuries. Between 1644 and 1911, the total revenue income of the government stayed at about 2-4% of GDP in China, comparing to Britain's 37% in 1810; and France's 12% of GNP in 1760. And the average ratio of civil officers occupied less than 0.5% of contemporary Chinese population (see *Chart III-5* and *IV-5*), which fell far below the European level especially after the 1850s. (Comparing to Austria-Hungary's 2.92% in 1890; and France's 1.83% in 1890, see Section 4.2.1).

[41] See Chuang-Tsu 莊子. *Chuang-Tsu* 莊子. Chapter 28. (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1996 Reprint).

[42] R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 90, 134.

labour by the government may incur extensive tax resistances or even armed rebellions from the farmers. Nonetheless, opposing this humanistic logic of soft rule, the third emperor of Ming (Cheng-Tsu 成祖) carried out a series of ambitious and resource and labour consuming tasks, including the lavish expense for the military operation against Vietnam and the Mongols, the constructions of palaces and canals, and the seven great maritime expeditions. The state's over-mobilisation of labour and resources and excessive extraction of taxes generated huge repercussions from the local gentry and taxpayers. An evident increase of farmer rebellions under the reign of Yuong-Lo 永樂 were recorded in the *History of Ming*, these include the 1409 revolt in Hu-nan 湖南 led by Li Fa-Liang 李法良, the 1412 farmer rebellion in Chia-hsing 嘉興 commanded by Ni Hong-Chih 倪弘之, the 1418 farmer upheaval under the leadership of Liu Hua 劉化, the 1420 farmer revolt under the command of Yang Te-Tsung 楊得春, and the 1424 rebellion led by Wu Kuei 吳貴.[43] The refusal of heavy taxation and over exploitation led to the contraction of the Ming government, and turned the later regime into a state of physiocracy attempting to minimise its activities and adopt an inward-looking policy from the late 16th century (see Section 4.2.2 and Chapter 6). The return to the characteristic lightness and introversion of the later Ming regimes can therefore be seen as a consequence of the extensive humanistic repercussion, which proved to be insurmountable by the elite of the Ming's time. The Ming people, like civilians in other Chinese regimes, protested against taxes not simply because they could not afford them, or were unable to appreciate the advantage of the public construction (such as the canals system), but they felt that the state over interfered in the lives of people, and that they were unfairly levied.

Aside from the above four probable circumstances, in many cases, there could be no apparent instrumental or humanistic inclination for the motives of a human action, and in other cases, a historical event may be motivated by a mixed or shifting instrumental and humanistic logic (bloc 3A). For instance, it is very difficult to tell whether the dissemination of Christianity as well as science and technology to China by the Jesuits in the 17th and 18th centuries, was based mainly on an instrumental or humanistic logic. The missionaries in China tended to use scientific knowledge as a

---

[43] See Chow Chung-Cheng 晁中辰, *The Biography of Ming Emperor Cheng-Tsu 明成祖傳*, Taipei, 台灣商務, 1996, 500-501.

means to demonstrate the power of the almighty God and the superiority of the European societies, so as to convince the mandarins and convert their beliefs. Yet, as Herskovits points out, the evangelical tradition went far beyond religious considerations:[44]

> This evangel[istic tradition] was secular as well as religious, and was epitomised by such descriptive phrases as 'the white man's burden,' and the 'civilizing mission,' used to express the obligation to bring 'civilisation' to those who lived in accordance with difference and therefore less desirable conventions... It represents part of a complex of concepts, such as the idea of progress associated with it, that strikes deeply into the belief and motivational systems of European and American societies... It was behind the drive to bring the findings of scientific medicine to those who used other curing methods. And it has been manifest in the urge to spread to the rest of the world methods to raise standards of living through extending economic aid as a means of achieving technological growth.

In other words, apart from the instrumental end of religious conversion, the donor groups also carried with them a humanistic logic. This humanistic logic can be called the evangelistic drive or need for the Europeans, in the sense that the European way was not only held to be the best, but in addition brought into play a principle of new experience, that it was the duty of those whose way was best to bring their benefits to others. In this context, it can be said that the introduction of Christianity and technology by European missionaries to China were based on the mixed or shifting, yet mutual reinforcing, instrumental and humanistic rationalities.

The division of the above five interactive circumstances of human reasons are by no means clear-cut, and the attribution of the initiating logic for the illustrated historical cases can be variedly defined and interpreted, depending on the point of time that one enters. The implication for such intersubjectivity is that it provides a theoretical outlet for the often one-sided narration of cultural or material-institutional determinist interpretation of history on the one hand, and shifts the focus of discourse from the oppositional tensions between the humanistic and instrumental rationalities to their integrative and dialogic relations on the other. In a mutual complementing position, as

---

[44] Melville J. Herskovits, "Economic Change and Cultural Dynamics", in Ralph Braibanti and Joseph J. Spengler eds., *Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1961, 114-1138, quote page 123-4.

illustrated in the first case, the humanistic logic may be applied to bridge the gap of the instrumental measure by filling it with primordial symbols, emotions, and ethical values, and by overlooking less significant physical disparities to achieve a pragmatic end. On the other hand (in the second case), an established institution that is developed from the enduring political and economic practices may be applied to reinforce an existing humanistic logic, or generate the new commonsensical logic through practices in the day-to-day life. For the third circumstance, the humanistic and instrumental logics in reverse oppose each other. This suggests that an initial compromise of the existing humanistic logic, in degree or in part, may trigger a series of unintended consequences; under which case, new institutions may be established before the change of beliefs, and eventually alters the existing cultural logic. The fourth case shows that if the humanistic feeling of dissonance is too strong to be repressed or channelled by the elite, the psychological discomfort may convert into an extensive resisting motivation, and even cause enormous cultural repercussions. The last category is the mixed (or shifting) logic, whose logical and sequential attribution cannot be clearly specified. However, like the other four cases, what they do make evident is that the blending and reciprocity of the humanistic and instrumental logics as the motivation of human action is a notion that may sit well with a variety of empirical categories or processes.

To sum up, a purely instrumentalist view would obviously underplay the collective mental or psychological status underlying economic and political transformations. To neglect the mindset behind the process of cultural engineering is to ignore the motives and logics of a society for prioritising certain elements over others during a given period of time. The elite's engineering process alone is insufficient in explaining how much cultural resource a society can mobilise; how quick and how far the change can proceed; how intense the stress a society can endure when facing its challenges. A purely humanistic view of social transition, on the other hand, may easily fall into an evolutionary historicism or cultural determinist position, by claiming that every social action is culturally and historically decided. It overlooks the real negotiating processes, the political and economic engagements, and the powerful institutional mobilisation of culture. Ideas, be they religious, moral, practical, or aesthetic, although they may persist, must be carried by powerful social groups to have powerful social effects. They have to be institutionalised in order to find more than merely an idealistic

existence in society. The humanistic logic needs to become a taken-for-granted feature to be able to influence the course of social transformation, and the route for this is institutionalisation. Cultural identity is an interlocked system of sensitivity, which needs to be derived from various aspects of life practice. Cultural logic is the conjunction of such sensitivity. This is the reason why Geertz held that "culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviours, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed;" yet, as networked systems of construable signs, it is a context, something only within which they can be intelligible.[45] Taking the 15th and 16th centuries, no single elite, or a group of elites in Europe or China knew exactly how powerful and rich, or how institutionally effective and technological advanced their societies were, let alone in a comparative sense. Neither did they know exactly how the societies were to become (wealthier, or poorer; more or less powerful) in the years to come. What most people had in mind was not a precise numeric data (of the demographic increase or decrease, the average governmental income and expense, and ratio or scale of social mobility), an exact sequence of historical causality, and the ultimate destination they were heading for. Rather they had in mind a conflated picture of a blurred knowledge about the society, and a much stronger sentiment or feeling that converged of their passions in pursuing the present goals and interests, and their judgments on how to make a better life according to their cultural beliefs.

Thus realised, "cultural rationality" can be defined as a way of behaving that is based on an integral instrumental and humanistic thinking, or a combined internal-external sense, which we term the "cultural logic". Such logic is a specific, if not unique, principle (or principles) for the organisation of the collective cultural traits. It orchestrates the values, beliefs, human feelings and emotions, as well as the pragmatic interests and social institutions into a distinct pattern, which in Schafer's term, formulates a particular "cultural personality"[46]. The deliberate or unconscious conceptual leap, and the fusion of the humanistic and instrumental logics, though sometimes leading people to behave in a seemingly haphazard way, does enable us to not only trace the causes and effects, calculate the interests and profits, and distinguish the valid and invalid, but also to love and hate, feel joy and sorrow, judge

---

[45] Clifford Geertz, op. cit. (1973), 14, 314.
[46] D. Paul Schafer, op. cit. (1998), 110, 114, 116.

beauty and ugliness. As argued in Section 2.3.4, this "dialogic connectivity" functions to integrate the day-to-day practice and meaning of every individual. It networks those multiple fragmented dimensions of people's lives into a integral whole, and allow them to prioritise one value, or prefer one worldview more than the other. "Cultural rationality", thus, is about acts of integration and synthesis aimed at melding all the diverse fragments of mundanity. Cultural logics are the guiding principles that orchestrate those conflated images within people, which tell them who they were and what they should do, and which shape the practice-meaning-weighing-system. It is through this evaluating framework that one decides when to base a behaviour on the instrumental or humanistic logic; when to insist an inner value more than a physical result; when to save face rather than gaining pragmatic profits; and when to utilise one logic to bridge the gap of the other in accounting his motives, even though only in retrospective. This negotiating process, as shown in Section 4.4, was reflected in the early Euro-Chinese encounters, when the Ching bureaucrats were at the junctures of deciding whether to hold up to their moral-ethical supreme cultural tradition, or to adopt the western logics of power and wealth. And it is these consistent logics, or the changes of logics that make the observation of a cultural system's (its members') decision-making tendency, or in our term "cultural trajectory", possible.

5. 4   Cultural Logics as the Conditions of Social Transformation

The implication of our analysis of the internal disposition and momentum of culture is clear. That is the cultural logic itself may impose certain conditions that are either conducive or obstructive to the process of social transformation or the elite's cultural engineering. However, to realise how cultural logics may condition (i.e. resist or enhance) the human actions, we need to understand how cultural rationality, and the integral meaning-practice-weighing-system operate. Edward Shils' analysis of the sacred nature of traditions or the society's attitude towards its past may shed some light on this missing link. In his attempt to explain the liability for the adaptations or admixtures of new cultural traits within a cultural system, Shils made the distinction between a "traditional" and "traditionalistic" society. Accordingly, a traditional society maintains a critical independent attitude toward the authority of its traditions, therefore is able to surpass the barriers and restraints, which are imposed on human

220

behaviours and thoughts by its tradition. A free traditional society thus becomes compatible with rational criticism and creative innovation. For Shils, it is no accident that freedom first emerged as a modern political ideal in Protestant countries where a powerful sense of individuality was curbed by passionate conflict with a Puritanical ethos and formed a self-restraining tradition. A traditionalistic society like India or China, on the other hand, has a revivalist, enthusiastic attitude towards tradition. Such an attitude permeates all political, economic, cultural, and religious spheres and unifies them in a common subordination to the "sacred" as it is received from the past. As the society overemphasises the "sacredness" of tradition, the enthusiasm soon transforms into a dogmatic ideology and becomes harmful to liberty and social adaptation (This resembles our categorisation in Section 5.3.2, *Chart V-2*, Bloc B1 and B2, i.e. a contradictory mode between the instrumental and humanistic logics, which result in the former (the European) case in successful cultural engineering, and the latter (the Chinese) case an extensive cultural repercussion.)[47] In other words, people's attitude or mindset towards the sacredness of traditions in a society plays a crucial role in deciding the tendency of social innovation.

This traditional and traditionalistic distinction is useful but requires further clarification. Firstly, traditions are not always negative. There are also active, outgoing and positive tendencies of traditions, which in contrast may facilitate social transformation. As Bert Hoselitz pointed out, "if the prevalent ideology is one of 'modernisation,' traditionally transmitted norms may exert a positive influence. They may provide stability in a situation of constant and rapid change."[48] Secondly, Shils himself also recognised that, "all societies regard as sacred certain standards of judgment, certain rules of conduct and thought, and certain arrangements of action." A value standard need not be conventional to be conceived as sacred, that is attached to the divine. There is an element of the sacredness in the secular and irreligious level of social practices, which might be nothing more "otherworldly" than "civility," "the rule of law," "balance of power," and "individual liberty," or "cultural diversity" such as the case of Europe. Since the "sacredness" of organising principles need not be attached to the divine (gods), they are subject to alteration and even rejection.

---

[47] Edward Shils, op. cit. (1958), quote page 153, 158, 160-161.
[48] Bert F. Hoselitz, op. cit. (1961), quote page 111.

Therefore, societies vary only in the intensity and self-consciousness of their acknowledgement, and the scope that they allow to the sacred, and the extent of participation in them.[49]

The traditional and traditionalistic distinction becomes more informative thus argued, as it indicates that cultural traits or traditions in different societies may be variously orchestrated. Since every society integrates its cultural traits according to specific instrumental and humanistic logics, it therefore generates distinct value orientations as the sacred organising principles for the thoughts and behaviours of a community.[50] As the conjunctions and cementing forces, those organising principles integrate otherwise fragmented elements in a cultural system into a coherent whole, and form a distinct pattern of culture. And for that reason there results within different societies a discrete degree of cultural integrity, and a heterogeneous constitution of cultural hierarchy. These organising principles resemble what we termed "cultural logics" in the way they function, which appeal to the members of a society in varied senses, and whose consolidating power also differed. As stressed in Section 2.3.4, every culture maintains its own way of value presentation; the historical causality can only be apprehended through an adequate comprehension of the internal cultural logics. Therefore, the sacredness of these logics should not simply be judged by the Eurocentric dualistic criteria of being secular or religious, dogmatic or liberal, and enthusiastic or self-restraining, or have attached to it any implication of inferiority or superiority.

What seems more adequate and constructive is to look into the rationale behind the sacredness of traditions. That is to recover the logic explaining why certain cultural traits or values become taken-for-granted in a cultural system, and in what way do these sacred cultural traits and logics interlink to shape people's sentiments of, and attitudes towards, their "cultural wholeness". Such a cultural wholeness can be assessed by how firmly the cultural traits are united by the organising principles and institutions; how far the members of a society will insist on the integrity of their cultural pattern; and how much incoherence a cultural system will be able to endure

---

[49]   Edward Shils, op. cit. (1958), quote page 156.
[50]   Ruth Benedict, op. cit. (1961), 33.

when facing new challenges. The intensity of the feeling of sacredness alters as the function of the interlocking cultural logics changes. In parallel, the more these cultural logics are valued by a person or a society, and the tighter they merge with the socio-political institutions, the stronger will the sense of the sacred relation grow among them. These overpowering mental qualities of a society thus become the meta-theoretical guidelines and indicators of a society, which direct and suggest the possible decision of whether to resist or accept adjustments for existing cultural practices. Hence, the mental qualities are essential in projecting the tendency for the future social transformation.

Based on the previous theoretical and historical narrations, we can extract sets of cultural logics that are engraved in the structures and the diffused "dust of history". By encapsulating the intersubjectivity of these logics, it seems possible for one to simulate the conflated images of cultural identities, or the mindset of Chinese and European peoples with respect to their perceptions of the cultural hierarchy and integrity. In China, people responded to geo-ethnic conditions with an effective myth of common origin and created among different ethnic groups an incorporating "Middle Kingdom" that was founded on culturalism rather than racial particularism. A steady growth of population and city, a heavy humanistic intervention in geo-ethnic distribution, the non-expansive overseas policy, and a semi-institutionalised mechanism of social mobility through education and the civil examination system, all revealed the idealistic shadow of Chinese cultural rationality (see Section 3.1 and 3.2). In addition, a unified writing system and an authentic intellectual tradition effectively consolidated the internal linguistic and ideological divergence, whilst challenges from the recurrent nomadic returns injected a spirit of commonness into the elitist moral tradition. Confucianism, as argued above becomes a representative cultural logic, which is in all time synthesising and absorbing the Buddhist, Taoist and Legalist philosophy, and even the "barbarian" ways of thinking (see Section 4.3.3). Under this logical framework, the primordial elements of identity such as race and blood-tie had to compromise with the undistinguishable ancestral origins and transformed into a symbolic descent-line system. While the familialised political and economic state mechanism, although it maintained a single coordinating centre, had to appeal to cultural ideals that were based more on the ethical, moral or the taken-for-granted logic of commonsense rather than the word-binding legislation. These cultural logics

integrated deeply and strongly with the humanistic feelings of common people through all sort of daily practices in the three-layered socio-political institutions. In the meantime, the principle of "unity of the natural world and humanity" connected the human morality, ethic and emotions with the physical world, and rationalised the integral worldview in the society. The notion of cultural wholeness had constituted a humanistic or emotional attachment for Chinese people. It had become an enduring spirit, which returned once and again haunting the politicians and intellectuals to move towards political and economic integration. Therefore, despite the fact that periods of political disunity occupied almost one third (and minority rule nearly one fourth) of Chinese history since 221BC to AD 2001 – and that there had been as many as 225,887 recorded internal rebellions between 210 BC and AD 1900 (see Section 4.2.2) – the notion of unity and integrity like an "original sin" had saturated deeply into the mind of Chinese peoples. *In sum, what supported the sense of cultural wholeness in China were not merely the so-called unified yet self-restraining political and economic institutions, but also a prioritised humanistic belief and need for unity.*

With a later developed interconnected cultural network together with the understanding of being out-comers, the Europeans tend to attribute their particularity to primordial factors such as race, biological appearances, or invariable concepts like that of the "Chosen People". Myths and legends of common origin, except Christianity (which came from Asia Minor) seemed to remain relatively unconvincing. Apart from the claimed religious universality, little of the cosmopolitan worldview of the Hellenistic or Roman kind was influential after the fall of the Roman Empire.[51] The changing lingua franca and a religious oriented common education system, which was challenged first by the divisions of Christianity and later by the emerging guilds, added more weight to the sense of diversity. In addition, the comparatively rigid division of social strata further fostered the restless initiatives of society (see Section 3.3.1), whilst the macro-urban concentration of population and a shifting economic centre decided by markets all imparted a facilitating logic basing on interest calculation. Looking into the political economy, the competitive power actors, in the absence of a coordinating centre in Europe, resorted to ideas such as liberty, individuality, democracy and citizenship, which were regulated by the well

---

[51] See Peter Rietbergen, *Europe: A Cultural History*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998, 34.

established yet depersonalised legal system. From Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton, the specialised, materialist, and empirical investigations led European intellectuals to leave the great questions of religion and philosophy aside, and to no longer concern themselves overmuch with the coherence and wholeness of nature, which was reduced to a formula such as that of the "mechanical universe", one which served the European Enlightenment well enough. What can be observed is that the instrumental and scientific rationality transcended political and national barriers and preoccupied the whole of Europe in the modern age. Although social practices in different regions of Europe seemed to change jointly in a distinct tempo, and the overt political and economic institutions seemed to renovate accordingly with the interlinked cultural trends, the sense of cultural wholeness and integrity was to a great extent neutralised by this emphasis on particularity. The "universal" insistence on cultural and ethnic distinctiveness thus contributed to the integral logic for both unity and disunity of European peoples, in the sense that it was integrating Europe under the principle of "unity in diversity". As argued in Section 5.3.2, the logic of maintaining individual distinctiveness within a collective, and an insistence on the pan-European mechanism of balance of power had also become constant beliefs, which spilled over from the initial instrumental function into a psychological need. *To sum up, supporting the cultural wholeness of Europe were the highlighted common institutional heritages in political, economic and legal spheres, and a peculiar "half-neutralised" (as it was mitigated by the sense of particularity) humanistic desire for unity that would not be as strong as its Chinese counterpart.*

In a comparative sense, is it fair to argue that it was less probable for Chinese society to make fundamental changes, due to the forceful consolidating power of the cultural logics, their close mergence with the socio-political institutions, and people's strong humanistic insistence on their cultural wholeness? Or, would it be accurate for one to argue that new cultural elements would not be accepted easily in Europe, as people are less confident that the existing cultural system will be strong enough to endure further divergences following the challenges of the foreign ingredients? The answers are by no means straightforward. Shils' presupposition that Chinese society is more traditionalistic than Europe because it has a sacred and enthusiastic attitude on the past may not stand without modification. It should be remembered that most discourses about a petrified Chinese society are evaluated on European criteria, that is,

225

subjecting to the logic of pursuing wealth and power, or achieving the material, scientific, and institutional modernisation. As illustrated in Chapter 3 and 4, the transformations of geo-ethnic, social, economic, political and intellectual traditions in China were as dynamic as, if not more dynamic than, the European counterparts. If as Wong suggested, taking Chinese integration as the norm, against which to measure the reconfiguration of state power within Europe (i.e. the transformation of a system of competing states into a single more integrated state structure), the European achievements would seem far more modest in this regard.[52] Grounded in our theory of cultural logics, it seems more adequate to analyse the pace and direction for the transition of Chinese and European societies by taking into account their characteristic patterns of cultural rationality, and the new cultural elements and challenges they are to face. Due to the pro-humanistic characteristic of cultural rationality (i.e. emphases on the self-generating moral senses, and the spontaneous flow of human emotions and commonsense), a large-scale social transformation in China, as the case of the 19th century Self-Strengthening Movement, will incline to resort firstly to the extensive cultural mobilisation and the sympathetic understanding of people. Although such an approach tends to be non-immediate, indirect, less efficient or slower in pace, once the humanistic or psychological traits are consolidated, the following institutional and behavioural reforms may turn out to be even more stable and persistent (*Chart V-2*, Bloc A1). In Europe, a pro-instrumental cultural rationality tends to turn initially to the powerful operation of political, economic and legal institutions when facing possible transitions. The authoritative control of material resources and the effective employment of pragmatic measures without corresponding humanistic support, although it may bring about imminent interests and results, can also plant potential forces for later conflict and division. The lasting religious and ethnic divisions inside Europe can arguably be taken as the patent signals, which impart the not so smooth and speedy social transformation under the humanistic logic (*Chart V-2*, Bloc B2).

The last question one needs to ask is, how did the cultural logics obtain their extensive social powers? Again, Weber's *The Sociology of Religion* provides insight. As he wrote, "traditionalism... shall refer to the psychic attitude-set for the habitual workaday and to the belief in the everyday routine as an inviolable norm of

---

[52]   R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 284.

conduct."[53] In other words, the orchestrating principle in a society addresses its logic and operates its power through the function of the collective psychology (see Section 2.3.2). This requires a little elaboration. As argued above, human actions are to a large degree conducted by the fact that behind them "stand basic directional forces of an attitudinal nature, which in a broad sense can be understood as 'value orientations.'"[54] The value orientations permeate the society and impose among its members certain logics, whereby these logics intertwine as an integrated whole, and become a latent or even sacred order to orient the behaviours of people. So perceived, the collective mindset can be seen as the mental qualities, which interweave within the value orientations and cultural logics that are pervasively accepted by most of the members of a society, at any particular moment, as almost given. This collective mentality informs the process of arriving at social attitudes, dispositions and ways of conduct. To put it in another way, a decision that is undertaken within the practice-meaning-weighing-system (see Section 2.3.4) of an individual is very much influenced by the mindset of the individual and his perception about the mentality of a collective. Under this context, the conditions for a successful cultural engineering or smooth social transition become more than just a subjective selection or filtration of traditions. It involves an extensive conversion of the collective psychology, what Reinert and Daastøl labelled as the "gestalt-switch," or a fundamental change of Man's worldview or mindset, as a necessary condition.[55] For Reinert and Daastøl, a religious gestalt-switch in the Medieval Age was a basic but neglected explanatory variable for the economic growth in Europe.[56] The logic of social formations is not

---

[53]   Max Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religion", in H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills eds., *From Max Weber, Essays in Sociology*, New York, 1964, 296.
[54]   Jan W. Van Deth and Elinor Scarbrough, op. cit. (1995), 21-47, quote page 32.
[55]   Reinert and Daastøl regard the gestalt-switch as a necessary "precondition". In our argument, however, such gestalt-switch needs not to be a "precondition" but a "necessary condition" for social change. The reason, as argued in the second case of 5.3.2 (Chart V-2, Bloc A2), is that there could be a reverse sequence, in which behavioural and institutional changes precede the changes of cultural beliefs and attitudes, while the behavioural and institutional reforms later in turn alter the existing cultural logic.
[56]   Similar to Weber's *Protestant Ethic* (see Section 4.3.2), Reinert and Daastøl argued that through the Middle Ages the Aristotelian-scholastic tradition caused religion to be a strong deterrent in the search for new empirical knowledge. The Holy Scriptures, supplemented especially by Aristotle, were seen to hold the sum of knowledge useful for men. A search for knowledge outside these sources almost automatically became a heresy. Using such knowledge would "disturb the equilibrium of nature." A necessary foundation for later economic growth was that this religious argument was turned upside down. The gestalt-switch was based in a new and dynamic interpretation of the same Scriptures. The same Scriptures, adding the long-forgotten views of Plato, provided for a world where explorations and inventions were not only tolerated - with Leibniz-Wolff, they even became one of the main duties of Man. This was very much the spirit of the Renaissance. First in Roger Bacon (1214-1292), later in

227

merely a playing-out of economic movements that arise from their behaviour-shaping nature. "Rather, the grand logic of societies embraces all large-scale and long-lasting institutional or cultural changes that arise from whatever source."[57] To us, the key to overcome resistances of the elite's cultural engineering process does not lie merely in the utilising of natural resources, sciences and technologies, or the reform of social institutions and political-economy of their own, but also the changing of existing cultural logics. We therefore agree with Geertz that[58]

> In order to avoid having to regard ideas, concepts, values, and expressive forms either as shadows cast by the organisation of society upon the hard surfaces of history or as the soul of history whose progress is but a working out of their internal dialectic, it has proved necessary to regard them as independent but not self-sufficient forces—as acting and having their impact only within specific social contexts to which they adapt, by which they are stimulated, but upon which they have to a greater or lesser degree, a determining influence.

Rather than taking culture as a mere facilitating factor that is often "required" by other dynamics, cultural logics in contrast can be seen as either the motives and sustaining momentum for the cultural engineering, or the ethical and psychological justifications for resistances in the process. As the orchestrating principles, they are the mental factors that turn the seemingly passive cultural stocks into cultural resources to either reinforce the motivations for change or increase the mental resistance and constraints. A smooth social transition requires a far more delicate understanding of the inner cultural logics than just the institutional mobilisation of resources and relocation of pragmatic interests. Apart from such instrumental measures, it is important to specify on what grounds—logical, experiential, cultural or otherwise—the psychological discomfort or resistance of cultural engineering follows, so that adequate new knowledge or information can be introduced, or that necessary alteration of political attitudes, and reinterpretation of existing values or social customs could be

---

Nicolas of Cusa (1401-1464), Leibniz (1646-1716), and Wolff (1697-1754), the perfection of God was turned into an argument for searching new knowledge so that Man could strive towards Godly perfection. This turnaround in the use of religious argumentation made it a duty, not a heresy, to discover, experiment, and invent. Thus, the religious gestalt-switch was responsible for later economic growth in Europe. See Erik S. Reinert and Arno Mong Daastøl, "Exploring the Genesis of Economic Innovations: The Religious Gestalt-switch and the Duty to Invent as Preconditions for Economic Growth", *The European Journal of Law and Economics*, Vol. 4, No. 3/4, 1997, 233-283.

[57] Robert L. Heilbroner, op. cit. (1975), 26.

[58] Ibid., 361

sympathetically conducted to reduce the magnitude of the dissonance and tranquillise the reactive emotions.[59]

In order to reorient the meaning or recombine the existing cultural traits to adapt to a new social, political or economic condition, the elite need to: a) grasp the priority or hierarchy among different cultural stocks (i.e. comprehend the organising cultural logics), and ground on the existing cultural traditions rather than inventing them from without; b) realise the delicate intersubjectivity or two-way interactions between the humanistic logics and political-economic institutions in a specific cultural system as illustrated in Section 5.3.1 (i.e. how the humanistic motives—feelings, emotions, and cultural values, may orient or define the context of instrumental decision-making—the calculation of profits and interests; and how the political-economic institutions or the elite's instrumental measures may channel people's feelings, emotions, and definitions of the taken-for-granted logics); c) shift the course of cultural logics and collective mentality by resolving the contradiction between the old and new ethics, and conflict between the humanistic and instrumental rationalities; and d) facilitate the instrumental actions with the new institutionalised humanistic drives. Of the four processes, it should be emphasised particularly on course b), as without a clear understanding of the process b), it is not possible to pin point the exact cause for the failure or success of the processes c) and d). Yet, in the analyses of social transformation, far less has been explored regarding the reciprocal impacts between human feelings, cultural values, and political-economic institutions. Hence, the enquiry of process b) will be the key axis for Chapter 6, in its attempt to explicate the early Ming China's isolationist policy.

To us, only by generating a gestalt-switch, or a meta-psychological reform in the society can the elite transform cultural logics into sustaining motives for cultural engineering. Otherwise, all avoidance measures for cultural resistance merely repress temporarily the opposition of culture, which may occur through any possible chance in the future. Such alterations of collective mentality and cultural logics in the positive sense may well qualify as the factor, which Inkster labels as the cultural trait that is "measurably changing" in quality (see Section 5.1.1). It makes full sense that these

---

[59]   Leon, Festinger, op. cit. (1957), 279.

changing cultural logics may in their combination with the elitist engineering mechanisms become the catalytic forces of social transformation. So defined, cultural logics as a current of ideas and value orientations, or a package of the conscious, half-conscious and *yet-to-be-identified* humanistic elements of motivations, may in many cases extend the explanatory power of rationality. They may clarify many of the "unintended consequences" or "historical accidents", which cannot be contextualised by the imminent mobilisation of cultural resources alone.

Chapter 6 Around 1450:[1] The Chinese Withdrawal *before* European Expansion

Around the 1450s, most conventional historical accounts mark a divergence of the alleged "Chinese withdrawal" and great "European expansion". The implication for such a "withdrawal" or "expansion" is far from a territorial one. (In fact, and in opposition, as already pointed out in Section 4.1, the territory of Ming and Ching China was paramount comparing to its Han, Tang, Sung predecessors.) What stands behind the concepts of "expansion" and "withdrawal" is the argument that during the following one or two centuries (after 1520), Europe started to out-perform its Eastern counterpart in almost every aspect—the efficiency of the state bureaucracy and economic institutions, their ability to mobilise money, military and human resources, and the development of sciences and technologies. Vast amounts of literature have been produced to assert the spectacular rises of the European powers based on the Renaissance, Reformation and Scientific Revolution. Indeed, Europe eventually subordinated the old Kingdom of Heaven to a semi-colony around the mid-19th century (after the Opium War). Despite the still disputable "withdrawal" of China since the Ming times, it stands real, at least in comparative terms, that the two great forerunners of the world did diverge in their destinies. What this chapter intends to illustrate, however, is that the ebb and flow of power between Europe and China had much (if not more) to do with the embedded pro-humanistic (moral-ethical-commonsense oriented) Chinese cultural rationality which, when carried to its extreme, lead to the close door policy of the Ming *before* the phenomenal European expansion. And varying from the traditional explanations that focus on factors such as the Mongolian invasions, off-coast piracy, and shortness of financial resources, the chapter aims to show that China's isolationist policy (between 1380 and 1500) had little to do with its lack of efficient institutions, resources, technologies,

---

[1] The date 1450 is an arbitrary one, which stands shortly after the end of Cheng Ho's great expeditions in 1433, and decades prior to the Columbus discovery of the America in 1492. As for the period, which this chapter looks into, will be mainly between 1368 and 1520, that is, from the Ming's restoration to the first Portuguese embassy's arrival at Beijing 北京 under Tomé Pires.

and military power, but with some function of the emperors and civil officers' emphases on the principle of moral rule, as well as the inward-looking and non-aggressive cultural logic. By inward-looking, we do not mean that there was the illusive "Chinese ocean-phobia", or that the Ming Chinese felt no need for maritime activities such as fishing, foreign diplomacy, cultural exchanges, and overseas trade.[2] And as pointed out in Section 3.1.1 that the Tang, Sung and Yuan China had certainly welcomed foreign sea traders with open arms. Nevertheless, in comparison to the overseas expansion, foreign (trade and diplomatic) affairs and provocative military campaigns, securing the core China and focusing on internal affairs (trade, infrastructure and especially agriculture) had constantly been prioritised by the Ming rulers. While most people today might intuitively celebrate the European expansion and lament the Ming's close door policy, we nonetheless consider it more important to trace the logic and motives behind the expansion and withdrawal.

Adopting a "cultural (rationality) approach", this chapter attempts to look into the motives of decision-making behind the Ming state's political and economic institutions, particularly in areas of the coastal, security, fiscal, and foreign trade policies, as well as its attitude towards the diffusion of "useful knowledge". It intends to show not the "determinist nature" of cultural ideas, but that there are certainly intimate interactions between the cultural logics and Chinese political economy. By analysing the logics behind the Ming's course of actions, it puts China's cultural hierarchy into direct and constant test (i.e. what values would be prioritised over others), especially in cases that would involve explicit or implicit value and interest conflicts during the processes of decision-making. Putting it in another way, would the moral-ethic-commonsensical oriented Chinese cultural values still play an upper hand when they were in direct contradiction with the state's physical profits or the civil officers' careers? This is our locus of inquiry. In the respect of "withdrawal", one might also ask, were the emperors and the bureaucrats of the Heavenly Kingdom simply too arrogant, naïve and ignorant to recognise the advantage of maritime trade

---

[2] As Deng correctly points out, between 1430s and 1510s, there had been continuous debates on the legalisation of private foreign trade *vis-à-vis* government tax revenue. During this period, residents and officials in the coastal regions repeatedly urged the Ming Court to reconsider its ban over the sea, yet, such attempts had not been successful. The failure only led some sympathetic coastal officials to tolerate the local smugglers. See Gang Deng, *Maritime Sector, Institutions, and Sea Power of Premodern China,* Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1999 (a), 137, 155.

and tariff, and had not the slightest idea about the local fishermen's interest or suffering? Or were there other factors that had been so forceful yet imperceptible (as the function of *diffused power* described in Section 2.3.1), which eventually outweighed all other considerations and maintained Tai-Tsu's initial decision of an isolated kingdom for two hundred years? Can one also find the intersubjectivity between the instrumental and humanistic rationalities (as illustrated in *Chart V-2*), reinforcing or mitigating each other within the formulating process of the Ming's inward-looking policy? Extracting these sub-sets of logics behind the practices of the Ming, it then becomes possible for one to aggregate them into a distinctive set of cultural rationality,[3] and sketch the integral logic, or the so-called "invisible hand of culture",[4] behind the Chinese political economy.

6. 1   *Ho Shut the Door: The Ruling Logic behind China's Closing Door*

As the Portuguese yelled "Eastward Ho"[5] after Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope, a century before, the Ming emperor on the contrary commanded on seal of the maritime door. As early as 1372, Tai-Tsu had already ordered the closure of the coast. On January 13, the government re-registered a total of 112,730 soldiers and landless people, who use to be assigned as the "shipping household 船戶" under the rule of Fang Kuo-Chien 方國珍 (a warlord defeated by Hong-Wu 洪武), and dispatched them to different *wei* 衛 (guarding station) of the Ming. Tai-Tsu "still prohibit residents at the coastal areas to sail to the sea in private," so documented the *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu.*[6] No further accounts were given concerning such restrictions. Ten years later (1381), prohibitions on the sea were reiterated: as the *Records* put it,

---

[3] For Braudel and Chaudhuri's "set and sets theory" see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2, 2.4.1, and footnote 22.

[4] Wei E 魏萼, *The Wealth of Nations: A Chinese Version. The New Wealth of Nations with Chinese Characteristics* 中國國富論：一個富有中國特色的新國富論, Taipei, 時報, 2000(a), 45. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[5] David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London, Abacus, 1998, 79.

[6] This is the earliest record in Ming history, which mentioned the closure of the Ming coast. As it wrote, "still" prohibit, it is clear that such a policy must have be made before 1371 (probably between 1369 and 1370). Since there is no direct historical record ordering this restriction, the exact dating remains disputable. *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 70, in Tung Lun 董倫 and Hsieh Chin 解縉 et al eds., *Veritable Records of the Ming* 明實錄. (Taipei, 中央研究院歷史語言研究所, 1984 Reprints.)

"Residents at the coastal areas are forbidden to communicate with other states in private over the sea."[7] Foreign trades were certainly included. On the 15th of February 1384, the Ming's close door policy was carried into its extreme, when Tai-Tsu commanded Tang Ho 湯和 to inspect the coastal cities in Che-chiang 浙江 and Fu-chien 福建 provinces. Despite the acknowledgement that the local residents' livings were clearly put under suffers, a new order was given, "In order to prevent the pirates, people are banned from fishing in the sea."[8] Although restrictions on fishing and tributary trade at the trade ports were lifted at a later stage (see Section 6.2), private communications and commercial activities in foreign states were "officially prohibited" throughout the Ming Period (1368-1644).[9]

It seems obvious, according to the above-cited records, that piracy on the sea did influence the Ming's decision on the closure of its coastline. In addition to these accounts, during the period of 1369-1374 there were at least thirty-two major incidents of sea robberies and military contacts between the pirates and the Ming coastal guards that were documented in the *Records of Tai-Tsu*. Evidence showed that pirates from Japan, Korea, and the remaining forces of Fang did cause great disturbances at the southeast coastal areas, and brought about the close door policy of the Ming.[10] The question, however, is can such disruptions explain the overall "withdrawal" of China for the following two hundred and fifty years under the rule of

---

[7] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 139.

[8] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 159.

[9] It is recognised that the effectiveness of Ming China's bans over the sea has often been questioned. As Deng argues, under the Ming's ban on the maritime activities, private and even official involvements of maritime trade simply continued in the form of smuggling operations, while the reiteration of restriction itself also suggests that the enforcement of maritime ban was by no means absolute. However, it should also be noted that serious pirate threat and rampant sea smuggling activities only existed in the early and after the mid-Ming periods, and that between 1380 and 1450, or even 1500 (i.e. a significant eighty- to one-hundred-year period before the European expansion), only very few cases of pirate raids, or private and official smuggling operations had been recorded (see Section 6.3). Therefore, although private maritime sectors had not been entirely destroyed between 1380 and 1500, maritime trades as well as the development of private shipbuilding technology had to be operated under substantial official-legal constraints, and the scale of such smuggling operations remain significantly small. It is not an overstatement that overseas trade during this period was a life-risking business. Even though the time span of maritime control, as argued in Section 4.1, represents only a small fraction of Chinese history in a long-term, it nonetheless occurred at the critical juncture before the European expansion. See Gang Deng, *Chinese Maritime Activities and Socioeconomic Development, c. 2100 BC-1900 AD*, Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1997, 88-90; and Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (a)), 137.

[10] See Ying Chang-Yi 尹章義, "Tang Ho and the South East Coastal Defense in the Early Ming Period 湯和與明初東南海防", in Wu Chih-Ho 吳智和 ed., *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History 明史研究論叢*, Taipei, 1984, Vol. II, 145-221.

the Ming, one of the most powerful regimes in Chinese history? Was the Ming navy and military force never powerful enough to cope with the off-coast piracy? If this were the case, the close door policy of China would be simply an instrumental decision of the politicians to retreat from the pirate-occupied ocean. To pin down the causalities for such a rigid yet enduring policy, it is necessary that we explore further behind China's shutting door. This section will attempt to sketch first the basic ruling principles, or reflections of what we called "cultural logic", of China around 1450.

It has been repeatedly emphasised in previous chapters that morality and virtue was closely associated with the legitimacy of state rule in China. The Confucian ideological commitments assigned a high priority to the rulers to maintain popular welfare. As Wong argues, "There is no early modern European government equivalent to the late imperial Chinese state's efforts at dictating moral and intellectual orthodoxy, nor were such efforts particularly important to Europe's state-making agenda, as they were in China." The Chinese efforts to reach the minds of the commons and peasants contrast strongly with that of the Europeans (who left such matters to the religious authorities),[11] and the Ming state is no exception. Examination of the emperors' edicts and communications of the civil officers provide us with a more realistic view about how the moral and ethical way of thinking had spilled over into the decision-making process of Chinese institutions in about 1450.

Shortly before the Ming army was marching northward to claim the throne in 1367, Tai-Tsu promulgated a manifesto (drafted by Sung Lien 宋濂), which summoned the people and warlords at the middle Yangtze River area to rise and fight with him. It is informative to extract the logic behind the manifesto.[12]

> Ever since the kings and emperors came to rule the world under the Heaven, China had always been at the centre ruling the barbarians, and the barbarians at the periphery serving China. I have never heard the barbarians ruled the world... The Yuan regime was originally a northern barbarian group, who entered China as rulers, yet, all peoples within the four seas soon submitted.

---

[11] R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997, 97.
[12] Sung Lien 宋濂, "Manifesto to People in the Central Field 諭中原檄", in Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed., *The Royal Ming Edicts and Decrees 皇明詔令*, Vol. I, Vol. I., d. 1522-1566. (Taipei, 文海, 1984 Reprints).

Is this the force of men? No, it is the will of the heaven. Only literati with lofty ideals would still lament the reversing order. Nevertheless, the later rulers and officials [of Yuan] disobeyed the instruction of the ancestors. They neglected the enduring principles of all virtues; they abolished the senior prince and crowned the junior; their officials killed the emperor as the state was just about to stabilise; their young brothers murdered the older, took over their wives, and even received the concubines of their father... the norms between the father and son, the emperor and his subjects, the husband and wife, and the senior and junior were put into extreme chaos. One should know that the emperor, as the lord of the court, is the root and model for the world beneath the Heaven, while courtesy and righteousness is his basic means of rule. How can behaviours like these serve as the models to discipline the later generations? [My Translation]

The extract addresses the Ming's ground of "restoration" clearly enough, as it listed all the misconducts of the Yuan tyrants against the already taken-for-granted *moral* tradition, i.e. the indecent behaviours between the father and son, the husband and wife, and the emperor and his subjects etc. The Mongolians' disregard of these commonsensical human ethical orders "disqualified" them from being the rulers of the Culture Kingdom. Putting it in another way, had the Yuan rulers abided by the code of virtue, there would have been left no justifiable moral grounds for Chu to revolt against them. (And in fact, this was very much the case of the early Ching Dynasty when a bunch of the Han Chinese central civil officials and local scholars did accept the legitimacy of the Manchu rulers.)

More evidence concerning this pervasive moral-ethical-commonsensical based logic can easily be drawn from the memorials of the bureaucrats. For instance, we have argued in Section 3.2.2 that due to the integral view of nature and culture, the Chinese state's authority was deemed to rest upon a mandate conferred by Heaven. Hence, the officials often took natural disasters such as floods, famines, and the like as evidence of misrule. As collected in the *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔, Shang Lu 商輅 (1414-1486), a central civil official of the Ming, advised the emperor "To Develop Virtuous Policies and Pacify the Abnormal Catastrophe"; another official Yang Yen 楊言 suggested that the emperor should "Rectify his Own Misdeeds so as to Appease the Natural Disasters"; Ho Chi-Ming 何起鳴 on the other hand titled his memorial as "An Urge to Self-cultivation for Turning the Will of the Heaven"; and Chin Wu 秦武 encouraged His Majesty to "Invigorate the Sacred Aspirations in order

to Respond to the Natural Calamity".[13] One needs not look into the content, but the titles of the letters, to grasp their ethical arguments. Whether it was scientific and profitable to the state or not by making such connections between the emperor's misdeeds and natural disasters, was obviously not the central concern for the bureaucrats. Virtuous rule was so taken for granted, or commonsensical, not only for the bureaucrats and the emperor, but also for the commons and peasants. (In fact, Chun himself was a farmer originally before he revolted against the Yuan.) Any defiance of the ethical code shall directly threaten the legitimacy and authenticity of political rule. In other words, the "ideology of rule was moral, and this necessarily carried commitments to shape the peasant's mental world and sustain his material well-being."[14] Such an overpowering cultural logic left the emperor and bureaucrats little choice but to conform to it, or they should soon expect riots to be justified, and new rebellious manifesto to be promulgated.

Chart VI-1: Classification on Letters from Chinese Civil Officers to the Emperor in the Ming Times (c. 1367-1572)

Classifications	Number	Number of Letters		Percentage	
1. Virtue Rule	1.1 Sacred Teachings, Rites and Ancestral Instruction	265	224	29.5 %	24.9 %
	1.2 Reclining Luxuries, Pleasures and Tributes		41		4.6 %
2. Judiciary, Honouring the Decency and Impeaching the Misconducts		192		21.4 %	
3. Civil Service and Current Affairs		104		11.5 %	
4. Finance, Taxation and Labour Recruitment		76		8.5 %	
5. Infrastructure, Welfare and Social Orders		64		7.1 %	
6. Military and Security		133		14.8 %	
7. Feudal Awards and Palace Affairs		65		7.2 %	
Total		899		100 %	

Source: Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed., op. cit. (d. 1584); Chia San-Ching 賈三近 ed., *Transcripts on the Royal Ming Memoranda in Chia-Ching and Long-Ching Reigns (1522-1572)* 皇明兩朝疏鈔, Chang Han 張瀚 ed., *Selective Compilations of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏議輯略, d. 1551. [15]

---

[13]   See Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)
[14]   R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 93.
[15]   The duplicated titles in the three edited transcriptions have been excluded. The classifications used above are the total of the titles categorised under the original sub-heading of the following: 1.1 Sacred Teachings, Rites and Ancestral Instruction: The Ruling Principles of an Emperor 君道, Sacred

A statistical breakdown of three major compilations of the 899 Ming official memorials provide the historical mapping concerning what political-cultural atmosphere the Chinese politicians were operating under around the year 1450.[16] In *Chart VI-1*, among all the official correspondences to the throne between 1367 and 1572, there were nearly 30% of them addressing issues specifically about the tradition of virtuous rule. Most of the letters were reminders for the emperor to obey the sacred teachings, rituals, or ancestral instructions, and to reject unnecessary luxuries, pleasures, as well as tributes from abroad. The second largest category regards the judiciary, honour and impeachment of bureaucrats, which accounts for another 21.8% of the communications. Since the contents of the letters were circulating mainly on issues of promoting the integral conducts and suppressing the disloyal or indecent behaviours of the bureaucrats, memoranda under this heading can be taken as the reciprocal moral and ethical restraints among the civil officials. Surprisingly, the

---

Teachings 聖學, Following the Ancestral Instructions 法祖, Self-cultivation 脩省, Ritual Ceremonies 禮儀, Courtesies to the Subjects 禮臣; 1.2 Reclining Luxuries, Pleasures and Tributes: Heresy and Religious Preferences 好尚, Inspection Tours 巡幸, Pleasures 玩賞, Tributary Gifts 貢獻, Extra Labours and Exploitations 差遣; 2. Judiciary, Honouring the Decency and Impeaching the Misconducts: Correcting the Infringement 弼違, Assisting the Integral 援直, Jail and Criminal 刑獄, Discipline 風紀, Honouring the Loyal and Merits 表忠(旌功), Treacherous Officials and Powers 權姦, Impeachment 糾劾; 3. Civil Service and Current Affairs: Orders 命令, State Affairs 國是, Current Policies 時政, Responding Strategy 召對, Employment 用人, Accepting Advises 納諫, Selecting the Able 銓選, Assessment 考課, Civil Service System 制科; 4. Finance and Taxation: Financial Expense 財用, Taxation 征榷, Labours 賦役, Horse Trading Policy 馬政, Land Cultivation 屯田; 5. Infrastructure, Welfare and Social Orders: Rivers and Canals 河渠, Water Transportations 漕運, Topography 輿圖, Famine and Relief 荒政, Astronomy and Calendar 曆律, Schools 學校, Customs 風俗, Pacifying Bandits 彌盜, Constructions 營繕; 6. Military and Security: Military Preparation 武備, Frontier Defence 邊防, Punitive Expedition 征討, River Defence 江防, Pacifying and Administering the Foreigners 撫治; 7. Feudal Awards and Palace Affairs: Crown Prince 儲貳, Queens and Concubines 宮閫, Suzerain and Vassals 宗藩, Awarding Noble Titles 賞爵, Collateral Relatives of the Emperor 外戚, Eunuch 近幸. See Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed., op. cit. (d. 1584); San-Ching Chia 賈三近 et al eds., *Transcripts on the Royal Ming Memoranda in the Reigns of Chia-Ching and Long-Ching (1522-1572)* 皇明兩朝疏鈔, d. 1586. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 465. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints); Chang Han 張瀚 ed., *Selective Compilations of the Royal Ming Memorials* 皇明疏議輯略, d. 1551. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

[16] Although the percentages presented here are derived from a calculation of the compiled letters selected by the Ming editors rather than of their absolute numbers, it is reasonable to project such ratios to the actual proportion of correspondences circulating among the state bureaucracy during the Ming period (since the ratios of letters under similar subheadings generally conform one another among all three compiled versions). At the very least, the figure certainly stands for the authentic view of how the Ming civil officers or literati (here the editors) visualise the weight or balance among various public affairs, to which they thought the rulers should dedicate their efforts accordingly.

proportion of these two categories alone outweighed all other "pragmatic" issues, and occupied over one half of all the memorials. Beyond these two headings, there are only 11.1 % of the correspondences addressing directly the issues of major current affairs and state policies; some 8.5 % of the letters tackle problems of the state finance and taxation; another 7.1 % deal with issues of the infrastructure, custom and social order; and 14.8 % discuss the military and security matters. Not only are the ratios of the "non-virtuous-centred" memorials low, as to be illustrated in Section 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4, even in communications regarding finance, taxation, and security issues this overpowering pro-humanistic cultural logic still overshadows the context. (And comparing to *Chart IV-6*, these figures correspond very much to the Ching government's effort in rewarding the local administration.) The focus of official letters reflects very much the virtuous ruling principle of the Ming.

6.2   *Cultural Logics through Foreign, Security and Coastal Policy*

By positing oneself amid the internal setting of China's ruling culture, it is then possible to realise the Ming rulers' logics in decision-making over the state's foreign security and coastal policies. As to be shown below, the cultural logic of the Ming is indeed a necessary explication for the formation of its close door, non-expansive, and non-exploitative foreign policy. Such a pro-humanistic cultural rationality, which serves as one of the proximate causes of the policy shaping, is in this case reinforcing if not guiding the instrumental rationality (*Chart V-2*, bloc A3 and A1). Differing from the European states of the 15th century, which seemed to regard people outside the European territory inapplicable to the internal ruling principles (see Section 6.3), the Ming's foreign policy was clearly an extension of its moral governance. (At least it was expressed as a diplomatic formality.) Following the code of virtuous rule, overseas colonialism and material exploitation of the remote barbaric states was something almost unimaginable to the Chinese rulers. Even over-labouring its own people was taken as morally inadequate, let alone exploiting the subject peoples beyond its political jurisdiction. For evidence of the overpowering ethical imperative, again we need to move into the stream of history.

October 30, 1371, Tai-Tsu 太祖 convened Ministers of the central government and

Magistrates from the provinces at the Feng-tien Gate 奉天門, where basic instructions on national defence and foreign policy were given by the Emperor,[17]

> For the barbarian states beyond the seas, they must be chastised if they do menace China, but you must not think of taking arms against those which do not threaten China. There is an old saying that the expansion of territory does not endure peace, and over labouring the people is the cause to disorder. The Sui Emperor Yang invaded Liu-chiu 琉球 at his own will. For vainglories he endangered the lives of people and exhausted China... His deeds were recorded in history and were mocked by later generations. Thus, it is my will that we shall never invade those little barbarian states at the periphery of the world beyond the mountain and across the sea, if they do not menace China. Only the Hu 胡 and Jung 戎 at the north and west have been a danger to China for generations that we have no alternative but to be alert and on guard against them. You ministers must bear these in mind and understand my intention. [My Translation]

Tai-Tsu's command of 1371 was promulgated again in 1395 in its final form of *The Royal Ming Ancestral Instructions* 皇明祖訓, within which he gave further accounts of this non-expansive and non-aggressive policy. He even made it "constitutional" through his preface that "not a single word should be altered". Enlarging from the explanations about the remoteness and barrenness of the barbarian states, Chun added,[18]

> It is my concern that descendants in later generations might rely on the wealth and power of China and launch military actions simply for the sake of conquest. Or they might turn greedy in seeking military glory and bring casualties to people without due causes. Therefore, do bear in mind that you must not do so. [My Translation]

Tai-Tsu then listed fifteen states, which China would never invade. These include Korea, Japan, Greater and Lesser Liu-chiu, An-nan, Cambodia, Siam, Champa, Sumatra, Hsi-yang, Java, Pahang, Pai-hua, Sir Vijaya and Brunei.

Analysing Tai-Tsu's *Instruction*, one shortly finds that three thematic logics

---

[17] Chen Jen-Hsi 陳仁錫 ed., "The Instruction of Emperor Tai-Tsu—Succumbing the Barbarians 太祖高皇帝寶訓—馭夷狄", *Collections on the Royal Ming Records concerning State Affairs 皇明世法錄*, d. 1630. Vol. 6, 164. (Taipei, 學生書局, 1965 Reprints.)
[18] See Chun Yuan-Chang 朱元璋, "The Royal Ming Ancestral Instructions 皇明祖訓" in *Literature on the Foundation of Ming Dynasty 明朝開國文獻*, d 1368-1398. (Taipei, 學生書局, 1966 Reprints.)

dominated his argument. As a matter of fact, these rationales were so pervasive that they were repeatedly cited in the writings of later Ming officials and historians. The first theme is the extension of the virtuous rule, which led to the non-aggressive attitude of the Ming's foreign policy—Thou shall not invade those who do not threaten China but to attract and transform them. It is not surprising that this complies with the strategic view of Confucius toward foreigners two thousand years before (as pointed out in Section 3.1.2), that is, to attract foreigners by virtue and civility rather than conquer them by military power. We may see that China's experience with the barbarians, frequently unsophisticated nomads, did breed its feelings of cultural superiority. The Ming Chinese felt their language, customs, and espousal of Confucian ethics assured them the position of the Middle Kingdom in the world. Scholar-officials often considered the foreigners as peoples admiring the marvels of Chinese civilisation. Therefore, by being virtuous, compassionate, and generous, "the Emperor would encourage the barbarians to acknowledge their inferiority, to submit to the Chinese state, and to embrace Chinese rituals. In Chinese terminology, the barbarian would then 'come and be transformed'".[19] Again, conforming to *The Book of Changes*' explication of the meaning of "culture" (see Section 1.2.1), such a cultural logic was certainly espoused by Liu Chiu 劉球, a Great Scholar 大學士 of the Ming Court. In his correspondence to the emperor Ying-Tsung 英宗 in 1441, Liu argued that, "The feudalist Chou 周 state once attempted to conquer the state Chung 崇. Without a success, the Chou instead learnt that it should cultivate itself with virtues and moral teachings and wait for the Chung's voluntary submission."[20] Another example can be drawn from Yao Kuei 姚夔(1414-1473), the Minister of Rites and Personnel 禮部及吏部尚書 in 1462. Dealing with the problem of Ha-mi's 哈密 (Chinese Turkestan, at that time Ming's vassal state) inheriting heir, Yao suggested to the Emperor,[21]

---

[19] Morris Rossabi, *Ming China's Relations with Ha-mi and Central Asia, 1404-1513: A Reexamination of Traditional Chinese Foreign Policy*, Ph D in Columbia University, University Microfilms, 1973 (Ph D Thesis submitted in 1970), 20-22. (Shelf mark in the British Library: 15595.c.30.)

[20] The letter was selected later by the Ching emperor Chien-Lung in 1828 in his compiled Ming official letters. Liu Chiu 劉球, "Memorial Regarding Affairs of the Frontier Defense 邊防事宜疏", in Ching Emperor Koa-Tsung 清高宗 ed., *The Royal Selected Letters of Ming Officials 御選明臣奏議*. d. 1828. Vol. 2. (Collected in the *Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries of Wen-Yuan-Ke 文淵閣四庫全書*. Vol. 445. Taipei, 臺灣商務, 1983-1986 Reprints.)

[21] Yao Kuei 姚夔, "Letter on the Issue of Foreign Situations 夷情疏", in Chen Chih-Lung 陳子龍 et al

> Assisting the weak and protecting the small is the utmost benevolence of the king, whilst reviving the collapsed state and supporting the extinct countries shall reveal the righteousness of the Court... By not answering their request, not only shall we leave a worry at our frontier, but we shall also lose the Court's courteousness to show our sentiment of compassion and tenderness. [My Translation]

Again parallel to the security reason, the other key consideration of whether to intervene in the internal politics of its vassal state or not was the "righteousness" and "courteousness" of the Court. Tending foreigners with "compassion and tenderness 懷柔" so as to win over their heart; and treating foreign states with righteousness and conciliation so as to gain their voluntary submission is exactly the way how Ming China imagined it should conduct its soft control externally. The idealistic attempt was reflected even in matters that were so trivial, yet so deliberately carried out by the Ming state. For instance the Ming Minister of Personnel Ma Wen-Sheng 馬文升 (1426-1510) advised the emperor to give order to officials in the Kuang-lu-shih 光祿寺 (the department that was responsible for imperial food) that they should provide better meals and wine to the foreign embassies, and they should heat the dishes up before the envoys arrived so as to show the Court's courtesy. Ma also urged the emperor to adopt a soft foreign approach and make peace with all foreigners. His words summed up Ming China's attitude toward foreign embassies,[22]

> As I understand, foreigners from all directions come to pay their tribute in order to express their sincerity and admiration of our culture. And the Court treats people from afar generously so as to reveals its gentleness and kind reception. This is what the earlier dynasty did, and this is also the convention of our dynasty. [My Translation]

The second thematic logic (as described in Section 4.2.2) is the inward-looking attitude of Chinese bureaucrats towards the security issue (also see Section 6.3). Securing the core China is certainly the priority among all strategic considerations. For instance, Li Hsiang 李賢, the Deputy Minister of Personnel 吏部侍郎 in 1456,

---

eds. *Collected Royal Ming Documents on Statecraft 皇明經世文編.* d. 1628-1644, Vol. 56. (Taipei, 臺聯國風, 1968 Reprints.)

[22] Ma Wen-Sheng 馬文升, "Letter Urging a Soft Approach for the Appeasement of All Foreigners 敦懷柔以安四夷疏", in Chen Chih-Lung 陳子龍, op. cit. (d. 1628-1644), Vol. 62.

advised the emperor to disperse those surrendered high-ranking foreign officers from the capital to secure the state. Here is one of the reasons he gave,[23]

> I heard that the right way of ruling for the emperor should start from his own subjects and common people, and then to the birds, animals and foreign barbarians... Although a holy man should treat everyone with benevolence, in practice, his goodwill must first reach those intimate ones and than to the less intimate ones. I have never heard that the holy man give favour to the birds and animals first before his own subjects have not even got a place to stay. [My Translation]

Li's rationale is precisely the inward-looking logic, which prioritises the Chinese subjects over the "foreigners". This sounds seemingly contradictory to the first theme that the Middle Kingdom should try to benefit the "foreigners" and win over their hearts. Nonetheless, if one notes that here Li's targets are those "surrendered high-ranking foreign officers", who had been given full salaries by the state but whose loyalty were still ambivalent, then the contradiction becomes less strong. As Li argued later in his letter,[24]

> These foreign barbarians have human faces but hearts of the beast kind; they are greedy and care only about interest. They do not surrender sincerely because they admire our culture; as a matter of fact, they sometimes submit and at times they betray. The foreigners are here because they admire the profit that China can offer. [My Translation]

Although it has to be admitted that the Sinocentric worldview of the literati had been so strong that it cannot but serve as one of the influential factors for the Ming's security policy, one must not assume that ethnocentrism was in any way decisive in the process of decision-making. After all, Li's argument represents only one part of the whole picture. In contrast to the position of Li, there was an official like Chiu Chun 邱濬 (1420-1495), the Minister of Defence between 1488 and 1505, who pointed out the limit of this barbarian-Chinese distinction. In his communication to the emperor, Chiu argued that although he acknowledged the differences between the natures of Chinese and the barbarian, yet after the Ming restoration, many of the Mongolians "had been transformed and forgot their uncivilised nature to the extent

---

[23] Li Hsiang 李賢, "Letter on the Dispersion of the Foreigners 論散處夷人疏", in Sun Hsun 孫旬, op. cit. (d. 1584), Vol. 54.
[24] Ibid.

that one can no longer distinguish their origin easily." Chiu therefore suggested to the emperor to recognise the limit of suppressing foreign officers, and that the emperor should instead promote their ranks and salaries to win over their hearts.[25] What can be drawn from these strategic debates is that although there did exist counter rationales to the principle of idealistic rule, and there was the element of selfishness behind China's inward-looking cultural logic, yet, in order to appeal to their colleagues and subject peoples, either side of the politicians would have to negotiate under the overpowering pro-humanistic cultural framework. For such a framework, which was characteristic of its moral-ethical-commonsensical oriented cultural logics, formulated the basis of political dialogues in most cases. To put it in another way, not only the politicians often felt the need to justify their moral grounds for adopting a pragmatic or utilitarian approach, or at least to interpret their pragmatism in a morally and ethically compatible terms to win over the heart of the people, but quite "naturally" they would select a pro-humanistic explanation for their own political actions and decisions. By not doing so, the politicians would expect to lose not only their political credibility, but also personal integrity. This is the way that culture influences the practice of the Ming's policymaking: by saturating into the policymakers' mode of thinking and situating them into a culturally defined political context that a policy is set into debates. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* again (in Section 2.3.4), when an objective event demands a stimulative response, culture integrates with past experiences, will function at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, which from time to time conditions the actions of decision-making.

In addition, and in substance, it is also necessary to understand how the Ming officials distinguish "foreigners" from "Chinese". Already the 1367 manifesto drafted by Sung Lien had revealed the criterion expressively,[26]

> As for the Mongolians and the coloured-eye race people 色目人 [from Central Asia and Europe], although they are not of the same ethnic origin like the Hua-hsia 華夏 kind, like us, they are born and live amid the same heaven and earth. If they can learn the courtesy and righteousness, and

---

[25] Chiu Chun 邱濬, "The Limits of Keeping the Chinese Inside and Foreigners Outside—One 內夏外夷之限一", in Huang Shing 黃訓, *Collected Royal Ming Records of Famous Officials on Statecraft 皇明名臣經濟錄*. d. 1522-1566. Vol. 16. (Taipei, 學海, 1984 Reprints.)

[26] Sung Lien 宋濂, op. cit. (d. 1522-1566).

are willing to be the emperor's people and subjects, then they will be raised and treated in exactly the same way that the Chinese are brought up. [My Translation]

In other words, for the Chinese literati what distinguishes the Hua-Hsia people from foreigners is the sense of morality and ethics, an essential part of the Chinese culture. Even those of the Hua-Hsia ethnic origin, who do not abide by this virtuous order, will be deemed as animals or beasts. This is exactly what was expressed in the essay of *The Chinese Heart* by the Sung writer Chen An 陳黯(quoted in Section 3.3.2), "Some people are born in the centre they are Chinese in appearance but barbarians at heart. Some people are born in barbarian lands but their actions are in harmony with rites and righteousness. In that case they are barbarians in appearance but Chinese at heart."[27] The Ming ethnologist and historian Cheng Hsiao 鄭曉 also specified the criterion in his *Empirical Research on Foreigners*, "What is supporting and nurturing the world is the heavenly ordained virtue, and what is distinguishing the Chinese from the foreign barbarian is the way of the benevolent rule."[28] Such a definition brings us right back to what is termed in Chapter 1 the "cultural-centric" worldview of China, which although it cannot escape from the exceptional sense of self-identity, does get away from the primordial constraint of "race" and "blood". Only this superior feeling of cultural achievement, and the fear of losing the well-established order also lead to the inward-looking attitude in the security policy. As far as the central officials felt the state powerful and wealthy enough to maintain self-sufficiency, the bureaucrats tended to adopt a least intervention policy in order to reduce any possible disturbances of people (also see Section 6.4). Such logics thus account for Tai-Tsu's *Instruction* about not to overlabour people for "vainglories", and not to "rely on the wealth and power of China and launch military actions" simply for the sake of conquest. Similarly, in 1421 when Yung-Lo emperor decided to lead a military campaign against the Mongolian, he immediately faced enormous opposition from the central officials. The Minister of Treasury Hsia Yuan-Chi 夏原吉, Minister of Rites Lu Cheng 呂震, Minister of Defence Fang Pin 方賓, and Minister of Artisan Wu Chong 吳中 all

---

[27] Also see the last paragraph of Section 1.2.1, the distinction between the Hsia people and barbarians by the Tang officer Han Yu 韓愈.

[28] Cheng Hsiao 鄭曉, *Royal Ming Empirical Research on All Foreigners* 皇明四夷考, d. 1564. Preface. (Taipei, 華文 1969 Reprints.)

disagreed. Risking his life and career, Hsia argued with the emperor,[29]

> The year before, the military campaign was launched without substantial success, and the military horses and grain storages were lost eight out of the ten. Now disasters are occurring repeatedly and people all feel tired... Please just send some other generals for the campaign and do not over-mobilise the array of vehicles. [My Translation]

To send some other generals instead was certainly a polite opposition against the campaign. Despite his politeness, Hsia still offended the emperor. And as a result, he was jailed and Fang committed suicide. Unfortunately, the emperor's campaign found no enemies and the army used up all its provisions. Before Yung-Lo died half way through the returning journey, he said sadly as an aside to his officers, "Hsia Yuan-Chi loves me." Hsia was released later by the succeeding emperor, who commanded to hold up the expeditions of Cheng Ho, reduce the taxation and labour service, and offer relief for famines at Hsia's suggestion. The inward-looking logic again prevailed.[30]

The third thematic logic, developing from the second logical strand (of securing the core China and the uncivilised nature of the barbarians), is the officials' distrust of the foreigners, and therefore the constant need to keep alert and guarding against them. Chinese politicians were by no means "naïve". Taking Tai-Tsu's *Instruction* as an example, of the fifteen listed states that he claimed he would never invade, the emperor however added a footnote below Japan that, "Although this state does pay the tribute, it is treacherous at heart." Chun wrote so because the Japanese once conspired with the Ming prime minister Hu Wei-Yung 胡惟庸 to revolt against him. As the *Records* also testified, Chun announced in 1371, "I prohibited the communication over the sea because it links to foreign countries"; and in 1394 that "Foreign states overseas are deceitful and cunning, therefore I forbid the

---

[29]   Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al eds. *History of the Ming 明史*. Vol 149, No. 37. (Taipei, 中華書局, 1981 Reprints.)
[30]   These policies show the ideal picture of rule in the mind of Hsia. The case that the Ming officers dissented with the emperor's decision can be seen as motivated by mixed instrumental and humanistic logics (*Chart V-2*, Bloc 3A), that is between the calculation of physical resources and the moral principle of not overlabouring the people. What reveal here are also individual cases of the civil officers' private decision-makings, of which the humanistic rationality outweighs the instrumental rationality. The ministers adhered to certain cultural values (loyalty, virtuous rule, or inward-looking logic) even knowing that in so doing it would certainly damage their personal interests and careers, and even endanger their lives.

communication."[31] Analysing Tai-Tsu's *Instruction*, Lo correctly points out that the "caution against indulging in military adventurism and the exhortation to be always on guard against intrusions from the north" were repeatedly emphasised by the emperor.[32] This clearly paralleled Chu's sense of pragmatism with the idealistic teaching.

Like the founding emperor, in most writings of the foreign-security tactic, threats from the north and the west (i.e. the land) were always regarded as far greater than the south and east (i.e. the sea). In his strategic letter to the emperor in 1485, the Minister of Defence Ma Wen-Sheng 馬文升 wrote, "The Hu barbarian had been a threat to China, and not even one dynasty can be exempted from it."[33] In Wei Huan's 魏煥's *The Royal Ming Empirical Research of the Nine Boundaries* 皇明九邊考 of 1542, it stated at the very first paragraph that, "Of all foreigners from the four directions today, the North barbarian is the most urgent one."[34] It was only in the late 16th century and the early 17th century that enemies from the sea began to be taken seriously, yet they were still ranked behind the north tribes. As the *Treatise on Military Preparations* 武備志 rated the dangers the foreigners posed to China in 1617, at the top of the list were the northern barbarians, which then followed the Japanese, the Hsi-fan 西藩, the tribes of Ha-mi, the peoples from the sea (i.e. the Portuguese etc), An-nan, and finally Korea.[35] Therefore, it can be said that this instrumental logic for guarding the land attack from the north and west had to a certain extent transformed into a humanistic logic for Chinese officials, which from time to time shifted their focus inwards to the

---

[31]   *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 70, 231.

[32]   Jung-Pang Lo, "Policy Formulation and Decision-Making on Issues Respecting Peace and War", in Charles O. Hucker ed., *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1969, 41-72, quoted page 52-53.

[33]   Ma Wen-Sheng 馬文升, "Letter of the Strategy to Defend against the Barbarians 禦虜方略疏", in Sun Hsun 孫旬 op. cit. (d. 1584), Vol. 55.

[34]   Wei Huan 魏煥, *The Royal Ming Empirical Research of the Nine Boundaries* 皇明九邊考, d. 1542, Vol. I. (Taipei, 華文 1969 Reprints.)

[35]   However, we disagree with Lo that Tai-Tsu's proclamation to the fifteen states had simply been "intended to win their good will so that China would be safe from the seaward side and Tai-Tsu could concentrate his attention on defence of the north-western frontier"; or that the Ming state under Chun's rule was simply not powerful or rich enough to take military actions against the countries he listed. For a) what was written in the *Instruction* is a guideline for later rulers, which Chun obviously prohibited any ideas of expansion even when the later Ming governments were to become more wealthy and powerful; and b) it wouldn't make sense to include Korea and Japan in the list, because at that time they were two of the main sources from where Ming's coastal piracy came. Jung-Pang Lo, op. cit. (1969), quoted page 53-55.

land rather than to the sea (*Chart V-2*, Bloc A2).

To sum up, we agree with Wu that the coastal policy of the Ming should be considered under the context and as an integral part of its foreign and security policy. According to the Law of the Great Ming 大明律, "People who exit the gateway of the frontier without a 'land passport 路引'" will receive a corporal punishment of a hundred laps by a thick stick, and be jailed in prison for three years." The sea, as part of the state's frontiers, of course comes under the same law.[36] Under the Ming's coastal policy (or in fact the general security policy), all ships, of all purposes, were only permitted to go to the sea if they obtained the "official ticket or document 號票文引". And all foreign ships were allowed to board and come to China, only if they could show the tribute permissions or memorials (called "*keng-ho* 勘合"[37]) issued and renewed by every Ming emperors. So were the tributary groups from the land. In other words, throughout the rule of the Ming, the communications between China and foreign states, be it diplomatic or commercial, were strictly controlled by the Ming state via the implementing of the tributary system. And such a tributary trade was maintained exclusively official until 1567, when the Ming government eventually opened three trade ports to private Chinese (still not foreign) civilian participation. After centuries of "barbarian invasions", the Ming state wished to minimise the threat from foreigners, and the tribute system suited perfectly to such an isolationist policy. By carefully limiting the entrance of foreigners and foreign embassies, the Chinese government hoped to reduce the possibility of friction. China under the Ming wished "neither to forcefully expand nor diminish its territory and sought to impress this view upon the barbarians. Its primary goal was to protect the Chinese farmers" from periodic

---

[36]   Wu Chi-Hua 吳緝華, "The Connectivity between the Ming's Restriction over the Sea and its Isolation Policy—A New Research on the Causes for the Sea Restriction Policy 明代海禁與對外封鎖政策的連環性—海禁政策成因新探", in Wu Chih-Ho 吳智和 ed., *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History* 明史研究論叢, Taipei, 1984, Vol. II, 127-143.

[37]   "Keng-Ho 勘合" is the official tributary permission issued by the Ming government to the foreign states, which was separated into two corresponding parts. Each of the two parts was kept separately by the Chinese government and the foreign states, listing the name of embassies, the amounts and kinds of tributary goods that the embassies were to deliver that year, as well as the seal of the Ming state and serial number of the permission. The Chinese officials at the sea ports would then collate the two parts of "Keng-Ho 勘合" at the embassies' arrival and allow them to tribute. Chen Kao-Hua 陳高華 and Chen Shang-Shen 陳尚勝, *The History of Chinese Overseas Communication* 中國海外交通史, Taipei, 文津出版社, 1997, 172.

barbarian raids on the land border and from the sea.[38] Tai-Tsu's strands of thought became much more straightforward if one started from the principle of moral rule, which led naturally to the maintaining of peace and welfare of people, and to stand against any forms of over-mobilising the people and resources for vainglories. To be pragmatic, the Ming rulers did not want to invade other states (due to their adherence to the moral ruling principle), yet they couldn't guarantee the exemption of invasions from other countries, or their inability to restrain their subjects from turning into pirates. Then a "rational", if not the best solution, to be formulated within the so-called "meaning-practice-weighing-system" (see Section 2.3.4 and Section 5.3.2) seemed to be: a) adhering to the idealistic ruling principle internally; and b) adopt a strict defensive foreign security policy; whilst c) proclaiming solemn warning against all neighbouring countries both at the land and from the sea at the same time.

6. 3   Cultural Logics through Institutions: Naval Powers, Expeditions and Knowledge

Was China powerful enough institutionally, militarily, and financially to carry out an expansion policy at the Ming times? This question is indeed critical, for unless evidence reveals that the Ming state was fully capable of adopting an aggressive strategy, then the emperor and officials' elegant and eloquent moral speeches would always remain to be bluffing, or disguising their inability of implementing an expansive policy. On the contrary, if evidences from the institutional, military and financial respects all suggest the Ming state was fully competent in enforcing an aggressive foreign security policy, then what seems most probably to be restraining the empire from expanding would be its "virtuous" cultural logic. This section will look at the Ming's coastal defence, the organisation of Cheng Ho's great expeditions, the shipbuilding and weaponry technology, and the state's attitude towards knowledge.

6. 3. 1   A Comparison of Naval Powers

Ying's research into the Ming's coastal defence system provides an overall picture for

---

[38]   Morris Rossabi, op. cit. (1973), 27.

the state's coastal defence and naval power. As documented in the *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu*, the naval force of the Ming was established in as early as 1370, when Tai-Tsu commanded to set up a navy of 24 *wei*, with each *wei* was attached a fleet of 50 warships, and 350 soldiers for their maintenance (more soldiers could be recruited during warfare). In 1372, another 660 large seagoing vessels were built to guard against the pirates, while hundreds of multi-oared speedy ships were constructed to chase the pirates into the ocean. In Ying's calculation, between 1370 and 1387, there were 59 guard stations established at the coast of Che-chiang province alone (that is an average of about one guard station for every ten miles), with a total of 62,000 soldiers. A similar scale of military force was also set up in the Fu-chien province. With the Ming fleets chasing the pirates off the sea, and the guard stations defending the possible ravage at the coast, piracy was evidently under control in around 1380. The occurrence of pirate raids decreased substantially after 1374. Between 1374 and 1382 there were hardly any accounts of pirate attack documented, while only sporadic events were reported between 1382 and 1500. Hence, in 1382 when military officers in the Fu-chien guard stations suggested that the emperor construct more warships, Tai-Tsu replied, "Nowadays there is no warfare beneath the heaven, and what on earth will we need to build more warships for?"[39] Wu concludes similarly that after the Hon-Wu and Yung-Lo 永樂 reigns (1403-1424) and before the arrival of the "new pirates" from the West in the 16th century, the Ming's off coast had been very much under control.[40] In fact, the Ming's military power in the early 15th century was far more than capable of being defensive. As has already been pointed out in Section 4.2.2, despite the strong oppositions from the ministers, between 1403 and 1424 Cheng-Tsu 成祖 launched five major attacks to the Mongols with some 100,000 to 500,000 soldiers each. And as the Minister of Defence Chiu Chun 邱濬 testified in the late 15th century,[41]

> After Tai-Tsung's 太宗 six [five] military expeditions in person hundreds of miles beyond the Great Wall, not even one barbarian dared to confront his thunder like forces with their mantis arms, but all scurried like rats...During this past one hundred years, all enemies succumbed and

---

[39] Ying Chang-Yi 尹章義, op. cit. (1984), 162-163

[40] Wu Chi-Hua 吳緝華, op. cit. (1984), 129.

[41] Chiu Chun 邱濬, "Succumbing the Barbarians 馭夷狄", in Chen Chih-Lung 陳子龍 etc, op. cit. (d. 1628-1644), Vol. 73.

the threats at the frontiers were eliminated. [My Translation]

Although the situation at the north may have been somehow underplayed (as there was at least one major setback in 1449, when the emperor Ying-Tsung 英宗 was captured by the Mongols during his northwards expedition), it is fair to say that throughout the 15th century, a barbarian invasion to penetrate the Great Wall was even less likely than the pirates raids at the southeast coast. It is such confidence that enabled Cheng-Tsu to order the seven great expeditions of Cheng Ho during the first three decades of the 15th century. As Prince Henry of the Portuguese began, in the year 1415, to carry out the plan he had so much at heart, sending two or three ships every year to discover the African coast beyond Cape Nam,[42] Cheng Ho had cruised into the Indian Ocean, Arabic Sea, and arguably reached the East coast of Africa. (Recent research by Gavin Menzies even suggests that one of the Admiral's fleets had explored South America and Australia and sailed into the Caribbean. It may have even achieved a round-the-world voyage between March 1421 and October 1423, one hundred years before Ferdinand Magellan.[43])

The Admiral's maritime expeditions had been regarded highly not only in terms of the distance the fleet had travelled, but also because of the nautical knowledge that was employed, the size that the ships were built, as well as the scale of the fleets that were organised. The fleets of Cheng Ho were well equipped with charts and compasses, and its captains were knowledgeable about metrological and hydrological conditions. The recent discovered navigation map of Cheng Ho shows that between 1425 and 1430 the navigators of Ming had recorded the routes of the fleet in extreme detail within a 21 feet scroll.[44] As to the specific details of ship-building, *History of the*

---

[42] *A General Collection of Voyages and Discoveries, Made by the Portuguese and the Spaniards, during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, London, Published by W. Richardson, J. Bew, T. Hookham, J. and T. Egerton, and C. Stalker, 1789, 10.

[43] In a lecture to the Royal Geographical Society in London, Gavin Menzies backed up his hypothesis with what he said were secret pre-Columbian maps showing results of the Cheng Ho's voyage, ancient Chinese artefacts and remains of gigantic shipwrecks in Australia and the Caribbean. Menzies also described how with a commercial software package called Starry Night, he reconstructed the Chinese celestial navigation system and traced what he thinks is the epic round-the-world voyage of Cheng Ho from March 1421 to October 1423. See John Noble Wilford, "Did Chinese beat out Columbus? U.K. Historian Thinks So", *The New York Times*, March 18, 2002

[44] See Hsu Yu-Hu 徐玉虎, "Research on the Navigation Map of Cheng Ho's West Expeditions 鄭和下西洋航海圖考", *The Mainland Journal of Historical Science 大陸雜誌史學叢書*, 1967, Vol. II No. 4, 46-50.

Ming mentioned briefly that, "62 large ships were built, each with a length of 44 chang 丈 and a width of 18 chang" (one chang equates approximately 3.3 meters). These so-called "treasure ships 寶船", which Cheng Ho used on his voyages, were mostly built at the Lung-chiang Shipbuilding Yard in Nan-ching 南京龍江船廠.[45] "The poop had three superimposed decks, and there were several decks below the main one. No less than nine masts were stepped in the largest Treasure-ships." Each of the treasure ships was able to carry a crew of 450-500 men.[46] Despite the existing historical records and archaeological evidence, no agreement has yet been reached as to the exact size and design of the treasure ships. Many have argued that the size for the ship of Cheng Ho might have been misreported, and the real length and breadth of the ship may equate to about one half of the figure documented. Chen's research in 2001 calculates and lists a detailed measurement about the performance of the two possible models of the treasure ship; the main specifications are tabled as *Chart VI-2* below.[47] In regard to the organisation of the fleets, on the first expedition in 1405, Cheng Ho had with him at least 317 ships. Apart from the 62 treasure ships, there were other 255 ships of other classes and sizes, with more than 27,800 sailors. The fleet, which possessed both logistic and combating functions, was composed of five categories of ships, including the treasure ships, horse ships 馬船, grain ships 糧船, combat-billet ships 坐船, and war ships 戰船(see *Chart VI-3*). [48]

Juxtaposing the above-listed figures with the contemporary European counterparts, one soon finds the contrast between them. As Friel notes, Henry V's *Grace Dieu* of 1418 has a keel length of at least 125 feet (38.1 meters), and a breadth of some 37.5

---

[45]   See Pao Tsen-Peng 包遵彭, *On the Ships of Cheng-Ho* 鄭和下西洋之寶船考, Taipei, 中華叢書, 1961, 13.

[46]   In 1962 an actual rudder-post was discovered at the site of one of Ming shipyards near Nan Ching. This great timber, 36.2 feet long and of 1.25 feet diameter, shows a rudder attachment length of 19.7 feet. It could therefore be calculated, using accepted formulae, the approximate length of the vessel on which it had been used, and obtained lengths of 480 feet and 536 feet depending on different assumptions about draught. See Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971, Vol. IV Part III, 480-482.

[47]   The measurements of the full-length size model of Chen varied slightly with the figures that were recorded in the *History of the Ming* (in *Chart VI-3*), as they were modified according to Chen's geometric studies and other historical accounts. See Chen Jeng-Horng 陳政宏 etc, "Preliminary Comparison of the Performance of the Replica Model of Cheng Ho's Treasure Ship 鄭和寶船復原模型 性能之初步比較研究", Paper Presented in Toward the Ocean—Seminar on Cheng Ho Studies 走向海 洋－鄭和研究學術研討會, Taipei, September 25-26, 2001, Table I.

[48]   See Pao Tsen-Peng 包遵彭, op. cit. (1961), 7-13.

Chart VI-2: Measurements for The Treasure Ship of Cheng Ho

	Treasure Ship in a Full-Length size Model	Treasure Ship in a Half-Length size Model
Length	125.65 meters	65 meters
Breadth	44 meters	22.761 meters
Depth	12 meters	6.208 meters
Displacement	15,169 tons	2,046 tons

Chart VI-3: Types of Ship in Cheng Ho's Fleet

Class	Mast No.	Deck-keel depth (Meter)	Draft (Meter)	Length		Breadth	
				Chang	Meter	Chang	Meter
Treasure Ship	9	14.0	11.3	44	145.2	18	59.4
Horse Ship	8	12.0	9.7	37	122.1	15	49.5
(Grain) Supply Ship	7	9.0	7.3	28	94.2	12	39.6
(Combat-) Billet Ship	6	7.7	6.2	24	79.2	9.4	31.0
Warship	5	5.8	4.7	18	59.4	6.8	22.4

Source: 包遵彭 Tsen-Peng Pao, *On the Ships of Cheng-Ho 鄭和下西洋之寶船考*, Taipei, 中華叢書, 1961, 7; Gang Deng, *Chinese Maritime Activities and Socioeconomic Development, c. 2100 BC-1900 AD*, Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1997, 53, Table 2.3.

feet (11.4 meters). The *Mary Gonson*, which was probably built between 1510 and 1530, has a keel of about 80 feet (24.4meter) long and the keel and the rakes of stem and sternpost would give the ship a length of 115 feet (35.1 meters, comparing to 65 to 125 meters of the Treasure ship).[49] Needham on the other hand analysed the displacement and burthen of the Chinese and European ships, "none of Vasco da Gama's ships had reached 300 tons and some were much less; and for the Santa Maria of Columbus 280 tons is an acceptable figure. Yet in the middle of the 8th century Chinese ships had reached nearly 600 'tuns and tunnage', and by the middle of the 13th, 700." The average size of the ships of the Spanish Armada of 1588 was still only 528 tons, and only seven out of 137 Spanish ships were over 1,000 "tuns burthen". Yet, the larger vessels of Cheng Ho would have a burthen of about 2,500 tons and a displacement of about 3,100 tons (not too far away from the 2001 calculation of Chen in *Chart VI-2*).[50] Even taking the half-length model of Cheng Ho's treasure ship, the size and displacement are still significantly larger than its contemporary European counterpart. Louise Levathes provides a fascinating illustration comparing the St.

---

[49] Ian Friel, *The Good Ship. Ships, Shipbuilding and Technology in England 1200-1520*, London, British Museum Press, 1995, 34.

[50] "Tuns burthen" and "tuns and tunnage" were terms which arose from the Bordeaux wine trade in the 12th century, the former having reference to the number of tuns or barrels which the vessel could carry, and the latter including also the empty spaces between the barrels. Joseph Needham, op. cit. (1971), Vol. IV Part III, 452, footnote b.

Maria of 1492 with the treasure ship of Cheng Ho of 1405 (see *Chart VI-4*). However, what is even more interesting is the question she then poses,[51]

> Cheng Ho and Vasco da Gama missed each other in Africa by eighty years. One wonders what would have happened if they had met. Realising the extraordinary power of the Ming navy, would da Gama in his eighty-five to a hundred-foot vessels have dared continue across the Indian Ocean? Seeing the battered Portuguese boats, would the Chinese admiral have been tempted to crush these snails in his path, preventing the Europeans from opening an east-west trade route?

The withdrawal of the Ming's mighty navy from the Indian Ocean eight decades before da Gama seems to have reflected Inkster's "accidental" view of the later European expansion.[52] To us, one side of this "historical contingency"—the "accidental" Chinese withdrawal—can only be explained in collaboration with the pervasive cultural logic that operates beneath the Ming political institutions.

Another important aspect for the analysis of naval power is the usage of guns and cannons in the 15th century. Gunpowder was introduced to Europe by 1260, but the earliest certain reference to a cannon in Europe is in the treatise of c. 1326 written by the Englishman Walter de Milemete. The treatise shows a primitive vase shaped cannon, lying on its side on a wooden trestle, with a large arrow emerging from its mouth. However, until well into the 15th century (and perhaps later), cannons and guns remained of limited importance in sea warfare. Henry V's fleet, the most powerful royal naval force of 15th century England, had only fifteen gun-armed ships out of an effective total of about thirty, with no more than forty-two guns between them. The most heavily armed was the 760-ton great ship Holigost, with its merely seven cannons. Guns and cannons only become more numerous by the later 15th century; in 1485 "the derelict old Grace Dieu had 21 'gonnes feble' along with 89 chambers, and a formidable armament of 140 bows."[53] In China, rockets and gunpowder had been widely used in battles since the Sung and Yuan Dynasties. The earliest excavated bronze hand-gun dated 1288 from the northeast province of China

---

[51]   Louise Levanthes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Ship of the Dragon Throne 1405-1433*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1994, 21.
[52]   See Ian Inkster, "Accidents and Barriers: Technology between Europe, China and Japan for 500 Years", *Asia Journal of International Studies*, Vol. I No. 1, July 1998(a), 1-37.
[53]   Ian Friel, op. cit. (1995), 152-153.

Chart VI-4: Cheng Ho's Treasure Ship and Columbus's St. Maria
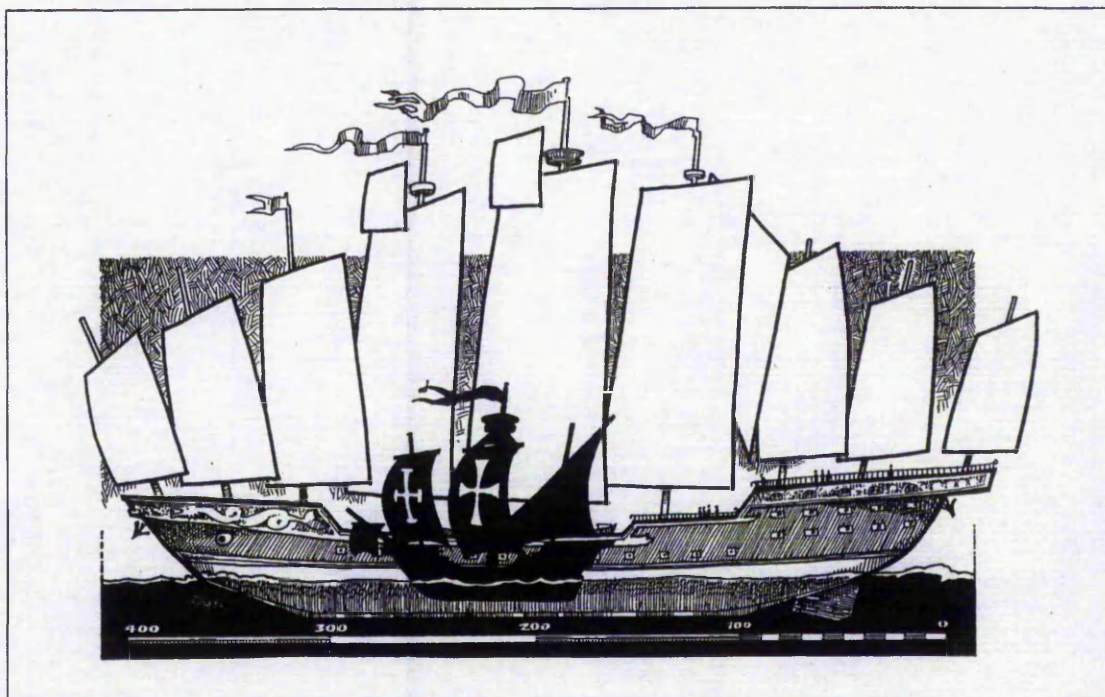
Source: Louise Levanthes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Ship of the Dragon Throne 1405-1433*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1994, 21.

Hei-lung-chiang 黑龍江. As opposed to handguns, several hundreds of cannons dated between 1356 and 1357 were unearthed in Nan-ching. Many of the cannons were iron cast, which weighed up to 302.7 kg.[54] According to the Ming historian Wang Hsi 王圻, already in 1412, iron cast cannons had been set up on the northern and western mountains of China. The diffusion of weaponry technology from Europe is also evident. The Portuguese first arrived at China in 1514, and the Fo-lang-chi 佛朗機 (Portuguese or Spaniards) cannons had been reproduced in Nan-ching in 1523 and set up on the Chinese warships, while another three hundred of them were distributed to the guard stations at all frontiers in 1528.[55] Needham even suggested that the Frankish breech-loaders were fairly familiar weapons in south China as early as 1510, that is even before the Portuguese arrival at Kuang-tung 廣東.[56] Thus, it maybe true that the

---

[54] Joseph Needham, op. cit. (1971), Vol. V Part VII, Table I, and 290-296.

[55] Wang Hsi 王圻, *Sequel to the General Research on Historical Literatures* 續文獻通考, d. 1603, Vol. 134. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 758-769. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

[56] In 1519, the famous philosopher Wang Yang-Ming 王陽明, who was then the Governor of Chiang-hsi 江西 mentioned that there had been another rebellion in the same province twelve years earlier, when an officer Wei Sheng 魏昇 attacked the brigands with more than a hundred Fo-Lang-Chi,

European artillery was more advanced than the Chinese one in the 17th century, however, as late as the mid 16th century cannons and guns in China were as competitive as the European ones, if no longer superior. Lastly, if what Ian Friel suggests is correct that "boarding", with masses of ships laid side-by-side, was still the main sea-fighting technique in the European naval warfare at least before the late 15th century; and that "the only effective long-rang weapons were the long bow, and to a lesser extent, the crossbow, with guns coming a very poor third";[57] then the decisive factors for naval warfare in around 1450 would still be the sheer number and size of ships and soldiers on board, as well as the organisation of the fleets. Such an analysis on the military tactic again indicates that the Ming navy would have played an upper hand were they indeed to meet the European galleons. And let us not forget when the Portuguese and Dutch did meet the Chinese navy in the 16th and 17th centuries they both took no advantages. The Portuguese was expelled by the Ming fleets in 1522, and the Dutch navies were driven back in 1607. Between 1622 and 1624, the Ming imperial navy again twice defeated the invading Dutch fleets off China's south coast.[58] (See Section 4.4) Needham summed up quite well the comparisons between the Ming and the European naval power,[59]

> In its heyday, about 1420, the Ming navy probably outclassed that of any other Asian nation at any time in history, and would have been more than a match for that of any contemporary European State or even a combination of them. Under the Yung-Lo emperor it consisted of some 3,800 ships in all, 1,350 patrol vessels and 1,350 combat ships attached to guard stations (*wei* 衛 and *so* 所) or island bases (*chai* 寨), a main fleet of 400 large warships stationed at Hsin-chiang-ko 新江口 near Nanking [Nan-ching], and 400 grain transport freighters. In addition there were more than 250 long-distance 'Treasure-ships' or galleons, the average complement of which... overstepped 1,000 in the largest vessels.

---

and destroyed them. Joseph Needham, op. cit. (1971), Vol. V Part VII, 372

[57] As Friel suggests, the earliest-known set of official "fighting instructions" in English date from c. 1530, within which the tactics described are essentially medieval. "Cannon, small-arms and 'crossbow shot' was to be used to clear an enemy's deck before boarding... Gunfire was to be avoided when chasing another ship, for it slowed your vessel down, but it was advocated as a means of escape when being chased, using the smoke from cannon to cover an attempt to get to windward of the pursuers. There was no notion of using guns at a distance to batter an enemy ship to pieces or to sink it." See Ian Friel, op. cit. (1995), 141-146.

[58] Patrick K. O'Brien etc. eds., *Philip's Atlas of World History*, London, George Philip Limited, 1999, 139.; Kang Chih-Chieh 康志杰, "Reasons Why the Jesuits in Ming and Ching China Defied the Dutch 明清之際在華耶穌會士抵制荷蘭的原因", 歷史月刊 *History Monthly*, May 1999, 103-110.

[59] Joseph Needham, op. cit. (1971), Vol. IV Part III, 484.

Ming China's military power in the first half of the 15th century was indeed formidable, and certainly far more than being capable of adopting either a defensive or isolationist foreign policy.

6. 3. 2   On Institutions and the Mindsets of Expeditions

Turning to the governmental institutions, already in 1394 there had been a well-developed post system, which comprised 361 horse posts, 224 water posts, and 493 combined water and horse posts inside China, or a total of 1,078 post stations around the country in every twenty to twenty-five miles. Among Liao-tung 遼東, Ssu-chuang 四川, Yun-nan 雲南, Kuang-tung, Fu-chien, Beijing 北京 and Shang-hsi 陝西, at each converging point of the water and land transportation there was a official post. These message posts were designed to transmit military intelligence, urgent official letters and documents, and to serve as the reception centre for passing bureaucrats.[60] As to the resources being mobilised by the Ming institutions, during the Yung-Lo reign the state gathered together 10,000 artisans and nearly one million labours per year for 12 years to complete the extravagant palace and to reconstruct the canals system for grain-transport. Between 1368 and 1620, 18 major construction projects were carried out to build the 6,700 kilometres of the Great Wall.[61] Taking the number of the Ming's civil officers again (see *Chart IV-5*), although the number made up only 0.21% of total population in 1500, such a ratio was still significantly higher than the European figure. In about 1500, France with a rather optimistic estimation had some 12,000 persons in government service out of a population of 15 to 20 million. That is a ratio of 0.06% to 0.08% of total population. (The number of 12,000 is probably a maximum: this was very likely the highest total reached under Louis XIV.)[62] All these indicate that the Chinese state institution in about 1450 was certainly no less capable of mobilising material resources and human labours than its European counterpart. Only after 1500, with an increasing population and a fixed number of civil officers the percentage of civil servants in China decreased swiftly,

---

[60]   Yang Kuo-Chen 楊國楨 and Chen Chih-Ping 陳支平, *The New Compiled History of the Ming* 明史新編, Taipei, 昭明出版社, 1999, 44-45.
[61]   Patrick K. O'Brien, op. cit. (1999), 139.
[62]   Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. Vol. II, The Wheels of Commerce*, London, Phoenix Press (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds), 1982, 549.

and dropped to its lowest level of about 0.03% in 1850. In contrast, the figure of Europe rose drastically. As Mann calculates, the state-employed personnel made up 0.29% of total population in 1780 France, and surged to 2.14% in 1910.[63]

Having these military and institutional comparisons in mind, one might find it difficult to understand what was it that was making the extraordinary contrast between the mindsets of the Chinese and European voyagers? While the Chinese cruises were those of a well-disciplined navy paying friendly visits to foreign ports, the Portuguese east of Suez deemed themselves "saviours of the pagans" and "crusaders of the Christ", who engaged in total war. Already in 1420 and 1431, Prince Henry appointed Lopez d'Azevedo to request the pope Martin V,[64]

> To acknowledge and to animate their zeal for the extension of the faith, by conferring on the crown of Portugal all the lands the subjects thereof should discover along the coast of Africa, to the Indies inclusively; since the unbelieving nations ought to be regarded as unjust possessors, of whom nevertheless, they only sought the salvation.

With a mentality of the *conquistator*, the Portuguese alone took from Angola no less than 1,389,000 slaves between 1486 and 1641, yet many of the contemporary occidental scholars approved these activities. Hence the historian João de Barros wrote,[65]

> It is true that there does exist a common right to all to navigate the seas, and in Europe we acknowledge the rights which others hold against us, but this right does not extend beyond Europe, and therefore the Portuguese as lords of the sea by the strength of their fleets are justified in compelling all Moors and Gentiles to take out safe-conducts under pain of confiscation and death. The Moors and Gentiles are outside the law of Jesus Christ, which is the true law that all must keep under pain of damnation to eternal fire... It is true that the Gentiles are reasoning beings, and might if they lived be converted to the true faith, but inasmuch as they have not shown any desire as yet to accept this, we Christians have no duties towards them.

---

[63] Also see Section 4.2.1; Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: The Rise of Classes and Nation-states, 1760-1914.* Vol. II, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 393.
[64] Françis Lopez de Castagneda "The History of the Discovery and Conquest of the East Indies" in 1442, in *A General Collection of Voyages and Discoveries, Made by the Portuguese and the Spaniards, during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, London, Published by W. Richardson, J. Bew, T. Hookham, J. and T. Egerton, and C. Stalker, 1789, 20-21.
[65] João de Barros, *Décadas de Asia*, Década I (1420 to 1505), Galharde, Lisbon, 1552, i, 6, quoted from Joseph Needham, op. cit. (1971), Vol. IV Part III, 514-517.

The rule of law and justice, as well as the notion of right and citizenship did not "expand" outside the Continent. For the 15ᵗʰ century European navigators, the Moors and Gentiles only deserve to be condemned and suffer the pain of eternal fire if they did not convert their beliefs. The Chinese exploration is a very different story. In 1911 a stele that commemorates one of the visits of the Ming navy under Cheng Ho was unearthed within the town of Galle. The inscription on the tablet in opposite provides a perfect illustration of the extension of the Chinese cultural ideal outside its territory. This is how it reads,[66]

> His Imperial Majesty, Emperor of the Great Ming, has dispatched the Grand Eunuchs Cheng Ho... to set forth his utterances before the Buddha (Lord), the World-Honoured One, as herein follows... Of late we have dispatched missions to announce our Mandate to foreign nations, and during their journeys over the oceans they have been favoured with the blessing of Thy beneficent protection... Wherefore according to the Rites we bestow offerings in recompense, and do now reverently present before the (Lord) Buddha, the World-Honoured One, oblations of gold and silver, gold-embroidered jewelled banners of variegated silk, incense-burners and flower-vases, silks of many colours in lining and exterior, lamps and candles, with other gifts, in order to manifest the high honour of the (Lord) Buddha. May His light shine upon the donors.

What was restrained within the Ming navy by the influence of such a moral-ethical based cultural logic is exactly that "conqueror and evangelist" mentality. With the continuous internal opposition motivated by the principle of virtuous rule, and without the profits from the colonies to "reward" (if not in a full sense "support") the expeditions, Cheng Ho's voyages had to come to a halt sooner or later. Even if the cost of the exploration was not as high as many had assumed (see Section 6.4), such campaigns could hardly escape the label of "a sin for extravagance and over-mobilisation," for those expenses were morally unjustifiable. At Yung-Lo's death, an edict of Jen Tsung 仁宗 in 1424 ordered "all the treasure ships to the western oceans to be stopped... All civilian artisans to be discharged and return to their hometowns... and all sea-going junks under construction to be discontinued."[67] Despite the seventh expedition, the Ming voyages ceased to proceed after Cheng Ho's

---

[66] Joseph Needham, Ibid., 522-523.
[67] "The Enthronement Edict of the Emperor Jen Tsung 仁宗昭皇帝即位詔", in Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed., op. cit. (d. 1522-1566), Vol. 7.

death in 1433. In 1473, when the emperor Hsiang Tsung 憲宗 was again "tempted" to deploy an expedition and ordered to search the navigation map of Cheng Ho in the state archive, the code of virtuous rule once more came to play a decisive role. Liu Ta-Hsia 劉大夏 (1436-1516), the Deputy Minister of Defence withheld the navigation map in secret (and supposedly burnt it later). For three days the clerk in charge could not find the map, and when the Minister of Defence Shang Chuang 尚忠 inquired in anger how could the document in the state archive simply disappear? Liu replied,[68]

> The Three-Guarantees 三保[Cheng Ho's] west expeditions had cost hundreds of thousand of money and grain, and caused more than ten thousand military and civilian casualties. Even though he had brought back some rare treasures, what good would it do to the state? This is particularly a misrule at that time, and it was the responsibility of all high-ranking officers to remonstrate against such a policy. Although there was once such a file, it should by all means be destroyed to eradicate that misrule. Why are you still investigating its existence? [My Translation]

As documented, the Minister listened in astonishment and said to Liu, "Your Excellency are really a person of virtue, my position will soon be yours." Later Liu indeed became the Minister of Defence, and the map of Cheng Ho was never found in the Ming Court ever since.[69] Yet again, a seemingly instrumental decision-making that was based on the economic rationale of excessive cost and insufficient return was in fact bounded within the moral-ethical oriented logic at a deeper level (*Chart V-2*, Bloc A3, a mixed or shifting cultural rationality). The adherence to a cultural value not only outweighed the diffusion of nautical knowledge, but also the Deputy Minister's "crime" to destroy a critical state archive. By 1500, regulations aggravated the existing punishment to a capital offence for building a sea-going junk with more than two masts. And the 1521 edict of Shih-Tsung 世宗 imparts that a large number of the sea-going vessels docked at the Chang-chia Bay 張家灣 had been left unused and damaged for a long time; many of them were waiting to be fixed, and many to be

---

[68] Yen Tsung-Chien 嚴從簡, *Records on Journeys to Foreign Territories* 殊域周咨錄, d. 1574, Vol. 8 (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 736. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.); and Hsu Yu-Hu 徐玉虎, op. cit.
[69] Yen Tsung-Chien 嚴從簡, Ibid.

sold out.[70] By 1525 coastal authorities were enjoined to destroy all ocean-going ships and to arrest their owners (also see Section 4.2.2). The formidable navy of the Ming eventually came to disintegrate.

Taking the Yung-Lo emperor as a case of potential break-through for the Ming's isolationist policy, one can imagine how difficult it was (even for a Chinese ruler) to turn against the tide of the dominant cultural logic. The huge military force organised to conquer the Mongols in the north, the great expeditions of Cheng Ho, the mass mobilisation of labours for public and royal constructions, and the powerful coastal guards and navies almost all fell to pieces after Cheng-Tsu's death at the opposition of the bureaucrats and people. Even when Yung-Lo was still alive, five major rebellions had occurred to articulate the farmers' dissatisfactions for the emperor's over-mobilisation (see Section 5.3.2). Seeing in this way, Cheng-Tsu's efforts may be taken as instrumental measures that were eventually suppressed by the extensive cultural repercussion, which obviously valued the logics of inward-looking, or a minimum interference of people over the accumulation of wealth and power of the state (*Chart V-2*, Bloc B2).

6. 3. 3   The Ming's Attitudes towards Knowledge

Was Ming China, as Landes accuses, a bad learner who simply "closes its eyes to novelty" due to its "cultural triumphalism", its idealistic "cultural wholeness", and its "petty downward tyranny"?[71] Had the Chinese no curiosity about nature and new knowledge? The question can be addressed in four various ways. Firstly, between 1403 and 1408, the Ming court compiled the largest and the earliest encyclopaedia of the world. The *Encyclopaedia of Yung Lo* 永樂大典 collected some 8,000 pieces of work of different kind around the country, and divided them into 22,937 volumes. The content of the collection ranges from the Confucian and Taoist classics, history, prose, and poems, to works of astronomy, topography, medicine, religion and artisan crafts etc.[72] Yung-Lo apparently valued books (here knowledge) far more than jewelleries.

---

[70]   "The Enthronement Edict of the Present Holy Emperor 今聖皇帝即位詔", in Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed., op. cit. (d. 1522-1566), Vol. 19.

[71]   David Landes, op. cit. (1998), 336, 343.

[72]   See Hsieh Chin 解縉 et al etc, *Encyclopaedia of Yung-Lo* 永樂大典, Preface, d. 1408. (Beijing, 中

In 1404, the emperor ordered the Minister of Rites Cheng Shih 鄭賜 to send those who know books well to search and purchase scattered books from the folk. He commanded,[73]

> Do not bargain with the civilian about the price of the book, just offer whatever they want and bring back those rare books... The folk people accumulate gold and jade for their sons and grandsons, I on the other hand collect these books for my offspring. The value of gold and jade is limited, yet is there a price for these books? [My Translation]

Clearly, "lack of curiosity" about nature, at least for the traditional knowledge concerning astronomy and topography etc, is rather a red herring and simply not the case. As to whether China had not interest towards "novelty" (or western knowledge) at the Ming times, such a question should be considered under a more specific historical and cultural context. This leads to the second aspect of our discussion, that is China's attitudes of "cultural triumphalism" and insistence on "cultural wholeness".

We have repeatedly argued that the "cultural superiority" of China was built upon its sense of moral and ethical supremacy, which directs to the commonsensical logic inside every individual's mind and was integrated tightly with the understanding of "nature".[74] Scientific and technological knowledge in China like the classic learning did not stand alone, as argued in Section 4.3.3, it integrated tightly with the cultural values, and was designated to carry out the function of Tao 文以載道[75]. The disparate logic in the Chinese meaning-practice-weighing-framework interpreted the role of knowledge under a very different value context, which subjected the material progress and practical knowledge to the virtuous order of the world. This intellectual foundation of cultural wholeness unlike the source of European moral and ethical

---

華書局, 1986 Reprints); Chang Lien 張璉, "The Publication under the Despotic Cultural Policy of the Ming 明代專制文化政策下的圖書出版情形", *Sinology Research* 漢學研究, 1992, Vol. 10 No. 2, 355-369.

[73] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsung* 太宗實錄, r. 1402-1424, Vol. 53, in Tung Lun 董倫 and Chin Hsieh 解縉 et al eds. *Veritable Records of the Ming* 明實錄. (Taipei, 中央研究院歷史語言研究所, 1984 Reprints.)

[74] See See Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰, *The Origins of Modern Chinese Thought—The Evolution of Chinese Political Culture from the Perspective of Ultrastable Structure (Vol. I)* 中國現代思想的起源—超穩定結構與中國政治文化的演變, Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chinese University, 2000, Chapter 2 and 3. (Title Translated by the Author.)

[75] Q. S. Tong, "Power, Ideology and Economy: Cultural Policy in China", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1995, 109-120.

conventions that relied mainly on the authority of the Church had never been significantly challenged. Therefore, instead of asking whether the Chinese cultural superiority had indeed blinded its eyes to novelty, it seems to us making more sense by asking first whether the European findings on new knowledge before the 15th and 16th century had been solid enough to cast a doubt upon the worldview of the Ming literati. The answer, as our comparisons above suggest, seems rather unlikely. In fact, before the 16th century we see no real challenges yet from the Europeans, which could have threatened the basis of the Chinese intellectual tradition. Whatever the Renaissance and Reformation might have brought about to Europe and was expressed through the Portuguese, Spaniard and Dutch, it was simply not powerful enough to disorient the Celestial Empire from its existing cultural trajectory, and to motivate the Ming scholars to alter their moral-ethical-commonsensical oriented cultural hierarchy. As to the only real or potential challenge—the Portuguese artillery technology, it was certainly fully adopted and rapidly diffused by the Ming army and navy in the early 16th century as suggested in Section 6.3.1.

Thirdly, about the idealistic nature of the Chinese literati, indeed there was the intellectual tendency of pursuing cultural idealism. And we agree with Needham that the "sterile conventionalised version of Neo-Confucianism, markedly idealist in metaphysics and Buddhist in religion" might have led the late Ming intellectuals to lose their interest in geographical science and maritime techniques, and replaced the energetic valour of the early Ming by an "introspective culture".[76] However, it is important to note that scientific or practical knowledge per se does not necessarily bring about extroversive or expansive culture. For instance, the technological breakthrough in the construction of the Chinese canal system in 1411 had in contrast decreased the Ming's maritime grain-transport service.[77] According to Sung, the full-capacity and all-seasons Grand Canal system had shifted the Ming's sea routes grain shipment from south to north inwards to the inland of the empire so that it could avoid the "dangerous wind and wave of the sea."[78] On the other hand, idealism does not necessarily lead to an introspective culture either. With similar idealistic pursuits

---

[76] Joseph Needham, op. cit. (1971), Vol. IV Part III, 526.
[77] Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*, London, Eyre Methuen, 1973, 220.
[78] Sung Ying-Hsing 宋應星, *The Exploitation of the Work of Nature* 天工開物, d. 1637, Vol. 9. (Taipei, 金楓出版, 1986 Reprints.)

of Confucian classics in the pre-Ming era, China had managed to support a relative high level of scientific and technological development comparing to that of the pre-1450 Europe (see below). Besides, such an idealistic nature of the Chinese literati had also proved to be compatible with some of the most outward-looking Chinese regimes, such as the Tang, Sung, and Yuan Dynasties. Therefore, Needham may be right at the level that the mode of thinking of the innovators is at least as influential as the characteristic of the scientific and technological knowledge. Yet, what seems critical to an outward-looking culture is not only the intellectual's emphasis on science and technology per se, but also how the idealistic centred cultural logic may in fact interpret the function of practical knowledge, and how the moral-ethical oriented worldview may be translated to not hinder but encourage the research of science and technology.

Lastly, with respect to the "downward tyranny", it is agreed that there had been elements of state control on knowledge. For instance, the technology of gun founding was regarded as top secret by the Ming state and it was forbidden to disclose it to any civilians, whilst shipbuilding technology of sea-going vessels was restricted to officials. Yet, the argument that a centralised state bureaucracy would necessarily hamper the development of science is not thoroughly valid either. In the European case, "political decentralisation is often recognised as the structure most favourable to technological and economic development."[79] In traditional China, however, a centralised political structure had also managed to contribute to the momentum of the technological development, particularly on aspects of agriculture, medicine, astronomy, metallurgy and mining etc. It had provided the necessary materials and channels of technological diffusion. As argued in Section 4.3.3, the Chinese officials had long been involved with formulating and disseminating "useful knowledge"[80] about agrarian production, the lunar calendar, and improving the techniques and

---

[79] Gang Deng, *Development Versus Stagnation: Technological Continuity and Agricultural Progress in Pre-modern China*, Westport and London, Greenwood Press, 1993, 174.
[80] In the Conference on the Global History of Material Progress, the term "useful knowledge" is defined by O'Brien as referring to "all forms of knowledge that directly or indirectly maintained and raised the productivity of the inputs (land, natural resources, capital and above all labour) utilised to produce final outputs/outcomes, including: consumption goods, health, security, success in warfare etc." Here it is defined in a wider context. See Patrick Karl O'Brien, "A Prospectus for the Third Windsor Conference on the Global History of Material Progress", Conference on The Evolution and Diffusion of Steam Power and Steam Engines in Europe Compared with China from 1589 to 1914, Windsor Great Park, 15-17 April, 2002.

works of artisans.[81] Such efforts of the state bureaucracy (arguably) could have contributed as much as they did to harm the development of Chinese science and technology. To us, if there were any differences truly salient about Ming China's attitude towards "knowledge" they would be its different emphasis and investment (of both spiritual and material resources) on it. The Ming court had published an enormous amount of literature on the "useful knowledge" according to their value system: there were books about rituals and courtesies to civilise the lives of the people; books of legislations and laws to discipline their behaviours; and books of canonical texts to educate and cultivate their minds.[82] What then followed was the "useful knowledge", about irrigation, transportation, artefact, and statecraft that is applied to "order the world".[83] Emphasising the agrarian aspect of knowledge Sung Ying-Hsing 宋應星 even divided his famous book *The Exploitation of the Work of Nature* 天工開物 into the upper and lower volumes "to express 'the valuing of the grain and agriculture and the devaluing of the gold metals and jewelry'."[84] All these again reveal the spilled-over cultural logic behind the thinking of Chinese bureaucrats, who tended to regard practical knowledge as a means to fulfil certain ethical purposes. Such a mode of thinking simultaneously carried within practical activities a moral orientation,[85] which is clearly influenced by the moral-ethical-commonsensical centred worldview. In Ming China, a moral- and ethical-free knowledge and value unburdened scientific activities were indeed unlikely to find root. Even in the pursuit of scientific and technological knowledge, the Ming bureaucrats would have to justify their researching activities under the context of folk interest, common goodness, and social righteousness.

On the whole, although suffering from the ironic preface of Sung, it is not difficult to sense the unaccommodating mainstream intellectual atmosphere for the development

---

[81] R. Bin Wong, "The Chinese State and Useful Knowledge: Criteria, Intentions and Consequences", paper presented in the Conference on Regimes for the Generation of Useful and Reliable Knowledge in Europe and Asia 1368-1815, Windsor Great Park, 14-16 April, 2000.
[82] Chang Lien 張璉, op. cit. (1992).
[83] R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (2000).
[84] Sung Ying-Hsing 宋應星, op. cit. (d. 1637), preface.
[85] Timothy Brook, "The Milieux of Scientific Activity in Ming China", paper presented in the Conference on Regimes for the Generation of Useful and Reliable Knowledge in Europe and Asia 1368-1815, Windsor Great Park, 14-16 April, 2000.

of technology in Ming China,[86]

> I would advice those brilliant literati, who are longing for their great careers, to throw this book away from the desks. For this book is not going to have any tiny little relevance to the achieving of their scholarly honour, or the pursuing of their official ranks. [My Translation]

Nevertheless, to simply conclude that the Chinese emphasis on moral and ethical aspects of knowledge would necessarily hinder their material progress and adaptation of the Western science, would be as ironical and illogic as arguing that the European science and technology had prevented the "west" from advancing into a more morally integral people who were able to restrain their colonialist and *conquistador* mentality. To us, a cultural logic approach to the diffusion of new knowledge should take into account the feeling and emotion behind the acceptance or rejection of the knowledge (such as self-esteem, humiliation, protectionist mentality and the ethnocentric moralist worldview), and the motives that were packaged within the diffused technology (such as the evangelist attitude, colonialism, profit-making and exploitation of resources). Cultural values themselves do not necessarily obstruct the scientific and material progress. However, when cultural values are tied up with the negative feelings and reactive emotions, they could generate extensive cultural repercussions and hinder the diffusion of new knowledge substantially. Hence, what is required for a smooth transferring of knowledge is a clearer division between the diffused knowledge, the packaged motives, and the reactive humanistic logics. Only by curtailing the packaged humanistic motives at the transmitting side, and tranquillising (or unpacking) the reactive humanistic emotions and logics at the receiving side will it allow the receiving cultural system to formulate a compatible, or even positive reinterpretation of the ties between the existing moral-ethical values and the diffused new knowledge. As argued in Section 5.4, a "gestalt-switch" or fundamental alteration of collective mentality could have reinforced the motivations for change, and quickened the pace of scientific finding and material growth. On the other hand, as suggested in Section 5.3.2, "cultural logic" itself has also to be taken as a dynamic concept, which can be changed by a specific design of cultural engineering, or through the self-adjusting process in response to external challenges. Through the filtration or reinterpretation of

---

[86] Sung Ying-Hsing 宋應星, op. cit. (d. 1637), preface.

266

traditional cultural values, such a engineering design or adjusting process may alternatively channel the humanistic emotions and reactive feelings into positive attitudes towards new knowledge. This is the intersubjectivity of the instrumental and humanistic rationalities. Let us answer Landes's question in this way. If the Portuguese and Dutch had somehow behaved in a more "civilised" way, showing that their sense of morality and benevolence was fully compatible with, if not fully capable of mastering, their scientific and military knowledge; and if the Jesuits and the Popes had not been so eager to convert all Chinese from their rightful beliefs, and expressed more reverence towards their ritual practices as then Cheng Ho had done; China could have responded differently and decided to alter their cultural hierarchy to absorb the Europeans science and technology well before the 18th century.

6. 4   *Cultural Logics through Finance, Taxation and Tributary Trade*

What remains to be considered in this section are the financial conditions and the moral shadow that had shrouded the economic practices of the Ming bureaucrats. By looking into the fiscal, taxation and international trade policy, this section aims to a) illustrate how the idealistic cultural principles had been translated into the economic practices of the Ming governments; and b) investigate whether the Ming court were financially powerful enough to carry out an expansive foreign policy.

It is stressed in Chapter 5 that light tax had been a benign gesture of the Chinese government demonstrating its adherence to the principle of soft rule. Such a practice after being carried out for a long-term was generally accepted by politicians and people in common, and had become a taken-for-granted humanistic logic in the Ming Period. The rulers of the Ming frequently expressed a commitment to light taxation, which they honoured.[87] As soon as Tai-Tsu ascended to the throne, a series of "benevolent measures" were introduced in 1368: an edict ordered the local officials to help settling the people, cut down the taxes, exempt the levied service, investigate the range of natural disasters, reallocate the land, release the stored grain, and give

---

[87]   R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997, 102.

amenity to minor criminals.[88] Similar commands were given by the emperor Yung-Lo's in 1402 and Jen-Chung in 1424,[89] and in fact in almost every enthronement edict of later emperors. Under the Ming, the "Confucian tenet that the nation's wealth should be 'preserved within the people' was taken to its literal extreme, interpreting it to mean that any financial gain to the government was bound to be a loss to the governed."[90] Two of Tai-Tsu's remarks would exemplify our point.

On February 8, 1371, there were officials who advised that the government should broaden its sources of income and increase the expense of the state. Tai-Tsu however disagreed,[91]

> The heaven and earth create the wealth to nurture the people, therefore he who be an emperor should take the providing of people's living as his prime responsibility. Even by cutting the unnecessary spending and lightening the taxation, one still fears that he might have exploited the public, never mind increasing the service levy and taxation... The emperor is the lord under the heaven; therefore he should conserve the wealth to those living beneath the heaven. How could he use the need of people as an excuse and take advantage of them in secret? [My Translation]

On hearing the words of the emperor, "those who made the advice felt ashamed, and thereafter no one dare to argue on the basis of wealth and profit," the *Records* so documented. Another example occurred on January 26th 1387, when Tai-Tsu reiterated his economic ideal of light taxation and a controlled budget to the officials in the Ministry of Treasury. This is how he argued,[92]

> Those who are good at managing money never exploit people to profit the office, but only generate wealth to enrich the people. In previous dynasties, the officials who were in charge of managing the state's finance did not realise this principle. They exploited and eroded the interest of the public and extorted every single penny in the name of generating wealth and enriching the country... What they did not understand is that the money they earned was limited, yet the harm

---

[88] "Edict of Amenity to the People beneath the Heaven after Succeeding the Yuan Dynasty 初元大赦天下詔", in Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed., op. cit. (d. 1522-1566), Vol. I.
[89] "The Enthronement Edict of the Emperor Cheng-Tsu 成祖即位詔"; "The Enthronement Edict of the Emperor Jen Tsung 仁宗昭皇帝即位詔", in Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed., op. cit. (d. 1522-1566), Vol. 7.
[90] Ray Huang, *Taxation and Governmental Finance in Sixteenth-Century Ming China*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1974, 187.
[91] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu 太祖實錄*, c. 1399, Vol. 135.
[92] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu 太祖實錄*, c. 1399, Vol. 177.

they did to people was incalculable. Our state already has a fixed taxation system, the money spared will be abundant if you retrench the spending and control the budget. Decrease the conscripted labour, for it shall keep the farmer yielding and the woman weaving. Be generous to those who fulfil their duties and suppress the opportunists at the bottom of the society. Make the idle and lazy people work hard in the field, then farmers shall speed up their work and few will have to live on other's support. In this way, every household will naturally be supported and the storage shall be abundant. You Ministry of Treasury must always be alert not to harm the integrity of the state merely for the acquisition of wealth. [My Translation]

This is almost a reversal of Weber's theory of the European Reformation in the 16th century, by which it presumably justified an attitude of absolute ruthlessness in acquisition of wealth (see Section 4.3.2). The Ming's fiscal policies derived from the above moral guideline were basically aimed to save the expense of the state and decrease the tax burden of people. A fixed tax quota system was introduced by Hong-Wu in 1377, after the monarch dispatched teams of officials to tour the 178 local tax stations and assigned the local revenue quotas. Such quotas set at the beginning of the dynasty had hardly been changed throughout the Period of the Ming.[93] And with regard to financial issues, "frugality" and "avoidance of any unnecessary spending" were almost the identical overtone of all official memoranda. In his memorial to the emperor, the Minister of Treasury (in 1528) Ho Tang 何瑭 suggested,[94]

> Your Majesty should behave in a frugal manner and set model for the world beneath the Heaven. You should ask all civil officials to save their expense and cherish their well-beings; prohibit them from any extravagant behaviour; and punish whoever spoils this good custom. In this way people's wealth will not be wasted, their mind will not be confused, and the state's policy of ruling by rites and education shall be achieved. [My Translation]

Such is the pervasive logic characterising the Ming's economic practices. Statecraft and humanism in China usually went hand in hand. Since the public approval was usually identified with the classical spirit, concerns for benevolence often preoccupied the minds of the bureaucrats. Here *History of the Ming* gives a good example showing that the Ming civil administrators in particular were willing to bend their policies and

---

[93] Ray Huang, op. cit. (1974), 47
[94] Ho Tang 何瑭, "Memorial on the Exhausting Wealth of the People 民財空虛疏", in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed., op. cit. (d. 1584), Vol. 38.

procedures to suit the concept of virtuous rule. In 1521 a man named Shao Ching-Pang 邵經邦 was appointed as the tax collector at the inland port Ching-chou 荊州. Although the commodity tax was collected according to a "prescribed ad valorem schedule," the court also assigned an annual quota to each port, basically as a general target of collection. In three months, Shao's collections had fulfilled the quota. He therefore suspended the taxation altogether, and for the rest of the year commercial vessels were allowed to call at the port free of duty. Officials like Shao were often commended by the Ming bureaucrats and later historians as model officers, who extended the emperor's magnanimity to the people. In a modern sense, Huang is maybe right that the officials were guilty of laxity and courting personal favour among the taxed at the expense of legality and administrative efficiency.[95] However, for the Ming officials, fiscal precision was merely a marginal technical consideration compared to the principle of benevolent rule. Under the specific historical context, Huang's accusation might seem harsh to a bureaucrat who had not only completed his task that the state had assigned, but also given something "morally extra" to the emperor's subjects.

Some comparative figures might help us in realising to what extent the Ming's virtuous rule and self-restraining nature might have affected its taxation. According to Braudel, the sum total of taxation may represent some 10% to 15% of gross national product for 15th century Venice. And in a larger, more extensive and less urbanised territory than Venice, the fiscal tension could be lower, that is, perhaps 5% to 10%.[96] (This supposedly does not include any surtaxes and service levy.) The figures at the Chinese side seem relatively lower. In the 15th and 16th China, the total payment of formal taxation (including the regular land taxes, surcharges, surtaxes, portions of the service levy collected on the land, and un-collectible items absorbed into it) was in general less than 10% of the "agricultural output" (not national product). For a huge empire with a well-established bureaucracy and a costly infrastructure, an overall tax level of 10% of agrarian output is indeed low.[97] (And as argued in Section 4.2.2, the

---

[95] Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al. *History of the Ming 明史*, Vol. 206, No. 94; also Ray Huang, "Fiscal Administration During the Ming Dynasty", in Charles O. Hucker ed., *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies*, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1969, 73-128, quote page 74-75.
[96] Fernand Braudel, op. cit. (1982), 532.
[97] Ray Huang, op. cit. (1974),166-175, 183.

figure in the Ching Period was even lower, which stayed at about 2% to 4% GDP, or less than 5.6% agricultural output. On the contrary, in Europe the percentage of central government expenditure in contrast started to rise after 1500. It reached 22% of national income in 1760 Britain, and 35% for Prussian-Germany.) Perhaps as Mark Elvin suggests, the higher economic productivity achieved in Sung times, and the perfection of new techniques of political control, such as the civil service examination system based on Confucian ideology, might have reduced the costs of control per head of population.[98] Despite the impossibility of quantifying in precision how much the real reduction of taxation and state expense had been during the Ming times, which was conducted on the basis of the moral-ethical-oriented cultural logic, by the historical records given, one can hardly deny that the Ming rulers' ideal of minimising the state's intervention and upholding its moral commitment to people had played a significant role in the economic decision-making. Financial practices that are often regarded as decided over by the goal-achievement-calculative rationality are after all not so "instrumental" as many have imagined. There is certainly the intervention of the humanistic rationality in the sphere of political economy, or what Chapter 2 has termed, the intersubjectivity of meaning (cultural ideas) and (institutional) practices.

Turning to the Ming government's attitude towards foreign trades, in Section 6.2, it was argued that all forms of foreign communication were restricted exclusively to the official level, and all legal commercial activities from abroad must be conducted under the tribute system. However, scholars have long disputed about the profitability of the Ming's tribute system, or tributary trade. The proponents of a profitable tributary system claim that it was an economic design to benefit certain privileged groups and Chinese officials, or to achieve state monopoly on international trades. Because many of the tribute envoys were in fact poorly disguised trading missions, and tribute embassies frequently brought with them sorely needed products to the Ming. As Rossabi argues, in the case of Ha-mi and Central Asia, the most common tribute offerings were horses, camels, animal pelts, jade, Mohammedan blue, sal ammoniac, and knives, all of which were of value, or even essential, to the Chinese economy. Besides, instead of minimising contacts, the Yung-Lo emperor even sent embassies to attract tribute envoys and increase the profits of trade. He thus concludes,

---

[98]   Mark Elvin, op. cit. (1973), 92.

the view that "China's foreign relations and the tribute system were based exclusively, or even primarily, on self-defence and isolationism is inaccurate. Economic motives played as important a role."[99] Opponents of the profitable tribute system on the other hand insist that the tributary trade, although involved transferring of goods, did not indeed benefit the Ming court. For John Fairbank, "The important thing to the rulers of China was the moral value of tribute. The important thing for the barbarians was the material value of trade." Since the main purpose for the tributary trade is to show the benevolence of the self-sufficient Middle Kingdom, the value of the offered objects was certainly balanced, if not out-weighed, by the imperial "gifts" to the missions and vassal rulers.[100] T. F. Tsiang also held that "it must not be assumed that the Chinese Court made a profit out of such tribute"; while Levi went so far as to claim that economically, "the tribute system was a deficit enterprise for the government."[101] In order to resolve the dispute, it is necessary that we go through some qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Four cases can be put forward to support the early Ming's non-profit-making attitude towards foreign trade. Firstly, in the question of favouring the privileged groups and officials, it should be noted that after Tai-Tsu prohibited all private overseas communications, he soon turned his eyes to the local officers and gentry. On January 22 of 1372 the emperor warned against bureaucrats that,[102]

> Recently, I heard that Li Hsing 李興 and Li Chung 李春, the commanders of the guard station in Fu-chien Hsing-hua 興化, sent people overseas privately to trade. Was there nobody at the coastal guard stations aware of their so doing? If I do not prohibit and caution them, then everyone would be deluded by the profit and be trapped by the criminal law. [My Translation]

The emperor obviously sensed the potential corruptions at the local level, and wanted to leave people no illusions of any possible official conspiracy. As to the state domination of trade, one should note the case of February 14, 1394. On that day, Tai-Tsu banned all foreign incenses and ritual products from coming into China, and

---

[99] Morris Rossabi, op. cit. (1973), 35-36, 323.
[100] J.K. Fairbank, "Tributary Trade and China's Relations with the West", *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. I No. 2, February 1942, 129-149, quote page 139.
[101] Quoted from Morris Rossabi, op. cit. (1973), 30-31.
[102] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 70.

prohibited their use in all popular ritual practices. Those remained in the market were commanded to be sold out in three months or face rigid punishments.[103] This case again shows that "profits" from international trade were not of Tai-Tsu's main concern. The point is well made by Wu. At the Ming's time, foreign incenses had been commonly used in the ceremonies of Chinese folk religious. To increase the tariff income or official monopoly on foreign trade, the Ming government could have encouraged the popular use of foreign incenses and expand the market. Then the state may raise the tariff rate and control the supply, or even monopolise it as a new state enterprise. However, instead of expanding the internal market, the Ming forbade all usage of the foreign incense in the ritual ceremonies, which made no sense to the idea of profit making and state monopoly.[104] Thirdly, there is a direct statement from Tai-Tsu that ordered the favourable treatment to foreign envoys and tributary trade. When receiving the tribute embassy from So-li's 瑣里 (at today's Oromandel Coast of India) in 1372, the emperor explained that "States from the West seas were the so-called remote vassals, whose envoys travelled across the sea for countless months and years to pay their tribute. Thus, whatever amount their tributes are, the principle is to reward them more than they pay." The envoy was then given the agricultural calendar, money, fabric, and yarn weaved of golden silk string.[105] The fourth case shows both Tai-Tsu's sense of pragmatism and idealism. In his conversation to the embassy of Java in 1380, the emperor expressed plainly to the envoy,[106]

> As the ruler of the Chinese and all foreigners, my ruling principle is to make no distinction between the state from near or far. Your country locates at a small island of the remote sea, and frequently sends embassies to China. Although in the name of tribute you come, in reality you are here merely to make profit. However, I shall still treat you with courtesy. [My Translation]

Indeed, it should not be assumed that the Ming rulers were naïve. Although the bureaucrats were full of the idealistic and ethical thinking, they did understand well the possible benefits that the tributary trade could have brought about to the country. In other words, the Ming rulers were adhering to their moral principles with a full consciousness that it was limiting their own material good. Such a policy only testifies

---

[103] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 231.
[104] Wu Chi-Hua 吳緝華, op. cit. (1984).
[105] Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al. *History of the Ming* 明史, Vol. 325, No. 213.
[106] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄, c. 1399, Vol. 134.

to the existence of a forcefully idealistic logic, which differs hugely from the profit-making one. The principle of treating foreign embassies with benevolence and favouring the tribute trade was maintained by the later Ming governments. On November 14, 1403, the envoy of La-ni 剌泥(today's Gajarat at the west of India) came to pay their tribute. During their stay members of the embassy traded privately with the local people, and the officer in charge therefore suggested the emperor to levy their goods. However Yung-Lo disagreed, here is how he replied,[107]

> Tax on commerce is a means that the state applies to suppress those opportunists at the bottom of the society, is it for making profit? Now the foreigners admire our righteousness and come from afar, if only for trivial profit we might gain by damaging their interests, then how tremendous we shall lose by humiliating our own integrity. [My Translation]

Notions of "profit" and "interest" were obviously downplayed by the Ming rulers in the 15th century in their intersection to the moral-ethical ruling principle. There was no sense of commercial protectionism, and there was no intention of economic exploitation on foreign or tributary goods. In 1405, in order to show his benevolence, Yung-Lo even sent back the 10,000 tales of gold indemnity (and cancelled another 50,000 taels) from Java, after the King of west Java mistakenly attacked Cheng Ho's troops and caused some 170 casualties. The emperor condemned the attack by an edict and gave his account to the Ministry of Rites, "What I requested from these people from afar is the confession of their wrong doings, do I really want their gold?"[108] It was probably difficult for the 15th or 16th century Europeans to understand such a dominant Chinese cultural logic that valued "benevolence" over 60,000 taels of gold. Profit for profit's sake was deemed as immoral, and was certainly not a justifiable basis for the pragmatics of state policy. Unlike the European mercantilism, throughout the Period of the Ming, overseas Chinese merchants were seen as outlaws or "de-Sinicised expatriates" who betrayed "national integrity" for profit, therefore should receive no protection from the state.[109] As argued in Section 4.2.2, such a policy later allowed Dutch and Spanish colonial authorities to prevent the development of Chinese merchant communities in Manila and Batavia, and even

---

[107] *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsung* 太宗實錄, r. 1402-1424, Vol. 24; Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al. *History of the Ming* 明史, Vo. 81. No. 57.
[108] Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al. *History of the Ming* 明史, Vol. 324, No. 212..
[109] See Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (a)), 134-135.

encouraged angry 'natives' to massacre the Chinese businessmen. 25,000 overseas Chinese were slaughtered in the Manila incident of 1603 alone.[110] Thus viewed, the Ming withdrawal does seem to be another unintended consequence triggered by the pervasive Chinese cultural logic.

Reading the official letters, one soon finds that China's moral principle did play a crucial role in restricting the import of tributary goods. Memorials advising the emperor not to receive luxurious goods and rare treasures from abroad echoed one another. As the Minister of Personnel (between 1500-1501) Yueh Ni 倪岳 recounted, during the Cheng-Hua 成化 reign (1465-1487) the emperor Hsiang Tsung 憲宗 once turned down the tribute of rare birds and sea stones from Korea; and in 1488, the Hong-Chih 弘志 emperor too rejected the tribute of jade and treasure stones from the westerners. Both emperors meant to "show their reverence to frugal norms, and were praised by people from near and far about their righteous rule, benevolence and civility."[111] In a practical term, as the officials Ni Yueh, Chang Chong 張翀 and Chang Lu 張祿 all agreed, adding up the manpower levied, the accommodation provided, the food supplied (to both the labours and the tribute embassies), and the cost spent to recruit the carts, horses, and carriage drivers for transportation, the fees would outweigh the value of the tributary goods on hundredfold. Never mention the distaste and hatred it begot from the public. In his memorial, Chang Lu even calculated the cost for raising a lion, "A lion eats two goats everyday, which account for 60 goats per month, and some 700 goats per year. This would equal some 500 taels of silver per year." Such is the reason why the officers often concluded that they should restrict the occasion of foreign tribute, to decline all extra contribution, and to avoid disturbing people's lives.[112] Qualitative evidences on the whole suggest that the tribute system was by no means a profitable enterprise.

---

[110] Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 202; Chang Hsi-Lung 張錫綸, "Chinese Trade in Indo-China and Islands of South China Sea during the 15th to 17th Centuries 十五六七世紀間中國在印度支那及南洋群島的貿易", in Pao Tsen-Peng 包遵彭 ed., *International Trade during the Ming Period 明代國際貿易*, Taipei, 台灣學生書局, 1968, 71-86.

[111] Ni Yueh 倪岳, "Memorial on Stopping the Foreign Tributes 止貢夷疏", in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed., op. cit. (d. 1584).

[112] Chang Chong 張翀, "Memorial on Refusing Extra Tributes so as to Declare the Utmost Honesty to the Public 停免額外貢獻以昭大信疏"; Chang Lu 張祿, "Memorial on Rejecting Rare Objects so as to Cultivate the Sacred Mind 卻異物以養聖心疏", in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed., op. cit. (d. 1584).

At the quantitative side, the study of the Ming's revenue income seem very much in line with our attitudinal analyses. With a fixed quota on land taxes, the regular land taxation of the Ming produced a steady 30 million taels silver per year in the 15th and 16th century, which comprised up to 75% of the state's total revenue income.[113] The salt revenue is the second largest item, which generated approximately some 10% of this amount in comparable monetary value. It then follows the miscellaneous incomes (here comprised of all state revenues other than the land taxes and the salt revenue), which make up the remaining 15% of annual revenue. The figure of 1570 to 1590 shows that the Ming's miscellaneous income was of a total of 3.78 million taels of silver, within which the revenue from commerce and industry shared some 943,000 taels. And of the 943,000 taels, the inland customs duties stood for 340,000 taels; the local business tax made up 150,000 taels; and the maritime tariff (that was repeatedly exempted by Hung-Wu and Yung-Lo to demonstrate their magnanimity) contributed only 70,000 taels. Thus as Huang rightly suggests, throughout the Ming Period international trade was never regarded as a primary source of state income, "the payment termed 'award' exceeded the value of the merchandise several times over, and was compounded by the cost of the entertainment lavished on the personnel of the embassy."[114] Even at the Ming's most prestigious reign Yung-Lo, with about thirty foreign states coming to "trade" under the tribute system once every one to three years, and with each embassy restricted to only one to three ships, which carried less than

---

[113] Only a general conjecture can be made as to the monetary value of the taxation. The commutation rates varied widely. In South China however, most commutations fell within the range of between 0.5 and 0.7 taels per picul. In north China 0.8 taels to 1 tael per picul could be accepted as the normal range. The surcharges (about 7% covering spoilages and transportation), surtaxes, and the absorption of other revenues could raise the average value of the "picul". If one then assumes that the average value of all "piculs", in kind and silver, was 0.8 tales, the total value of the regular land taxes would be slightly more than 21 million taels. The total collection of service levy throughout the empire was probably 10 million taels. Even if it was only partially absorbed by the land taxes, the service levy should at least have raised the total revenue from agricultural land to 25 million taels, or even close to 30 million taels. Ray Huang, op. cit. (1974), 86, 175.

[114] The miscellaneous incomes includes a) the revenues from commerce and industry: inland customs duty (range from 0.2% to 3% of the goods), the local business tax, maritime tariff (range from 20%-30% of the goods), store franchise fees, excise on wine and vinegar, stamp tax on real estate transfers, forest produce levy, government mining, fish duty; b) the administrative incomes: sale of rank; ecclesiastical license fees, payment for 'rationed salt', common post money, incense fees at national shrines, commutation of punishments, profits from minting money; and c) the commutation of services and supplies: speed-the-delivery money, artisan payment, reeds tax, material supplies to the four bureaus, horse payment, commutation of capital guard duty, commutation of personal attendance, savings from postal service, calendar paper, kitchen service fees due to the court of imperial entertainments. Ibid., 46, 38, 227-265.

three hundred people, the maritime profit was almost marginal to the Ming state.[115] It is fair to state that the Chinese maritime sector no matter how sophisticatedly developed still lay within the threshold of the land-based or agrarian dominant economy.[116]

As to the question whether the Ming was financially powerful enough to afford an expansive foreign policy in the 15th century, Su's calculation on the annual expense of Cheng Ho's may shed some light. According to the *Record of Lung-Chiang Shipbuilding Yard 龍江船廠誌* of the Ming times, the construction of a 400 *lio* 料 (a Ming measuring unit for burthen) warship costs roughly 75 taels of silver for the labour service. Taking this as a basis, a 2,000 *lio* treasure ship of the Great Admiral would cost some 375 taels for the labour needed. Assuming with Yang-Ming Su that the cost of physical materials for shipbuilding equals the cost of labour required, then a fleet comprises 100 treasure ships, and 200 warships of 400 *lio* would mount to a total of 100,000 taels. And if we triple that cost to include the expense needed for the expedition, it would cost the Ming court a maximum of 300,000 taels per year to maintain such a fleet (Note: every expedition of Cheng Ho lasted about two years.)[117] This estimation conforms roughly to the above recount of Ta-Hsia Liu, the Deputy Minister of Defence. Although in an absolute term the expense is a huge sum of money, in proportion, it stands for only 1% to 1.2% of the Ming's annual revenue income (300,000 out of 25-30 million taels, see footnote 113). It would not be difficult at all for the empire to raise such amount of money either by expanding its foreign trade or by extracting "extra resources" from abroad, had it decided to adopt an aggressive foreign policy. If we take account of what O'Brien and Panmeraz both agree, the extra-continental profits were about 7% of gross investment by late 18th

---

[115] Chen Yu-Ying 陳玉英, "Research of the Ming's Tributary Trade 明代貢舶貿易研究", in Wu Chih-Ho 吳智和 ed., *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History 明史研究論叢*, Taipei, 1984, Vol. II, 343-398.
[116] As Deng argues, there was the "agricultural fundamentalism" of premodern China, which can be realised in several aspects. Firstly, agriculture was recognised as being the fundamental sector of Chinese economy. Secondly, farming as an occupation received great respect and farmers were accorded considerable dignity. And thirdly, to encourage and protect agriculture was considered the dominant economic policy for government. Gang Deng, op. cit. (1997), 60; and Gang Deng, op. cit. (1993), 14-18.
[117] Su Ming-Yang 蘇明陽, "A Historical Account of Cheng Ho's Westward Expeditions (I)鄭和下西洋歷史漫談(一)", *The NTOU Newsletter 海洋大學校訊*, Vol. 113, Jan. 2002.

century Britons,[118] such a "free lunch" could have been more than enough to maintain the enormous fleet of the Ming to their encounter with the ships of Vasco da Gama in the late 15th century.

---

[118] Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, New Jersey, 2000, 186-188, 264-285.

Chapter 7   Conclusion

The thesis set its task to formulate a theoretical framework so as to investigate (a) empirically through the structured history of European and Chinese cultural systems and their encounters, whether there have been disparate logics of self-identification, which have from time to time oriented the directions of their cultural development. Through the studies of history in the *longue durée* (with the emphasis on the period from 1450 to 1900), it attempts to extract the distinct cultural logics (way of thinking and behaving) of both cultures; (b) in what way these seemingly "abstract" logics of self-identification in Europe and China had actively influenced their condition of geo-ethnic distribution and political economy; and (c) whether such cultural logics may in turn be manipulated and changed by the elite's engineering processes, and by challenges emerged from within and without the cultural systems.

The main findings of the thesis are fivefold: (a) There do exist disparate cultural logics in both Chinese and European cultural systems, which in a much formalised version can be summarised as a pro-humanistic (i.e., moral-ethical-commonsensical based) cultural logic in China, and a pro-instrumental (i.e. goal-interest-calculating and scientific oriented) cultural logic in Europe, particularly after the period of 1450. (b) Although the transformation of both systems are by no means culturally determined (i.e. decided over by the inner value system and cultural ideals), through an integral meaning-practice-weighing-framework, culture did influence the practice of policymakers by saturating into their way of thinking and by containing them within a culturally defined value system in a way that a political-economic policy was set within a context of cultural debates. (c) In historical contexts, to us, the so-called divergence between Europe and China, which started at the turn of the 16th century and only became clear in the 19th century, had not much to do with China's shortfall of economic resources, advanced technologies, efficient political institutions, and powerful military, but more to do with its insistence on its existing cultural logics, such as the principle of virtuous rule and the inward-looking attitude. Nonetheless, as experiences of the 19th century China suggest, the bottom-line for the prolonging of existing cultural logics, is the pragmatic survival of a culture. (d) Cultural logics

should not be taken as static or unchangeable concepts; neither are they purely idealistic beings. Cultural logics are inseparable from social practices and (political-economic) institutional functions. Rather, there exist complex intersubjective relations between cultural logics and the material and social worlds (i.e., between meaning and practice), which cannot be understood without probing into their processual reciprocities. In other words, the transformation of a culture is subject to continuous negotiations among different cultural agents and aspects, which involve a variable pattern of combinations among geo-ethnic conditions, political-economic institutions, practices of routine, embedding cultural logics, external challenges, as well as historical contingencies (or unintended consequences). Thus, (e) while culture can not become influential without the function of institutions, a smooth social transition on the other hand requires far more than just the institutional mobilisation of resources and allocation of pragmatic interests. A necessary condition for successful cultural engineering therefore is the understanding of the delicate inner cultural logics. The consolidation of motives for changes requires an extensive conversion of the collective psychology, what Reinert and Daastøl labelled as the "gestalt-switch," or a fundamental change of Man's worldview or mindset.[1] These findings are further elaborated below.

Firstly, about the disparate cultural logics of Europe and China, William McNeill summed up quite lucidly the trajectories of European and Chinese civilisations concluding his *The Rise of the West*:[2]

> Compared to the civilised societies of Asia, European civilisation exhibited marked instability. Rising to an extraordinary peak in classical times, it declined in equally extraordinary fashion following the fall of the Roman empire in the West. By contrast, Chinese... history presents a far smoother curve. Despite marked changes in modes of religious, artistic, and intellectual expression, the civilised peoples of Asia always maintained a fairly stable institutional base on the local level. Complex social structures, involving both economic and cultural specialisation, survived all the disturbances of time from the second millennium... [Q]uite possibly western civilisation incorporated into its structure a wider variety of incompatible elements than did any

---

[1]   See Erik S. Reinert and Arno Mong Daastøl, "Exploring the Genesis of Economic Innovations: The Religious Gestalt-switch and the Duty to Invent as Preconditions for Economic Growth", *The European Journal of Law and Economics*, Vol. 4, No. 3/4, 1997, 233-283.
[2]   William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West, A History of the Human Community*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1963, 591-593.

other civilisation of the world... In this, far more than in any particular intellectual, institutional, or technological expression that western Europe has from time to time put on, lies the true uniqueness of Western civilisation.

McNeill is perhaps correct in his view that Europe had long been marked with cultural diversity; however, by failing to look beneath the smooth curve of Chinese history, he might have underestimated the dynamic character of "Chinese stability". As illustrated in Chapter 3 and 4, already before 1450, with the rich linguistic and cultural varieties, a steady rate of population growth, a high-level urban development, a semi-institutionalised mechanism of social mobility, the well-established civil examination and nationwide education system, the well-developed infrastructure (the canal and inundation system), as well as a high level literacy rate, China had no doubt formulated a distinct cultural logic of its own. Leaving the long-standing political centre aside, were not the dramatic rise and fall of governmental control; the incessant transferring of power from one dynasty to another; the abrupt institutional changes (from autocratic-feudal system, city-states, centralised bureaucratic state, divided military lords, to repetitive minority rules); the ever-shifting official-gentry-family ties; and the recurring nomadic intrusions all illustrative of periodic dynamism? Or must cultural dynamism be defined as corresponding to the European criteria, that of an ever-competing network of multiple manorial, monarchical and city-states, which operated under some principle of the balance of power?

We have argued that European and Chinese cultures were both dynamic but differed in their ways of value presentation. Contra postmodern theorists, or at least some of them, who celebrate concepts of deconstruction, decentralisation, differentiation, and discontinuity (Chapter 1), studies of history across time and space can hardly dismiss the distinct and persisting logics within cultural systems. We agree with Wong and Pomeranz that by abandoning cross-cultural comparison altogether and focusing exclusively on exposing the contingency, particularity, perhaps unknowability of historical moments, postmodern theorists make it almost impossible to approach any comparative analyses in history.[3] And along the lines of McNeill and Braudel, we

---

[3]   Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, New Jersey, 2000, 8; R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1997.

argue that civilisations through history of a *longue durée* do impart their enduring features, structures, and discrete cultural logics.[4] *Such cultural logics, we argue, although they may differ in approach and in degree, do orchestrate those seemingly incidental factors and events into recognisable trajectories, and form particular way of life in different cultural systems.*

Putting such a theoretical claim into historical contexts, although in a perhaps over formalised version, it can be said that pre-1450 China had formulated an overarching moral-ethical based, pro-humanistic cultural logic, which set up an overtly steady developing model of society and political-economy that conformed essentially to the transformation of the covertly competing, yet mutual accommodating Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist and commonsensical ways of thinking. The ideal, like the symbol of the Chinese dragon (Section 1.2.1), was to incorporate as many elements of particularities as possible into an integral whole, and to achieve a harmonious and tranquil society characterised by stability. The internal dynamism was expressed through efforts to maintain, or reinstate, a sense of equilibrium in Chinese dynastic institutions,[5] and to prosper economically and politically without losing the sense of cultural integrity. To put it in another way, here sense of cultural integrity became a necessary, if not pre-, condition of any possible political and economic development or transformation. As summarised in Chapter 5, responding to their geo-ethnic conditions people in China created among different ethnic groups with an effective myth of common origin and an incorporating "Middle Kingdom" that were founded on culturalism rather than racial particularism. A steady growth of population and city, a heavy humanistic intervention in geo-ethnic distribution, the non-expansive overseas policy, and a semi-institutionalised mechanism of social mobility through education and the civil examination system all revealed the idealistic shadow of Chinese cultural rationality. In addition, the familialised political and economic state mechanism, although it maintained a single coordinating centre, had to appeal to cultural ideals that were based more on the ethical, moral or the taken-for-granted logic of commonsense rather than the word-binding legislation; while the recurrent

---

[4]   William H. McNeill, op. cit. (1963); Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilisations*, London, Allen Lane and The Penguin Press, Translated Edition by R. Mayne 1994.
[5]   See Gang Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy: Structural Equilibrium and Capitalist Sterility*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999 (b), 298.

challenges from nomadic groups further injected a spirit of commonness into the elitist moral tradition. These cultural logics integrated deeply and strongly with the humanistic feelings of common people through all sort of daily practices in the three-layered socio-political institutions. Due to such pro-humanistic characteristic of cultural rationality (which emphases on the self-generating moral senses, and the spontaneous flow of human emotions and commonsense), a large-scale social transformation in China inclined to resort firstly to the extensive spiritual mobilisation and generate the sympathetic feelings or understanding of people. Although such an approach tends to be non-immediate, indirect, less efficient or slower in pace, once these humanistic or psychological traits are consolidated, the following institutional and behavioural reforms may turn out to be even more stable and persistent.

The Europeans on the other hand emphasised individuality and ethnic particularity over cultural cohesion. With a later developed interconnected cultural network together with the understanding of being out-comers, they stressed the competition among various political, economic, and religious centres rather than the sustenance of a culture of the harmonious whole. Behind these competing centres were the mechanism of the balance of power, the insistence of liberty, the depersonalised legal system, the institutionalisation of specialised knowledge and an emerging value-free science, which together started to shape a goal-interest-calculating and scientific oriented pro-instrumental cultural logic particularly after the Renaissance. It therefore presented an explicit picture of restless instability and incompatibility. A pro-instrumental cultural rationality in Europe tends to turn initially to the powerful operation of political, economic and legal institutions when facing possible transitions. The authoritative control of material resources through effective pragmatic measures without corresponding humanistic support, although it may bring about imminent interests and results, can also plant potential forces for later conflict and division. The lasting religious and ethnic divisions inside European societies today can arguably be taken as the patent signals, which impart the potential risks caused by the speedy social transformation without paying due attention to people's humanistic needs. *Comparative studies of Chinese and European histories refute many prevailing notions of Chinese cultural stagnancy or petrified stability. Rather they strengthen the*

theoretical point that every culture may maintain its own way of value presentation,[6] *and the incommensurability of culture often lies in the lack of vectorial interpretations of the inner logics* (Section 5.3.1 and 5.4).

It is true that for about one hundred years after 1450, close encounters of the European and Chinese civilisations began to mark their divergences in respect of military power, political control, and economic performances. As argued in Chapter 6, not only did Ming China withdraw its formidable navy from the Arabian seas to adopt an isolationist policy; inside China, the number of civil officers as a percentage of total population also dropped from 0.21% in 1500 to its lowest of about 0.03% in 1850; the sum total of government taxation decreased from a ratio of 10% of the agricultural output in the 15th and 16th to about 2% to 4% GDP (or less than 5.6% agricultural output) in the 18th and 19th century (Section 4.2.2); and the demographic sum of the fourteen largest cities fell from 2.02% of total population in 1500 to 1.29% in 1900 (*Chart IV-2*). It was argued that the idealistic view of minimum state control and a policy of equal distribution revealed the heavy humanistic intervention in the Chinese political economy. The Europeans on the contrary expanded their colonies throughout the world after the Columbus and Da Gama discoveries. Within Europe, the percentage of state employment rose from some 0.06% of total population in 1500 to 2.14% in 1910 (the French figure); the sum total of state taxation surged from some 10% of gross national product in 15th century to about 35% of national income in 1760 (the figure of Prussian-Germany, Section 4.2.1); and the population of the fourteen largest cities as a percentage of total population increased from 1.70% in 1500 to 6.36% in 1900 (*Chart IV-1*). Thus, the intensive state mobilisation of capital and power and a macro-urban concentration of populations in Europe had on the other hand facilitated the emerging pro-instrumental rationality.

Before we proceed further to conclude our comparative historical studies, one methodological issue needs to be considered, i.e. the set up of benchmarks. We agree very much with Wong that differences "alone cannot create comparability. Without standards for comparison, effective generalisation is limited."[7] And for the sake of

---

[6]   Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明, *Modern Spirit and Confucians Tradition* 現代精神與儒家傳統, Taipei, 聯經, 1996, 104.
[7]   R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 2.

effective assessment of political economy, historians are used to adopting certain political and economic parameters such as the extent of political hegemony, prestige and power, urbanisation, commercialisation, the growth of GNP/GDP and life expectancies etc. As pointed out in Chapter 4, Landes takes the *build-up* or the accumulation of knowledge and scientific and technological know-how as the critical benchmark of success, as it leads to the eventual *breakthrough* of an economy.[8] Wong takes challenges, capacities, claims and commitments as four analytic parameters for both European and Chinese state formation and transformation.[9] Frank, however, considers the supply and flow of American money and silver in the interconnected world-economy as the critical factor that contributed to Europeans economic advantages in Asian market.[10] Pomeranz uses the extra-continental resources such as precious metals, labour- and land-intensive raw materials, and slave trade as the key factors, which abolished the ecological constraint for the development of European capital- and energy-intensive industrialisation.[11] Braudel on the other hand holds that the economic structure such as commerce, market and material profit are the main factors that dominated *the world-economy*. Such factors therefore were used as key benchmarks for his historical analyses.[12]

Assessments of Chinese and European economic and political systems through such benchmarks are certainly justifiable, as they provide useful indicators for the analysing material progress and quality of life of both cultural systems. The question here however is that, through a cultural perspective what benchmark or set of benchmarks can be used to evaluate Chinese and European cultural systems and their

---

[8] David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London, Abacus, 1998, 200-205, 512-524.

[9] By challenge he means the problems set out within specific historical settings that states attempt to solve. "Capacities" refers to the human and material resources the state can mobilise for its purposes and effectiveness with which it can achieve its goals. "Claims" take the forms of demands for state action or limitations on state actions placed by both elites and common people; definitions of what a state is expected to do and what it is not allowed to do both fall under the category of claims. "Commitments" are ideologically expressed preferences for certain styles of rule. States make promises about the principles they will use; these commitments can be about processes of decision making or about maintaining or promoting particular social conditions. R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 79-83.

[10] Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, California, University of California Press, 1998, 356.

[11] Kenneth Pomeranz, op. cit. (2000), 186-188, 264-285.

[12] Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. Vol. III, The Perspective of the World*, London, Collins, (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds) 1984; Fernand Braudel, *A History of Civilisations*, London, Allen Lane and The Penguin Press, 1987 (Translated Edition 1994, by R. Mayne), 194-195; and Ian Inkster, "Pursuing Big Books. Technological Change in Global History", *History of Technology*, Vol. 22, 2000(b), 233-253.

political economy. Would such criteria be able to "replace various forms of Eurocentrism with interpretations that can embrace Western and non-Western experiences on an analytically more equal basis", without being condemned to an extreme relativism?[13] And what concluding remarks can be drawn from such analyses of political and economic comparisons? And as pointed out in Chatter 4, most political and economic centred histories seem to focus on, or celebrate, certain set of values that prioritise the measurement of wealth, material power, technological progress, and institutional efficiency. Some of the economic analyses are even applied in turn to indicate the superiority or inferiority of a civilisation. In line with Said,[14] we argue that these political and economic parameters, which serve as a form of cultural vocabularies, have carried within them certain innate methodological prejudices for the overall assessment of cultural achievements. This is particularly so as criteria like powerful institutions, wealth, and advanced scientific knowledge were essentially modern European oriented cultural values, which by contrast might have been deliberately marginalised in traditional China.

The position of the thesis however is not the total discarding of economic and political benchmarks and analyses of material progress. As shown in Chapter 3, 4, 5 and 6, patterns of geo-ethnic distribution, degree of urbanisation, social mobility, the rate and percentage of state taxation, power of political and economic institutions, and military forces have been carefully juxtaposed. Yet given those comparison presented, it was held that one should also take into account the "incommensurability" of culture. In other words, for comparative cultural studies, numbers, wealth, and the efficiency or powers of political and economic institutions have to be posited within the context of a culture's meaning system. And the main task of a cultural approach is to explain through the dominant cultural logics why and how certain resources and priority were granted to those social, political and economic principles and praxes rather than making simple numeric statements and conclusions. Numbers therefore matter in the sense that they provide referential evidence for the meaning deciphering of historical occurrences. And cultural logics in this sense become themselves benchmarks of comparative studies. Only one should keep what Geertz pointed out in mind that

---

[13]   R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 2.
[14]   Edward W. Said, *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*, London, Penguin Books, 1978.

culture is not something one can "run symbolic forms through some sort of cultural assay to discover their harmony content, their stability ratio, or their index of incongruity". And that "culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviours, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed;" as networked systems of construable signs, it is a context, something only within which they can be intelligible.[15] A cultural approach is about the interpretation of how and why people in different societies and periods of time think and behave differently, why they make their decisions basing on certain cultural logics at the critical moments, and how such different ways of thinking and behaving are reflected on the material and institutional structures.

Thus, let us not be carried away by the above-mentioned numeric divergences after the 1450s and start to celebrate the *Triumph of the West*,[16] or even claim the ultimate victory of Western liberal values in political democracy and capitalist markets.[17] A cultural perspective requires one to look beyond those measurable institutional and material progresses and search for the inner logic of numeric divergences. Differing from most political and economic centred histories, and extending from the recent works of Frank, Chaudhuri, Pomeranz, Deng, and Wong, and we challenge the Eurocentric narrations of world history on cultural grounds. We argue that the ebb and flow of power between Europe and China at the turn of the 16th century (and only became clear in the 19th century), had not much to do with China's shortfall of economic resources, advanced technologies, efficient political institutions, and powerful military, but more to do with its insistence on the principle of virtuous rule and non-aggressive cultural logics. *This leads to our second main finding that culture influences the practice of policymakers by saturating into their way of thinking and by containing them within certain value systems within which a political-economic policy is set into cultural debates (see Chapter 6). In other words, all the cultural agents have to make their decisions within the so-called "practice-meaning-weighing-system" of culture (Section 2.3.4 and 5.3.2), and by referring to such value orientations they then choose when to hold on to the existing cultural logics and when not to. To us, the Chinese cultural system (or, to a great*

---

15 Clifford Geertz, op. cit. (1973), 14, 314, 404-405.
16 J. M. Roberts, *The Triumph of the West*, London, Guild Publishing, 1985.
17 F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Penguin Books, Free Press, 1992, xi, xiii.

extent, the elite groups) at the Ming times had set forward certain political-economic goals that differed largely from the European's, and which can only be understood through its inner cultural logics or embedding value system.

Therefore, thirdly, what were critical for the Euro-Chinese divergence after the 16th century were not simply the practice of accumulation of capital and the institutional mobilisation of power, but the moral-ethical reforms, or the collective mentality changes behind such structuralised behaviours. Around 1450, while the Chinese social, political and economic institutions were integrated tighter into the moral-ethical-commonsensical cultural logics and led China into a society characterised by an inward-looking and self-restraining nature; in Europe the *ceaseless* accumulation of capital and power, and relentless overseas expansion first obtained its moral justification through the reformed religious ethos in the 16th century. Later, together with the discovery of a "mechanical universe", this endless pursuit of wealth and power broke away from its religious roots and the Aristotelian unity of nature and Christian doctrine, even scientific researches began to unload their burden of moral judgment. These together directed Europe into a culture that was characterised by the outward-looking and goal-profit-calculating cultural rationality, which valued the acquisition of wealth and power over the moral and ethical claim of equality among nations. Nothing like these occurred in China. As argued in Chapter 6, Ming China chose to adhere to a set of moral-ethical-commonsensical cultural logics during the process of encounters, and refused to yield to the capitalist value of endless accumulation of wealth and power even with the acknowledgement that such an insistence might do harm to China's political and economic interests. Only the ideal of virtuous rule eventually channelled the Ming into an inward-looking and isolationist policy and withdrew itself from the sea, which *accidentally* allowed the Europeans to rise by "climbing up on Asian shoulders".[18] To interpret history in this way, it certainly contradicts Immanuel Wallerstein's position that the European originated modern capitalist World System eventually asserted itself, and expanded to incorporate the entire globe into its orbit.[19] *Since the inner logics varied essentially, it*

---

[18]   Ian Inkster, "Accidents and Barriers: Technology between Europe, China ad Japan for 500 Years", *Asia Journal of International Studies*, Vol. I No. 1, July 1998(a), 1-37; and Andre Gunder Frank, op. cit. (1998), 356.

[19]   Immanuel Wallerstein, "World System versus World-Systems", in Andre Gunder Frank and Barry

is inadequate to judge the success or failure of a culture simply through the comparison of material progress and superficial political and economic structures without taking the possible influence of cultural logics into account. While Chinese economy may be accused of being "restrained" by its idealistic cultural logics, by Chinese cultural standards, dominant values in the European modernising process after the 16th century such as the relentless acquisition of wealth, power and value-free knowledge seem far too cynical and undesirable. Using Weber's terms, the modernising process had converted many Europeans into "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart",[20] who had disturbed the "ought-to-be" balanced material and spiritual relations within a culture. That was not what the Ming Chinese wanted.

The conditions undeniably changed enormously in the 19th century. The supreme value of Chinese cultural wholeness and moral-ethical-commonsense oriented cultural logics was shattered by the military setback after the Opium War. For the Chinese intellectuals in the second half of the 19th century, powerful institutions and efficient mobilising of wealth and military force had become the propositions for any possible prolonging of cultural ideals. It therefore had become a choice between diminishing and survival rather than simply between sets of different cultural values. Despite being morally and ethically unconvinced, and emotionally humiliated, the pro-humanistic based cultural rationality had to yield for the time being and became undesirable *temporarily*. Here, with several modifications, Toynbee's model of challenge and response turns out to be a useful concept in analysing the timing and decision-makings of China. According to Toynbee, challenges that are respectively too weak and too severe would fail to stimulate a creative response.[21] The former may arguably be seen as the case of the European challenge to China between the 16th and 18th centuries. Since it posed no realistic threats yet to China, it made no significant impact on Chinese cultural logics and induced no creative response. To put it simple, there was no motive for change if the Ming Chinese considered that they could

---

K. Gills eds., *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?*, London, Routledge, 1993, 292-296; and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Culture as the Ideological Battleground of the Modern World-System", in Mike Featherstone ed., *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*, London, Sage, 1990, 31-56.
[20] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Surrey, Routledge, 1930 (Translated, Second Edition 1992, by T. Parsons), 181-182.
[21] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1972 One Volume Edition, 97, 123.

maintain their economic and political stability and subjectivity without further efforts. In the late 19th century, when European invasions indeed cast serious doubt on the capacity of the Ching government, we then see not only significant changes in Chinese political and economic institutions (through the Self-Strengthening Movement), but also critical modification in the existing cultural values. The 19th century Chinese experiences suggest that the bottom-line for a society to adhere to its existing cultural logics is its pragmatic survival. Once such awareness was generated, extensive political, economic and institutional reforms may then usher in varied sets of cultural values into such cultural system with far less resistances.

Fourthly, regarding issue of relations between culture and practice, Sahlins summarised the conflict between utilitarianism and a cultural account that "whether the cultural order is to be conceived as the codification of man's actual purposeful and pragmatic action; or whether, conversely, human action in the world is to be understood as mediated by the cultural design, which gives order at once to practical experience, customary practice, and the relationship between the two."[22] In the historical context, Wong on the other hand raises the question that in the 1950s one common family of explanations for the failure of East Asian countries to develop modern industrial economies stressed the absence of an acquisitive individualism in Confucian societies. More recently, a very different story however was told that "Confucian virtues, such as respect for authority and the submerging of individual desires to group goals in a spirit of self-sacrifice, are promoted to explain the Japanese economic miracle." Such contradictory arguments put forward the question that how can cultural attitudes simultaneously hinder and promote economic change?[23] This is certainly a very intriguing question, yet, political and economic historians seem to have lost their creativity when facing cultural factors. If political and economic factors such as capital, market, competition and power control may at different times and occasions be considered as favourable or unfavourable to the function of a political economic system, or to different systems, why then must cultural ideals or cultural values be set into an one-way-effect interpretation to the practice of political economy?

---

[22] Marshall Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*, Chicago, The University of Chicago, 1976, 55.
[23] R. Bin Wong, op. cit. (1997), 2.

Differing from the conventional theoretical dichotomy, the thesis suggests that one may approach the relations between cultural values or ideals (humanistic rationality) and political and economic practices (instrumental rationality) through at least five different modes of intersubjectivities. As expressed in *Chart V-2*, in a mutual complementing mode, the humanistic logic may be applied to bridge the gap of the instrumental measure by filling it with primordial symbols, emotions, and ethical values, and by overlooking less significant physical disparities to achieve a pragmatic end (bloc A1). On the other hand, an established institution that is developed from the enduring political and economic practices may be utilised to reinforce an existing humanistic logic, or generate the new commonsensical logic through practices in the day-to-day life (bloc A2). Thirdly, the humanistic and instrumental logics may oppose each other. An initial compromise of the existing humanistic logic, in degree or in part, may trigger a series of unintended consequences; under which case, new institutions may be established before the change of beliefs, and eventually alters the existing cultural logic (bloc B1). The fourth possible case is that the humanistic feeling may prove to be too strong to repress thus convert into an extensive resisting motivation, and even cause enormous cultural repercussions (bloc B2). The fifth possible mode is the mixed (or shifting) relations between cultural and practical reasons, whose logical and sequential attribution cannot be clearly specified (bloc 3). Therefore, depending on the point of time that one enters, the attribution of the initiating logic for the illustrated historical cases can be variedly defined and interpreted.

The intersubjectivity of humanistic and instrumental rationalities is crucial in the sense that it provides an alternative, yet more complicate, theoretical outlet for the often one-sided narrative of either cultural or material-institutional determinist interpretation of history. Such dialogic modes shift the focus from the oppositional tensions between the humanistic and instrumental rationalities, to the integrative and interconnective relations between cultural and practical reasons and between cultural logics and political economy. To us, the best way to grasp the propensity of cultural transformation is to set oneself into the specific socio-historical context, and search for the contemporary cultural connotation of certain political and economic practices, rather than by making abstract generalisations. We agree with Toynbee that "challenge and response" must be realised as differing from the concept of "cause and effect", in the sense that the effect of a cause is inevitable, invariable, and predictable, but the

291

initiative that is taken by the live parties to an encounter is not a cause but a challenge. And unlike an effect, its response is variable and unpredictable.[24] Such a non-predetermined model of cultural reaction allows us to distinguish our theory of cultural trajectory from the conventional narratives of social evolution. Indeed, cultural ideals are expressed through the function of institutions, and they only become influential to the way people think and behave via the dialogic processes of practice and meaning making. Yet, differing from the traditional modern linear and structural interpretations of culture, which often assign culture a progressive or teleological end that guides itself towards a specific direction, we hold that the inner logics of culture are by no means static and predetermined, but constantly changing in response to internal and external challenges.

As Sahlin suggested in his *Culture and Practical Reason* that "the cultural scheme is variously inflected by a dominant site of symbolic production, which supplies the major idiom of other relations and activities. One can thus speak of a privileged institutional locus of the symbolic process, whence emanates a classificatory grid imposed upon the total culture." Hence, while Western society postulated the utilitarian practical interest that was elaborated first by economic science and applied thence to all domains of social action,[25] Chinese society and its institutions had on the other hand highlighted the humanistic facets of culture, and projected such facets on to the functions of political and economic practices. There everything seemed to be "bathed in a humanistic (moral-ethical-commonsensical) light". Indeed, as presented in Chapter 4 and 6, there had certainly been options for the Chinese emperors, political-economic elites, intellectuals, and people in common. *Thus, it seems more helpful to consider the transformation of a culture as subject to the continuous negotiation processes among different aspects of culture, which involves a changeable pattern of combination among the geo-ethnic conditions, political-economic institutions, practices of routine, embedding cultural logics, external challenges, as well as historical contingencies (or unintended consequences).*

Finally, varying from Toynbee's belief that "the future fate of a civilisation lies in the

---

[24] Arnold J. Toynbee, op. cit. (1972), 97, 123.
[25] Marshall Sahlins, op. cit. (1976), 210-211.

hands of a minority of creative persons,"[26] we argue that cultural transformation is not simply a design of the social elites. Unlike political-economic factors, culture operates in a far more delicate way. As illustrated in Chapter 6, political and economic decisions that are often regarded as decided over by the interest-calculating logic are not so "instrumental" as many have thought. More importantly, there can also be cultural repercussion from the public when the actions of the elites prove to be too gradual or too abrupt, or the humanistic logics are not well dealt with. In other words, the self-adjusting mechanism of a cultural system may operate both ways, either from the top down, involving initiatives of the state or the elite, or form the bottom up, with the activities of the commons or the rebelling masses.[27] Thus, rather than taking culture as a mere facilitating factor that is often "required" by political and economic actors, cultural logics in contrast can be seen as the motives or sustaining momentum, which from time to time orient or condition the elite's engineering measures. In order to reorient the meaning or recombine the existing cultural traits to adapt to a new social, political or economic condition, the elite need to: a) grasp the priority or hierarchy among different cultural stocks, and ground on the existing cultural traditions rather than inventing them from without; b) realise the delicate intersubjectivity or two-way interactions between the humanistic logics and political-economic institutions in a specific cultural system; c) shift the course of cultural logics and collective mentality by resolving the contradiction between the old and new ethics, and conflict between the humanistic and instrumental rationalities; and d) facilitate the instrumental actions with the new institutionalised humanistic drives.

Given the above concluding remarks, it is noted that our studies have stressed more on the structured and authentic history (i.e. a top-down approach) rather than a so-called history from below (or a bottom-up approach), since the material investigated so far involve mainly official sources and accounts at both central and local levels. One potential problem for such a top-down approach is that there is the danger of idealising or romanticising the behaviours of the dominant groups and their interpretation of past. As Ginzburg argued, there had been surprising similarities

---

[26] Ibid., 127.
[27] Gang Deng, op. cit. (1999 (b)), 297.

between basic currents in the peasant culture and those in the most progressive circles of 16th century culture. Thus, to "explain these similarities simply on the basis of movement from high to low involves clinging to the unacceptable notion that ideas originate exclusively among the dominant classes... It forcefully poses a problem... that of the popular roots of a considerable part of high European culture, both medieval and postmedieval."[28] Similarly, we have suggested that in China notions such as family ethics and minimum intervention of the state did not necessarily originate from elite strata. For instance, in Section 5.3.2 the quote extracted from *Chuang-Tsu* 莊子 that "I cultivate [in the field] as the sun rises and rest as the sun sets. I live on freely between the heaven and the earth, and my mind and will fly without restraint, so what is Tien-Hsia [or the emperor] to me," was a direct testimony of a farmer (rather than a central politician) who expressed his belief of the state's ought-to-be weak control.[29] And it seems more adequate to argue that the elite's institutionalisation of culture had conformed to a great extent to the common or popular culture rather than vice versa.

Another criticism for such top-down approach and idealised past is that it may have understated the tensions between belief and practice, or between what one says and what one does. As Bourdieu stresses,[30]

> practice has a logic which is not that of logic... Analysis of the various but closely interrelated aspects of the theorisation effect (forced synchronization of the successive, fictitious totalisaton, neutralization of functions, substitution of the system of products for the system of principles of production, etc.) brings out, in negative form, certain properties of the logic of practice which by definition escape theoretical apprehension, since they are constitutive of that apprehension.

In other words, there exist irregularities and even incoherencies in the logic of practice whereby one's behaviours do not always conform what he/she thought or believed, or that one's acts do not necessarily follow logically and systematically his inner value judgement. The logic of practice therefore can be understood as

---

[28] Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, London and Henley, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980 (Translated Edition by John and Anne Tedeschi, First Published in 1976), 125-126.

[29] See Chuang-Tsu 莊子. *Chuang-Tsu* 莊子. Chapter 28. (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1996 Reprint).

[30] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977, 109-110.

convenience (that is, easy to master and use), which obeys a "principle of the economy of logic whereby no more logic is mobilised than is required by the needs of practice,"[31] and in some cases a cultural agent merely aims to achieve pragmatic objectives in names of cultural values of logics. Moreover, a top down approach might easily overlook the omnipresence of power relations between social groups and the changing pattern of interdependencies that weave people (both allies and opponents) together. This as Elias described is "a fluctuating, tensile equilibrium, a balance of power moving to and fro, inclining first to one side and then to the other."[32] Historical examples as such undeniably exist in both China and Europe, and even in records of official history, it is not difficult for one to trace such inconsistencies between cultural beliefs and practices, as well as the ever shifting power relations.

For instance, as early as in the Earlier Han periods, Huan Kuan's 桓寬 *Treatise on Salt and Iron Monopoly* 鹽鐵論 had recorded a series of controversial debates between the central officials and local scholars. In Huan's treatise, disputes concerning the state's economic and military policies reflect exactly the factual contradictions between the logic of practices and idealistic cultural values. On the issue of state monopoly of salt and iron, while the central officials held that "the state should monopolise the transaction of salt and iron, and utilise the increased income to supplement the military expense at the north", local scholars on the other hand advised the emperor to "base his rule on benevolence, virtue and righteousness" and not to consider too much about "issues of profits and war expense."[33] Whilst the state officers accused the local scholars of "holding to hollow words and being incompetent of providing pragmatic strategies" to secure the north boundaries, the local scholars on the contrary treated the central officials with contempt and blamed them for discarding the virtue of righteousness and "being preoccupied by notions of interest and profit."[34] The records expose precisely the conflict between logics of pragmatism and idealism in traditional China, and interestingly enough, the so-called idealism here emerged not from the

---

[31]   Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1990 (Translate Edition by Richard Nice), 86; and Pierre Bourdieu, op. cit. (1977), 110.
[32]   Quoted from Mike Featherstone, "Nobert Elias and Figurational Sociology: Some Prefatory Remarks", *Theory, Culture & Society*, SAGE, 1987, Vol. 4, No. 2-3, 197-211, quoted page 203.
[33]   Huan Kuan's 桓寬, *Treatise on Salt and Iron Monopoly* 鹽鐵論, d. BC 81 (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1965 Reprints), Vol. 1 No. 1.
[34]   Ibid., Vol. 5 No. 27.

central officials (the authentic top), but from the local scholars (the bottom). The idealistic logics of local scholars in this case had checked the pragmatic power of the state. Besides, at the issue of preventing maritime smuggling, it was recorded in *History of the Ming* that because of Chun Wan's 朱紈 (a civil official of the late Ming) integrity and firm attitudes in banning the smuggling activities, he was falsely charged and sentenced to death by those who harboured the smugglers. Thereafter no one in the central government dared to speak up for the closure of the coastal areas.[35] Here while honouring the candidness of Chun, it revealed at the same time the treacherous natures of other officers. Many of them surely had not stood by the moral-ethical based cultural logic. Looking at the European side, Elias has attributed the beginning of civilising process (in terms of self-discipline and self-control) in the 18th century Europe to the surge of a courtly rationality. To him, the "man of reason" was the product of the "pressure of court life, the vying for the favour of the prince or the 'great'; then, more generally, the necessity to distinguish oneself from others and to fight for opportunities with relatively peaceful means, through intrigue and diplomacy."[36] Therefore, civilisation is "not 'reasonable'; not 'rational', any more than it is 'irrational'. It is set in motion blindly, and kept in motion by the autonomous dynamics of a web of relationships, by specific changes in the way people are bound to live together."[37] To put it in another way, the 18th century European aristocrats were not civilised simply for the sake of wanting to be civilised, apart from the ideal of becoming civilised, such a process was also the result of a combined considerations such as gaining self-interest, prestige, and power of control.

Much more examples can be found in non-official histories and literatures. In the famous book of the Ming scholar Wu Chin-Tzu 吳敬梓, *Unofficial History of the Mandarin* 儒林外史, it depicted a bucketful of misconducts of the Ming mandarinates. Instances such as "county magistrates who abuses their power and maltreated the folk people"; "local gentry who bribed the official for personal benefits"; and "military generals who went to brothels and covered up prostitutes" did not seem uncommon

---

[35] Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al eds, *History of the Ming* 明史, d. 1672-1755 (Taipei, 中華書局, 1981 Reprints), Vol. 250 No. 93.
[36] Nobert Elias, *The Civilising Process*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1994 (Translated Edition by Edmund Jephcott, First Published in 1939), 190.
[37] Nobert Elias, op. cit. (1994), 167.

during the late Ming periods.[38] As summarised in the preface of the 1736 edition, Wu's book reflected the Ming mandarinate's pursuit of fame and wealth. "There are those who flatter and insult people and vie for their own fame and wealth; there are those who rely on their fame and wealth and turn proud and arrogant; and there are those who pretend to be disinterested in names and wealth, and are however mocked by others for their pride and idealism."[39] All these clearly indicate the existence of a "counter cultural logic", which was reacting to the dominant value system at both elite and popular levels. Under the umbrella of moral-ethical-commonsensical based cultural logics, different social groups may hold varied worldviews that were challenging the dominant cultural ideals. As Wang and Liu point out, there was a saying among the Earlier Han civilians that "with gold of a thousand taels, the son of the rich shall never die in the market." This indicates that under the protection of wealth and power, even the law had started to lose its efficacy in maintaining justice.[40] Merchants certainly knew well how to exploit the very best of their money. According to Kuo, in Ching periods, merchants who accumulated hundred thousand taels of silver and indulged themselves in wine drinking and sexuality seemed nothing unusual. Local tyrants who forcibly occupied people's houses and lands and took over other's wives or daughters as concubines were not difficult to find in the local records.[41] Indeed, one should not overlook the dark side of history and over-romantising the past simply to exaggerate the function of idealistic cultural logics. Apart from the dominant cultural values, there were also popular, civilian and merchant cultures, which on the other hand had injected varieties of cultural values (good or bad, moral or immoral) that would provide the internal dynamism and potentials for changes in a cultural system.

Lastly, it is noted that women, who constitute half of the population in Europe and China, had not been given due historical weight in the official history. As Kao emphasized, women had played extremely significant roles in providing labour forces

---

[38]　Wu Chin-Tzu 吳敬梓, *Unofficial History of the Mandarin 儒林外史*, d. 1745-1749 (Taipei, 聯經, 1991), No. 1, 4, 42.
[39]　Ibid., Preface.
[40]　Wang Chao-Hsiang 王兆祥 and Liu Wen-Chih 劉文智, *Merchants in Ancient China 中國古代商人*, Taipei, 台灣商務, 1999, 196.
[41]　Kuo Ying-Te 郭英德 and Kuo Chang-Bao 過常寶, *Local Tyrants in Ancient China 中國古代惡霸*, Taipei, 台灣商務, 1999, 44.

and conducting family education in traditional Chinese societies. Weaving and silk making was allegedly invented by the wife of the Yellow Emperor, Lei Tsu 嫘祖 in China. And from manufacture industries (such as tailoring and embroidery), agriculture (cultivating in field with men), fishing, farming, mining industries to commercial activities, women had been involved in almost all economic spheres in traditional China.[42] Such extensive social participation of women however had not been reflected in their social and political positions. Women were barred from the civil examination system throughout the imperial age, and few female political figures were to be found in official historical records. As revealed on the education of women, the teaching they received was not those to increase their knowledge bases but that of knowledge of constraints such as rules of submitting to their fathers, husbands and sons, obeying the female virtues and tight control of their sexual lives in the name of virginity.[43] Elias pertinently pointed out the problem beneath such an "uneven balance" between the sexes. To him, there was the codified inequality of the society, which through the process of socialisation and institutionalisation has become not only a custom that enshrined an uneven balance of power between the sexes. More importantly, it has become a "habit, part of the social habitus of individuals. The restraint exerted by social custom has largely turned into second nature and, thus, into self-restraint."[44] To approach Chinese culture by using the standard of omnipresence power relations, Elias's term "harmonious inequality" may sum up quite well the relations between dominant Chinese cultural logics and the non-dominant cultural values (i.e. female, peasant, popular and merchant cultures). Indeed, Chinese society also exist the fluctuating balance of power and the ever changing pattern of interdependencies among various groups. However, under the framework of an "uneven balance of power", the dominant value system in China had provided the non-dominant cultures enough flexibility, which allowed them to exist and bend the mainstream cultures for pragmatic reasons as far as they did not destabilise the authentic position of the moral-ethical-commonsensical cultural logics. This harmonious inequality only changed after the middle of the 19th century.

---

[42] Kao Shih-Yu 高世瑜, *Women's Lives in Ancient China* 中國古代婦女生活, 台灣商務, 1998, 34-66.
[43] Ibid., 67.
[44] Nobert Elias, "The Changing Balance of Power between the Sexes—A Process-Sociological Study: The Example of the Ancient Roman State", *Theory, Culture & Society*, SAGE, 1987, Vol. 4, No. 2-3, 287-316, quoted page 287-288.

Although our investigation of the Chinese and European cultural identities and their logics focuses mainly on the past, its implication certainly does not remain historical. In his inaugural speech of May 20th 2000, the President of Taiwan Chen Shei-Bien 陳水扁 still emphasised that Chinese people believe in the Confucian philosophy, that "a government which employs benevolence 'will please those near and appeal to those from afar,' and 'when those from afar will not submit, then one must practice kindness and virtue to attract them.'" Chen even went so far as to judge that "such Chinese wisdom will remain a universal value."[45] In China, the President Chiang Che-Ming 江澤民 made it clear that although he does not wish to see conflict across the Taiwan Straights, yet "if he was forced to make a decision, he is ready to give up the ultimate opportunity of Chinese economic modernisation."[46] This is clearly a modern version of Chinese humanistic logic that prioritises the value of cultural integrity over economic and material progress. Marching into the Third Millennium, just as global theorists assume that modernisation and the experience of modernity, as the set of "world historical processes", have become the inevitable "global fate", the power of traditional Chinese cultural logics on the contrary remain immense. As Tomlinson rightly points out, the so-called "modernisation theory" pretends that the countries of the Third World were progressing independently from "traditional" to "modern" as Europe had in the period between the 16th and the 20th centuries, and "conveniently ignores the history of economic exploitation under colonialism and the continuance of this within the market structure of global capitalism."[47] Our historical studies suggest that the exchanges of culture require a clearer distinction between the diffused cultural elements per se (e.g. science, technology, or ideas), and the intrinsic ethnocentric motives behind them. The spread of Indian Buddhism into China and East Asia had caused far less cultural resistances and repercussions than that of the European "imposition" of scientific and liberal values of political economy around the world. Although there may well be structural cultural differences between the two cases, it is reasonable to hold that *only by curtailing the innate sense of superiority of the*

---

[45] "President Chen's 520 Inaugural Speech: Taiwan Stands Up: Advancing to an Uplifting Era," released by Council of Mainland China Affairs, May 20th, 2000.
[46] See "Lee Kuan-Yao: Chiang Che-Ming does not Wish to see the Conflict across the Straits 李光耀：江澤民不願見到兩岸衝突", *China Times Evening Post 中時晚報*, Oct 20th, 2000.
[47] See John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism, A Critical Introduction*, London, Pinter, 1991, 143, 144, 147-148.

transmitting agents and tranquillising the reactive humanistic emotions and logics at the receiving ends will the receiving cultural systems be allowed to formulate an objective, or even positive reinterpretation of the ties between the existing and new diffused cultural values.

Modernisation is an unfinished process,[48] and history has certainly not come to an end. Truly, we cannot be sure whether China is able to overcome the Western challenges as it did to incorporate the Indian Buddhist thought as an integral part of its culture. And it is not yet clear whether the introduction of Western cultural elements has brought with it a decisive break in Chinese historical trajectory and changed its entire cultural configuration.[49] However, it seems clear that severe traumas of the 19th century defeats have forced upon China the need to be increasingly responsive to the existing cultural traditions. And judging from the recent emergences of "East Asian capitalism", the "planned market economy" in China, and so-called "socialism with Chinese characteristics",[50] we agree with Inkster that those new developments may be more than "simply an extension of the life of the global system through the positing of stimulative 'challenge' to the centre," but the "early years of diverse modes of development, or even of convergence away from the existing core towards a new regional sites of endeavour." The new modes of political economic institutions might not work by the rules of the Western capitalist regime of the post-Enlightenment period, but emerge as "viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism."[51]

In the global age, what Chinese culture needs to come to terms with, are not merely Western science and technology, or to master the way of acquiring wealth and power. As Tu argues, when Chinese intellectuals begin to shift their focus away from the West, and once more learn from cultures such as India and other underdeveloping nations, this would mean that China has eventually surpassed the mental barriers involved in taking Western values as *The* model.[52] Similar indicators may be applied

---

[48] Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity—An Incomplete Project", *New German Critique*, No. 22, Winter, 1981, 3-15.
[49] Arnold J. Toynbee, op. cit. (1972), 59.
[50] Lo Hsiao-Nan 羅曉南, *Contemporary Chinese Cultural Transformation and Identity* 當代中國文化轉型與認同, Taipei, 生智, 1997, 31-32.
[51] Ian Inkster, *The Japanese Industrial Economy. Late Development and Cultural Causation*, London and New York, Routledge, 2001, 129.
[52] Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明, op. cit. (1996), 96.

to the European side. Featherstone is correct that "it is no longer possible to conceive global processes in terms of the dominance of a single centre over the peripheries... While cultural integration processes are taking place on a global level the situation is becoming increasingly pluralistic, or polytheistic."[53] When the West finally begins to take serious account of adopting non-Western cultural values, it would mean that the Europeans have eventually abandoned their thousand-year-old Eurocentrism. Taking what is happening in the European Union's integration movements, the influence of cultural values such as unity and diversity do tend to involve a two-way interaction. The Europeans today are reconsidering the "historical constructions of diversity" by placing greater emphasis on the "common cultural values and roots" and adopting a cultural policy under the approach of "unity in diversity".[54] Political and economic elites attempt to formulate a new sense of cultural integrity through new "invented dragon symbols",[55] (although it is far from clear to what extent these symbolic artefacts will constitute a newly designed, overarching European cultural identity). And as shown in the colloquy of the European Cultural Charter, there are also reflections on the crisis of modern industrial Western civilisation,[56]

> gradually, after the Renaissance, [instrumental] rationality tended to gain the upper hand in a culture which was turning into an economic machine backed up by technology... There is a growing awareness that conventional reason has its limitations, however subtle the operation of combinative reasoning. For reason also has a wider, unconscious dimension consisting of intuition, imagination and poetry, modes in which in the arts and sciences, reason is seen to be at its most creative combinative reason being necessary for verification (in the full etymological sense of the word).

Indeed, in the modern world the loss of an ethical totality proved difficult to repair. "The problems of grafting a comprehensive ethic for the totality of life-conduct on to

---

[53]   Mike Featherstone, *Undoing Culture: Globalisation, Postmodernism and Identity*, London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi, Sage, 1995, 12-13.
[54]   Decision No 508/2000/EC of The European Parliament and of the Council of 14 February 2000 Establishing the Culture 2000 Programme, OJEC, L 63, 10.3.2000, 1-2.
[55]   These include symbols such as the European passport, the twelve gilded stars "European flag", the 9th May "European Day", the official anthem "Ode to Joy", the pan-European institutions—the European Commission, European University Institute and European Disney—and the new single European currency. Peter Odermatt, "The Use of Symbols in the Drive For European Integration", in J. Th. Leerssen and M. Spiering eds., *Yearbook of European Studies 4—National Identity*, Amsterdam, GA, 1991, 222, 224, 227.
[56]   Council of Europe, *The European Cultural Charter. Colloquy on the Cultural Identity of Europe Past and Present*, Strasbourg, Council for Cultural Co-operation, 1980, 3, 13.

the separate aesthetic, erotic and intellectual life-orders within a differentiated cultural sphere proved demanding."[57] All these concerns make full sense for us to re-evaluate the once undesirable pro-humanistic Chinese cultural rationality, and to reassess the functional roles of human feelings, emotions, compassions, commonsense, and memories behind the superficial economic-political structures, interests, and power relations.[58] An integral cultural rationality enables us to face and rediscover a place for the humanistic needs of people rather than to take them as "irrational elements" and wait for unexpected cultural repercussions. Taking both instrumental and humanistic motivations into account, a cultural perspective may in many cases extend the explanatory power of human reason, and contribute to clarify many of the *yet-to-be-identified* factors that cannot be adequately contextualised by instrumental rationality alone.

---

[57] Mike Featherstone, op. cit. (1995), 38.
[58] Just as one might have noted that the diagram of *The Trajectory of Cultural Identity* (*Chart II-1*), which is utilised, in our attempt, to express a combined Western cultural theory and Chinese cultural thinking, in fact resembles an "adapted version" of the thousand-year-old Chinese symbol of Tai-Chi 太極. Such an attempt again demonstrates the "recursive nature", or in Giddens' term, the capacity of "reflexivity", of an old, and to many, undesirable way of thinking, which despite its enduring existence keeps acting back upon a cultural agent as the way it does to this present work. See Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge, 1990, Polity Press, 36; and Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1984, xxiii.

Bibliography

About Translations:

All Chinese sources including the titles of the books and articles, unless otherwise specified, are translated literally into English by myself (according to the meaning of the titles and texts) with the Chinese titles in Chinese characters also provided. In cases of the names of locations, dynasty and specific historical periods, they are translated according to the phonetic transliteration table of the Wade and Giles system (except that in some famous cities and places such as Taiwan, Taipei, Macao, Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Mongolia, Tibet and Yangtze River etc the common usages are applied), and with the original Chinese nouns or phrases given in Chinese characters. In the footnotes and bibliography, the authors' Chinese names are also transliterated according to the Wade and Giles system, unless a proper English name is given by the author, in which case the proper English name will be attached behind in brackets. The publishers of Chinese books and journals are only given in their original Chinese characters, as the English translation or transliteration does not make it easier to trace their sources.

Pre-1914 Chinese Sources:

The following primary sources: *Book of the Han* 漢書, Vol. 28, No.2; *Book of the Late Han* 後漢書, Vol. 19, No. 1; *Book of the Chin* 晉書, Vol. 14; *Book of the Sui* 隋書, Vol. 29; *The Old Book of the Tang* 舊唐書, Vol. 16; *The New Book of the Tang* 新唐書, Vol. 37; *History of the Sung* 宋史, Vol. 8 and 85; *History of the Chin* 金史, Vol. 46; *History of the Yuan* 元史, Vol. 58; *History of the Ming* 明史, Vol. 77; are only used in *Chart III-6* as referring to the official registered figures of Chinese populations in each dynasty. The texts are drawn from the *Twenty-four Dynastic History of China* in the electronic database of *Scripta Sinica* 漢籍電子文獻資料庫, which is open to public access on the website of Academia Sinica of Taiwan (http://www.sinica.edu.tw/ ftms-bin/ftmsw3).

_____ *The Analects* 論語. Section 2, 4, and 16. (Taipei, 啟明書局, Reprints.)
_____ *The Book of Changes* 周易. Vol. 3. (Taipei, 地球, 1994 Reprints).
Chang Chong 張翀. "Memorial on Refusing Extra Tributes so as to Declare the Utmost Honesty to the Public 停免額外貢獻以昭大信疏". in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)
Chang Han 張瀚 ed. *Selective Compilations of the Royal Ming Memorials* 皇明疏議輯略. d. 1551.

(Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Chang Lu 張祿. "Memorial on Rejecting Rare Objects so as to Cultivate the Sacred Mind 卻異物以養聖心疏". in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Chang Ting-Yu 張廷玉 et al eds. *History of the Ming* 明史. d. 1672-1755 (Taipei, 中華書局, 1981 Reprints.)

Chen Chih-Lung 陳子龍 et al eds. *Collected Royal Ming Documents on Statecraft* 皇明經世文編. d. 1628-1644. (Taipei, 臺聯國風, 1968 Reprints.)

Chen Jen-Hsi 陳仁錫 ed. "The Instruction of Emperor Tai-Tsu—Succumbing the Barbarians 太祖高皇帝寶訓—馭夷狄". *Collections on the Royal Ming Records concerning State Affairs* 皇明世法錄. d. 1630. Vol. 6. (Taipei, 學生書局, 1965 Reprints.)

Chen Shou 陳壽. *Records of the Three Kingdoms* 三國志. Vol. 32. (Taipei, 商務印書館, 1981 Reprints.)

Cheng Hsiao 鄭曉. *Royal Ming Empirical Research on All Foreigners* 皇明四夷考. Preface. d. 1564. (Taipei,華文 1969 Reprints.)

Chia San-Ching 賈三近 et al eds. *Transcripts on the Royal Ming Memoranda in the Reigns of Chia-Ching and Long-Ching (1522-1572)* 皇明兩朝疏鈔. d. 1586. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 465. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Chiu Chun 邱濬. "Succumbing the Barbarians 馭夷狄". in Chen Chih-Lung 陳子龍 et al eds. *Collected Royal Ming Documents on Statecraft* 皇明經世文編. d. 1628-1644. Vol. 73. (Taipei, 臺聯國風, 1968 Reprints.)

_____ "The Limits of Keeping the Chinese Inside and Foreigners Outside—One 內夏外夷之限一". in Shing Huang 黃訓, *Collected Royal Ming Records of Famous Officials on Statecraft* 皇明名臣經濟錄. d. 1522-1566. Vol. 16. (Taipei, 學海, 1984 Reprints.)

Chuang-Tsu 莊子. *Chuang-Tsu* 莊子. Chapter 28. (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1996 Reprint).

Chun Yuan-Chang 朱元璋. "The Royal Ming Ancestral Instructions 皇明祖訓". in *Literature on the Foundation of Ming Dynasty* 明朝開國文獻. d 1368-1398. (Taipei, 學生書局, 1966 Reprints.)

Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed. d. 1522-1566. *The Royal Ming Edicts and Decrees* 皇明詔令. (Taipei, 文海, 1984 Reprints.)

Ho Tang 何瑭. "Memorial on the Exhausting Wealth of the People 民財空虛疏". in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. Vol. 38. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Hsieh Chin 解縉 et al etc. *Encyclopaedia of Yung-Lo* 永樂大典. Preface. d. 1408. (Beijing, 中華書局, 1986 Reprints.)

Huan Kuan 桓寬. *Treatise on Salt and Iron Monopoly* 鹽鐵論. d. BC 81. (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1965 Reprints).

Huang Shing 黃訓. *Collected Royal Ming Records of Famous Officials on Statecraft* 皇明名臣經濟錄. d. 1522-1566. Vol. 16. (Taipei, 學海, 1984 Reprints.)

Li Hsiang 李賢. "Letter on the Dispersion of the Foreigners 論散處夷人疏". in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. Vol. 54. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Liu Chiu 劉球. "Memorial Regarding Affairs of the Frontier Defense 邊防事宜疏". in Ching Emperor Koa-Tsung 清高宗 ed. *The Royal Selected Letters of Ming Officials* 御選明臣奏議. d. 1828. Vol. 2. (Collected in the *Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries of Wen-Yuan-Ke* 文淵閣四庫全書. Vol. 445. Taipei, 臺灣商務, 1983-1986 Reprints.)

Liu Hsiang 劉向. *Shuo Yuan* 說苑. Vol 15. (Taipei, 台灣商務, 1965Reprints.)

Lao Tan 老聃. *Lao-Tsu* 老子. Section 2. (Taipei, 時報文化, 1987 Reprints.)

Ma Wen-Sheng 馬文升. "Letter of the Strategy to Defend against the Barbarians 禦虜方略疏". in Sun

Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

_____ "Letter Urging a Soft Approach for the Appeasement of All Foreigners 敦懷柔以安四夷疏. in Chih-Lung Chen 陳子龍 et al eds. *Collected Royal Ming Documents on Statecraft* 皇明經世文編. d. 1628-1644. Vol. 62. (Taipei, 臺聯國風, 1968 Reprints.)

Ni Yueh 倪岳. "Memorial on Stopping the Foreign Tributes 止貢夷疏", in Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Ssu-Ma Chien 司馬遷. *The Records of History* 史記. Vol. 129, No. 69. (Taipei, 臺灣古籍出版, 1996 Reprints.)

Sun Hsun 孫旬 ed. *Transcripts of the Royal Ming Memoranda* 皇明疏鈔. d. 1584. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 463-464. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Sung Lien 宋濂. "Manifesto to People in the Central Field 諭中原檄". in Fu Feng-Hsiang 傅鳳翔 ed. d. 1522-1566. *The Royal Ming Edicts and Decrees* 皇明詔令. (Taipei, 文海, 1984 Reprints.)

Sung Ying-Hsing 宋應星. *The Exploitation of the Work of Nature* 天工開物. d. 1637. (Taipei, 金楓出版, 1986 Reprints.)

Tsao Chiu-Ming 左丘明. *Records of States* 國語. Vol. 16. (Taipei, 商務印行, 1975 Reprints.)

Tu Yu 杜佑. *Trans-dynastic Records* 通典. Vol. 13, 14 and 19. (Taipei, 商務印行, 1987 Reprints.)

Tung Lun 董倫 and Hsieh Chin 解縉 et al eds. *Veritable Records of the Ming* 明實錄. *(Veritable Records of Ming Tai-Tsu* 太祖實錄. c. 1399; and *Veritable Records of Tai-Tsung* 太宗實錄. r. 1402-1424. Taipei, 中央研究院歷史語言研究所, 1984 Reprints.)

Wang Hsi 王圻. *Sequel to the General Research on Historical Literatures* 續文獻通考. d. 1603. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 758-769. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Wei Huan 魏煥. *The Royal Ming Empirical Research of the Nine Boundaries* 皇明九邊考. d. 1542. (Taipei, 華文 1969 Reprints.)

Wu Chin-Tzu 吳敬梓. *Unofficial History of the Mandarin* 儒林外史. d. 1745-1749 (Taipei, 聯經, 1991).

Yao Kuei 姚虁. "Letter on the Issue of Foreign Situations 夷情疏". in Chen Chih-Lung 陳子龍 eds. *Collected Royal Ming Documents on Statecraft* 皇明經世文編, d. 1628-1644. Vol. 56. (Taipei, 臺聯國風, 1968 Reprints.)

Yen Tsung-Chien 嚴從簡, *Records on Journeys to Foreign Territories* 殊域周咨錄. d. 1574. (Collected in the *Compilation of the Sequel to Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries* 續修四庫全書. Vol. 736. Shanghai, 上海古籍出版社, 1995 Reprints.)

Post-1914 Chinese Sources:

Alitto, Guy 艾愷. 1986. *Cultural Conservatism* 文化守成主義. Taipei, 時報文化. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Chang Hsi-Lung 張錫綸. 1968. "Chinese Trade in Indo-China and Islands of South China Sea during the 15th to 17th Centuries 十五六七世紀間中國在印度支那及南洋群島的貿易". In Pao Tsen-Peng 包遵彭 ed. *International Trade during the Ming Period* 明代國際貿易. Taipei, 台灣學生書局, 71-86.

Chang Lien 張璉. 1992. "The Publication under the Despotic Cultural Policy of the Ming 明代專制文化政策下的圖書出版情形". *Sinology Research* 漢學研究. Vol. 10 No. 2, 355-369.

Chang Pao-Min 張保民. 1997. "Comparative Studies of Processes of Modernisation In China, Japan and Taiwan 中日台現代化進程之比較". *History* 歷史月刊. Taipei, July, 110-119.

Chang Yen 張研. 2000. *The 18th Century Chinese Society* 十八世紀的中國社會. Taipei, 昭明.

Chen Chia-Yen 陳嘉言 and Yang Ching-Hsien 楊靜賢. 1988. *Chinese Modern History 中國近代史*. Taipei, 大中國圖書.

Chen Kao-Hua 陳高華 and Chen Shang-Shen 陳尚勝. 1997. *The History of Chinese Overseas Communication 中國海外交通史*. Taipei, 文津出版社.

Chen Ko-Wei 陳可畏. 1981. "About the Formational and Developmental Problems of Nations in China 關於中國的民族形成與發展問題". In 中國民族學研究會 ed., *Ethnological Studies 民族學研究*. Beijing, 民族出版社, 28-36.

Chen Yung-Cheng 陳永崝. 1988. "The Essence of Chinese Culture—Dragon 中國文化的本質—龍". *The Fine Arts of China 中國美術*. Vol. 10, July, 121-123.

Chen Yu-Ying 陳玉英. 1984. "Research of the Ming's Tributary Trade 明代貢舶貿易研究". In Chih-Ho Wu 吳智和 ed. *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History 明史研究論叢*. Taipei, 大立, Vol. II, 343-398.

Chi Chien-Fei 祈劍飛. 1993. *The World's Perspective towards China 世界的中國觀*. Taipei, 博遠.

Chien Mu 錢穆. 1989. *Nation and Culture 民族與文化*. Taipei, 東大出版.

_____ 1993. *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History 中國文化史導論*. Taipei, 台灣商務印行.

_____ 1995(a). *Outline History of China 國史大綱 Vol. I.* Taipei, 國立編譯館, Revised Third Edition (First Published in 1940).

_____ 1995(b). *Outline History of China 國史大綱 Vol. II.* Taipei, 國立編譯館, Revised Third Edition (First Published in 1940).

Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤, Fan, Hung-Yeh 樊洪業 and Liu, Ching-Feng 劉青峰. 1986. "Cultural Background and the Structural Changes of Science and Technology 文化背景與科學技術結構的演變". In Kuan-Tao Chin 金觀濤 and Ching-Feng Liu 劉青峰. *Questions and Methodologies 問題與方法集*. Taipei, 谷風, 157-239.

Chin Kuan-Tao 金觀濤 and Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰. 1994 (a). *Prosperity and Crisis 興盛與危機*. Taipei, 風雲時代出版公司.

_____ 1994 (b). *Transformation in Opening Up 開放中的變遷*. Taipei, 風雲時代出版公司.

_____ 2000. *The Origins of Modern Chinese Thought—The Evolution of Chinese Political Culture from the Perspective of Ultrastable Structure (Vol. I) 中國現代思想的起源—超穩定結構與中國政治文化的演變*. Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chinese University. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Chin Yao-Chi 金耀基. 1991. *The Modernisation of China and Intellectuals 中國現代化與知識份子*. Taipei, 時報文化, Second Edition.

_____ 1992. *From Tradition to Modern 從傳統到現代*. Taipei, 時代文化, Third Edition (First Published 1990).

Chou Shih-Fu 周世輔. 1990. *History of Chinese Philosophy 中國哲學史*. Taipei, 三民書局, Revised Sixth Edition.

Chow Chung-Cheng 晁中辰. 1996. *The Biography of Ming Emperor Cheng-Tsu 明成祖傳*. Taipei, 台灣商務.

Feng Erh-Kang 馮爾康. 1988. *Introduction to the Studies of Chinese Social History 中國社會史研究概述*. Taipei, 谷風.

Han Yang-Min 韓養民. 1986. *Cultural History of Chin and Han Dynasties 秦漢文化史*. Taipei, 里仁書局.

History Monthly 歷史月刊 ed. 1996. *Three Thousands Years Ethnic Integration 族群融合三千年*. Taipei, 歷史智庫.

Hsiao Chi-Ching 蕭啟慶. 1996. "Ethnic Policy and Ethnic Relations in Yuan Dynasty 元朝的族群政策與族群關係". In History Monthly 歷史月刊 ed. *Three Thousands Years Ethnic Integration 族群融合三千年*. Taipei, 歷史智庫, 121-136.

Hsieh Chien (Hsieh Jiann)謝劍. 1994. "Cultural Identity, Ethnic Identity and Nationalism: Taking the Diversity of China as a Case Study 文化認同, 族群認同與民(國)族主義:以中國的多元性為例". In Ching-Feng Liu 劉青峰 ed. *民族主義與中國現代化 Nationalism and Chinese Modernisation*. Hong Kong, 中文大學出版社, 159-176.

_____ 1999. "China is One Nation. Discussion on the So-Called 'Tibet Problem' 中國當然是一個民族.並論所謂'西藏問題'". *香港社會科學學報 Hong Kong Journal of Social*

Science. No. 14, 201-227. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Hsu Cho-Yun 許倬雲. 1988. *Features of Chinese Ancient Culture 中國古代文化的特質*. Taipei, 聯經.

Hsu Wei-Shan 徐文珊. 1969. *A Research on Chinese Nation 中華民族之研究*. Tai-Chung, 中台印刷場.

Hsu Yu-Hu 徐玉虎. 1967. "Research on the Navigation Map of Cheng Ho's West Expeditions 鄭和下西洋航海圖考". *The Mainland Journal of Historical Science 大陸雜誌史學叢書*. Vol. II. No. 4, 46-50.

Hsueh Hua-Yuan 薛化元. 1991. *晚清「中體西用」思想論 1861-1900 The Late Ching Thoughts on "Chinese System with Western Means" 1861-1900*. Taipei, 稻香出版社.

Hu Shih 胡適. 1980. "Whole Scale Globalisation and Wholesale Westernisation 充分世界化與全盤西化". In Shih Hu 胡適. *Dr. Hu Shih and the Chinese and Western Cultures 胡適與中西文化*. Taipei, 牧童社, First Edition.

_____. 1980. *Dr. Hu Shih and the Chinese and Western Cultures 胡適與中西文化*. Taipei, 牧童社 First Edition. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Huang Jen-Yu (Huang, Ray) 黃仁宇. 1989. *Discussing Chinese History at the Hudson River Side 赫遜河畔談中國歷史*. Taipei, 時報文化.

_____. 1993. *China: A Macro History 中國大歷史*. Taipei, 聯經. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Huang Li-Chih 黃力之. 1998. "Reconsideration of Cultural Assimilation in the Post Cold-War Era 冷戰后文化同化問題沉思錄". *Cultural Studies 文化研究*. November, 93-96.

Jang Byung-Seok 鄭炳碩. 1999. "Viewing the Harmony of Confucius and Confucianists from the Viewpoint of Cultural Conflict 從文明衝突看孔子與儒家和諧理念". *Leguin Monthly 鵝湖月刊*. Vol. 3 No. 25, 9-12. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Kang Chih-Chieh 康志杰. 1999. "Reasons Why the Jesuits in Ming and Ching China Defied the Dutch 明清之際在華耶穌會士抵制荷蘭的原因". *歷史月刊 History Monthly*. May, 103-110.

Kao Shih-Yu 高世瑜. 1998. *Women's Lives in Ancient China 中國古代婦女生活*. 台灣商務.

Kung Peng-Cheng 龔鵬程. 1995. *Thinking and Culture 思想與文化*. Taipei, 業強出版社.

Kuo Huong-Chih 郭洪紀. 1995. *Cultural Nationalism 文化民族主義*. Taipei, 遠流. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Kuo Ting-Yi 郭廷以. 1994. *The Guideline History of Modern China 近代中國史綱*. Taipei, 曉園出版社, Vol. I.

Kuo Ying-Te 郭英德 and Kuo Chang-Bao 過常寶. 1999. *Local Tyrants in Ancient China 中國古代惡霸*. Taipei, 台灣商務.

Li Kuo-Chi 李國祁. 1986. *Chinese History 中國歷史*. Taipei, 三民書局.

Liang Shu-Ming 梁漱溟. 1982. *The Essence of Chinese Culture 中國文化要義*. Taipei, 里仁書局, First Edition.

Liu Chih-Chin 劉志琴 and Wu Ting-Chia 吳廷嘉. 1994. *An Introduction to Chinese Cultural History 中國文化史概論*. Taipei, 文津出版社.

Liu Ching-Feng 劉青峰 ed. 1994. *民族主義與中國現代化 Nationalism and Chinese Modernisation*. Hong Kong, 中文大學出版社.

Liu Kuang-Ching 劉廣京. 1987. "The Second Preface: Modern Institution and Merchant 後序:近世制度與商人". In Yu Ying-Shih 余英時. *Chinese Modern Religious Ethic and Merchant Spirit 中國近世宗教倫理與商人精神*. Taipei, 聯經, 31-32.

Liu Yung-Chieh 劉永佶. 1997. *Chinese Cultural Modernisation 中國文化現代化*. Shih Chia Chuang 石家庄, 河北大學出版社.

Lo Hsiao-Nan 羅曉南. 1997. *Contemporary Chinese Cultural Transformation and Identity 當代中國文化轉型與認同*. Taipei, 生智.

Malinowski, B. 1987. *What is Culture? 文化論*. Taipei, 台灣商務印書館 (Translated Fourth Edition by Fei Tung 費通, First Published in 1944).

Mou Tsung-San 牟宗三. 1954. "The Feature of Chinese Culture 中國文化之特質". *The Symposium of Chinese Culture 中國文化論集*. Taipei, 中華文化出版事業委員會, 190-222.

Pao Tsen-Peng 包遵彭. 1961. *On the Ships of Cheng-Ho 鄭和下西洋之寶船考*. Taipei, 中華叢書.

Pao Tsen-Peng 包遵彭 ed. 1968. *International Trade during the Ming Period 明代國際貿易*. Taipei, 台灣學生書局.

Su Ming-Yang 蘇明陽. 2002. "A Historical Account of Cheng Ho's Westward Expeditions (I)鄭和下西洋歷史漫談(一)". *The NTOU Newsletter 海洋大學校訊*. Vol. 113, Jan.

Sun Lung-Chi 孫隆基. 1992. *The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture 中國文化的深層結構*. Hong Kong, 集賢社.

Tang Te-Kang 唐德剛. 1998. *Seventy Years in the Late Ching Period (I) The Transformation of Chinese Society and Culture 晚清七十年(壹). 中國社會文化轉型綜論*. Taipei, 遠流.

Tien Chih-li 田志力. 1998. *China's Economic Area in the 21ˢᵗ Century21 世紀中華經濟區*. Taipei, 立緒文化事業.

Ting Wei-Ch 丁偉志.1998. "The Historical Features of Sino-West Cultural Exchange in Modern China 近代中國中西文化交流的歷史特點". *Cultural Studies 文化研究*. Nov. 1998, 32-36.

Tsai Hui-Chin 蔡惠琴. 1998. "Studies on the Mentality of *Shih* who Participated in the Civil Service Examinations of Mid- and Late-Ming Period (Chia-Ching—Wan-Li) 明代中晚期 (嘉靖—萬曆) 士人科舉心態之探討". *Fu-Jen History Newsletter 輔仁歷史學報*. Vol. 9, June, 113-135.

Sun Kuang-Te 孫廣德. 1982. *The Debates on Tradition and Westernisation in the Late Ching Period 晚清傳統與西化的爭論*. Taipei, 台灣商務印行.

Tu Feng-Hsien 杜奉賢. 1997. *The Developmental Theory of Chinese History: A Comparison between Marx and Weber's Theory on China 中國歷史發展理論: 比較馬克思與偉伯的中國論*. Taipei, 正中書局.

Tu Wei-Ming 杜維明. 1996. *Modern Spirit and Confucians Tradition 現代精神與儒家傳統*. Taipei, 聯經.

Wang Chao-Hsiang 王兆祥 and Liu Wen-Chih 劉文智. 1999. *Merchants in Ancient China 中國古代商人*. Taipei, 台灣商務.

Wei Cheng-Tung 韋政通. 1991. *Introduction to Chinese Culture 中國文化概論*. Taipei, 水牛出版社..

Wei E 魏萼. 2000 (a). *The Wealth of Nations: A Chinese Version. The New Wealth of Nations with Chinese Characteristics 中國國富論:一個富有中國特色的新國富論*. Taipei, 時報. (Title Translated by the Author.)

_____2000 (b). *The Wealth of Nations: A Chinese Version. A Third Hand in Economic China 中國國富論:經濟中國的第三隻手*. Taipei, 時報. (Title Translated by the Author.)

Wu Chih-Ho 吳智和 ed. 1984. *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History 明史研究論叢*. Taipei, 大立.

Wu Chi-Hua 吳緝華. 1984. "The Connectivity between the Ming's Restriction over the Sea and its Isolation Policy—A New Research on the Causes for the Sea Restriction Policy 明代海禁與對外封鎖政策的連環性—海禁政策成因新探". in Wu Chih-Ho 吳智和 ed. *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History 明史研究論叢*. Taipei, 大立, Vol. II, 127-143.

Yang Kuan 楊寬. 1999. *History of Western Chou Dynasty 西周史*. Taipei, 商務印行.

Yang Kuo-Chen 楊國楨 and Chen Chih-Ping 陳支平. 1999. *The New Compiled History of the Ming 明史新編*. Taipei, 昭明出版社.

Yen Shou-Cheng 閻守誠. 1997. *History of Chinese Population 中國人口史*. Taipei, 文津.

Yen Yun-Hsieng 閻雲翔. 1988. "Research on the Dragon 試論龍的研究". *Chio-Chou Academic Periodical 九州學刊*. Vol. 2 No. 2, Jan, 99-110;

Yi Mo-Yuan 易謀遠. 1981. "The Ancestral National Formation and Development in China 中國古代民族的形成和發展". In 中國民族學研究會 ed. *Ethnological Studies 民族學研究*. Beijing, 民族出版社, 8-27.

Ying Chang-Yi 尹章義. 1984. "Tang Ho and the South East Coastal Defense in the Early Ming Period 湯和與明初東南海防". In Chih-Ho Wu 吳智和 ed. *Treatises on the Studies of Ming History 明史研究論叢*. Taipei, 大立, Vol. II, 145-221.

Yu Ying-Shih 余英時. 1980. *The History of Chinese Shih Stratum—Ancient History 中國之士階層史論-古代篇*. Taipei, 聯經.

_____1987. *Chinese Modern Religious Ethic and Merchant Spirit 中國近世宗教倫理與商人精神*. Taipei, 聯經.

_____1992. *Observing the Modern Meaning of Chinese Culture from its Value System 從價值體系看中國文化的現代意義*. Taipei, 時報文化.

Pre-1914 English Sources:

Herodotus, *The History*. Chicago, The University of Chicago, Translated Edition 1987 (by David Grene).

A General Collection of Voyages and Discoveries, Made by the Portuguese and the Spaniards, during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. 1789. London, Published by W. Richardson, J. Bew, T. Hookham, J. and T. Egerton, and C. Stalker, , 10.

Post-1914 English Sources:

Adshead, S.A.M. 2000. *China in World History*. London and New York, Macmillan Press LTD, Third Edition (First Published in 1988).

Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities*. London and New York, Verso.

Anderson, M. S. 1985. *The Ascendancy of Europe 1815-1914*. London and New York, Longman, Second Edition (First Published in 1972).

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. and Tiffin, H. eds. 1995. *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*. London and New York, Routledge.

Banton, Michael and Harwood, Jonathan. 1975. *The Race Concept*. Newton Abbot, London and Vancouver, David & Charles.

Barth, Fredrik ed. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries—the Social Organisation of Culture Difference*. Bergen-Oslo, Universitets Forlaget, and London, George Allen and Unwin.

Benedict, Ruth. 1961. *Patterns of Culture*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, (First Published 1935).

Ben-Tovim, Gideon. 1997. "Why 'Positive Action' is 'Politically Correct'". In Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner eds. *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe*. London and New York, Sed Books Ltd., 209-222.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1999. "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern. The Question of Agency". In Simon During ed. *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London and New York, 1993, 190-208.

Bideleux, Robert and Jeffries, Ian. 1998. *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change*. New York and London, Routledge.

Bielenstein, Hans. 1980. *The Bureaucracy of Han Times*. Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne and Sydney, Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

_____1990. *The Logic of Practice*, Cambridge, Polity Press (Translate Edition by Richard Nice).

Bowen, James. 1972. *A History of Western Education*. Vol. One, London, Methuen & Co Ltd.

Braibanti, Ralph and Spengler, Joseph J. eds. 1961. *Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development*. Durham, Duke University Press,

Braudel, Fernand. 1979. *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century, Vol. I, The Structure of Everyday Life*. London, Fontana Press, (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds).

_____1980. *On History*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, (Translated Edition by Sarah Matthews).

_____1982. *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. Vol. II, The Wheels of Commerce*, London, Phoenix Press (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds).

_____1984. *Civilisation and Capitalism 15th-18th Century. Vol. III, The Perspective of the World*. London, Collins, (Translated Edition by Siân Reynolds).

_____1987. *A History of Civilisations*. London, Allen Lane and The Penguin Press, (Translated Edition 1994, by R. Mayne).

Bronowski, J. and Mazlish, B. 1963. *The Western Intellectual Tradition*, Middlesex, Penguin Books.

Brook, Timothy and Luong, Hy V. 1999. "Introduction: Culture and Economy in the Postcolonial World". In Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong eds. *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern Asia*. Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 1-21.

Brook, Timothy and Luong, Hy V. eds. 1999. *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern Asia*. Michigan, The University of Michigan Press.

Brook, Timothy. 1999. "Profit and Righteousness in Chinese Economic Culture". In Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong eds. *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern*

Asia. Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 27-44.

Burn, A. R. 1952. *The Government of the Roman Empire. From Augustus to the Antonines*. London, Historical Association.

Burns, E. M. and Lerner, R. E. and Meacham, S. 1980. *Western Civilisations*. New York, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Caglar, Ayse S. 1997. "Hyphenated Identities and the Limits of 'Culture'". In Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner eds. *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe*. London and New York, Sed Books Ltd., 169-185.

Carr, E. H. 1961. *What is History?* London, Penguin Books.

Chan, Gerald. 1999. "The Origin of the Interstate System: The Warring States in Ancient China". *Issues & Studies*, Vol. 35 No. 1, 147-166.

Chaudhuri, K. N. 1990. *Asia before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Chi, Chao-Ting. 1936. *Key Economic Areas in Chinese History*. London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Childe, Gordon. 1954. *What Happened in History*. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, Revised Edition (First Published 1942).

Chow, Kai-wing. 1994. *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China. Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse*. Taipei, SMC Publishing Inc.

Cohen, Anthony P. 1994. "Boundaries of Consciousness, Consciousness of Boundaries. Critical questions for Anthropology". In Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers eds. *The Anthropology of Ethnicity. Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*. Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 59-79.

Curtis, V. R. 1988. *Indo-European Origins*. New York, Peter Lang Publishing.

De Vos, George A. 1995. "Ethnic Pluralism: Conflict and Accommodation. The Role of Ethnicity in Social History". In Lola Romanucci-Ross and George A. De Vos eds. *Ethnic Identity. Creation, conflict, and Accommodation*. Walnut Creek, London and New Delhi, Third Edition, 15-47.

De Vos, George A. and Romanucci-Ross, Lola. 1995. "Conclusion. Ethnic Identity: A Psychocultural Perspective". in Lola Romanucci-Ross and George A. De Vos eds. *Ethnic Identity. Creation, conflict, and Accommodation*. Walnut Creek, London and New Delhi, Third Edition, 349-379.

Deng, Gang. 1993. *Development Versus Stagnation: Technological Continuity and Agricultural Progress in Pre-modern China*. Westport and London, Greenwood Press.

_____1997. *Chinese Maritime Activities and Socioeconomic Development, c. 2100 BC-1900 AD*. Westport and London, Greenwood Press.

_____1999 (a). *Maritime Sector, Institutions, and Sea Power of Premodern China*. Westport and London, Greenwood Press.

_____1999 (b). *The Premodern Chinese Economy: Structural Equilibrium and Capitalist Sterility*. London and New York, Routledge.

_____2000. "A Critical Survey of Recent Research in Chinese Economy History". *Economic History Review*. LIII, 1-28.

Deth, Jan W. Van and Scarbrough, Elinor. 1995. "The Concept of Values". In Jan W. Van Deth and Elinor Scarbrough eds.. *The Impact of Values*. New York, Oxford University Press, 21-47.

During, Simon ed. 1993. *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London and New York.

Elias, Nobert. 1994. *The Civilising Process*. Oxford, Blackwell (Translated Edition by Edmund Jephcott, First Published in 1939).

_____1987. "The Changing Balance of Power between the Sexes—A Process-Sociological Study: The Example of the Ancient Roman State". *Theory, Culture & Society*, SAGE. Vol. 4, No. 2-3, 287-316,

Elman, Benjamin A. 1990. "The Evolution of Civil Service Examination in Late Imperial China". *Newsletter for Modern Chinese History*. Vol. 11, 65-88.

Elvin, Mark. 1973. *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*. London, Eyre Methuen.

Elzinga, Aant. 1999. "Revisiting the 'Needham Paradox', The Multifaceted Nature of Needham's Question". In S. I. Habib and D. Raina eds. *Situating the History of Science, Dialogues with Joseph Needham*. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 73-113.

Fairbank, J. K. 1942. "Tributary Trade and China's Relations with the West", *The Far Eastern Quarterly*. Vol. I No. 2, February, 129-149.

_____1968. "A Preliminary Framework". In John King Fairbank. *The Chinese World Order. Traditional China's Foreign Relations*. Cambridge and Massachusetts, Harvard

University Press, 1-19.

Featherstone, Mike ed. 1990. *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*, London.
_____1995. *Undoing Culture: Globalisation, Postmodernism and Identity*. London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi, Sage.

Ferguson, Y. H. and Mansbach, R. W. 1996. "The Past as Prelude to the Future? Identities and Loyalties in Global Politics". In Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil eds. *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*. London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 21-44.

Fernandez-Armesto, Felipe. 1997. *The Times Guide to The Peoples of Europe*. London, Revised Edition (First Published in 1994).

Festinger, Leon.1957. *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. London, Tavistock Publications.

Fincher, John. 1972. "China as a Race, Culture, and Nation: Notes on Fang Hsiao-ju's Discussion of Dynastic Legitimacy". in David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote eds. *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture*. Hong Kong, Cathay Press Limited, 59-69.

Fisher, H. A. L. 1936. *A History of Europe*. London, Edward Arnold & Co., (Complete Edition in One Volume).

Fontana, Joseph. 1995. *The Distorted Past. A Reinterpretation of Europe*. Oxford, Blackwell, (Translated Edition by Colin Smith).

Fox, Edward Whiting. 1991. *The Emergence of the Modern European World*. Cambridge USA and Oxford UK, Blackwell.

Frank, Andre Gunder. 1998. *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*. California, University of California Press.

Frank, Andre Gunder and Gills, Barry K. eds. 1993. *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?* London, Routledge.

Friedman, Jonathan. 1994. *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage.

Friel, Ian. 1995. *The Good Ship. Ships, Shipbuilding and Technology in England 1200-1520*. London, British Museum Press.

Fukuyama, F. 1992. *The End of History and the Last Man*. London, Penguin Books.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. USA, Basic Books.

Gellner, Ernest. 1992. *Reason and Culture: The Historic Role of Rationality and Rationalism*. Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell.
_____1997. *Nationalism*. London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Gerschenkron, Alexander. 1968. *Continuity in History and Other Essays*. Cambridge and Massachusetts, The Belknap Press.

Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
_____1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
_____1993. *Sociology*. Cambridge, Polity Press, Second Edition (First Published 1989).

Gilroy, Paul. 1993 (a). *Small Acts. Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures*. London, Serpent's Tail.
_____1993 (b). *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London and New York, Verso.

Ginzburg, Carlo. 1980. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. London and Henley, Routledge & Kegan Paul, (Translated Edition by John and Anne Tedeschi, First Published in 1976).

Goody, Jack and Watt, Ian. 1968. "The Consequences of Literacy". In Jack Goody ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 27-68.

Gough, Kathleen. 1968. "Implications of Literacy in Traditional China and India". In Jack Goody ed. *Literacy in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 70-84.

Grant, Michael. 1968. *The Climax of Rome*. London, Phoenix.

Graves-Brown, Paul. and Jones, Siân and Gamble, Clive eds. 1996. *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*. London and New York, Routledge.

Gurevich, Aaron. 1995. *The Origins of European Individualism*. Oxford UK & Cambridge US, Blackwell, Translated Edidtion by Katharine Judelson.

Guttenplan, Samuel D. and Tamny, Martin. 1978. *Logic: A Comprehensive Introduction*. New York, Basic Books, (First Published in 1971).

Gwatkin, H. M. et al eds. 1957. *The Cambridge Medieval History*. Cambridge, Vol. III, The Cambridge University Press.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1981. "Modernity—An Incomplete Project". *New German Critique*. No. 22, Winter, 3-15.
_____1994. "Citizenship and National Identity". In Bart van Steenbergen ed. *The Condition of*

Citizenship. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage, 20-35.

Habib, S. I. and Raina, D. eds. 1999. *Situating the History of Science, Dialogues with Joseph Needham*. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press.

Hale, John. 1993. *The Civilisation of Europe in the Renaissance*. London, Harper Collins Publishers.

Hall, Stuart. 1992. "The West and the Rest, Discourse and Power". In Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben eds. *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge, The Open University, 275-331.

_____1994. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora ". In Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman eds. *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory. A Reader*, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Harvester Wheatsheaf (First Published in 1993), 392-403.

Ha-milton, Peter. 1992. "The Enlightenment and the Birth of Social Science". In Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben eds. *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge, The Open University, 17-70.

Hannaford, Ivan. 1996. *Race. The History of an Idea in the West*. Washington, D.C., The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press; and Baltimore London, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers eds. 1994. *The Anthropology of Ethnicity. Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*. Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis,

Harbison, E. Harris. 1955. *The Age of Reformation*. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press.

Hedetoft, U. 1999. "The Nation-state Meets the World, National Identities in the Context of Transnationality and Cultural Globalisation". *European Journal of Social Theory*. Vol. 2 No. 1, 71-94.

Heilbroner, Robert L. 1975. *The Nature and Logic of Capitalism*. New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company.

Held, D. 1992. "The Development of the Modern State". In Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben eds. *Formations of Modernity*. Cambridge, The Open University, 71-125.

Heller, Agnes. 1992. "Europe, An Epilogue?" In Brian Nelson et al eds. *The Idea of Europe*. Oxford, Berg Publishers, 12-25.

Herskovits, Melville J. 1961. "Economic Change and Cultural Dynamics". In Ralph Braibanti and Joseph J. Spengler eds. *Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development*. Durham, Duke University Press, 114-1138.

Hill, Stephen. 1988. *The Tragedy of Technology*. London, Pluto Press.

Ho, Ping-ti. 1959. *Studies on the Population of China, 1368-1935*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.

_____1962. *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China. Aspects of Social Mobility 1368-1911*. New York, Columbia University Press.

Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence eds. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Hobsbawm, Eric. 1983. "Mass Producing Traditions, Europe, 1870-1914". In Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger eds. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 263-307.

Hoselitz, Bert F. 1961. "Tradition and Economic Growth". In Ralph Braibanti and Joseph J. Spengler eds. *Tradition, Values, and Socio-Economic Development*. Durham, Duke University Press, 83-113.

Hsieh, Jiann. 1996. "China's Minorities and the Problems of National Integration: An Anthropological Perspective". In *Proceedings of the International Symposium on "Linguisticulture: Where do We Go from There*. Osaka: Osaka University, 95-108.

Hsu, Immanuel C. Y. 1990. *The Rise of Modern China*. New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, (Fourth Edition).

Huang, Ray. 1969. "Fiscal Administration During the Ming Dynasty". In Charles O. Hucker ed. *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies*. New York and London, Columbia University Press, 73-128.

_____1974. *Taxation and Governmental Finance in Sixteenth-Century Ming China*. New York, Cambridge University Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1996. *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York, Simon and Schuster.

Inkster, Ian and Satofuka, Fumihiko eds. 2000. *Culture and Technology in Modern Japan*. London and New York, I. B. Tauris.

Inkster, Ian. 1991. *Science and Technology in History: An Approach to Industrial Development*. Hampshire and London, Macmillan.

_____1995. "Culture, Action, and Institutions, on Exploring the Historical Economic Successes of England and Japan". In Penelope Gouk ed. *Wellsprings of Achievement, Cultural and Economic Dynamics in Early Modern England and Japan*. Hampshire,

Variorum Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 239-266.

_____1998(a). "Accidents and Barriers: Technology between Europe, China ad Japan for 500 Years". *Asia Journal of International Studies*. Vol. I No. 1, July, 1-37.

_____1998(b). "Motivation and Achievement: Technological Change and Creative Response in Comparative Industrial History". *The Journal of European Economic History*. Vol. 27 No. 1, 29-66.

_____2000(a). "Cultural Resources, Social Control and Technology Transfer: Industrial Transition Prior to 1914". In Ian Inkster and Fumihiko Satofuka eds. *Culture and Technology in Modern Japan*. London and New York, I. B. Tauris, 45-64.

_____2000(b). "Pursuing Big Books. Technological Change in Global History". *History of Technology*. Vol. 22, 233-253.

_____2001. *The Japanese Industrial Economy. Late Development and Cultural Causation*. London and New York, Routledge.

Jameson, Fredric. 1991. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London and New York, Verso.

Jenkins, Richard. 1996. *Social Identity*. London, Routledge.

Jenks, Chris. 1993.*Culture, Key Ideas*. London, Routledge.

Jones, Siân and Graves-Brown, Paul. 1996. "Introduction: archaeology and Cultural Identity in Europe". In Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds. *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*. London and New York, Routledge, 1-24.

Jones, Siân. 1996. "Discourses of Identity in the Interpretation of the Past". In Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds. *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*. London and New York, Routledge, 62-85.

_____1997. *The Archaeology of Ethnicity. Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*. London and New York, Routledge.

Keesing, R. 1976. *Cultural Anthropology, A Contemporary Perspective*. New York and London, Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Kroeber, A. L. and Kluckhohn, C. 1963. *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. New York, Vintage Books.

Kymlicka, Will. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship*. New York, Oxford University Press.

Landes, David S. 1969. *The Unbound Prometheus. Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Landes, David. 1998. *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*. London, Abacus.

Lapid, Y. 1996. "Culture's Ship, Returns and Departures in International Relations Theory". In Y. Lapid and F. Kratochwil eds. *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*. London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 3-20.

Lapid, Yosef and Kratochwil, Friedrich eds. 1996. *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*. London, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Laurence, Ray and Berry, Joanne eds. 1998. *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*. London and New York, Routledge.

Laurence, Ray. 1998. "Territory, Ethnonyms and Geography. The Construction of Identity in Roman Italy". In Ray Laurence and Joanne Berry eds. *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*. London and New York, Routledge, 95-110.

Lee, James. 1978. "Migration and Expansion in Chinese History". In William H. McNeill and Ruth S. Adams eds. *Human Migration: Patterns and Policies*. Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press, 20-47.

Lerner, Robert E. and Meacham, Standish and Burns, Edward McNall. 1993(a). *Western Civilisation. Their History and Their Culture Vol. I*. New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, Twelfth Edition.

_____1993(b). *Western Civilisation. Their History and Their Culture Vol. II*. New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, Twelfth Edition.

Levanthes, Louise. 1994. *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Ship of the Dragon Throne 1405-1433*. New York, Simon & Schuster.

Li, Xiaorong. "Asian Values" and the Universality of Human Rights. 1998. *Business and Society Review*. Vol. 102/103, 81-87.

Lo, Jung-Pang. 1969. "Policy Formulation and Decision-Making on Issues Respecting Peace and War". In Charles O. Hucker ed. *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies*. New York and London, Columbia University Press, 41-72.

Mallory, J. P. 1989. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*, London, Thames and Hudson.

Mann, Michael. 1986. *The Sources of Social Power. A History of Power from the Beginning to A. D. 1760*, Vol. I. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Mann, Michael. 1993. *The Sources of Social Power. The Rise of Classes and Nation-states, 1760-1914*, Vol. II. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

McEvedy, Colin and Jones, Richard. 1978. *Atlas of World Population History*. Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.

Macfarlane, Alan. 1978. *The Origins of English Individualism*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell.

_____1987. *The Culture of Capitalism*. Oxford, Basil Blackwell.

McNeill, William H. 1963. *The Rise of the West. A History of the Human Community*. New York, Toronto and London, Mentor Books.

McNeill, William H. and Adams, Ruth S. eds. 1978. *Human Migration: Patterns and Policies*. Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press.

Meister, R. 1990. *Political Identity, Thinking through Marx*. Cambridge, Basil Blackwell.

Mendelssohn, K. 1976. *Science and Western Domination*. London, Thames and Hudson.

Mercer, K. 1990. "Welcome to the Jungle". In J. Rutherford ed. *Identity*. London, Lawrence and Wishart, 43.

Mills, C. Wright. 1956. *The Power Elite*. London, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press.

Mollat du Jourdin, Michel. 1993. *Europe and the Sea*. Oxford UK and Cambridge USA, Blackwell, (Translated by Teresa Lavender Fagan).

Needham, Joseph. 1954. *Science and Civilisation in China*. London, New York and Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, Vol. I.

_____1969. "The Past in China's Present". in Joseph Needham. *Within the Four Seas. The Dialogue of East and West*. London, Allen and Unwin, 31-88.

_____1971. *Science and Civilisation in China*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Vol. IV.

_____1971. *Science and Civilisation in China*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Vol. V.

_____1983. "Science, Technology, Progress and the Break-through: China as a Case Study in Human History". In Tord Ganelius ed. *Progress in Science and Its Social Conditions*. Oxford, New York, Toronto, Sydney and Frankfurt, Pergamon Press, 5-22.

Nelson, Brian. et al eds. 1992. *The Idea of Europe*. Oxford, Berg Publishers.

Newton-Smith, W. H. 1985. *Logic: An Introductory Course*. London, Melbourne and Henley, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

O'Brien, Patrick K. et al. eds. 1999. *Philip's Atlas of World History*. London, George Philip Limited.

Odermatt, Peter. 1991. "The Use of Symbols in the Drive For European Integration". In J. Th. Leerssen and M. Spiering eds. *Yearbook of European Studies 4—National Identity*. Amsterdam, GA.

Osborne, Robin. 1996. *Greece in the Making, 1200-479 BC*. London and New York, Routledge.

Paludan, Ann. 1998. *Chronicle of the Chinese Emperors*. London, Thames and Hudson.

Parsons, Talcott. 1947. "Introduction". In Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*. London, Edinburgh and Glasgow, William Hodge and Company Limited, (Translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons), 13-14.

_____1937. *The Structure of Social Action*. New York and London, McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Petts, David. 1998. "Landscape and Cultural Identity in Roman Britain". In Ray Laurence and Joanne Berry eds. *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*. London and New York, Routledge, 79-94.

Pomeranz, Kenneth. 2000. *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. New Jersey.

Popper, Karl R. 1957. *The Poverty of Historicism*. London, Routledge.

Preston, P. W. 1997. *Political, Cultural Identity, Citizens and Nations in a Global Era*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage Publications.

Reinert, Erik S. and Daastøl, Arno Mong. 1997. "Exploring the Genesis of Economic Innovations: The Religious Gestalt-switch and the Duty to Invent as Preconditions for Economic Growth". *The European Journal of Law and Economics*. Vol. 4, No. 3/4, 233-283.

Renfrew, C. 1996. "Prehistory and the Identity of Europe. Don't Let's be Beastly to the Hungarians". In Paul Graves-Brown, Siân Jones and Clive Gamble eds. *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*. London and New York, Routledge, 125-137.

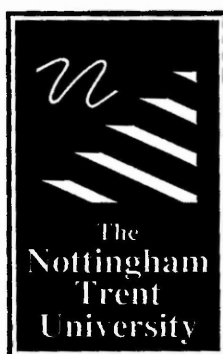Rex, John. 1986. *Race and Ethnicity*. Milton Keynes, Open University Press.

Rietbergen, Peter. 1998. *Europe: A Cultural History*. London and New York, Routledge.

Roberts, J. M. 1985. *The Triumph of the West*, London, Guild Publishing.

_____1996. *A History of Europe*. Oxford, Helicon Publishing Ltd.

Romanucci-Ross, Lola and De Vos, George A. eds. 1995. *Ethnic Identity. Creation, conflict, and Accommodation*. Walnut Creek, London and New Delhi, Third Edition.

Roosens, Eugeen. 1994. "The Primordial Nature of Origins in Migrant Ethnicity". In Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers eds. *The Anthropology of Ethnicity. Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*. Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 81-104.

Rösener, Werner. 1994. *The Peasantry of Europe*. Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, Blackwell, (Translated Edition by Thomas M. Barker, First Published 1993).

Rossi, Ino. 1982. "On the Assumptions of Structural Analysis: Revisiting Its Linguistic and Epistemological Premises". In Ino Rossi et al. *The Logic of Culture: Advances in Structural Theory and Methods*. London, Tavistock Publications, 3-23.

Sahlins, Marshall. 1976. *Culture and Practical Reason*. Chicago, The University of Chicago.

Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*. London, Penguin Books.

Sarup, M. 1993. *An Introductory Guide to Post-structuralism and Postmodernism*. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Harvester and Wheatsheaf.

Schafer, D. Paul. 1998. *Culture: Beacon of the Future*. England, Adamantine Press.

Schutz, Alfred. 1973. *The Problem of Social Reality*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff.

Shennan, S. J. ed. 1989. *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*. London, Unwin Hyman Ltd.

Shils, Edward. 1958. "Tradition and Liberty: Antinomy and Interdependence". *Ethics. An International Journal of Social, Political, and Legal Philosophy*. Vol. 68, No. 3, Apr. 153-165.

Smith, Anthony D. 1986. *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell.

_____1990. "Towards a Global Culture?" in Mike Featherstone ed. *Global Culture*. London, Sage Publications, 171-191.

_____1991. *National Identity*. London, Penguin.

Soysal, Yasemin Nuhoglu. 1996. "Changing Citizenship in Europe, Remarks on Postnational Membership and the National State". In David Cesarain and Mary Fulbrook eds. *Citizenship, Nationality and Migration in Europe*. London and New York, Routledge, 17-29.

Spengler, Oswald. 1932. *The Decline of the West*. London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd (Translated One Volume Edition 1971, by Charles Francis Atkinson).

Stam, R. and Shohat, E. 1995. "Contested Histories, Eurocentrism, Multiculturalism, and the Media". in David Theo Goldberg ed. *Multiculturalism. A Critical Reader*. Massachusetts, Basil Blackwell.

Steenbergen, Bart van ed. 1994. *The Condition of Citizenship*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage.

Strauss, Levi. 1969. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston, Beacon Press. (Translated Edition by T.H. Bell and T.R. von Sturmer under R. Needham's Editorship, First Published in 1949).

Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner eds. 1997. *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe*. London and New York, Sed Books Ltd.

Tarnas, Richard. 1991. *The Passion of the Western Mind*. London, Pimlico.

Tilly, Charles. 1993. *European Revolutions, 1492-1992*. Oxford and Cambridge, Blackwell.

Tomlinson, John. 1991. *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*. London, Pinter.

_____1999. *Globalisation and Culture*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Tong, Q. S. 1995. "Power, Ideology and Economy: Cultural Policy in China". *International Journal of Cultural Policy*. Vol. 1, No. 1, 109-120.

Toynbee, Arnold J. 1972. *A Study of History*. London, Thames and Hudson, One Volume Edition.

Turner, Bryan S. 1994. "Postmodern Culture / Modern Citizens". In Bart van Steenbergen ed. *The Condition of Citizenship*. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, Sage, 153-168.

Turner, Graeme. 1996. *British Cultural Studies An Introduction*. London and New York, Routledge, Second Edition (First Published in 1990).

Turner, Terence. 1995. "Anthropology and Multiculturalism, What is Anthropology that Multiculturalists should be Mindful of it?" In David Theo Goldberg ed. *Multiculturalism. A Critical Reader*. Massachusetts, Basil Blackwell, 406-421.

Tylor, E. B. 1958. *Primitive Culture. Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*. Gloucester, MA, Smith.

Walker, P. C. Gordon. 1972. "Capitalism and the Reformation". In Lewis W. Spitz ed. *The Reformation: Basic Interpretations*. Lexington, Massachusetts Toronto (The Second Edition).

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1990. "Culture as the Ideological Battleground of the Modern World-System". In Mike Featherstone ed., *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*, London, Sage, 31-56.

_____1993. "World System versus World-Systems". In Andre Gunder Frank and Barry K. Gills eds. *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?* London, Routledge, 292-296.

Weber, Max. 1930. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Surrey, Routledge, (Translated by T. Parsons, Second Edition 1992).

_____1947. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*. London, Edinburgh and Glasgow, William Hodge and Company Limited, (Translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons).

_____1964. "The Social Psychology of the World Religion". In H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills eds. *From Max Weber, Essays in Sociology*. New York, 296.

_____1964. *The Religion of China. Confucianism and Taoism*. New York, The MacMillan Company (Translated Edition by Hans H. Gerth First Published in 1951).

_____1997. "What is an Ethnic Group?". in Montserrat Buibernau and John Rex eds. *The Ethnicity Reader. Nationalism Multiculturalism and Migration*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 15-26.

Weiner, Richard R. 1981. *Cultural Marxism and Political Sociology*. Beverly Hills and London, Sage Publications.

Wendt, Alexander. 1996. "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics". In Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil eds. *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*. London, Lynne Rienner Publishers. 47-64.

West, Cornel. 1999. "The New Cultural Politics of Difference". In Simon During ed. *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London and New York, 1993, 256-267.

Wieviorka, Michel. 1998. "Is Multiculturalism the Solution?" In *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 5, Sep. 1998, 881-910.

Williams, Raymond. 1981.*Culture*. London, Fontana Press.

_____1982. *Cultural and Society*. London, The Hogarth Press, (First Published in 1958).

Wolf, Eric R. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. California, University of California Press.

Wong, R. Bin. 1999. "Chinese Understandings of Economic Change: From Agrarian Empire to Industrial Society". In Timothy Brook and Hy V. Luong eds. *Culture and Economy: The Shaping of Capitalism in Eastern Asia*. Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 45-60.

_____1997. *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press.

Woolf, Alex. 1998. "Romancing the Celts. A Segmentary Approach to Acculturation". In Ray Laurence and Joanne Berry eds. *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*. London and New York, Routledge, 111-124.

Unpublished Chinese and English Sources:

_____2000. "President Chen's 520 Inaugural Speech: Taiwan Stands Up: Advancing to an Uplifting Era." Released by Council of Mainland China Affairs, May 20th.

_____2000. "Lee Kuan-Yao: Chiang Che-Ming does not Wish to see the Conflict across the Straits 李光耀：江澤民不願見到兩岸衝突". *China Times Evening Post 中時晚報*. Oct 20th.

_____Decision No 508/2000/EC of The European Parliament and of the Council of 14 February 2000 Establishing the Culture 2000 Programme, OJEC, L 63, 10.3.2000, 1-2.

Brook, Timothy. 2000. "The Milieux of Scientific Activity in Ming China". Paper presented in the *Conference on Regimes for the Generation of Useful and Reliable Knowledge in Europe and Asia 1368-1815*, Windsor Great Park, 14-16 April.

Chen Jeng-Horng 陳政宏 et al. 2001. "Preliminary Comparison of the Performance of the Replica Model of Cheng Ho's Treasure Ship 鄭和寶船復原模型性能之初步比較研究". Paper Presented in Toward the Ocean—Seminar on Cheng Ho Studies 走向海洋一鄭和研究學術研討會. Taipei, September 25-26.

Chi Pei-Wen 齊珮文. 1991. "Research on French Cultural Policy 法國文化政策之研究". Taipei, MA

Thesis in Graduate Institute of European Studies Tamkung University.

Council of Europe. 1980. *The European Cultural Charter. Colloquy on the Cultural Identity of Europe Past and Present*. Strasbourg, Council for Cultural Co-operation.

Rossabi, Morris. 1973. *Ming China's Relations with Ha-mi and Central Asia, 1404-1513: A Reexamination of Traditional Chinese Foreign Policy*. Ph D in Columbia University, University Microfilms. (Shelf mark in the British Library: 15595.c.30.)

West, Cornel 1997. "Toward a Socialist Theory of Racism", the website of Democratic Socialists of America. (URL:http://www.dsausa.org/rl/Race/West.htm.)

Wilford, John Noble. 2002. "Did Chinese beat out Columbus? U.K. Historian Thinks So". *The New York Times*. March 18.

Wong, R. Bin. 2000. "The Chinese State and Useful Knowledge: Criteria, Intentions and Consequences". Paper presented in the *Conference on Regimes for the Generation of Useful and Reliable Knowledge in Europe and Asia 1368-1815*, Windsor Great Park, 14-16 April.

The
Nottingham
Trent
University

Libraries &
Learning
Resources