Sinicization and Civilizational Processes
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The opening stanza of Rudyard Kipling's Ballad of East and West reads:

“Oh East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet
Till earth and sky stand presently at God’s great Judgment seat.”

Yet, contra Kipling there exists no sharp division separating East from West. All civilizations are distinct not unique. Grounded in different local settings they are embedded in a common global context. There is thus nothing unique or special about China, the United States, Islam, Japan, Europe, or India. They are exemplars of richly pluralist civilizations.

In its broadest sense Sinicization means making the world suitable to China and the Chinese. It encompasses processes of assimilation and acculturation in both their domestic and international dimensions. In relation to world affairs Arnold Wolfers has written about the “milieu goals” that all major states pursue. As a matter of policy, Wolfers argues, such states attempt to create a milieu in

1 For their criticisms, comments and suggestions I would like to thank Nicola di Cosimo, Rudra Sil, Sidney Tarrow, Gungwu Wang, the participants in a workshop held at Peking University in January 2010, and my co-authors participating in this project. For their invaluable research assistance I am indebted to Emma Clarke, Elisa Charbonnel, and Jill Lyon. Finally, I would like to acknowledge with enormous gratitude the generous financial support that I received in 2009-10 from Louise and John Steffens Founders’ Circle Membership at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Princeton.

2 Beecroft 1956, 425.

3 See Katzenstein 2012 for an analysis of Western civilization with a specific focus on Anglo-America. For a general overview of civilizational politics see Katzenstein 2010a and Arnason 2010a,b.

4 Wolfers 1962, 67-80.
which they can feel comfortable. The creation of comfortable milieus extends beyond the world of states to include all of society. That is, it involves both government policy and social practice. In Chinese terminology this combination of policy and practice aims at the creation of a harmonious environment. Harmony in this context does not refer to dull uniformity but to interesting diversity (he er bu tong). In European social theory Gramsci’s concept of hegemony is a reasonable analogue to the Chinese concept of harmony. Power wielded through hegemony or harmony tends to be invisible as the existence of that power is taken for granted. Sinicization is a civilizational process that can, but does not necessarily, contribute to the concealing of power.

Sinicization is not unique. It is comparable to processes of Europeanization, Americanization, Japanization, Indianization and Islamicization. Such civilizational processes are of increasing importance as the power of states, polities or empires rises; and they linger as power slips away. Sinicization is analyzed here as a social mechanism. At the broadest level, a social mechanism is an action-based explanation which shows how the occurrence of a triggering event regularly generates the type of outcome to be explained. Composed of multiple practices, discourses and component processes operating at both individual and collective levels, Sinicization is creating an international milieu that China and the Chinese find welcoming. These processes are relational. They do not only affect others by radiating out from China. Instead, exposing China to more intensive relations with other polities and civilizations, they also help remake China. Importantly, they can affect China’s organization of power which is hierarchical, practices delegation, relies on moral suasion, shuns open conflict, is performance oriented, seeks to save face on questions of procedure, and sidesteps obstacles and opposition. In this book we inquire into Sinicization as a process that is reflected in a variety of practices and policies that can be traced empirically in the domains of security, political economy, and culture.

Sinicization is a concept that incites the imagination of many Chinese. They feel perfectly comfortable with a conceptual vocabulary that corresponds closely to their shared beliefs in the unity of the Chinese people and to a shared sense of inevitability of the rise of China after a long period of unjust and unjustified humiliation. Not so in America. Among historians and social scientists the concept of Sinicization enjoys a bad press. It connotes flatness in a world full of nooks and crannies. Indeed, the concept of Sinicization is widely thought to be dangerous. It appears to entail an intellectually unacceptable and historically invalid teleology connoting that in the end everyone will become Chinese. Like its twin, the concept of Sinic civilization, Sinicization, this view holds, connotes that nomads at home and barbarians abroad have a fragile and transitory existence that leaves them with only one role on the stage of history -- to pass away quickly and quietly.

This book argues that on empirical and analytical grounds both views are inaccurate and unwarranted. In contrast to the applause and criticism which greets the concept of Sinicization in different quarters,

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5 I thank Jia Qingguo for pointing this out to me in private correspondence (November 9, 2009).
7 Callahan 2010.
this chapter and book seek to develop an approach that makes the concept analytically and empirically tractable. Rather than talk about Sinic civilization in the singular and Sinicization as a uniform and unidirectional process, I conceive of Sinic civilization as constituted by multiple and often conflicting traditions. Correspondingly, Sinicization is a set of variegated and open-ended processes of acculturation, with total assimilation as the exception not the rule.

By pointing to the internal pluralism of civilizations in a world of plural civilization I begin this chapter with a discussion of how to avoid the illusion of singularity in civilizational analysis (Part 1). Informed by the writings of Norbert Elias I then provide a brief descriptive account of Sinicization, Japanization and Indianization thus underlining the book’s main message that Sinic civilizational processes exist side by side and in interaction with other civilizational processes (Part 2). For the purpose of illustration I then use analyses that focus on process and practice to put the empirical contributions of this book into an analytical perspective (Part 3). The following section shifts to the analysis of civilizational identities of China, Japan and India (Part 4). A brief conclusion sums up the main themes of this chapter (Part 5).

1. Civilizational Analysis: A Conceptual Overview

Civilizations provide us with the broadest social context and world views that help shape everyday practice through the exercise of power in institutions “World images,” argues Gary Hamilton, “have decisive effects on how such spheres of activity are actually interpreted and organized as going concerns.” All civilizations engage in the illusion that they are singular and thus blind us to the existence of other ways of imagining and living life. But we live, undeniably, in a world of plural civilizations. Furthermore, the illusion of singularity is often fostered by intellectual and political entrepreneurs who seek to serve particular interests through discursive moves and political strategies. Under the cold light of evidence, the claim to singularity typically does not hold up. Civilizations are distinctive and differentiated, not unique or unified.

Language and Religion. The two most important and distinctive characteristic of a civilization are its languages as well as literary and religious traditions. Separately and together both provide for ample raw material from which to fashion multiple traditions of civilizational life. Language is a constitutive element of civilization. In the 18th century the French language and the French court were the epitome of civilization and were emulated in polite society throughout Europe. Frederick the Great of course spoke German – to his horses. In India language is a central marker of civilization. The very choice between “Hindu” or “Indian” civilization poses a central question. ‘Hindu civilization’ suggests religion as the one overarching cultural component that overrides all others. ‘Indian civilization’ makes space for numerous cultural components and healthy contestation between them. Rudolph chooses the

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8 Katzenstein 2010b.
9 Hamilton 2010, 37.
composite over the coherence view of Indian civilization. The Indian subcontinent encompasses states that are divided in terms of religion but share linguistic, literary and other cultural characteristics, and thus give credence to the concept of Indian civilization. Furthermore, Rudolph argues, India invalidates the distinction between civilized and uncivilized based on the existence of a written language. With Brahmans trained in an oral tradition reciting the Vedas, Sanskrit survived for hundreds of years under the social convention of oral transmission; writing would have violated the sacred. Similarly, Islamic civilization arose in the context of nomadism with a strong oral tradition. The absence of a written language at the origin, as in Islam, or over prolonged periods, as in India, shows that language plays a different role in the evolution of civilizations. In East Asia for millennia Chinese was used for writing in Korea, Japan and Vietnam even though these countries retained their indigenous languages and in some cases their own script. The emphasis on language and elite culture overlooks the importance of language as a vehicle of xenophobic nationalism and, in the case of India, of imperialism and colonialism. Indians continue to debate what is the language of Indian civilization. Even though as a practical matter Indian elites rely widely on English, and even though the prominence of English makes it possible for India’s service sector to leap-frog other developing economies, nobody thinks of it as India’s language.

Religion is a second marker of civilization. Samuel Huntington, for example, refers to “Western religion” rather than “Western Christendom” as the successor to “Latin Christendom,” the term of choice used widely before the Enlightenment. Western Christendom was in fact a deeply divided religious tradition. In the 17th century that division was revealed in Protestant and Catholic mass slaughters during the Thirty Years War. As late as the turn of the 20th century Protestants viewed Catholicism with much suspicion as a subversive transnational religion, just as many Catholics and Protestants today regard Islam. James Kurth builds and elaborates on Huntington’s argument about the importance of Reform Protestantism for the origin and evolution of Western and American civilization. Especially provocative is Kurth’s argument that the Protestant core of the American creed has come to include the civil religion of a secularized Protestantism – what he calls the heretical, neo-pagean religion of America’s secular elite. Religious diversity rather than universal religion marks the resurgence of religious vitality in contemporary world politics. Multiple traditions of secularisms, in the plural, point to the intensification or persistence of religious consciousness and politics with which these secularisms must engage. While Christianity and Islam have expanded in the 20th century, so have various forms of nonreligious and atheistic belief systems. Varieties of religious and secular belief systems thus continue to exist side by side in a world of plural and pluralist civilizations.

Russia. Throughout its history Russia has remained open to very different external influences and occupied a peripheral position, especially in relation to Western Europe. Yet in sharp contrast to Africa,

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11 Lawrence 2010.
12 Kang 2010.
13 Huntington 1996.
14 Kurth 2010.
Russia is readily recognized as a distinct civilization. The reason inheres less in Russia itself and more in Europe’s intellectual re-imagination of East and West during the Enlightenment. For centuries Europe had been organized intellectually along a North-South gradient. But during the Enlightenment West European elites invented Eastern Europe as a foil to highlight their own civility and progress against the supposed backwardness and barbarity of the East. The idea of Eastern Europe was thus deeply entangled with Europe’s Orientalist tradition. “The new idea of civilization,” Larry Wolff writes, “was the crucial and indispensable point of reference that made possible the consolidation and articulation of the inchoate idea of Eastern Europe,” not as an antipode to civilization but rather as an intermediary point on a civilizational gradient that declined from West to East.

Even though Russia’s borders have been wide open, Russians have embraced the notion of constituting a distinctive civilization. Language, literature and religion are vital parts of Russia’s self-consciousness. Greek missionaries and the pervasive influence of Byzantium provided deeply intertwined legacies that made Russia both integral and marginal to European civilization. Russian Orthodoxy evolved under the influence of these open-ended, transcivilizational processes. By the early 20th century Russian religion had taken on firm ideological functions, with Marxism becoming Russia’s official, civil religion.

The collapse of the Soviet Union reopened Russian debates about its contested identity. Russian intellectuals and policymakers rejected as ethnocentric Francis Fukuyama’s liberal international and Samuel Huntington’s realist, cultural ideas. Although these theorists hold mutually exclusive views, Russian intellectuals widely considered both to be inadequate. Internationalism overemphasizes the global, cultural realism the local sources of civilizational identity. For Russian intellectual sensibilities both arguments are too linear and overlook the dialectical relationship between global and local. Furthermore, Russian civilizational discourse revealed the existence of different political camps and schools of thought marked by vigorous disagreements: Liberal, Social Democrat, Statist and National Communist. Each of these traditions holds to distinct views on the sources, strengths and contents of Russia’s cosmopolitan and local traditions. All of them are marked by the capacity for dialectical thought strikingly absent from Fukuyama’s and Huntington’s writings.

15 Huntington 1996, 45.
16 Wolff 1994, 12, 14.
17 Worth 1998.
18 Rzhevsky 1998, 2, 4.
21 Tsygankov 2008, 763.
In this view of Russian civilization the separatist tendencies that are of growing importance in Putin’s Russia mirror ethnocentric and exclusive American views. The reassertion of the trinity of Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality signals a return to 19th century Tsarism and a decline of liberal and Social Democratic traditions. Russia’s new Conservatism points with great pride to traditional values, as conservatism does everywhere. Yet like all forms of conservatism, it has no compelling answer to the criticism that traditional values come in various types: traditions of serfdom and traditions of peasant uprisings, for example, or traditions of Tsarist authoritarianism, Stalinist totalitarianism, and Russian liberalism. Contemporary Russia is a civilizational state that continues to debate the relevance of its multiple traditions for its role in the modern world. And that debate reveals a broad continuum of contemporary civilizational discourses that stretches from liberal Eurocentrism to Post-Soviet Eurasianism. In brief, this sketch of Russian civilizational politics illustrates the pitfalls of styles of analysis that make us think about Russia, the East or any civilization in unique or unified terms.

**Pluralist Civilizations in a Global Ecumene, not Unitary Civilizations in the International State System.** The plurality and pluralism of civilizations helps us avoid being trapped by the illusion of singularity. There are two basic views on civilization. This book takes a pluralist view of civilizations that are embedded in a global ecumene. This ecumene describes universal systems of knowledgeable practices characteristic of multiple modernities rather than a competitive international state system reinforcing civilizational unity. Language and culture are highly consequential; literary and religious traditions are at the center of civilizational complexes. The movement of peoples, back and forth between hills and valleys and across continents and oceans, as well as the tensions within and between religious and literary traditions, account for the pluralism of civilizations.

An alternative view of civilizations holds that they are unitary cultural programs, organized hierarchically around uncontested core values that yield unambiguous criteria for judging good conduct. This view was a European invention of the 18th century. In the 19th century it was enshrined in one standard of civilization. That standard was grounded in race, ethnic affiliation, religion, and a firm belief in the superiority of European civilization over all others. The distinction between civilized and uncivilized peoples is not specific to the European past. It enjoys broad support today among many conservative supporters of Huntington’s thesis of the clash of civilizations – a book that was translated into 39 languages. Paradoxically it is also held by many liberals who are committed to improving the rule of

22 Coalson 2008.

23 Tsygankov 2008, 768-72.

24 I am restating here some of the main arguments and themes first published in Katzenstein 2010a and 2010b.

25 Huntington’s publisher signed 57 foreign contracts. As of 2009 Linking in Taiwan had sold 18,738 copies. Xinhua in the PRC sold out 25,000 copies before printing another 16,000 copies of which it sold 14,900 within a year. Information provided by Valerie Borchardt, December 1, 2009, personal communication.
law and global standards of good governance. Furthermore, the unitary argument is widely used by non-Europeans in their analysis of civilizational politics. Everywhere and at all times, barbarians have knocked on the doors of civilizations.\(^{26}\)

All civilizations experience conflicts over contested truths. If and where they appear to cohere around core values these are imaginative innovations created for particular purposes rather than inherent cultural traits of unchanging collective identities and practices. What drives civilizational politics are conflicts over contested truths that reflect internal pluralism and external context. In contrast to this pluralist view, Samuel Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* restates the old, unitary thesis for our times. For Huntington, civilizations are coherent, consensual, invariant, and equipped with a state-like capacity to act. Huntington succeeded brilliantly in his objective of providing a new paradigm for looking at world politics after the end of the Cold War. His correct anticipation of 9/11 gave the book a claim to validity that helps account for its continued relevance. Less noticed in public than in academic discourse is the fact that Huntington greatly overstates his case. Numerous analyses have established beyond any reasonable doubt that clashes occur primarily within rather than between civilizations.\(^{27}\) Furthermore, the book’s appeal has not been undermined by the failure of the second of its two main claims. Since the end of the Cold War, the relations between Sinic and American civilizations are summarized best by terms such as encounter or engagement rather than clash.

A very similar, anti-Western counter-discourse, also steeped in Western reasoning, has existed for a long time also in Asia. Lee Kuan Yew and his advisor Tommy Koh are outspoken champions of the Asian value view that is common in Singapore.\(^{28}\) Another well-known public intellectual in Singapore, Kishore Mahbubani, is a champion of Asia. His recent book details a seismic shift in power from ‘West’ to ‘East.’\(^{29}\) And then there is the dialogue between Mohammad Mahathir and Shintarō Ishihara which develops the same point more stridently.\(^{30}\) The voices proclaiming the dawn of Asia’s civilizational primacy may shift from yesterday’s Japan, to today’s China and tomorrow’s India. But these voices are growing louder. Like “Orientalism,” “Occidentalism” characterizes East and West in the singular.

*Global Ecumene and Balance of Practice, not International Anarchy and Balance of Power.* The internal pluralism of civilizations is reinforced by a larger context in which they are embedded. That context is not the international system or global markets, frequently deployed concepts that suffer from excessive sparseness and abstraction. Recognition of the importance of this global ecumene is central to the


\(^{29}\) Mahbubani 2008.

\(^{30}\) Mahathir and Ishihara 1995.
trenchant self-critique that William McNeill wrote of his own brilliant book *The Rise of the West*, more than a quarter of a century after he had completed it and six years before the publication of Huntington’s book.\(^\text{31}\) For McNeill, civilizations are internally variegated, loosely coupled, elite-centered social systems that are integrated in a commonly shared global context. He argues that his earlier path-breaking book was wrongheaded. It was based on the faulty assumption of the existence of civilizations conceived as separate groupings whose interaction was the main engine of world history. Instead, McNeill insists now that an adequate account must give proper consideration to the broader context in which all civilizations are embedded. Since civilizations are internally differentiated, they transplant selectively. And since they are loosely integrated, they generate debates and contestations that tend to make them salient to others. What historically was true for South Asia and the Islamic world, under the impact of modern communications technologies is even more true for all contemporary civilizations. A global ecumene pluralizes civilizations within a loose sense of shared values.

Such a pluralist conceptualization of civilization is attuned to the emergence of new cultural and political forces that reflects on the richness of the politically available repertoires of different civilizations. Analysis of pluralist civilizations stresses the balance of human practices and public policies. Shifting balances are producing and reproducing behavioral and symbolic boundaries within and between civilizations that are more or less closely tied to political power.

This pluralist and ecumenical view differs starkly from Samuel Huntington’s unitary conception of civilization. His civilizations are operating in an international system rather than a global ecumene. Hence, Huntington articulates as a policy maxim “the commonalities rule,” pointing as an urgent need to something that exists already in abundance: the search for values, institutions, and practices that are shared across civilizations.\(^\text{32}\) In his view, civilizations balance power rather than reflecting open-ended processes and a broad range of human practices. Neglecting all the evidence of a restless, pluralist and at times seething West, Huntington’s analysis sees the West as a civilizationaly reactive status quo power that reluctantly engages the upsurge of revisionist non-Western civilizations. Rather than focusing on actors such as states, polities, or empires that are embedded in civilizational complexes, in Huntington’s analysis civilizations themselves become actors. And, implausibly, he measures civilizational power solely by material capabilities such as population, GNP, and military expenditures. His clash of civilizations thus looks remarkably similar to a clash of large states or empires.

*States, Polities, Empires.* Civilizations are not political entities in and of themselves. Instead, they provide a social context and world view that contains various types of political actors, among them states, polities, and empires. The international standing of these actors is determined by the perceived credibility of their current power and prestige, the perceived salience of their active historical memory, and the appeal of their imagined future. If credibility, salience and appeal are widely acknowledged to be politically authentic, civilizational states, polities and empires are politically consequential. In China,


\(^\text{32}\) Huntington 1996, 320.
historically the state was central and provided a template that Korea, Japan, and Vietnam adopted in organizing their own states. In contemporary China, the state remains central but does not control a far-flung diaspora which is indisputably part of Chinese civilization. In Japan’s civilization the familial state is central. And in contemporary India the state matters; but historically, Indian civilization has flowered and prevailed surreptitiously and over long periods and distances without taking any explicitly political, let alone statist form.

States are centers of political authority with distinct identities and institutions, and endowed with the capacity of collectively mobilizing resources in the achievement of political objectives. States are not the only such centers of authority. Far from being unitary, states take on very different forms. Their hallmark, centralized-territorial rule, persists today in many parts of the world, not unchallenged, but as part of overlapping and intersecting networks of rules in which states, often but by no means always, hold a preeminent position. States are often nested in such broader structures of authority, both older ones like historical empires and newer ones like emerging polities or governance structures. And the degree of “stateness” is variable. Some states, such as Japan, can draw on broader and deeper sources of state power than others such as India. And China’s state power differs depending on whether we conceive of China in territorial terms as the PRC or as a combination of both the territorial state of China and the networks that connect that state to a far-flung Chinese diaspora. Historically, the triumph of the European state over alternative forms of political organization was based on the state’s superior record of keeping peace at home, securing property rights in markets, collecting taxes, organizing a common defense, and waging war. Today, at the European level, stateness remains low in the case of Europe’s emerging multi-level polity. And it does not exist in the case of global Islam.33

Polities are a second type of civilizational actor. They are broader centers of authority that are not exclusively territorially based. Michael Mann sees a world with complex changes that make states in some parts of the world lose control over some political domains while gaining control over others as the need for increasing regulation of human affairs intensifies.34 In Mann’s view, states are becoming increasingly polymorphous and crystallize in multiple forms; they do not exist as singular actors. For example, at the regional level a multi-tiered European polity is in the process of becoming that complements states engaged in the process of a partial pooling of sovereignty.

John Meyer and his colleagues and students have developed systematically the idea of one global polity which provides cognitive and normative models that help constitute contemporary states.35 Such models provide contemporary states with universal rules in which to ground their claims to legitimacy. As was true of nineteenth century America, far from producing anarchy, political conformity is being generated by the reliance on common cultural material such as law, science, civic associations, religious sects, and nationalism. The global polity acts like a consultant for many different political actors and for

33 Pasha 2007, 62.
34 Mann 1986; 1993.
the most part produces talk that is addressed primarily to constituent states and influences the goals they set (social and economic development as well as welfare, justice, rights, and equality). Indeed, “it becomes rational rather than treasonous to propose copying policies and structures that appear to be successful in a virtuous or dominant competitor.”

Besides states and polities, empire is a third actor in world politics. European empires exported state institutions to other parts of the world where they provided an overlay to indigenous political forms of organization and loyalty, which eventually nested within the institutional import from Europe. Numerous social, economic, and cultural developments in world politics have empowered non-state actors and made citizens more critical consumers of the public goods that states and non-state actors continue to provide.

In contemporary world politics, the American imperium is the closest analogue to empire. Imperium combines traditional elements of old-fashioned European imperialism with elements of rule that are distinctively new. The system of far-flung military bases and the power of the American military illustrate the importance of the territorial-military aspects of America’s imperium. At the same time, the United States is also a central actor and part of a system that is creating new forms of non-territorial rule, for example in the evolution of governing mechanisms or in the standards that help define the evolution of consumer society and definitions of individual happiness and contentment.

This categorization among states, polities, and empires is not iron-clad. Actors often inhabit overlapping spaces. This is true of the United States, which is both a state and an imperium. It is true of European states, which are pooling some of their sovereignty in Europe’s emerging polity. And it is also arguably true of China which is in the midst of transforming a civilization into a nation-state.

2. Civilizational Processes: Sinicization, Japanization, and Indianization

Civilizational theories offer insights into how to think about processes especially in the domestic context. A brief review of these insights sets the stage for an empirical characterization of Sinicization, Japanization and Indianization.

Norbert Elias and Civilizing Processes. Norbert Elias was the first to focus attention on civilizing processes. His analysis focused on European history, specifically the adoption of polite manners by an aristocracy which had once been unmannered and couth. Elias argued that the civilizing process created a significant distance between the psychological and behavioral traits of an uncivilized and ill-mannered

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38 Xu 2009.
child and a civilized and well-behaved adult. The concept thus connotes a hierarchical view of the world that contrasts “advanced” with “backward” peoples and polities. Yet Elias was not a proponent of Eurocentrism, and as a 20th century German was acutely aware of the possibility that civilizational processes could be reversed easily into decivilizational ones.

Like domestic society in our globe-spanning, contemporary civilization of modernity, civilizational processes yield contingent outcomes. Social groups, nations and civilizations that draw sharp boundaries between self and other seek to cement their own rule. Claiming civilizational superiority as a condition is a political tool. It has very little to do with civilizational processes which are mutable and can be reversed. When power differentials are very great between a favored in-group and a disfavored out-group, it becomes normal for people to think that the power differential is rooted in immutable civilizational conditions. This was true in the 19th century when European states were thought to have set the standard of civilization for the rest of the world, thus providing justification for Europe’s imperialist rule over much of the rest of the world. But when power differentials shift, as they evidently are now between China and its Asian neighbors and the United States and Europe, our attention shifts away from supposedly unchanged civilizational conditions to variable civilizational processes.

Reflecting various practices, such processes are normally referred to as globalization or internationalization in the contemporary civilization of modernity. Globalization describes processes that transcend time and compress space and that have novel and transformative effects on world politics. Internationalization describes processes that refer to territorially based exchanges across national borders and that reflect basic continuities in the evolution of the international state system. Globalization favors convergence around common standards as well as a variety of local adaptations to global change. Internationalization permits continued national differences in national practices. The civilization of modernity is marked by a mixture of transformative global and incremental international effects. Understanding civilizational processes and practices in world politics requires us to move from general characterizations of global and international processes to more specific ones that reflect the distinctive characteristics of intercivilizational engagements and encounters, as well as occasionally civilizational clashes.

All civilizational processes have a Janus face. One side describes the process of remaking “other” to be more like “self” either through total assimilation or by making “other” conform more closely to dominant civilizational practices. The other side describes the process by which “other,” by appropriating aspects of civilizational “self,” exerts its own effect on the center. The first process is typically conceived of by the civilizational center as reaching outward; the second typically refers to the practices of actors located in various civilizational peripheries or in another civilization. Rather than a set of practices that are forced on others, as in theories of cultural imperialism, civilizational processes


often reflect self-chosen practices. Both processes typically occur simultaneously. At one extreme, as Jonathan Zeitlin argues for the specific case of Americanization, is a simple process of diffusion of best civilizational practices that do not alter the center in any way. At the other extreme are self-reflective peripheral actors who recombine and absorb the center’s civilizational influences into effective ensembles of interdependent elements. Profoundly interactive, two-way processes have positive and negative consequences for both civilizational center and periphery.

Elias’s theory of civilizing process is a trend theory. It tracks the path from “spontaneous, instinctual expression” which are gradually brought under social and then internal control in the form of self-restraint. As a historicization of Freud, Elias’s theory traces the growth of the superego. The theory relies on two types of causal mechanisms. The first is the monopolization of force by the state which disarmed a warring aristocracy and helped create a society of courtiers. Although this is a plausible analysis for domestic politics, it is not suitable for the analysis of civilizational processes at the global or international level. The second mechanism is the increasing interdependence in civil society which, as Durkheim suggested, encourages increasing feelings of constraint and reliance on others. With growing interdependence and an increasing shift in the division of labor “mechanical solidarity” of local groups gives way to “organic solidarity” of universal sentiments of altruism or religious belief. This second mechanism is more relevant to civilizational processes at the global level than the first.

But is it true? The analysis of Sinicization in this book is informed by a different intuition that does not focus on growing interdependence as the main determinant of outcomes in the global civilization of modernity. Instead the rise and decline of civilizational states, polities or empires leads to different civilizational processes -- such as Sinicization now, Japanization in the 1980s, and perhaps Indianization in the near future. Civilizational processes are linked more directly to shifts in political power.

Sinicization. Today’s Sinicization recombines old with new elements and is evolving differently in different states. A long, complex and unending process, Sinicization refers to the eventual assimilation of non-Han people who have entered the Chinese realm. Although the Peoples Republic of China has reemerged on the international stage after a period of national humiliation, marginalization, and isolation, to date its civilizational impulses remain relatively weak and undefined. Viewed against the background of the changing political fortunes of different strata of overseas Chinese living in the various states of Southeast Asia and beyond, Sinicization is a highly variegated set of social processes. During the last two decades the emergence of a region-wide consumer society in the major East Asian metropolitan areas has become an undeniable fact of life. Upper and upper-middle class Chinese are making choices, for example about their preferred use of mother tongue (Hokkien, Cantonese, or

42 Zeitlin 2000, 16-17.
43 Collins 2010, 440.
45 Shiraishi 2006.
Teochew) and about the education they prefer for their children -- Hong Kong and Singapore for high school for better training in English and Mandarin, Britain and the U.S. for college and professional education. Indeed, Shiraishi goes as far as to call the appearance of “Anglo-Chinese” (Chinese of whatever nationality who are fluent in English and comfortable with Anglo-Saxon norms) the most important of the many momentous changes that are transforming Southeast Asia. Sinicization will leave the social make-up of Southeast Asian societies heterogeneous and polyglot.

On more explicitly political issues as well Sinicization refers to multiple patterns rather than a singular one. China’s sheer size, for example, is creating novel and very different economic opportunities and security threats for East Asia. Economic opportunities abound in markets that are growing very rapidly and for populations that are skilled, adaptable and hard-working. At the same time new threats arise in the form of organized crime in gambling and prostitution, drug trafficking, the smuggling of migrants, piracy, and new environmental hazards. And the volatile Taiwan issue remains a source of security threat in East Asia, although attenuated by the election results of 2008. Furthermore, historical memories are creating their own conflictual dynamic not only in Sino-Japanese disputes over the treatment of Japanese aggression in the 1930s and 1940s in Japanese history textbooks but also in the relations between China and South Korea, illustrated in 2004 by the dispute over the Koguryo kingdom (37 BC to AD 668) as either the forerunner of the Korean nation or a Chinese vassal state. Sinicization summarizes the recombination of old and new elements.

Contemporary and past Sinicization processes share a fundamental similarity. Sinicization is not flowing only in one direction and creating sameness. It is a two-way street that leaves ample space for persistently heterogeneous social and political practices. The case of the Manchus is instructive. While Ping-Ti Ho and Evelyn Rawski disagree on the importance of Sinicization, they both agree that the Manchu rulers in the Qing dynasty made vital contributions to help consolidate an administratively multiethnic empire and thus laid the foundation for the contemporary Chinese nation-state. The Manchus portrayed themselves as being Chinese and accepted many Han practices, including the Confucian canon, as the foundation for the civil service entrance examination and as a guide for many policy decrees.

But the imperial image consisted of more than Han influences. The Manchus conquered the Ming dynasty with a multiethnic force that included Manchus, Mongols, and Chinese living in northeast Asia, outside of Ming borders. The key to the success was a combination of Sinicization with the shrewd ability to differentiate empire building among the non-Han peoples from the administration of former Ming provinces. The Qing concept of universal emperorship was predicated on the assumption that the Qing would rule over different peoples with distinct cultural identities. Sinicization was a program applied only to ethnic minorities living in the South and Southwest of the Qing empire. Han Chinese

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literati who played a central role at the Qing court had to share power with a separate conqueror elite, banner nobles and imperial kinsmen (of Manchu, Mongol or Han descent) that existed parallel to and often was superimposed on top of the imperial bureaucracy. This was reflected both in the administrative structures the court imposed on the “outer” non-Han and “inner” Han domains of the empire, and in the disagreements on vital matters of policy, such as China’s stance at the outset of the Opium War. Being Manchu and becoming Chinese turned out to be a false dichotomy. During the Qing dynasty the Sinicization of Han blended with northeast Asian political elements. Falling well short of total assimilation, the process was one of give and take.

This convergence of acculturation and differentiation in the process of Sinicization may well hold more generally. Sinicization writes Gungwu Wang “was not associated with coercion and the need to dominate.” Instead Sinicization was a spontaneous process that included both providing institutional models and practices worth emulating and the capacity to appropriate from abroad both religious-philosophical ideas (such as Buddhism) and aspects of material culture (such as technology). With China’s economic ascent, the material balance of power is shifting, and so is the ratio between receiving and giving in contemporary processes of Sinicization.

Japanization. In his analysis of Japan Shmuel Eisenstadt identifies two key characteristics of Japan—continuous internal institutional change and a great receptivity to outside influences coupled with an astonishing capacity to internalize these influences. Japan is often called a country of imitators. At the same time Japan has displayed enormous resilience to reinforce its basic political conceptions of social order. One place where this resilience is very evident is in the colonization of Hokkaidō and the “catastrophic de-culturation, dispossession and subjugation of the island’s indigenous population, the Ainu,” carried out in a manner reminiscent of Okinawa, Korea and Taiwan. External changes have rarely displaced Japan’s governing premises. And in contrast to other civilizations, Japan has never seen itself as part of a broader civilization with which it might share such premises or basic identities. Japan was in close contact with Korea and China throughout its history. And although Buddhism and Confucianism had a large influence on Japan, they were greatly transformed in the process of incorporation.

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50 Ho 1998, 125.
51 Elliott 2001, xiv.
52 Osterhammel 2005, 376-81.
54 Ho 1998, 150-52.
55 Eisenstadt 1996, 14-16.
56 Blaxell 2009.
In contrast to the macro-historical perspective that stresses Japanization as a specific form of adaptation to external change, more recent analyses of the processes of Japanization have been impressed by Japan’s prowess as an industrial behemoth in world markets. Japanization is intimately linked to the global spread of an American consumption culture. Since America has become the land of excessive and conspicuous consumption, especially in recent decades, that culture is met in Japan with considerable ambivalence.\(^{57}\) It values thrift and investment too little, and growing inequalities too much. Still, by the late 1960s the Japanese had come to recognize American products of mass consumption – TV, washing machines, refrigerators – as Japanese and proceeded to produce and export them, and subsequent generations of consumer products, to America, the rest of Asia, and to the world.

Japanization as a process has been studied most intensively in the global automobile and popular culture industries.\(^{58}\) In automobiles, electronics and other export industries Japanese producers succeeded in creating large gains in productivity, flexibility and quality that assured them of a preeminent position in regional and global markets. Japanese firms behaved differently in different markets. In Britain, for example, Japanese automobile producers were eager to create a new system of industrial relations. In the U.S. they rushed to open production facilities in a market threatened by high tariff walls. Detailed studies support the conclusion that Japanization does not offer any fixed benchmarks by which to measure its spread. It involves, rather, relatively open-ended processes of diffusion, emulation and the adoption of distinctive patterns of production and consumption. It offers no clear templates that can simply be replicated in different national or local settings. Instead Japanization appears to involve variable combinations of deliberate organizational designs, shared cognitive schemas and normative orders, and conflicting political interests.

Japan’s popular culture industries offer a second illustration.\(^{59}\) Japanese modernity exists alongside other forms of modernity. Its civilizational self-understanding is grounded in the notion that Japan can translate Western standards of modernity for the rest of Asia without sacrificing its own distinct identity. During Japan’s reckless militarist expansion in the first half of the 20\(^{th}\) century as well as during its relentless mercantilist expansion in the second half, Japanese widely believed in the country’s civilizational myth or mission. Culturally, Japan’s distinctive hybridity of multiple modernities “domesticates anxieties about foreign influence.”\(^{60}\) Japanization is intermingling with the polymorphic and indigenized modernities of its neighbors. Artistically creative and economically dynamic, Japan’s popular culture industries have flowered especially in Asian markets. For generations Japan has specialized in cultural imports, from baseball to Christmas. Japanese producers thus acquired the cultural know-how of American and European producers and reselling that know-how in the form of indigenous production to their avid customers in East Asia and beyond. As Japanese products have no

\(^{57}\) Garon and Maclachlan 2006.


\(^{60}\) Zuberi 2005, 112.
Japan's culture industries have had an astounding success of creating cultural similarity with other countries especially in East Asia. Eliminating distinctive Japanese characteristics is of paramount importance in the energetic pursuit of glocalization. Having adapted many of the products of American popular culture, Japanese producers regard themselves as particularly well positioned to translate Western leisure products for Asian sensibilities. In both importing and exporting they are creating a sameness in consumption styles that is distinctly different from American and European styles. In popular music, TV dramas, and manga, among others, the electronic revolution so readily embraced in East Asia diffuses Japanese images and values while at the same time opening up the Japanese market to cultural influences from S. Korea, Taiwan, Hongkong, China and Southeast Asia.

Indianization. Admittedly, “Indianization” is an awkward though accurate neologism. It points to the fact that India’s civilizational engagements with the world, for the most part is sidelining India’s 150 million Muslims. Historically these processes were structured around the Indian ocean which put India at the center of trade routes that connected it with Southeast Asia and East Asia, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and Africa. This location at the central switch point of the Afro-Eurasian world was important both before and after the arrival of the European powers. The contacts between India and the Islamic world, specifically Iran, deserve explicit mentioning. “Greater India” stretched from Southeast Asia to Iraq. Tagore’s travels explored that realm and went beyond it. In modern times India staffed and provided many of the shock troops of the British empire: merchants, workers, policemen and soldiers. And as Britain’s “jewel in the crown” India and the networks spanning the Indian Ocean were indispensable for helping to finance Britain’s global empire. That empire was not only a hub-and-spoke arrangement centering on London but also a web of horizontal filaments, with India a subimperial center of great importance. The Great Depression, World War II, and Indian independence ended this symbiosis between India and Britain. For Britain the loss of India in 1948 meant the loss of its empire. For India it meant becoming the world’s largest democracy. For historians it remains an open question whether for a century India was parasitic on Britain’s global empire or whether Britain was parasitic on the set of civilizational, commercial, cultural and political networks that had grown around the Indian Ocean, with India at the center.

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61 Faiola 2003.
63 I would like to thank Durba Ghosh, Mary Katzenstein and Robert Travers for their insights and helpful suggestions of relevant literatures.
65 Cole 2002a,b.
66 Bharucha 2006.
Contemporary India is marked by multiple processes of Indianization. An illustrious group of Indian writers (such as Salman Rushdie, a Muslim, Vikram Seth, and Arundhati Roy) have an avid readership all over the English-speaking world and are contributing an enormous amount of artistic talent to world literature.\(^{68}\) Indeed Anglo-Indian literature, in the opinion of some, constitutes the most important contribution that India has made to the world of books.\(^{69}\) With an annual production of about 1,000 movies, Bollywood dwarfs Hollywood in sheer numbers, if not in profitability. Bollywood’s rise was helped by the Cold War. Because of its shortage of Western currencies, during the Cold War the most important market for Indian movies was in the Socialist commonwealth. Globally, Awaara, produced in 1951, was probably the most widely watched movie of its era, and Raj Kapoor was the most admired film star of the 1950s and 1960s. Even today the former member states of the Soviet Union continue to be important outlets for an industry which, compared to Hollywood, enjoys little if any political support.\(^{70}\) Indian movies and the artistic and social sensibilities they express continue to be hugely popular in Greece, Egypt, Iran and Pakistan.\(^{71}\) More recently their appeal, both commercial and artistic, has also been strong in the Commonwealth countries, the United States, and wherever there exists a large Indian diaspora.\(^{72}\) Rupert Murdoch’s STAR-TV is India’s second largest media company. It gives India’s movie and TV industry a ready-made vehicle for accessing directly an Asian market of about 300 million.

Other examples of Indianization readily come to mind. At the Bandung Conference in 1955 Nehru’s India was in the forefront of defining for Third World countries a zone of diplomatic autonomy outside of the Cold War structures imposed by the two superpowers.\(^{73}\) In the form of Hindutva, in recent decades India is exporting religion to the United States, Britain and all places where there exists a substantial Indian diaspora.\(^{74}\) And that diaspora’s vibrancy challenges the notion of increasing cultural homogeneity in the era of globalization.\(^{75}\) Indian cuisine has spread across the globe both as haute cuisine and as cheap restaurant or street food.\(^{76}\) In the globalization of sports, cricket’s most recent TV-friendly reorganization will give India a preeminent, and South Asia an overwhelming, market share.\(^{77}\) And at the elite level, a group of expatriate Indian economists who are working primarily in Britain and the United

\(^{68}\) Rajan and Sharma 2006b.

\(^{69}\) Pollock 1998, 70.

\(^{70}\) Ashreena 2007.


\(^{72}\) Rajan and Sharma 2006a.

\(^{73}\) Acharya 2009.

\(^{74}\) Bhatt and Mukta 2000.

\(^{75}\) Shukla 2003.

\(^{76}\) Collingham 2006.

\(^{77}\) Appadurai 1996, 89-113.
States are unrivalled in the academic world. They are producing cutting-edge research while still retaining a much broader intellectual outlook and harboring much bigger intellectual ambitions than their more narrowly and professionally focused British or American colleagues.78

India has also been on the receiving end of processes of engagements, most notably in the financial crisis of 1991, and the adoption of a liberalization program has transformed important aspects of the Indian economy. Liberalization has brought affluence and a consumer society in which social trust and engagement have become more precarious, self-centered behavior has become more prevalent, and the ecological barriers to long-term growth are much greater than they were for Western countries. In this new consumer society old problems such as public health are recast as a component of an individualized political economy of pleasure.79 Though still relatively recent, the effects of liberalization have already proven to be profound, illustrating that processes of civilizational encounters and engagements are always a two-way street.

3. Civilizational Processes and Practices

We lack the conceptual framework for the analysis of civilizational processes in international politics that Elias developed for domestic affairs. We do know, however, that civilizational processes in global affairs occur in a setting which lacks a monopoly over the means of violence. This structural condition invites further thought about the processes and practices that make Sinicization incremental, reversible and bi-directional.

Civilizational Processes. Sinicization requires a distinctive style of analysis that in recent decades has become increasingly common in the social sciences. This is illustrated by the growing interest in process and causal mechanisms that has complemented a more traditional, variable-based language beholden to the logic of covering-law explanations and the correlational logic of statistical explanations. Mechanisms are lower-level process links that are embedded within but potentially independent from a higher level causal story.80 Conversely, a causal model, theory or narrative often relies on configurations of multiple processes and mechanisms to explain how some set of initial conditions in one or more contexts generates some set of outcomes or variations. Civilizational analysis that focuses on processes fits well into this research tradition.

78 The group includes Amartya Sen, Abhijit Banerjee (MIT), Pranab Bardhan (Berkeley), Kaushik Basu (Cornell), Partha Dasgupta (Cambridge, UK), Dilip Mookherjee (Boston University), and Sendhil Mullainathan (Harvard).

79 Mazzarella 2003, 59-98.

Beyond this general understanding there exists little agreement on what constitutes process or mechanism.\textsuperscript{81} For starters, civilizational processes cannot be analyzed only with a materialist definition of mechanisms as is common in the natural sciences and engineering.\textsuperscript{82} Instead, as in other fields of social science analysis they contain some irreducibly unobservable aspects of social reality, such as the conceptual and semiotic systems that can affect processes and objects without the intervention of observable, concrete mechanisms.\textsuperscript{83} Furthermore, civilizational processes exist at a level of generality that goes beyond specific spatial or temporal contexts. In this view civilizational processes are abstract representations that specify the logic of a process that is unfolding in different contexts.\textsuperscript{84}

Finally, mechanisms can offer plausible hypotheses at the individual level for the aggregation of disparate individual practices and at the collective level for their uniformities, as in relational mechanisms that work through network interactions.\textsuperscript{85} Typically, civilizational processes thus involve multiple mechanisms that reflect great causal complexity.\textsuperscript{86} Exemplified by the six substantive chapters in this book, civilizational process analysis invites empirical investigations of complex configurations of mechanisms that interact in different ways to generate outcomes in different contexts.

What should we expect from this style of analysis? Minimalists insist that civilizational processes and mechanisms are so complex, impenetrable and contingent as to defy explanation altogether. We can perhaps describe, interpret and assess the meaning of processes but we cannot aim at explaining them.\textsuperscript{87} Maximalists argue that causal mechanisms are “structures and entities that have the capacity to generate observed associations between macrophenomena.”\textsuperscript{88} They tell us that something occurs with regularity as well as why and how it occurs. An adequate account of how the world works combines credible causal mechanisms that were present and jointly sufficient to produce a given phenomenon or event.

This book establishes its claim between these two positions. Its motivation disagrees with the minimalistic position. But since the field of civilizational analysis is in its infancy and since this analysis draws on only six case studies, the maximalist position seems unrealistically ambitious for now. The task at hand is to illustrate the existence of important connections within and between civilizational

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\textsuperscript{82} Bunge 2004, 191.
\textsuperscript{87} Tilly 2001, 22-24.
\textsuperscript{88} Waldner 2007, 153.
\end{flushleft}
processes and mechanisms. The analysis of specific episodes in the fields of security, political economy and culture may provide some plausible claims about the existence of possibly robust mechanisms. Eventually, process- and mechanism-based accounts may thus lead us to search for recurrent configurations. This approach thus aims at highlighting mechanisms that make salient features of events or processes politically relevant.

This middle position approximates that of Peter Hedström and Martha Finnemore. Hedström differentiates between covering law explanations, statistical explanations and mechanism explanations. Each differs in its motivating explanatory principle: subsumption under a causal law, identification of a statistical relationship, specification of a social mechanism; and each emphasizes different key explanatory factors which have a law-like relation to the event that is to be explained, are of statistical relevance to the event to be explained, or rest on the identification of action-relevant entities and activities and their various linkages. “The core idea behind the mechanism approach is that we explain not by evoking universal laws, or by identifying statistically relevant factors, but by specifying mechanisms that show how phenomena are brought about.” Rather than examining a process, such as Sinicization, and asking what it is, Martha Finnemore looks instead at the activities of actors and asks how they describe and interpret their activities in different contexts. Her methodology is a “narrative explanatory protocol.” These protocols are, first, descriptive in laying out a chronological sequence and, secondly, configurative in articulating a coherent structure in arranging them in a particular way. Following Charles Pierce and John Ruggie, Finnemore bridges induction and deduction with the method of “abduction,” a dialectical combination of both.

Scholars have identified numerous mechanisms in various studies. In his historical work, for example, Charles Tilly has focused on strategic exchange and bargaining, diffusion with threshold effects, and tipping points in network structures. Iain Johnston’s analysis of China and international institutions has highlighted the importance of social influence, mimicking, and persuasion. Referencing the work of Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse, Kevin Featherstone distinguishes between asymmetrical patterns of absorption, accommodation, and transformation. And in his analysis of multiple modernities, Jürgen Kocka has focused on imposition, imitation, adaptation, and negotiation. These different mechanisms, and others we could add to the list, specify the causal relationships between situation, actor, action

90 Hedström 2005, 11.
93 Tilly 1997, 47.
95 Featherstone 2003, 19-20.
and discourse, and emergent structural properties. Empirical analysis and close attention to observable and unobservable effects thus may help generate a preliminary inventory of civilizational processes and mechanisms.

**Civilizational Practices.** Rather than aiming at explaining whole civilizational processes such as Sinicization with invariant models of power mobilization, power transition, or cultural diffusion, following Tilly’s advice it seems more appropriate to focus on subprocesses of Sinicization illustrated by the six case studies in this book, with particular emphasis on specific elements of practice and policy. Practices and policies underline that civilizations are marked by both vigorous disagreements in action and speech and at times unreflected practices. Together, they generate different outcomes. One such outcome, cultural imperialism, describes the unilateral imposition of the norms and practices of one civilization upon another that it seeks to displace or destroy. A second outcome describes the wholesale adoption by local actors of the format, but not the content, of imported cultural products and practices. Finally, a third outcome, and the one that is most typical in the relations among major civilizations and most readily observed in the book’s six case studies, describes hybridization. Local norms and practices are altered by selectively appropriating imported practices. This is the give-and-take that defines civilizational processes, the exchange of cultural material in the form of information, ideas, values, norms, and identities. It highlights shifting balances of practice between different civilizations. Sinicization is reflected in such processes of transcivilizational engagements and intercivilizational encounters.

International relations theory has in recent years rediscovered the categories of pragmatism and practice. Influenced among others by Pierre Bourdieu and Jürgen Habermas, both concepts help clarify some of the most vexing questions in the field. Practices express what Vincent Pouliot calls “the logic of practicality,” a cousin of Bourdieu’s “logic of practice,” which operates alongside and complementary to the logic of consequence, appropriateness and argumentation. Practices differ from actions in that they offer an organized context for actions which differ from behavior; actions imply subjective and intersubjective elements which add meaning to the material world of behavior. Practices vary in their degree of competence and in the balance between discursive and material elements. They can exist in parallel without significant interference; they can evolve symbiotically forming coherent wholes in which different ensembles create mutually reinforcing relationships; they can form hybrid interactions with one another to create new practices; and they can exist in relations of mutual subordination. For actors practices can be unselfconscious, based on unspoken ‘background’ or ‘common’ knowledge, or they can be conscious. Political practices are a type of conversation that can

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97 Tilly 2001, 37.
100 Adler and Pouliot 2011b, 9-12, 32-33 MANUSCRIPT.
evolve into commonly accepted translations of differently structured life worlds. Practices, in the plural, refer to the habitual and routinized actions shared by a group of people.\textsuperscript{101} Action, in the singular, refers to the contingent and often creative part of human existence which plays itself out case by case. The two are closely related, as are chapters 6 and 7 by Carol Hau and Chih-yu Shih focusing, respectively, on the practices of diasporic groups and actions of individuals operating in relation to their home and host societies.

Pouliot’s systematic presentation of practical knowledge (knowing how) differentiates it sharply from representational knowledge (knowing that) through a set of ideal typical distinctions highlighting its: cognitive status (tacit, inarticulate, automatic vs conscious, verbalizable, intentional), mode of learning (experiential unspoken practice vs formal reflexive schemes), relation to practice (knowledge lies in the practice vs. knowledge precedes practice), nature of inference (implicit vs. explicit), direction of fit (world-to-mind doing vs. mind-to-world observing), type of reasoning (unthinking vs. instrumental or normative), and popular categories (commonsense, experience, intuition, knack, skill vs. scheme, model, theory, calculation, reasoning).\textsuperscript{102} These binary distinctions are helpful for alerting us to different micro-logics that motivate civilizational practices.

In the case of civilizations the logic of practicality includes representational models of action that are fictional, not rationalist. In contrast to literary fiction, imagined future states of the world remain often undisclosed, are seen as separated from the real world, and are perceived as naturalized representation of the future.\textsuperscript{103} Fictions thus can provide parameters for choices in an uncertain world while at the same time increasing that very uncertainty. They introduce the possibility of creativity into new practices. And they are non-verifiable in an uncertain world. Practice informed by fiction complements to unselfconscious civilizational practice.

Language is a specific social practice indispensible for both. It has a generative capacity that allows for novelty and creativity rather than mere repetition. Practices can generate conventions and symbols which stabilize meanings and make it possible to adhere to the protocols of instrumental decision making. Some human practices can reveal civilizational and other identities by activating myths and metaphors. The same is true of international diplomacy and law. They, too, are ongoing conversations and negotiations in search of workable translations and thus contribute to establishing contingent and evolving collective systems of shared reference. Political practice is the only way of telling whether, and to which extent, translation of civilizational and other differences has actually succeeded. In general transcivilizational engagement creates more successful translations than intercivilizational encounters; civilizational clash signifies fundamental rupture.

\textsuperscript{101} Guzzini 2010, 307.
\textsuperscript{102} Pouliot 2010, 29.
\textsuperscript{103} Beckert 2010, 2.
Vincent Pouliot takes this observation, if not my terminology, as the starting point for his analysis of the relations between West and East, exemplified by NATO and Russia after the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The Cold War clash between NATO and the Soviet Union was not transformed through political practices into peaceful engagements but ended up, rather, as a series of symbolic power struggles. For many reasons these encounters have not spilled over into overt conflict. But neither have they led to a security community marked by the emergence of dependable expectations of peaceful change. “NATO-Russia power politics seems to have uneasily migrated from the realm of war, however cold, to that of normalized diplomacy.” This conclusion is supported by other scholars. Russia is currently coming into its own because its civilizational encounter with the West makes it into a semi-periphery existing in relative isolation. And in separate analyses Ted Hopf and Iver Neumann have concluded that Russia remains Western Europe’s “Eastern Other” and that Western Europe remain Russia’s “External Other.”

- Use six chapters as illustrations in a section to be inserted here

In sum, civilization is not a condition but a set of processes created by human practices. These practices, in the aggregate, to civilizational processes such as Sinicization and are thus producing and reproducing behavioral, action and symbolic boundaries.

4. Civilizational Identities: China, Japan, and India

In today’s world these practices and processes are nested in one global civilization marked by multiple modernities. Over decades Shmuel Eisenstadt has worked out an argument that focuses on the delayed impact that the different religions embodied in civilizations have had on the eventual emergence of one global civilization containing multiple modernities. Civilizations embody different religious cores and secular cultural programs as continually reconstructed multiple traditions. And this reconstruction is shaped in all civilizations by specific antinomies: transcendental and mundane, universalistic and particularistic, totalistic and pluralistic, orthodox and heterodox. These antinomies motivate political struggles that have a strong impact on collective identities, political institutions and political practices. Through their practices actors can reveal to others and discover for themselves who they are. Who they are drives what they do; and what they do shapes who they are. This close link invites us to analyze

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104 Pouliot 2010.
105 Pouliot 2010, 2.
106 Hopf 2010.
108 Spohn 2010.
109 Pouliot 2010, 39.
Chinese, Japanese and Indian civilizational identities, without having to claim that they exist outside of one global civilization of multiple modernities.

**China.** David Kang’s analysis of the relations between China and its nomadic neighbors to the north and its Sinicized neighbors to the east and south provides a good illustration of the complexity of Chinese identities. Conflicts over relative gains between China and the nomads were augmented by the fact that nomads had no interest in adhering to China’s civilizational standards. A chasm of identities and practices separated the two, generating an almost permanent state of war. In contrast, convergence in one civilizational standard shared by China and its neighbors to the south and east resulted in prolonged peace. Despite this historical record today the Chinese notion of all-embracing unity (da-yitong) is normally uncontested by adherents of China’s various intellectual traditions. It is a core value which has significant consequences for how Chinese view the world and conduct their foreign policy. Occasional dissents from this viewpoint to the historical record, indicating that the time of division in Chinese history was longer than the time of unity. But such dissents typically fall on deaf ears. Instead, a deep-rooted Sinocentric worldview persists as “a myth backed up at different times by realities of varying degree, sometimes approaching nil.”

Confucianism offers a tradition for China that has proven sufficiently plastic and contested to accommodate China’s internal disagreements. Discarded as an imperial institution since the middle of the 19th century and hollowed out as a political ideology, the relevance of various incarnations of New Confucianism is now seen to lie in its humanism. Widely thought to have been a major factor for many of China’s ills during the last two centuries, in recent years the Chinese government has vigorously revived Confucianism. This ideology operates on the basis of hierarchical, reciprocal and morally based values. The political qualities that supposedly flow from these values – wisdom, morality, generosity, obligation to respect the interests of others – are now extolled as assets not liabilities.

The ethical and religious concerns of Confucian humanism, Tu Weiming argues, remain relevant in seeking to address contemporary China’s pressing problems. Tu’s conceptualization is largely congruent with the writings of Shmuel Eisenstadt and the concept of multiple modernity. For Tu cultural China focuses on the meaning of being Chinese. It is not a geopolitical, linguistic or ethnic concept. Instead cultural China is defined by transnational relationships in Greater China and the fluid borders

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111 Xu 2009, 51.


114 My analysis of Tu Weiming’s writings is based in part on Duan 2007.

115 Tu 1994.
separating civilization from barbarism. According to Tu Greater China comprises three distinct cultural worlds: first, the four states or quasi-states populated largely by ethnic Chinese -- mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore; second, the diaspora of overseas Chinese living in Northeast and Southeast Asia, the United States, and throughout the world; and third, individuals who are trying to understand China intellectually and interpret it to their own national communities. Cultural China emerges from the dialogues within and between these different Chinese worlds, with the erstwhile peripheries of the second and third Chinese world now in the unaccustomed role of civilizing China’s first world. Put differently, for Tu transnational intellectual and cultural networks trump established state, national or transnational identities. Confucianism is not an essential attribute of Chineseness, rooted in an empire, polity, or modern nation-state. It is instead a cultural resource mobilized primarily on the periphery of transnational Chinese networks.

Furthermore, inside mainland China the tradition of Confucianism is complemented by and competing with alternative traditions of Daoism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, popular religion, atheism and secularism. Outside of China, in the Sinocentric sphere of cultural influence, contested and contestable traditions of Confucianism can also be found in Japan, Korea and Vietnam. Tu Weiming’s analysis of civilizational dialogues agrees with Eisenstadt on the persistence of cultural pluralism in one encompassing civilization of modernity that has succeeded all Axial Age civilizations. Avoiding the stipulation of any cultural essences, Tu focuses attention on civilizational dialogues and processes. This formulation agrees with William Callahan’s insistence on the existence of transnationalism inside Greater China as the unstable product of contingent relations reflecting day-to-day practices.

Confucian traditions are also applicable to the economic rise of industrial East Asia. The economic importance of the overseas Chinese and Chinese transnationalism has been widely noted as a critically important aspect of the economic rise of East Asia. Tu’s analysis does not differentiate clearly between the values, habits, and institutions that mark the culture of Greater China. It does underline, however, the importance of their joint impact. That said, in Confucianism strong government, meritocracy, high trust polities, and enduring familial and social relations are important values that are expressed in routinized behavior. And just as East Asian capitalism is dynamic and evolving, so is economic Confucianism. Indeed, China’s economic success may become more attractive to other parts of the world in the future. A “Beijing consensus” -- authoritarian politics and capitalist competition -- offers an alternative to the “Washington consensus” -- market economies with democratic

118 Callahan 2004, xx.
121 Fukuyama 1995, 84-86.
government.\textsuperscript{122} Confucian consensual values at home and a stipulated Beijing consensus abroad are the political construction of one among several of China’s many traditions. Put differently, the economic rise of East Asia is built on a distinctive foundation that is grounded in and supportive of Eisenstadt’s notion of multiple modernities, Nonini and Ong’s notion of Chinese transnationalism as an “alternative modernity,” and Collins’ notion of competing zones of prestige.\textsuperscript{123}

\textit{Japan}.\textsuperscript{124} Like China Japan has its own multiple, contested traditions. In his broad overview of Japanese civilization as the only distinctly non-Axial age civilization, Eisenstadt has stressed Japan’s continuous, autonomous and turbulent history up to and including modern times.\textsuperscript{125} Japan lacked what the other Axial age civilizations had – the urge to implement in the mundane world of the here and now the precepts of a higher ethical or metaphysical order. Non-Axial age civilizations, such as the Mongols, quickly succumbed to Axial-age civilizations. Not Japan. Unlike all other non-Axial age civilizations Japan articulated and retained a strong sense of self in its encounter with Buddhism, Confucianism and the other Axial age civilizations.

Japan’s national polity (\textit{kokutai}) has timeless, almost mystical connotations.\textsuperscript{126} The conservative politics of a prescriptive, cultural familism roots the contemporary Japanese state deeply in the unbroken history of a family headed by the emperor. This has given state officials and the conservative camp in Japanese politics a culturally grounded vision that helped motivate and legitimate in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century the military attempt to make all of East Asia children of the Japanese emperor and subsequently to provide an astonishingly successful economic model for all East Asia to imitate. Before 1945 Shintoism was a cultural and political program seeking to assist Japan’s imperialist venture. After 1945 official discourse invoked Japan as a family nation, and familial metaphors crop up frequently also in the corporate world. Indeed the family as a corporate and pre-political unit is in the conservative reading of Japan the most important bedrock of Japan’s civilizational polity. The family that is being invoked varies. On the one hand it refers to the multigenerational household (\textit{ie}) which some scholars at the time of Japan’s rise in the 1980s viewed as the central source of Japanese success.\textsuperscript{127} But it refers also to the nuclear family as it has emerged in the modernizing Japan after World War II. Much of the failure of official rhetoric and public policy has to do with the discrepancy between the image of Japan’s “family way” in the singular and the lived experience and common sense understanding of the plurality and diversities in the literal and unscripted familial units that constitute Japan now as they have throughout the ages. Against

\textsuperscript{122} Ramo 2004.
\textsuperscript{124} I would like to thank Victor Koschmann for his freely shared insights.
\textsuperscript{125} Eisenstadt 1996.
\textsuperscript{126} Gluck 1985, 144-46.
conservative wishes, today it is students, slackers, singles, seniors and strangers that are transforming Japan’s family state and nation.\textsuperscript{128}

What realists regard as Japan’s unique civilization is thus marked by multiple traditions. Two stand out and have engaged in an unending tuck of war in recent decades. A primordial construction of a unique Japanese essence competes with a self-understanding of Japan as an infinitely flexible and adaptive set of institutions and practices. At enormous costs to itself Japan has resisted strong pressures, especially from its Asian neighbors, to take full responsibility for the unspeakable suffering that its imperialist venture and war of aggression brought in the 1930s and 1940s. At the same time, dependent on the United States as its most important ally and trade partner, Japan has shown an almost infinite flexibility in adjusting to the demands especially of a typically protectionist U.S. Congress. Over a period of decades Japanese officials have permitted a gradual opening of markets. At the same time, however, Japan’s techno-nationalist proclivities have remained so strong as to put Japanese business at a competitive disadvantage in an era of outsourcing and manifold international corporate collaborations. And with decreasing success, more than other civilizational states Japan has tried to maintain an ethnically homogenous population. Since the 1980s Japan’s growing internationalization has always been closely linked to a deepening of its nationalism. Opening up to the world and digging deeper into Japanese traditions and culture are twin processes.

\textit{India}.\textsuperscript{129} For Jawaharlal Nehru India was a place to be discovered, a singularity in a defined time and space.\textsuperscript{130} Nehru associated the Taj Mahal and the reign of the Mughal emperors as the fountainhead and crystallization of Indian civilization. By linking India’s Muslim past with its most spectacular architectural symbol, Nehru hoped, perhaps, to affirm a secular image of the Indian nation-state and challenge the Vedic origins of the India that many Indians believe in. Similarly, Sunil Khilnani chose to talk of the idea of India -- in the singular.\textsuperscript{131} And so did Louis Dumont in his characterization of India as a typical traditional society. Dumont’s analysis stressed social inequality and conflated structural principles with Brahmin conceptions which he regarded as a stand-in for all of Indian society.\textsuperscript{132}

Such conceptualization seems oddly out of touch with contemporary scholarship. India is not to be discovered either as a place or as an idea. Instead India is deeply divided. Several centuries of Muslim settlement, conquest, and rule in the region have not succeeded in making 150 million Muslims an integral part of India. Instead Indian history remains a focal point of contestation, most recently, since

\begin{footnotes}
\item[129] I would like to thank Durba Ghosh, Mary Katzenstein, Susanne Rudolph and Robert Travers for their critical comments on and helpful suggestions for my discussion of India.
\item[130] Nehru 1990.
\item[131] Khilnani 1997.
\end{footnotes}
the 1980s, with the rise of Hindutva. Prasenjit Duara calls Hindutva a syndicated, political, and monolithic form of Hindu nationalism favored by the BJP and Shiv Sena.\textsuperscript{133} Indeed, the rise of Hindu nationalism has been the central event in the crisis of Indian secularism.\textsuperscript{134} Side by side with Nehru’s secular and incorporating form of Hinduism, there exists now a religious and exclusivist form, articulated already by Golwalkar in 1948. It is seeking to elevate Hinduism above all other religions and regards Muslims and Islam as foreign elements in the Indian body politic whose influence should be diminished or eliminated altogether. As is true of Europeans and Americans, Indians are thus continuously asking themselves ‘who are we?’\textsuperscript{135} And as is true elsewhere, they are drawing on multiple traditions to give their tentative answers. For, as Amartya Sen points out, Indians are an argumentative lot, and not only in Bengal.\textsuperscript{136} Their arguments are recurrent attempts to rearticulate, to recombine, to silence, to renegotiate and to relive India’s various traditions. Even though it exists as a single state, India does not exist in the singular. India exists instead as an ongoing set of conversations, political quarrels, and at times bloody fights, as over the Mughal Babri Mosque in Ayodhya.

Not for Mahatma Gandhi.\textsuperscript{137} Like Tagore, Gandhi favored the political plurality of pre-modern Indian civilization that preceded the introduction and imposition of Western concepts of state and nation under British rule. From this vantage point India appears as a heterogeneous civilizational polity rather than a homogeneous nation state.\textsuperscript{138} Indian plurality emerged as the successor of a vast transnational ecumene in which Sanskrit texts, which had monopolized world literary production, had circulated for a millennium.\textsuperscript{139} It is still unknown why, between 1000 and 1500, the people in South Asia chose to produce texts in languages that did not travel as far as Sanskrit while at the same time joining an extended Persophone ecumene. Whatever the reason, this history created a degree of diversity that was not regretfully accepted, as in medieval Europe, but openly celebrated. Gandhi embraced the social and cultural pluralism that claimed his life and marked South Asia at the very moment India gained independent statehood.

Gandhi’s folk-based, critical traditionalism differed both from Tagore’s classical universalism and from the modern, secular concept of the nation-state which, Gandhi thought, would dehumanize life and eliminate the distinctiveness of Indian civilization.\textsuperscript{140} Informed by this view Gandhi sought to articulate

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{134} Needham and Rajan 2007.
\item \textsuperscript{135} Huntington 2004a,b.
\item \textsuperscript{136} Sen 2005.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Gandhi 1997.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Kumar 1989, 1997, 407.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Pollock 1998, 2006.
\item \textsuperscript{140} Nandy 1983, 47-63, 100-06.
\end{itemize}
an Indian identity that he regarded as a distinctive contribution to the world. His own biography made
Indian identity a diasporic intellectual construct, forged in the marginalized position Gandhi had
occupied in England and in the position of leadership that he held subsequently among Indian
expatriates in Africa. For Gandhi there actually existed a homeland that needed to be liberated and with
methods that were uniquely suited to his and India’s characteristics. This is why he and Nehru, despite
all their differences, could become comrades in arms in the most unusual struggle for national liberation
the world has seen. Gandhi drew on a variety of indigenous sources to articulate an Indian identity. And
Gandhi knew those sources much better than did Karl Marx who wrote “Indian society has no history at
all, at least no known history. What we call its history, is but the history of the successive intruders who
founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society.”

Marx’s view
and Gandhi’s image both had some similarity with 19th century European Orientalist discourse that
characterized India as rural, poor, religious, ascetic and deeply philosophical.

To search for the essence of India is a losing proposition. To engage the argumentative tradition about
India’s multiple traditions is not. Today the Hindutva movement and ideology interprets the Hindu past
as a form of cultural nationalism stretching back to Vedic times, a nationalism that is deeply entangled
with Indian civilization. In sharp contrast, secular anti-colonial nationalism, Hindutva activists argue,
could offer no more than a critique of oppressive colonialism and lacked a positive message that
represented the Hindu majority. This view overlooks the contribution of British rule to the
strengthening of religious boundaries in India that made the emergence of self-contained notions of
Hinduism a possibility. No natural categories such as Hindu or Muslim existed before British rule.
Neo-Gandhians among others are thus resisting the attempt to render a single version of the Indian past
pressing instead the ideal of multiplicity and the combinatorial richness it entails for the evolution of
India as a civilizational constellation. The contest over balancing the uniformity of individual rights in
India’s civil code with the diversity of personal laws protected by minority rights is an open-ended story,
an important example of India’s civilizational politics writ large.

Conclusion

Our world of civilizations is plural and pluralist. It easily accommodates China as very normal and
unexceptional case. Far from being unique, China, Japan and India are comparable to Western
civilizations and to Islam as a bridge civilization between East and West. Civilizations rarely clash. For the
most part they have encounters and engage, as is illustrated by the record of the last two decades in the
relations between Sinic and American civilizations. Although the conceptual language of civilizational
analysis has become part of the Chinese vocabulary only in recent times, Sinic civilizational

141 Marx 1973, 320. I would like to thank Leonard Seabrooke for this reference.
142 Kinvall 2007, 100.
144 Rudolph and Rudolph 1997, 236.
consciousness dates back many centuries. The many different ethnic and social groups that constituted the peoples of East Asia intermingled with one another over centuries and millennia. And that process of Sinicization was more important than the content of the social purposes and ideas that it generated.\textsuperscript{145}

Processes and practices that constitute encounters of, engagements with and clashes between civilizations show their dynamism to be in the realm of becoming rather than being. It is that dynamism that makes civilizations so important in the shaping of the multiple modernities that are part of one common global context. Will that global context be defined in the future by processes of civilizational convergence, as Emanuel Adler and his colleagues argue?\textsuperscript{146} Will one civilization of empathy emerge in which a new biosphere consciousness replaces the ideological consciousness that inheres in multiple modernities, as Jeremy Rifkin claims?\textsuperscript{147}

For now these remain open questions that only the future can answer. The past does give us a sense of the possibilities and limitations of an hyphenated Anglo-world.\textsuperscript{148} Anglo-Indians are Indian citizens whose paternal line leads to Europe. They were the creation of 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} century British imperialism. Having lived only in India, Anglo-Indians were for the most part Christian with English as their first and often only language. At the time of independence they formed a half-caste of about half a million people which has dwindled probably to one third that size today. Their distinctive culture was and is neither Indian nor British. While this generation of Anglo-Indian is not going to reproduce that culture, their children have an easy time finding good jobs with foreign firms valuing their excellent English and bicultural background. They join the thin veneer of cultural intermediaries who, like British expats, live between worlds. “Chimerica” is a journalistic neologism that speak to the possible emergence of such a veneer which might provide a cross-civilizational bridge, especially in the socio-cultural domain and especially in specific pockets of the Sinic world, such as Hongkong and the bi- or trilingual urban and professional elites in maritime Asia.\textsuperscript{149}

Unquestioned is the fact that civilizations are most similar not in their cultural coherence, isolation or tendency toward clash, but in their pluralist differences, in their plurality, and in their encounters and engagements. We should resist the temptation of excessive simplification and the fallacy of misplaced polarities entailed in binary distinctions between East and West. Instead, we should embrace the intellectual and political opportunities of what Kwame Anthony Appiah has called the “contaminated cosmopolitanism” of our multi-civilizational world.\textsuperscript{150} This concept captures nicely the messy co-occurrence of sameness and difference that is the defining trait of a world of plural and pluralist civilizations.

\textsuperscript{145} Gungwu Wang, personal communication, January 9, 2011.


\textsuperscript{147} Rifkin 2009.

\textsuperscript{148} Ridge 2010.

\textsuperscript{149} I would like to thank Takashi Shiraishi for clarifying this point for me.

\textsuperscript{150} Appiah 2006, 101.
The opening stanza of Kipling’s famous *Ballad of East and West*, I have argued here, is wrong: East and West are connected through manifold civilizational processes and practices. Kipling, however, continues his poem. With due allowance for the politically incorrect usage of gender and some imperfections in cadence, he writes:

“But there is neither East nor West, border nor breed nor birth
When two strong men stand face to face, tho they come from the ends of the earth.”

Was Kipling really wrong?

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