

The Confucian Dimension in the East Asian Development Model

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The question of whether there is a unique East Asian model of development has intrigued not only economists and political scientists, but also sociologists, anthropologists, historians, philosophers, and religionists in North America. Indeed, interest in the question has extended beyond the confines of academic inquiry; it has generated heated debates among business executives, policy makers, and commentators in the mass media throughout the Western Hemisphere. Intriguingly, since the question was first raised by futurologists, such as Herman Khan, [1] and comparativists, such as Peter Berger, [2] who observed East Asia as concerned intellectuals rather than as informed researchers, the scholars specializing in East Asian studies addressed the question primarily as a response to demands outside their expertise. As a result, the discourse on the East Asian development model functions at several distinct levels: as an explanation for the general public, as a way of assessing international trade competitiveness, and as input for formulating government policies.

It is important to note that the role of culture featured prominently when the question was first raised. Both Khan and Berger opted for a "cultural" explanation of the uniqueness of the East Asian development model. For them, however, an explanation of the economic dimensions of industrial East Asia (for obvious ethnic and cultural reasons, Singapore is also included in this "region") focusing on narrowly defined "institutional"

factors would have been acceptable. It was the inadequacy of such an explanatory model in accounting for many economically relevant social facts that prompted them to take the role of culture seriously. Intent on critiquing such decidedly "culturalist" orientation, Chalmers Johnson has tried to show that "culture" is irrelevant in understanding the rise of Japan as a super economic power. Nevertheless, his assertion that institutional innovations, such as the role and function of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) in post-War Japanese economic development, can fully account for the spectacular phenomenon, while highly informative, enhances rather than weakens the "culturalist" argument. [3] On the other hand, Berger, who is convinced that culture is irreducible, worries that an analysis which stresses the prominence of culture may render the East Asian model "unexportable" and thus self-defeating as a model that can be made universal. The institutionalists tend to undermine the role of culture, but the culturalists are deeply concerned about cultural determinism.

The perceived conflict between the institutionalists and the culturalists, however, is predicated on a false dichotomy, for while culturalists in general are also institutionalists, a sizeable number of institutionalists either consciously reject any reference to culture or inadvertently neglect to mention the relevance of culture in their analysis. In fact, militant institutionalists are persistent in refusing to

acknowledge the significance of culture (including spiritual values, social ethics, and religious practice) in formulating an explanation for the economic dynamics of industrial East Asia. Ironically, the militant institutionalists also include those who are specialists in religious studies. [4] A good number of the so-called culturalists are profoundly sensitive to institutional innovation and constraint; yet, they insist that culture cannot be reduced to an epiphenomenon (a superstructure of the mode of production, a response to the market, or a consequence of a government policy). Some of them strongly believe that institutions should also be understood as patterns of human interaction laden with cultural values. The economists by and large constitute the majority of the militant institutionalists. Their professionalism, while the most rigorous among the social scientists, has so significantly minimized the role and function of culture in any respectable quantitative analysis that the discipline is virtually unmindful of a vast arena of human experience vital to any actual economic behavior. The economists do not make mistakes within the parameters of their critical scrutiny. They are remiss in relegating culture to the residual category which rarely, if ever, becomes activated for serious professional consideration.

A caricature of the militant institutionalist position was recently voiced by a leading scientist at the Academia Sinica in Taiwan. Obviously annoyed by the frequent reference to the contribution of Confucian ethics to the rise of industrial East Asia in the mass media, he assigned himself the task of exploding the thesis by subjecting it to a simple logical test published as a special column in the most widely circulated newspaper. He first announced that Confucian ethics is not a necessary condition for economic development: if it were, no non-Confucian societies could develop economically. Then, he argued that Confucian ethics is not a sufficient condition for economic development: if it were, China should have developed economically centuries ago. Having, in his mind, definitive-

ly rejected the Confucian thesis, he provided his own list of the important factors for Taiwan's economic development. Although "leadership of the government" (easily recognizable as a cherished Confucian value!) tops the list, other culturally significant factors, such as thrift, are also mentioned. Yet, he refused to acknowledge that Confucian ethics has much to do with them. [5] Since then, Professor Yang Kuo-shu of Taiwan University, in his "microscopic verification", establishes an amazing degree of affinity between traditional value orientation and "personal modernity" on the one hand, and organizational behavior on the other. The post-Confucian hypothesis, in his view, is supportable. [6]

The Post-Confucian Hypothesis

The term "post-Confucian" may have been coined by Harvard political scientist Roderick MacFarquhar. In his attempt to define broadly the "Post-Confucian Challenge" as a way of understanding why the Sinic world (the Chinese cultural area) has been capable of assimilating industrial capitalism as a way to present a total (cultural as well as economic, political, and social) challenge to the West, he identifies post-Confucian characteristics, such as self-confidence, social cohesion, subordination of the individual, education for action, bureaucratic tradition, and moralizing certitude, as a key variable in explaining the dynamics of Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons (Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore). [7] Peter Berger succinctly formulates the post-Confucian hypothesis as follows:

It is essentially simple: both Japan and the newly industrialized countries of East Asia belong to the broad area of influence of Sinitic civilization, and there can be no doubt that Confucianism has been a very powerful force in all of them. The hypothesis is that a key variable in explaining the economic performance of these countries is Confucian ethic — or post-Confucian ethics, in the sense that the moral values in question are now relatively detached from the Confucian tradition proper and have become more widely diffused. Historical evidence on the spread of Confucian education and ideology is very relevant to this hypothesis, but equally important

is empirical research into the sway of Confucian-derived values in the lives of ordinary people, many of whom have never read a Confucian classic and have had little education, Confucian or other. [8]

The two conditions specified in Berger's hypothesis merit further exploration. The "historical evidence on the spread of Confucian education and ideology" is, of course, overwhelming. Edwin Reischauer's pithy article on "The Sinic World in Perspective" groups Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons together as integral part of the Confucian cultural universe. [9] The assumptive reason underlying Reischauer's perspective is widely accepted in the Sinological community: the spread of Confucian teaching, as interpreted by Chu Hsi (Zhu Xi, 1130-1200), was so extensive and penetrating in China and peripheral countries such as Korea, Vietnam, and Japan that prior to the impact of the West in the mid-nineteenth century, pre-modern East Asia could be characterized as the Confucian age.

Specifically, since the thirteenth century in China, late fourteenth century in Korea, fifteenth century in Vietnam, and seventeenth century in Japan, the cultural elite shared the same moral education and the political leadership appealed to the same ritual system, both defined in Confucian terms. In other words, every educated male adult was socialized in the same scriptural tradition, namely the Four Books with the collected commentaries compiled by Chu Hsi, and every statesman employed the symbolic resources from the Confucian tradition for governing the state.

Further, through informal oral transmission as well as well-structured local schools, the Sinic world, despite race, class and gender, became so familiar with Confucian categories of thought, realms of values, and rules of conduct that its beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors were profoundly shaped by the Confucian way of life. It would be far-fetched to characterize the Sinic world as exclusively Confucian, for Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism, Shamanism, Shintoism, Islam, folk religions, and Christianity are also part of East Asian (including Vietnamese) spirituality, but Con-

fucian humanism must be recognized as a *common discourse*. Indeed, more than a century of Western domination has not totally undermined the moral fabric of the Confucian discourse. For better or worse, it is still widely shared by East Asian Buddhists, Taoists, Shamanists, Shintoists, Muslims, and Christians. Without stretching one's imagination, the Confucian discourse remains the "civil religion" of East Asia, including Mainland China, North Korea, and Vietnam. By "civil religion" here is meant the value system that guides ordinary behavior as well as gives ultimate meaning to life in society. [10]

The relevance of Confucian humanism to the Sinic world notwithstanding, Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons are no longer Confucian. In fact, they have been so Westernized or, more appropriately, Americanized, that the presence of Confucian heritage can no longer be taken for granted. Indeed, the "moral fabric of Confucian discourse", restructured by Western and American ideas rooted in the Enlightenment mentality which glorifies science and democracy, often reveals itself as a distant echo rather than a loud voice. [11] The linkage between the "Confucian-derived values in the lives of ordinary people" in modern East Asia and the Confucian ethic in traditional elite culture has not yet been specified. This is why Robert Bellah has coined the happy phrase 'bourgeois Confucianism' to distinguish this from the 'high' Confucianism of the Mandarin elite of traditional China. [12] Professor S. G. Redding of the University of Hong Kong, in his thought-provoking study on the Chinese spirit of capitalism, suggests that the norms of the Chinese entrepreneurs are basically Confucian in nature. [13] Whether or not we choose to label this type of Confucian norms "bourgeois", we must acknowledge that there is, in comparative perspective, a "family resemblance" to what we take to be the core values in the age of Confucianism.

As Wang Gungwu, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, points out, "arguments lead[ing] back to Confucianism, following a process of elimination, some

might say, because observers have not been able to find much else in common among the four [Mini-Dragons]". While Professor Wang is cautious in noting that "[w]e still do not have the evidence to prove that Confucianism would help us explain the success of the little dragons", he calls our attention to what he terms "Low Confucianism" as contrasted with "High Confucianism":

It was only during the last few hundred years that a kind of Low Confucianism appeared among the Chinese. In their popular forms, Confucian cultural values would have to include a whole range of syncretic practices (including Taoist, Buddhist precepts, and religious experiences of all kinds) which were not separated from the ideas of filial piety and loyalty to which most people adhered. [14]

He further suggests that in order to refine the post-Confucian hypothesis we must investigate both the long trading experience of the Chinese and the nature of trade in Confucianism. His argument is impeccable:

With the twentieth century, however, the picture becomes far more complicated. Is religious background, or an upbringing with secular faith like Confucianism, a factor in business success? No matter whether we look at Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, or at South Korea, or at the overseas Chinese all over the world, we would find not only Confucians, Taoists, and Buddhists, but also Catholics, Protestants, and Muslims. It would be difficult to show that those who are consciously Confucian are more successful than those who are not or who actively profess other religions. Yet we are agreed that, for the four dragons anyway, Confucian values provide a common thread. So we must return to the nature of these values, and, in particular, their relationship with trade as a cultural value. [15]

There is remarkable convergence between Wang's Low Confucianism and Bellah's Bourgeois Confucianism. If we specify the post-Confucian hypothesis in terms of the norms and values in the Chinese merchant culture, the difficulty Berger encounters in presenting his post-Confucian hypothesis may be overcome. Specifically, the objection of Professor Li Yi-yuan who contends that "Chinese folk religion would be at least as important as

Confucianism for the matter at hand" can perhaps be met. [16] The issue is, of course, much more complicated than simply the distinction between two kinds of Confucianism. For one thing, China scholars have only begun a systematic inquiry into the relationship, whether complementary or conflicting, between High Confucianism and the folk traditions in pre-modern China. The research at the present juncture suggests a fruitful interaction for mutual enrichment between major Confucian thinkers, and the cultural transmitters in popular religions not only existed, but also defined the pattern of Confucian education. [17]

Max Weber was obviously wrong in defining the Confucian ethic as "rational adjustment to the world". [18] Talcott Parsons' assertion that "[t]he whole Chinese social structure accepted and sanctioned by the Confucian ethic was predominantly a 'particularistic' structure of relationships" [19] is also problematical. However, the post-Confucian hypothesis, while rejecting the Weberian and, by implication, the Parsonian claim that Confucianism is incompatible with modernization, is in full accord with the substantive Weberian thesis that the spirit of modern capitalism is rooted in cultural (specifically ethico-religious) values. The orienting questions for us, as Berger defines them, include: "[A]re there cultural roots, and especially religio-ethical roots, of modern Asian capitalism? If so, what are they?" [20] The post-Confucian hypothesis is meant to address these issues.

The Dynamics of the Confucian Tradition

The post-Confucian hypothesis is predicated on the assumptions that culture matters, that values people cherish or unconsciously uphold provide guidance for their actions, that the motivational structure of people is not only relevant, but also crucial to their economic ethics and that the life-orientation of a society makes a difference in the economic behavior of its people. These assumptions are necessary to make the post-Confucian hypothesis intelligible as an explanatory model. Also, the

hypothesis is based on the scholarly consensus that, in the Sinic world, the historical evidence on the spread of Confucianism as elite education and as political ideology is overwhelming and that the sociological data on the sway of Confucian values in the lives of ordinary people are extensive. Given that the Confucian heritage is what Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons have in common and that, despite claims of Japanese exclusivism, the pattern of East Asian development set in motion in Japan and followed by the Four Mini-Dragons has been remarkably consistent, we need to examine first the salient characteristics of the Confucian heritage and the possible bearings they have on the distinctive features of the East Asian development model.

Numerous attempts have been made by scholars to identify the Confucian-derived values that are relevant to economic development in industrial East Asia. Inspired by Weber's thesis on the Protestant ethic, thrift and industriousness have often been singled out as major Confucian contributions to the modern East Asia work ethic. A more elaborate attempt also includes family cohesiveness and respect for authority. Berger, for example, enumerates "some of the Confucian-derived values intended by the hypothesis" to show they are relevant to the work ethic and the overall social attitudes of the region". They include "a positive attitude to the affairs of this world, a sustained life-style of discipline and self-cultivation, respect for authority, frugality, an overriding concern for stable family life". [21] The values specified in Yang Kuo-shu's empirical study are more numerous. Hwang Kwang-kuo, a professor of psychology at Taiwan University, has made a systematic study on Confucianism and East Asian modernization; the Confucian values that he examines are the most comprehensive to date. [22]

Nevertheless, it is misleading to approach the Confucian tradition as if its efficacy in modern East Asia could be reduced to disembodied values. Redding's ingenious method of clustering these values in a more intelligible

pattern is promising, but it is beyond his scope to give a background understanding of the current status of the tradition. Joseph Levenson may have been right in characterizing the Confucian fate in the twentieth century as a pale memory in the minds of those who will struggle to revive it; but it is one thing to find genuinely creative reconstruction of Confucian philosophy and quite another to detect the Confucian "habits of the heart" at work. Indeed, the concerted effort to "museumize" the Confucian relics has not subdued its pervasive influence on the East Asian mentality.

As many anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists have reminded us, the East Asian psycho-cultural constructs are Confucian. In what sense has the Confucian tradition survived after the total collapse of the imperial order, the fundamental transformation of the agricultural economy, and a profound change in the family-centered social structure? The belief that the Confucian tradition has been inextricably linked to the polity, economy, and society of the "feudal" past compels us to pronounce that the Confucian fate was sealed when the political, economic, and social forces that sustained it had faded away. Actually, since the iconoclastic attack on "Confucius and Sons" occasioned by the May Fourth cultural movement in 1919, the demise of Confucianism has been announced time and again for the last 70 years. Some scholars pinpointed 1905 when the examination system based on the Confucian classics was formally abolished as the year that Confucianism died; others preferred the 1911 Revolution when the Emperorship based on Confucian symbolism lost its legitimacy. The Confucian "habits of the heart", however, survived and continued to flourish. Recently, intellectual historians in the Mainland, to their great surprise, have discovered that the New Confucian Humanism emerging in the post-May Fourth era is one of the most sophisticated, vibrant, and creative currents of thought in contemporary China. Intellectuals of all ideological persuasions in the People's Republic of China take it for granted that,

for better or for worse, the Chinese social ethic as well as the Chinese political culture are inseparably intertwined with the Confucian tradition.

The Chinese intelligentsia's obsession with the Confucian tradition as a defining characteristic of Chineseness is, however, one-sided. Like the major Axial Age civilizations, such as Hinduism, Greek philosophy, Buddhism, and Judaism (by implication, Christianity and Islam), Confucianism is not only historically complex, but culturally diverse. On the one hand, the category of Chinese culture is certainly larger than the Confucian tradition, for Confucianism, while the most influential and enduring, is but one of the several currents of thought in Chinese history. Yet, on the other hand, Confucianism is not exclusively Chinese, for the Confucian tradition is also Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese. As Professor Shimada Kenji of Kyoto University poignantly reminded colleagues at Peking University on a visit during the Cultural Revolution, Confucianism is a manifestation of East Asian spirituality. The underlying message is subtle but clear: If Peking is embroiled in an anti-Confucian campaign, there is no reason why Kyoto, or, for that matter, Seoul, cannot be the new center for Confucian learning. Professor Wang Gungwu defines the "Confucian world" as "the core areas of China, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and, around the edges, Singapore, Vietnam, and Japan". [23] Moreover, his study also indicates that overseas Chinese communities (given the recent history of immigration, we should add Korean and Vietnamese communities as well), throughout the world, notably in Southeast Asia, North America, and Western Europe, are also inheritors of the Confucian tradition.

As a way of life, without the formalistic structures of an organized religion, Confucianism not only coexisted with, but also benefited from Taoism, Buddhism, and, more recently, Christianity. The amalgamation of Confucianism with Shintoism in Japan and the blending of Confucianism with Shamanism in Korea, not to mention the phenomenon of

the so-called Three Teachings in "Cultural China", especially in Southeast Asian Chinese communities, give a particular syncretic texture to the Confucian tradition. Surely, the number of literate people who absorbed the values of High Confucianism was small even in imperial China, but virtually every occupational group in traditional East Asia, including the samurai, the farmer, the artisan, and the merchant, was profoundly influenced by the Confucian persuasion.

Tetsuo Nagita demonstrates the relevance of the Confucian discourse in his seminal study on the Japanese merchant culture in the eighteenth century. [24] Yu Ying-shih's systematic inquiry into the merchant ethic in traditional China reaches a similar conclusion. [25] The pervasiveness of the Confucian way of life in contemporary East Asia is shown in Koh Byon-ik's surprising discovery that an overwhelming majority of Korean Christian converts continue to honor their ancestors by actively participating in the Confucian rite of ancestral veneration. [26] An increasing number of East Asians have joined organized religions, but by becoming Buddhists, Christians, or Shintoists, they do not cease to be Confucians.

The Confucian insistence that learning is for the sake of the self and that the self is a center of relationships, in sharp contrast to the doctrine of individualism in the modern West, remains a powerful moral force in East Asia. This group-orientation (at least non-individualistic approach to life) based on the supreme value of self-cultivation seriously challenges the Parsonian assumption that "individualism (or, as he, Talcott Parsons, called it, 'ego-orientation') is inevitably and intrinsically linked to modernity". [27] The rise of Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons suggests an alternative path to modernity, a path that raises fundamental questions about the linkage between modernity, capitalism, and individualism. Further, it hints at the authentic possibility of a spirit of capitalism rooted in the Confucian ethic: a transformative potential generated by group solidarity and consensual effort.

The Confucian ethic, which Weber condemned as without "an inward core, of a unified way of life flowing from some central and autonomous value position", [28] seems to have centered in an efficacious location much more generative and dynamic than the lonely self: the self that is not an island, but an ever-expanding stream of interconnectedness. The ability of East Asian entrepreneurs to take full advantage of the human capital, be it family loyalty, a disciplined work force, or supportive staff is not an accident. They are beneficiaries of the Confucian way of life.

Equally important but less obvious is that the East Asian concept of society itself is Confucian in character. The adversary relationship carefully cultivated in American civil society is relegated to the background. Despite fierce competitiveness which generates a great deal of tension and conflict, East Asian societies are in essence "fiduciary communities" which take internal cohesiveness as a precondition for the well-being of the people. The ability of leaders in these societies to mobilize resources on a large scale from different sectors testifies to the credibility of the basic Confucian precept that the public good is not in conflict with private interests and the enhancement of the wealth of the nation will eventually bring profit to all. To be sure, the rhetoric of patriotism is so powerful that people are often blind to the abusive use of power by the elite, but since the Confucians believe that political leaders ought to be moral exemplars as well, any revelation that the leadership is corrupt will lead to a major crisis in legitimacy. Public accountability is, therefore, necessary for political survival. The relative ease with which industrial East Asian governments have transformed themselves into "development states" must be understood in the context of this pattern of interaction between the leaders and the populace defined in Confucian terms.

Duty-consciousness, accordingly, is a double-edged sword. The pervasiveness of the rhetoric of duty and the paucity of reference to rights in the public discourse must not lead us to the facile conclusion that respect for

authority (or subjugation to those in power at the expense of personal dignity) is always one-sided. In the Confucian ethic, the sense of duty is proportionate to the responsibility assumed. The heavier one's responsibility, the more enhanced one's sense of duty. As a result, those who are in exalted positions must have a keener sense of their duty, for they are responsible for extended networks of human relatedness. It is not at all uncommon for the people to demand that officials fulfill their duty as leaders. The reciprocity implied in duty-consciousness makes it difficult to defend basic rights as inalienable part of human nature, but it can safeguard against abusive use of power by the ruling minority. The Confucian spirit of protest, as shown on university campuses, is well and alive in East Asia.

The economic and political processes in industrial East Asia may have been generated by geopolitical and institutional forces totally unconnected with the cultural arena, but the responses of East Asian people seasoned in Confucian values are instrumental in fostering and maintaining the dynamics in ways profoundly meaningful to them and awe-inspiring to outsiders. Although it is premature to conclude whether or not this kind of development model shaped by the Confucian ethic is exportable, there are certainly features that can make this model universal and thus, attractive to those in search of a less individualistic, less self-interested, and less adversarial approach to modernity.

The East Asian Form of Life

The Confucian dimension in the East Asian development model can be summed up in three interrelated areas of concern: 1) the style of political leadership; 2) the pattern of social interaction; and 3) the path of human flourishing. All three can be subsumed under the label of group-orientation; yet, lest we commit the fallacy of constructing an exclusive dichotomy of group and individual, we should insist that the relevant conceptual ap-

paratus is the relationship between part and whole. In other words, Confucian group-orientation assumes that the whole comes into being because of the parts, for it is made up of the parts, and that the parts realize themselves through the whole, for they cannot exist as isolated monads.

1) *Style of Political Leadership.* It is quite conceivable that political power and intellectual influence are differentiated in Confucian societies. Those who are powerful may not have much intellectual persuasion and those who are influential in the fine arts, literature, thought, and religion may be politically powerless. The public demand, however, that political leaders must also act as moral exemplars and that members of the cultural elite must be socially responsible is characteristic of all Confucian societies. Political power and intellectual influence are, thus, laden with far-reaching ethical implications. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the East Asian cultural elite and ruling minority are subjected to more rigorous standards of moral conduct. It simply signifies the relevance of virtue, cultivated or presumed, in defining leadership.

The hierarchical order, both gender- and age-specific, coexisting with a relatively open meritocracy makes the style of leadership mysteriously complex to an outside observer, but the person who wields real power and influence is always well-connected, not by default, but by deliberate choice. Understandably, success in either economic entrepreneurship or political leadership is, to a large extent, due to the human factor. Yet, the winner is often the one who knows how to employ people as an internalized skill rather than one noted for his or her cunning manipulation.

Authority is achieved by superior personality traits, including the art of gentle persuasion. An authoritative figure embodies both experience and wisdom. It is revealing to note that in Japan, the real political leaders are not the elected officials who, like the nouveau riche, become prominent despite themselves. Rather, the senior bureaucrats in established

ministries who enter officialdom through rigorous examinations and climb the ladder of success with proven records of public service are the respected political leaders. The respect for authority, properly interpreted, involves an elaborate ritual of public recognition. It is a far cry from showing obedience to those who are in power. Indeed, with a high premium on consensus formation, real leadership always involves openness and receptivity to grassroots sentiments.

Lucian Pye may have exaggerated the "triumph of dependency" in centering Asian authoritarianism around "paternalistic power". [29] For one thing, the style of leadership in industrial East Asia is so complex a ritual process that it cannot be reduced to the psychodynamics between parent and child. Surely, child-rearing practice still serves as a reference point for analyzing how power is exercised in the political arena, but authority as ritualized power in the Confucian conception is as much a social fact as a psychological reality. If we accept Pye's assertion that "[t]he attraction of paternalism and the compulsion of dependency are powerful forces in Asian cultures" [30], the reason for this symbiosis must not be sought exclusively in what he calls the "psychodynamics of dependency". [31] Pye's assertion that family provides the basic context for human interaction is well-taken, but his description of the child's dependency needs seems one-sided.

2) *Pattern of Social Interaction.* In a rather graphic depiction, Pye illustrates his theory about the "psychodynamics of dependency" as follows:

Most Asians feel that they will be accepted and looked after by the collectivity if they behave in the expected ways. The ideal position for the individual in his relationships with authority is much like the situation a child might wish to have within the family. The citizen is inclined to picture himself as always the innocent party. He finds modest satisfaction in detecting faults in his leaders, for to do so inflates his own self-esteem, but there is a limit to such self-gratification because he also needs to believe in the ultimate benevolence of public authority -- much as children draw back from their fantasy wishes that their parents will disappear, while at the

same time clinging to their need to believe that their parents will be all-protecting. [32]

There is a measure of truth in Pye's apparently simple-minded sketch. The lack of psychology of suspicion on the part of the people towards the leadership seems to intimate a kind of childlike naivete in matters of political power. Pye, however, also acknowledges that for cultures which stress dependency to become effective in promoting modernization, "[a] key qualification is sympathetic, supportive leadership". [33] Actually, the success of the post-Confucian societies is in large part the result of such leadership. The real strength, then, lies in reciprocity and mutuality, rather than in subjugation and dependency.

Family features prominently in the East Asian pattern of social interaction. The type of parent-child relationship based on dependency in a nuclear family that Pye analyzes is too thin and shallow to account for the fully developed dyadic relationships in a richly textured social setting. The family with a variety of complex personal encounters provides an excellent learning environment for understanding age, gender, and status in a natural hierarchy. East Asians, seasoned in Confucian teaching on the "five relationships", tend to have a much differentiated and sophisticated appreciation of human relatedness.

While it is naive to believe that patterns of social interaction in a complex modern society, such as patron-client, manager-worker, doctor-patient, colleagues, comrades, and fellow travellers, can be subsumed under the "five relationships", the family's, especially the extended family's, potential for nourishing sensitivity and skills in inter-personal relationships must not be underestimated. The Confucian conception that the self is the center of relationships and that, as a dynamic center, it constantly evolves around an ever-expanding network of human-relatedness seems to have helped East Asians develop a form of modernization significantly different from that achieved by Western individualism.

3) *Path of Human Flourishing*. It is often acknowledged that Confucianism holds "a

positive attitude toward the affairs of the world". [34] The full implication of Confucian this-worldly spirituality, however, is extremely difficult to appreciate. The Weberian interpretation of Confucian rationalism, as contrasted with Puritanic ascetism, totally undermines its transformative potential in economy and society. The general impression that Confucianism, by advocating adjustment to the world, submitted to rather than rebelled against the status quo further condemns it to a conservative, if not reactionary, ideology. Ironically, among the Axial Age civilizations, Confucianism alone, like Marxism in the modern age, was committed to the transformation of the world from within. Indeed, Confucius made an existential choice to become a man among men and to seek basic solutions to the problems of the world by human effort. He refused to join the proto-Taoists (the hermits) to drop out and to find meaning in a state of nature. He never created a spiritual sanctuary, i.e., a church, a temple, a shrine, or a synagogue, as a sacred place diametrically opposed to the secular world. Instead, as Herbert Fingarette convincingly argues, he regarded the secular as sacred; he wanted to transform the political order defined in terms of power relationships into a moral community. It seems that his task was not merely to give sacred meaning to secular politics, but to see to it that sacredness is inherent in secularity. Strictly speaking, the dichotomy of the sacred and secular is not applicable to the Confucian life-orientation. For the Confucians, the world as we know it is the home, and we, as children of Heaven and Earth, are obliged to make our home a nourishing environment for humanity.

As a philosophy of life, Confucianism has developed not only an art of living, but also a science of managing the world. After all, it was instrumental in developing the most sophisticated and enduring bureaucracy in pre-modern history. The livelihood of the people (economics), governance of the state (politics), and the well-being of society at large (sociology) have always been central

concerns of Confucians. The scholar-officials in China, the civilian and military elite (*yangban*) in Korea, and the samurai-bureaucrats in Japan were paradigmatic Confucians.

The Confucians respect natural hierarchy, such as age differentiation in the family, recognize the importance of status and authority in society, and acknowledge the necessity of the division of labor in the economic sphere. Historically, however, the Confucian tradition has contributed to gerontocracy, authoritarianism, male domination, anti-commercialism, and a host of other patterns of thought and behavior that are incompatible with the modernizing process. Contemporary scholars in China and abroad are fully justified in pronouncing that the public image of a typical Confucian is not at all in accord with the modern personality type as defined by Alex Inkeles.

This, of course, does not mean that an East Asian politician, teacher, or merchant influenced by Confucian-derived values cannot function effectively in a modern society. On the contrary, the East Asian statesman, scholar, or business executive, inspired by Confucian humanism, may have more spiritual resources to tap than their counterparts in non-Confucian societies. Further, the emergence of a new kind of Confucian entrepreneurship raises challenging questions to those who tend to define modernization in exclusive Western terms. Actually, Inkeles' modern personality type, under the influence of the Parsonian perception that individualism is an indispensable motive force for modernization, may have to be modified in light of the East Asian experience.

The Confucian path to human flourishing, neither a spiritual journey to the other shore nor a salvation in the next life, is rooted in the improbability of this world and this life. While genetically it may not have contributed to the emergence of the spirit of capitalism, it seems in perfect accord with modern consciousness.

Towards an East Asian Model

In summarizing the distinctive features of Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons as a "model" of development, Ezra Vogel offers the following list: [35]

- 1. Post-Confucian blossoming
- 2. Shared fear and determination
- 3. Stable core of leaders with vision
- 4. Single dominant party
- 5. Meritocratic development state
- 6. Changing comparative advantage
- 7. Guided private enterprises with world market
- 8. Docile virgin labor
- 9. Supply and demand-driven education
- 10. Relatively equal wealth
- 11. Low state welfare
- 12. Cycle of success

Obviously, the role of culture is given proper weight in Vogel's assessment of the East Asian model. For those who are concerned that a cultural explanation is inherently deterministic, Vogel's syncretic approach suggests a way of perceiving culture not as a constant structure, but as a dynamic process. By juxtaposing cultural elements with institutional and contingent factors, we can pragmatically evaluate how cultural values, combined with institutional arrangements and contingent forces, give rise to a pattern of growth that can serve as a model. Taking culture seriously does not necessarily mean committing ourselves to an unexportable exclusivism. Rather, a more nuanced and subtle understanding of the dynamics of industrial East Asia requires that we probe the cultural resources underlying government leadership, entrepreneurial spirit, social solidarity, educational ethos, and moral fabric in Japan and the Four Mini-Dragons. The evocation of the Confucian dimension, if for nothing else, gives the intellectual discourse on the East Asian model a richer texture.

1. H. Kahn, *World Economic Development: 1979 and Beyond*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1979).

2. Peter L. Berger, "An East Asian Development Model?", *The Economic News* (Taipei), 17-23 September 1984. For a fuller account of his interpretive position, see his article bearing the same title in *In Search of an East Asian Development Model*, edited by Peter L. Berger and Hsin-huang Michael Hsiao (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1988), pp. 3-11. See also his thought-provoking article, "Can the Caribbeans Learn from East Asia?", *Caribbean Review* 13:2, February 1984, pp. 6-9.

3. Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982).

4. A notable example is Professor Winston Davies, who maintains, in a number of oral presentations, that culture, and for that matter, religion, has very little to do with Japanese economic development. Although his interpretive position is well-known, I have not yet read his argument in print.

5. I use this example simply to illustrate a point. My purpose is to show that seemingly naive rejection of the so-called post-Confucian hypothesis, which will be discussed later, has often been made by otherwise sophisticated scholars. Since this is characteristic of the "climate of opinion" in the Chinese-speaking academic community, there is no need to identify the specific source for this particular anecdote.

6. Yang Kuo-shu, "Ch'uan-t'ung chi-chih-kuan, ko-jen hsien-tai-hsing chi chu-chih-hsing-wei: huo Ju-chia chia-shu ti i-hsiang wei-kuan yen-cheng" (Traditional outlooks on value, personal modernity, and organizational behavior: a microcosmic verification of the post-Confucian hypothesis; unpublished manuscript).

7. R. MacFarquhar, "The Post-Confucian Challenge", *The Economist*, 9 February 1980, pp. 67-72.

8. "An East Asian Development Model?" in *In Search of an East Asian Development Model*, p. 7.

9. Edwin O. Reischauer, "The Sinic World in Perspective", *Foreign Affairs*, January 1974, pp. 341-348.

10. The term as originally coined by Robert Bellah as a conceptual scheme in understanding American religiosity is particularly helpful in understanding the role of Confucianism in pre-modern East Asia. Since Confucianism was not an organized religion, but evoked profound "religious" sentiments in traditional East Asian

societies, it can be said to have functioned as a "civil religion" in the Sinic world. For Bellah's original formulation of the Problematik, see his article, "Civil Religion in America", *Daedalus*, 96, Winter 1967; reprinted in Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970). See also, Robert N. Bellah and Philip E. Hammond, eds., *Varieties of Civil Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980).

11. For an attempt to address this issue, see Tu Weiming, "The Enlightenment Mentality and the Chinese Intellectual Dilemma", paper presented to the Four Anniversaries Conference, Annapolis, Maryland, 11-14 September 1989.

12. Peter Berger, "An East Asian Development Model?", p. 7.

13. S. G. Redding, "Operationalizing the Post-Confucian Hypothesis: the Overseas Chinese Case", in *Chinese-Style Enterprise Management*, edited by K. C. Mun (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1985). Also, his forthcoming book-length monograph, "The Chinese Spirit of Capitalism", under the sponsorship of the Institute of Economic Culture at Boston University.

14. Wang Gungwu, "Trade and Cultural Values: Australia and the Four Dragons", *Current Issues in Asian Studies Series*, No. 1 (Victoria, Australia: The Asian Studies Association of Australia, 1988), pp. 8-9.

15. Wang Gungwu, p. 13.

16. Peter L. Berger, p. 8.

17. For some promising directions of research in this connection, see David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

18. Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, trans. from German by Hans H. Gerth (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1951), p. 248.

19. Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action* (New York: The Free Press, 1937), p. 551.

20. Berger, p. 7.

21. Berger, pp. 7-8.

22. Kwang-kuo Hwang, *Ju-chia ssu-hsiang yu Tung-ya mien-tai hua* (Confucianism and East Asian Modernization; Taipei: Chu-Liu Book Co., 1988).

23. Wang Gungwu, p. 8.

24. Tetsuo Nagita, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: A Study of the Kaitokudo, Osaka Merchant*

Academy (Chicago: The University of California Press, 1987).

25. Yu Ying-shih, "Chung-kuo chih-shih tsung-chiao lun-li yu shang-jen chin-shen" (Religious Ethics and Merchant Spirit in Early Modern China) in *Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang ch'uan-t'ung ti hsien-tai ch'uan-shih* (The Modern Interpretation of the Chinese Intellectual Tradition; Taipei: Lien-ching, 1988), pp. 259-404.

26. Koh Byon-ik, "Confucianism in Contemporary Korea" in Tu Wei-ming, ed., *Proceedings of the International Seminar on Confucian Ethics and the Modernization of Industrial East Asia* (Singapore: Institute of East Asian Philosophies, forthcoming).

27. Berger, p. 6. It should also be noted that Parsons characterized the modern pattern of "industrial" structure as a "system of universalistic-specific-affectively-neutral-

achievement-oriented roles", in his *The Social System* (New York: The Free Press, 1951), p. 177.

28. Weber, p. 232.

29. Lucian W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: the Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 320-344.

30. Pye, p. 325.

31. Pye, pp. 326-9.

32. Pye, p. 328.

33. Pye, p. 334.

34. Berger, p. 7.

35. Based on lecture notes from his course, Industrial East Asia, in the Core Curriculum of Harvard University, 11 December 1989. I am grateful to Leong Choon-Heng, Ezra Vogel's teaching assistant, for this information.