Fairness, Globalization, and Public Institutions

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Korean soap operas and electronic games, among many other things, are becoming popular in the United States. In this respect, perhaps the globalization of culture has just begun in the United States (or has returned to past patterns of reciprocity). This would be an important step toward the fair and genuine globalization of culture. The resurgence of Asian culture will further this process. The future of cultural globalization, therefore, should be fairer, reciprocal, and hybridized, rather than unfair, one way, and homogenized. This certainly is our preferred future.

FURTHER THOUGHTS
Asian Values and Generational Challenges to Confucian Norms

Sohail Inayatullah

AT ONE TIME, "Asian values" meant a concern for a slower time, a concern for spiritual factors, a concern for community. "Asian values" were thus trumpeted as that which was nonnegotiable in economic development. Indeed, with the rise of Japan, there was interest in seeing if there was an Asian ethic (similar to the "Protestant ethic" in the West) that could explain Far Eastern capitalism. But while there is an economic dimension to Asian values, generally "Asian-ness" is seen as existing in counterpoint to the secularism, crass commercialization, and sexualization of the West.

However, in recent times, Asian values have also been used as a defense for all sorts of human rights abuses. Asian values have moved from being an ethical framework for day-to-day behavior to becoming a political instrument used against the West and indeed against Asia itself. Former Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia, for example, played the Asian values card in his brutal sacking of former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. Mahathir claimed that Ibrahim had to be stripped of his position because he was allegedly a homosexual.

To protect his own local capitalism cronies, Mahathir again evoked Asian values, that is, "we must protect our own." And yet while billionaires were protected from the Asian financial crisis, small shopkeepers were not. The Association of Southeast Asian Nation's (ASEAN) defense of Burma also has been based on "Asian values." (ASEAN criticized Burma's human rights record in the summer of 2003 in one of the organization's rare moments of boldness.) Asians are different and thus have different politics.

While there is certainly some truth to cultural differences focusing on a slower time and long-term relationship building, destruction of the environment, injustice toward the poor, and torture of unpopular individuals (to mention a few actions committed in the name of Asian values) should not and cannot be tolerated.

We should not be surprised by the hijacking of Asian values. While once it meant a call to civilizational dialogue, when few weapons were available for Asian leaders (with a desire to be prime minister for life), Asian values have since become the cynical tool of choice. The degradation of civilizational dialogue to mere West versus non-West politics has a number of ramifications. First, Asian values themselves are not questioned, but are seen as a priori instead of situational and evolutionary responses to the human condition. This does not mean that they are not universal, but that their universality must be seen in a historical context. Second, those who in fact live Asian values are denigrated as their framework is politicized, used as a way to attack others instead of as a guiding ethical framework, much as the way bin Laden and others have hijacked Islam. Third, once politicized, the possibility of real dialogue decreases.

Asian Values and Innovation

And it is real dialogue that is necessary in East Asia. For example, East Asian nations have prospered by essentially copying Western products. This strategy of producing Western goods at a lower cost has worked so far, but as Singapore has understood, there are real limits to this. The next phase in development requires innovation, experimentation, and creativity—all values that are not generally associated with the timelessness and feudalism of Asia. While younger East Asians may be quite ready to adopt these values (accepting them as global via music television and the brain-gain returning to home countries after receiving advanced degrees in the United States and the United Kingdom), middle-aged managers have not. The managers have succeeded in the old feudal hierarchical system. This is not a plea totally to tear down the vertical relations that are central to Asian universities, businesses, and government, but rather to keep the notion of "wise elder" while augmenting it with notions of flat, adaptive, learning organizations and communities. Thus the elder stays to provide vision and direction but not to skew economic and social opportunities. The elder essentially knows when it is time to flatten the organization and when it is time to leave.

The appropriation of "Asian values" by economic and political interests ensures that the elite in Asia stay too long and that the needed social transformation to create learning communities and nations does not occur. And that is why efforts to resist the hijacking of Asian values are crucial for Asia to transform from within.

Generational Challenges

Part of this tension is being resolved through age-cohort changes. For example, in research on how youth in Taiwan envision the future, there are marked gen-

erational differences. The elder generation's identity was largely created through the split with mainland China and thus sees the world through the strategic discourse with China to be feared. Younger Taiwanese (in their forties) have been concerned with notions of Taiwanese identity and with a stable economy and nation. But the younger age-cohort (teens and twenties) has even more different concerns. First, while they sense the tenuous relationship with China (like being a bird in a cage; like walking a tightrope with the United States on one side and China on the other, they remarked in a visioning workshop), they see the solution as partly achieved through globalization. That is, revolutions in science, technology, and air travel may create one world, where national identity is far less important.

But at the same time, the image of the past as the future also has currency. This is expressed as the desire to return to the farm, engage in organic farming (but of course, Internet connected and mobile-phone linked) and live a quieter and softer life.

Age-cohorts also see basic issues such as sexuality differently. In one focus group of Taiwanese students (mostly male), all but one saw their preferred and likely future of sex as virtual plus robotic (sex with robots who look like humans). Only one preferred sexual relations through marriage. Older age-cohorts are unlikely to know what virtual sex is, much less prefer it. The model they have is sex for life with a marriage partner. Of course, those at the top of the system can take a second wife or engage in sexual relations outside marriage. This is accepted as part of male feudal relations. For the younger generation this is not accepted, while virtual sex might be.

The yet unanswered question is that as young cohorts age, will these new values gained from the globalization of travel, media, and technology hold sway, or will the institutional constraints of Confucian feudalism dominate? This is partly a question of aging but also a central economic question. For East Asia to continue to prosper, it must both retain its Asian-ness and deeply transform it. It must retain respect for the elderly, respect for tradition, and yet also find ways to innovate, to engage in creative destruction. There is no easy answer to this. While Singapore seeks legislative creativity, other East Asian nations are still focused on the old "development" game. Until 9/11, the American system had deep openness, letting the outsider in, and even if the American flag was high, multiculturalism had become part of the discourse. Can Asia follow suit? Will American openness return to America or will "American values" take over that once open country?

Notes

1. Joan Leopold, *Culture in Comparative and Evolutionary Perspective: E. B. Tylor and the Making of Primitive Culture* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1980).

2. Tyler Cowen, *In Praise of Capitalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 6.

3. E.g., South Korea is a typical multi-religion country where there is no predominant religion. According to the Korean National Statistic Office (1999), Koreans identify themselves as Buddhist 26.3 percent, Protestant 18.6 percent, Catholic 7 percent, and other religions 1.3 percent. Source: The Korean National Statistic Office, available at www.nso.go.kr/.

4. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagine Community: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996); Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); and Andre Schmid, *Korea Between Empires: 1895–1919* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

5. Kuniyuki Tomooka, Sachiko Kanno, and Mari Kobayashi, "Building National Prestige: Japanese Cultural Policy and the Influence of Western Institution," in *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy and Globalization,* ed. Diana Crane et al. (London: Routledge, 2002), 49.

6. For instance, "Japanese cultural policies were established in the Meiji era to give 'distinction' to Japanese society by creating cultural symbols that contributed to national prestige." Ibid.

7. Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism. *White Paper on Cultural Policies* (2001). Available at www.culturelink.or.kr/policy_korea.html.

8. Jennifer Lindsay, "A Drama of Change: Cultural Policy and the Performing Arts in Southeast Asia," in *Global Culture,* ed. Crane et al., 65.

9. Culturelink, available at www.culturelink.or.kr/policy_china.html.

10. Tomooka, Kanno, and Kobayashi, "Building National Prestige," 52.

11. Diana Crane, "Culture and Globalization: Theoretical Models and Emerging Trends," in *Global Culture,* ed. Crane et al., 12.

12. Key to this notion is deregulation, non-intervention, and liberalization.

13. Jean Tardif, "The Hidden Dimensions of Globalization: What is at Stake Geoculturally," ATTAC's (an international movement for democratic control of financial markets and their institutions) International Portal, May 29, 2002. Available at http://attac.org/indexen/index.html.

14. The definitions of "cultural industry" are diverse. For instance, Benjamin Walter understood cultural industry as mass culture, in which reproduction and technical tools destroy the authenticity of the works of art. Benjamin Walter, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations,* ed. (with intro) Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968). At present, "it is generally agreed that this term applies to those industries that combine the creation, production and commercialization of contents which are intangible and cultural in nature. . . . The notion of cultural industries generally includes printing, publishing and multimedia, audio-visual,

phonographic and cinematographic productions, as well as crafts and design." Quoted in "What Do We Understand by 'Cultural Industries'?" in *Culture, Trade and Globalization: Questions and Answers* (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000), 19. See also D. Thorsby, *Economics and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

15. See "What is the Market Structure of Cultural Industries?" in *Culture, Trade and Globalization,* 19.

16. The purpose of industrial policies in general is to protect and foster the growth of industry by providing various means of support. The government (not the market) decides if a certain industry is to devote limited human and capital resources for the growth of the industry. The industrial policies of East Asian countries have their origins in Japanese industrial policy. See Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925–1975* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1982); and Bruce Cumings, "The Origins and Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy: Industrial Sectors, Product Cycles, and Political Consequences," *International Organization* 38 (Winter 1984): 1–40.

17. Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism, *White Paper on Cultural Policies.*

18. The Ministry of Culture and Sports was renamed The Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 1998 in the midst of the Asian economic crisis. The ministry is the major department responsible for national cultural policy and for the promotion of culture, arts education, cultural industry, preservation and conservation of cultural heritage, national historic sites and natural treasures, as well as international cultural exchange.

19. Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism, *White Paper on Cultural Policies.*

20. Since the late 1990s, Korean movies, popular songs, fashion vogues, and particularly Korean soap operas have become increasingly popular in China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Singapore, and even Japan. See Jim Dator and Yongseok Seo, "Korea as the Wave of a Future: The Emerging Dream Society of Icons and Aesthetic Experience," *Journal of Futures Studies* (August 2004): 31–44.

21. "Hanryu Tourist Marketing," available at www.knto.or.kr/eng/hallyu/hallyu .html.

22. Yong-Sung Lee, "KOCCA Expects Cultural Content Industry to Be Leading Business," *The Korea Times,* September 19, 2003, 14.

23. "Roh Vows to Build Korea into Cultural Power," available at www.kois.go.kr/ menu/government/newscontent.asp?Number=20030901008.

24. Quoted in Cheng Daixi, "Dazhong Wenhua Tan" (Telling the popular culture), *Qiushi* 96, no. 4, in Kim Yeongku, "The Meandering Chinese Culture Industry: The Beclouded Drift of Publishing and Cinema," *Journal of International and Area Studies* 4.1 (1997): 55–72.

25. "Premier Urges Cultural Development," *People's Daily,* March 5, 2004, available at http://english.people.com.cn/200403/05/eng20040305_136608. shtml.

26. See Yunxiang Yan, "Managed Globalization," in *Many Globalization: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World,* ed. Peter L. Berger and Samuel P. Huntington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 42.

27. "Experts Discuss Chinese Cultural Industry," *People's Daily,* May 23, 2002, available at http://english.people.com.cn/200205/23/eng20020523_96327.shtml.

28. Ibid.

29. Quoted in Kian-Woon Kwok and Kee-Hong Low, "Cultural Policy and the City-State: Singapore and the 'New Asian Renaissance,'" in *Global Culture,* ed. Crane et al., 152. As the Singapore case shows, cultural policy during the 1990s unfolded in a way that all relevant ministries, departments, and other government bodies were involved in the development of the cultural sector. The multi-ministry collaboration included ministries ranging from culture, commerce, trade, industry, tourism, foreign affairs, and education, to other government agencies responsible for customs, information and communications, as well as the postal service. Once united, the representatives of these various ministries collaborated together in supporting the multi-faceted strategic problems involved in promoting cultural industry.

30. Culturelink, available at www.culturelink.or.kr/policy_malaysia.html.

31. E.g., South Korea has remained closed to the inflow of Japanese popular culture for more than a half century since the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948. This is mainly due to Japan's colonization of Korea (1910–1945), which included an attempt to replace the Korean language and Korean culture with that of Japan. The official reason for South Korea's ban on Japanese popular culture was "anti-Japanese sentiment," which was still widely prevalent in Korea. The government officials argue that Japanese popular culture would "evoke bitter memories of colonial subjugation and cultural assimilation under Japanese colonial rule" ("KOCCA Expects Cultural Content Industry to Be Leading Business," 14). Another protective measure of South Korean cultural policy is the "screen quota system," which obligates film theaters to set aside a certain amount of screening time for Korean films. Enacted in 1963, the "screen quota" was originally designed to guarantee the showing of all films produced in South Korea in the context of revitalizing and promoting national culture. Since the mid-1990s, the nature of the screen quota system began to shift to an economic rationale in that the goal of the system would be to protect the local film industry and markets from powerful Hollywood films. The screen quota policy was successful to some degree in that the local film industry was revitalized and has become competitive against Hollywood movies in the local market.

32. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the debate over Japanese popular culture began to shift from historical matters to economic concern. South Korean policy makers have been concerned about powerful Japanese cultural products that would potentially sweep over the whole of the fragile Korean cultural market and industry. The general consensus of the government, local cultural industries, and research institutes is to remain closed to Japanese popular culture until Korea attains a certain level of competitiveness against Japanese cultural products.

33. E.g., the South Korean government faced a strong demand from the US government in the late 1990s to abrogate its screen quota policy. In order to cope with American pressure, the South Korean government attempted to abolish the screen quota system, but it soon faced fierce resistance from local filmmakers. They saw the colossal power of the Hollywood film industry as destroying the fragile Korean film industry. Film directors and actors (some of the most famous artists in Korea) took the most extreme forms of action, such as shaving their heads. The debate over whether to abrogate the screen quota is ongoing, even inciting sharp confrontation between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. While the latter argues that opening

the domestic films market is an inevitable global trend, the former insists that the screen quota must be maintained in order to protect the local film industry.

34. The United States, which possesses the foremost popular culture and cultural industries, tried to stop European states from protecting and subsidizing their film industries.

35. E.g., as joining of the WTO reveals, Chinese leaders seem to believe that China is greatly exposed to the outside world and that integration into the global economy is an ineluctable part of a nation's future. Chinese leaders are well aware that protective measures may still be possible in certain cases, but protectionism is a temporary solution to to the issue of cultural globalization. They are deeply concerned that the Chinese cultural industry will be faced with numerous challenges after China's entry into the WTO.

36. Crane, "Culture and Globalization," 12.

37. Tomooka, Kanno, and Kobayashi, "Building National Prestige," 53.

38. Ibid., 60; see also Douglas McGray, "Japan's Gross National Cool," *Foreign Policy* (May/June 2003), 45–54.

39. Koichi Iwabuchi, "From Western Gaze to Global Gaze: Japanese Cultural Presence In Asia," in *Global Culture,* ed. Crane et al., 268.

40. McGray, "Japan's Gross National Cool."