

Building up Cultural Strategy of China as a Great Power through Cultural Innovation

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Abstract: *The more China's rise matters in the world, the more Chinese culture matters in international cultural discourse. Chinese culture is not only part of the East, but it is becoming part of the world. Thinkers in each era have their own cultural standpoints and their own cultural identities. Interaction of the thinkers prompts the recognition of the great powers' cultural identity. This paper will illustrate the significance of cultural innovation to the development of a strong culture from six aspects.*

Keywords: *cultural innovation; cultural power; cultural cycle of Chinese characters; core culture; cultural leadership*

The globalization of Western culture indicates the withering of the richness of human multiculturalism. As to political systems, human right standards, financial systems, science and technology, the globalization of the above aspects will and should be achieved, since it is the guarantee for human progress. However, as to cultural forms, aesthetic sensibility, artistic spirit, and religion, they should maintain their own characteristics, without which the ecosystem of human spirit would suffer a major fracture and dislocation of ontology. Those looking inward and lamenting that the earth is a global village do not notice that human beings have entered into the space civilization with interstellar communication, and Chinese culture should make a difference in the new century. Chinese culture should rise through overall innovation, and China should make efforts to integrate elite culture with folk culture, and bring together the masters in the fields of ideology, culture and art, to introduce them to the world, making the country a cultural superpower valued by the world. This means Chinese culture not only belongs to China', but also belongs to the world. Therefore, Chinese culture should go out and meet the world in the new century.

I Cultural Power and Reconstruction of the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics

China's crisis in the East China Sea and South China Sea seemingly attribute to the intervention from the West, which has made the disputes on territory and resources more complicated, but the deeper reason lies in the death of the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics. In the past half century, anti-China trends in East Asia have been very serious, and the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics has been replaced by the Cultur-

al Cycle of America. Some countries of the South China Sea have begun to follow the United States; therefore, only through the restoration and reconstruction of the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics can we solve many problems. Chinese culture's influence on the cycle has largely disappeared with less influence on South Korea and Japan, and it has barely any influence on countries such as Vietnam, India and the Philippines; instead, these countries have become close to American culture and distant from China, encouraging confrontations as China lost her affinity. Thus, a sharp rise of China's cultural soft power, and the establishment of the country's cultural strategy and national discourse is extremely urgent.

It is not difficult to see that military crackdowns, economic competition and cultural battles have taken on a new trend, and the cultural innovation of China as a rising power is quite urgent. At present, the cultural battle has already begun. In the new century, the United States adjusts its strategy to promote its culture in Asia, and puts forward the plan to return to Asia, and claims that in the Asia-Pacific region the new century is the one to be dominated by the United States.

The United States, a nation with a 300-year history, has dominated the political, military and cultural directions of the world since 1945, by doing two things: first, it turned the 60 countries after World War II, into more than 200 countries. Second, it marginalized European modernism and earlier Asian modernism with post-modernism, and gradually formed the hegemonic discourse around the world. Post-colonialism, following the post-modernism, no longer involves territories conquest and slavery, but language, mind and money. America urges the world to follow it on the post-colonial road.

In fact, there are many types and patterns of world modernization, including not only Western modernization, but also China's modernization. China's modernity cannot be a replica of the West's and it proves that China's values, religious views, and institution are all rooted in its long history and culture. China's rise is rewriting human history and the country is no longer a marginalized one, but a country engaged in the changing of the world. A great power image is made up of four aspects: economic, political, military and cultural. China's economic image is bright; its political image is winning the trust of more and more countries; and its military image is also on the rise; but its cultural image is at a disadvantage.

Now what we need to think about is whether it is good for all humankind to follow the Western cultural mode, whether Eastern cultures can put forward their own cultural spirit, whether Eastern innovative culture is becoming a new cultural element in human civilization, and whether China should rethink what it means to be Chinese after a century of anti-China sentiments. With the threats of terrorism, separatism, racism, fundamentalism, imperialism and unilateralism, can Chinese culture offer the world a new option and a harmonious, peaceful solution? The cultural cycle of Chinese characteristics is dead, and China is pressed by English culture and neighboring countries' cultures. In this case, can China revive its own Chinese culture?

Margaret Thatcher once said, "In my opinion, the harmony of Chinese civilization has not entered into the world vision, but become an illegitimate, marginalized culture of no significance." And anti-China sentimental actions have been conducted in the western discourse for 65 years. The United States, the so-called world's leader, asked the Korean peninsula to stop using Chinese language in 1945, and now even the name of the capital of South Korea Seoul (汉城), which means "Chinese City", has been replaced with the word "首尔" (transliteration). Japan abolished Chinese characters, took anti-China actions and departed from Asia for Europe. It does not recognize itself as an Asian country but claims that it has to neighbor another Asian power, namely China. Vietnam has also abolished Chinese characters; Singapore also has a tendency to prefer English to Chinese; anti-China phenomenon is serious in Taiwan. China's crisis in the East China Sea and South China Sea seemingly can be attributed to the intervention from the West, which made the disputes on territory and resources more complicated, but the deeper reason lies in the disappearance of the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics. In the past half century, anti-China trends in East Asia tend to be very serious, and the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics has been replaced by the Cultural Cycle of America. Some countries around the South China Sea follow the United States; therefore, only the restora-

tion and reconstruction of the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics can help to solve these problems.

Chinese characteristics' diminishing in East Asia and the Asia Pacific region makes small countries around America part of the American cultural cycle. If we do not restore the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics, the South China Sea problem can only be solved through a war. If we could reconstruct the Cultural Cycle of Chinese Characteristics, people in the region could therefore be humanized and the war could be avoided as well. When China began to realize about the importance of soft power and announced that 100 Confucius institutes were about to be founded all over the world 10 years ago, South Korea opened the Sejong Institute and Japan opened the Japanese-learning center in sequence. What is more, India has always been working hard on expanding its influence in the West.

In my opinion, in the new century, if China still holds its cultural inferiority and cultural defeatism instead of its cultural confidence, we will never find the core values. I have visited more than 50 countries, and never found any of them has set a foreign language as a must in the examination for entering college, graduate school and being administrative officials. But China does so. Should we be happy for this? Famous scholars in no country have put forward such slogans as "down with ancient Greece and down with the Roman", "down with Socrates or down with Plato", but some Chinese did it—"down with Confucianism". The core values of the Chinese nation, of course, cannot be obtained from others, just like our race, our yellow face, dark eyes, black hair, which cannot be obtained from genes of other nations. It is impossible to grind our fingerprints off to look for new ones. In my opinion, the enlightenment of brilliant virtues, the innovation of people, and the pursuit of ultimate goodness will surely become a precious resource and element of the Chinese nation's core values. If we deny this point, we will not find the so-called China spirit anywhere.

II Cultural Strategy for Resolving Fundamentalism

A strong culture must have its own core values. The globalization of Christianity leads to the stronger American fundamentalist tendencies, which has become a big issue today. Fundamentalists believe that when the authority is challenged, they should stick to the authority of the original beliefs, resolutely against challenges and compromises, and even use political and military means to further show their toughness. Clearly fundamentalism is strongly conservative, exclusive and confrontational. In other words, fundamentalists think "I'm right and you are wrong; I am of a clan and you are wandering; my belief is of universal value but yours is of regional

value.” But the United States came across another fundamentalism with stronger resistance—Islam. For 10 years, wars and disasters are ongoing. Anti-terrorism has led to more terrorism. A considerable portion of the US GDP is put in the war across the world. For ten years, human has suffered from the confrontation between Christian fundamentalism of America and Islamic fundamentalism.

The trend of fundamentalism is on the rise in the world, and Obama tends to carry out imperialism. At this dangerous moment, we can neither choose narrow nationalism, nor follow the Western road. We can only focus on China, a country advocating tolerance and the doctrine of the Mean. Besides, we should absorb the virtues of cultures across the world, be creative and build a powerful China through culture. Rooting in the East means that the reconstruction of a cultural power identity is closely related to the Chinese Cultural Renaissance, and that the innovation of Chinese culture is not only an important symbol of comprehensive national strength, but also the basic guarantee of the harmonious and balanced development of the world’s natural and spiritual ecology.

Over the years, tolerance, patience, doctrine of the Mean, and esteeming harmony in Chinese culture barely had their own sound heard in the world, and China has been marginalized. There are 3.6 billion Christians, 1.4 billion Islamic believers, 900 million Hindus, and 460 million Buddhists around the world. These figures show China is being marginalized. American scholar Samuel Huntington warned that the conflict of late 20th century is between Christian civilization and Islamic civilization, and the conflict of the 21st century is between Christian civilization and Confucian civilization. The U.S.-China conflict has begun. The South China Sea was claimed to be the high sea by Americans, so was the East China Sea. The countries around the South China Sea, such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and countries around the East China Sea, such as Japan, South Korea, and even more marginalized countries such as India and other countries of the Pacific Rim surround China in a C-shaped way.

We might as well say the voice of the Eastern culture becomes very important with the globalization and homogeneity of the world, with the spread of the financial crisis and economic crisis in the West. The output of Chinese culture will help make China’s modern experience the experience of the world, and China’s cultural globalization will help form a new world order, which can not only optimize the global allocation of resources but also replace the previous discourse structure.

The neglect of the cultural strategy reflects the indifference of Chinese intellectuals, especially

scholars in humanities, to the cultural strategy. So far the region is almost an exclusive domain of domestic social science, lacking the voice of the humanists. The separation of humanities from national culture is not normal. The cultural problem is not only an academic one, but also an influential political one. In this case, introducing a cultural and political perspective, and expanding humanities into the cultural strategy not only help to strengthen the reasonability of the research on cultural strategy, but also, more importantly, rebuild the relationship between culture and the academy, between politics and the nation, and provide a new academic focus for cultural research.

In the era of globalization, cultural strategy refers to the competition strategy between cultures. The word “strategy” can only be holistic and forward-looking. Although the decline or Renaissance of Chinese culture may have no direct impact on our current life, and we might even be pilloried as alarmist, a reflection of the past of the culture and an overall plan on its future should be an inescapable responsibility of Chinese intellectuals. The more China’s rise matters in the world civilization, the more Chinese culture matters in the international cultural discourse. Chinese culture is not only part of the East’s, but is becoming part of the world’s.

Military war is replaced by culture war. In the future culture war, the view toward culture should be upgraded from tactical to strategic. China should attach greater importance to the overall national cultural strategy in China’s rise. As economy takes off, only when the cultural Renaissance, the output and widespread of Chinese culture have an impact on the world can China truly realize the peaceful rise. Reviewing the history, we will find that China paid little attention to its cultural image output, which led to many dangers China is facing now, such as the American culture’s invasion, the utilitarianism of the society, and the negative effects of economic imperialism. In European cultural Renaissance, Germany and France are more active in cultural expansion. Leadership is struggled for within the East Asian cultural circle. Japanese cartoons have influenced a generation of Chinese; the Korean trend, in essence, is a kind of cultural invasion; *Dae Jang Geum* shows the South Korean government’s efforts to justify their culture and to struggle for leadership in the East Asian culture cycle.

Thinkers in each era have their own cultural positions, and form their own cultural identities. Interaction of the thinkers prompts the recognition of a great power’s cultural identity. Rooting in the Eastern culture and paying attention to cultural output and innovation is the cultural strategy for the rise of China in the new century, and also ensures its cultural

security. This means that China no longer chases the Western trend in the new century, but becomes part of the world! Breaking cultural barriers, in my opinion, is the charm of the dialogue between East and West, and it shows the harmony of Chinese culture, spreading the innovative and positive spirit of new Chinese culture. The East-West dialogue will replace Western hegemony, and harmonious coexistence of human will replace any conflicts caused by misjudgment of the world's trend.

The spirit of harmony and peace of the East can curb the jungle law of the West and the harm brought by it. Nowadays, wars and terrorism happen across the world; human culture faces unilateralism and hegemony; human spirit appears empty and faces the loss of survival significance; the world is under the threat of geopolitical of war and nuclear war. In this situation, we need to think about the future of human beings. As a big country in the East, we should ponder how to innovate and continuously output Chinese culture. China should think about human's future from the point of all human beings. Cultural innovation should become the coordinator of cultural spirit in new century! Innovation of Eastern culture will surely put an end to the Western cultural unilateralism and military hegemony!

Rooting in the east means that the reconstruction of a cultural power identity is closely related to Chinese cultural Renaissance, and that the innovation of Chinese culture is not only an important symbol of national comprehensive strength, but also the basic guarantee of the harmonious and balanced development of the world. The cultural cycle of Chinese characteristics needs to be rebuilt. Under the confrontation of the Islamic fundamentalism and Christian fundamentalism, only the voice of China being heard can help ensure the happiness of human beings.

III Core Value of Chinese Culture is not Nihilism

Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism culture are three dimensions of Chinese ideology and culture. Confucianism emphasizes harmony and its purpose is to govern a country; Taoists believe that man is an integral part of nature and should pursue natural inaction, and the aim of Taoism is to govern the self; Buddhism emphasizes compassion, and its main purpose is to govern the mind and desires, including greediness, utilitarianism, even hegemony. These three doctrines have long been marginalized in history, but now should have their voice heard.

3.1 Chinese Spirit Emphasizing the Virtue

The Great Learning says that the way of Great Learning lies in the enlightenment of brilliant virtues,

the remolding of people, and the pursuit of ultimate goodness. Virtue is the core of Chinese culture throughout the history, which is included in Beijing spirits today. Saving a man's life is a small virtue; saving people's life several times a year is a middle virtue; saving people's life throughout one's life is a great virtue. Today many people lack virtue since they no longer help others. Clearly, enlightenment means to transfer small virtues into great virtues. Good virtue is born in nature. We should wash away the dust on the mind every day. According to an old saying, if you can one day renovate yourself, do so from day to day and let there be daily renovation. It is crucial to keep the daily renovation.

3.2 China Emphasizing the Innovation of People's Personality

To reach the aim of self-enlightenment and enlightenment of others, Ancient Chinese asked for advice from both the learned and those who were not learned. Confucius was very modest, saying that we should ask about everything and learn from others. The book *Shuo Wen Jie Zi* (which means "explanation of Chinese characters") written by Duan Yucai, had some explanation of the word "innovation". In my view, innovation is the development based on the traditional spirit. It is not to completely negate the tradition. German philosopher Heidegger absorbed a lot of spiritual elements from ancient Greek studying on the contemporary existential philosophy, and he modernized many ancient Greek vocabulary and thoughts. Thus, innovation is not anti-tradition, but it helps to enhance people's inner beauty.

3.3 Chinese Spirit Attaching Great Importance to the Word “止” (literally means “stop”)

Like two sides of the same coin, on the one hand, it means “stop sliding into corruption”, and “rein in”; on the other hand, it means “do not stop pursuing until one reaches the ultimate goodness”, which means “so long life exists, the struggle never rests”. The word “stop” emphasizes persevering pursuit—Qu Yuan, Zhu Geliang, Yue Fei, Wen Tianxiang, and Wang Guowei were convincing examples.

3.4 Three Reasons for Cultural Nihilism in the May 4th Movement

We need to reflect on three reasons for cultural nihilism in the May 4th Movement launched by Peking University: overthrow of Confucians, total Westernization, and abolition of Chinese characters.

First, in the May 4th Movement, some professors from Peking University exaggerated the slogan “down

with Confucianism” put forward by a scholar surnamed Wu from Sichuan province. In October 1966, Red Guards of Peking University went to Qufu, Shandong. They called an assembly, held demonstrations, overturned the tombstone, burned the plaque written “A teacher is an example for all”, and dug up Confucius’ tomb in a cruel and inhuman manner. Tsinghua University’s Red Guards arrived in Qufu in November 1966, and dug up the tombs of Confucius’ 70 generations. After that, Korea, a small nation with a population 48 million, declared that: Confucius belongs to Korea, and then it claimed that Laozi, Xi Shi, and Jiang Taigong all belong to Korea, and even the Mid-Autumn Festival and Dragon Boat Festival are festivals originating from Korea. This, of course, should be attributed to Korean nationalism. Eight years ago President Hu Jintao announced the establishment of 100 Confucius institutes around the world. The Office of Chinese Language Council International announced: In 2011, there were over 400 Confucius institutes, including more than 300 Confucius classrooms around the world. The number may reach 1,000 in five years. If China fails to find a typical cultural code, the West will lose the recognition of China’s cultural identity and cultural value which distinguish the differences between them.

Second, the idea of “Westernization” or “total modernization” put forward by Dr. Hu Shi from Peking University is misunderstood. No less than one doctor told me that China’s being colonized is absolute reasonable. Why? They said that as the former British colony Hong Kong is rich, and as the former Portuguese colony Macau is rich. But I want to ask, is Vietnam rich after being colonized? Is India rich after being colonized? Is Africa rich after being colonized? I think we should abandon “total Westernization”, and adhere to the “half-Westernization”: science and technology integration, paralleled systems, cultural dialogue, and religious conflict resolution. This is “China’s model” of modernization.

The third is the abolition of Chinese characters, which was proposed by Qian Xuantong, a professor of Peking University. If we had abolished the Chinese characters, the mobile phones, computers, publications, newspapers and books would be in alphabets and the ancient Chinese literature and culture would lose its meaning for us. After one hundred years of cultural nihilism, in addition to total Westernization, Chinese seem to understand only two persons: Zhao Benshan and Xiao Shenyang. Peking University professor Wang Xuan terminated the abolition of Chinese characters. In the early 1980s, when Ji Xianlin said, “Fortune changes”, some major newspapers criticized him and a professor publicly said in an article that the once staunch rationalist who had been in Germany for 10 years turned into a fortune teller. I asked Prof. Ji why he said that. He

said, “I am opposed to the cultural inferiority, defeatism and not being confident. I think the rise of China will happen in 30 years.” Now, 30 years have passed, China’s GDP has risen to the second in the world from the 76th. This is a great progress!

Chinese cultural spirit can no longer be nihilism, and the core value of Chinese cultural spirit must be established again!

IV Chinese Language Crisis Prevents China from Becoming a Cultural Power

Recently, a survey by the Social Survey Center of *China Youth Daily* through minyi.net.cn and sina.cn.com shows that 83.6% of respondents believe that Chinese people’s Chinese proficiency has deteriorated. 69.1% of them would like to see the promotion of Chinese traditional culture and classics, and 50.6% of them think that the Chinese language proficiency should be considered in personnel recruitment. This survey shows, in a sense, that saying the Chinese language is in crisis is not an exaggeration

Historically, four written languages of the five world’s early civilizations, namely, Egyptian hieroglyphs, cuneiform writing of Mesopotamia, American Mayan, and Indian Sanskrit, successively disappeared and are now represented only in history museums. Although Sanskrit is still studied by scholars, it cannot any longer be widely used as Chinese is. Chinese characters, the “oriental magic square”, have enjoyed a long life, which has disrupted the story of the tower of Babel since God cannot stop Chinese people building such a tower when their language remains united. It continues to show an increasing vitality in the 21st century.

The so-called “cultural circle of Chinese characteristics” is a Chinese-centered discourse system and a cultural region in which the Chinese language has great influence on other countries so that they have developed similar sign systems. Chinese characters and Chinese culture spread to Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and other countries in Southeast Asia, connecting the culture between China and its surrounding countries. Although most of these countries later created their own languages based on Chinese characters, the influence and trace of the Chinese language still exist.

The East China Sea and the South China Sea crises indicate that the “cultural circle of Chinese characteristics” is losing its efficacy. Domestically, due to the intensive Westernization over the years, as well as the national education system and talent policy, the importance of English has been unprecedentedly exaggerated and increasingly consolidated. Additionally, the exaggeration of the public voice and the persistent

overheating of the “overseas study fever” make English a crucial part of the contemporary Chinese education, affecting the insights of the intelligentsia and educational circles in general. Nowadays, students of different majors all consider English a top priority and spend one third of their time on the examination-oriented study. What’s worse, postgraduates and doctoral students spend more time on English learning than on their specialized courses, which leads to the decrease of their academic performance.

The obvious “English over Chinese” situation is still being hyped and English is still being overemphasized, which leads to a lot of talented professional personnel being rejected from corresponding circles just because of their poor English. It is said that English has already become the first-class language and Chinese, a second-class one in China. Children begin to learn English in kindergarten. When they grow up, they have to learn English for the college entrance examination, civil service examinations, job applications, and professional evaluations. Moreover, even the bus attendants also have to speak some English; and some prestigious universities even advocate all professors giving lectures in English. The promotion tests in China, so to speak, all take English, rather than Chinese, as the measurement for selection. Therefore, English seems to be the “new eight-part essay” in China’s examinations, playing the role of a “new imperial examination”.

I have no objection to English learning since learning another language is indeed very important to know about the world. However, the study of the native language and foreign language should be done in balance. Taking English as the only measurement of entrance examinations will bring untold troubles. The overemphasis on English shows the lack of confidence in our native language, a neglect of professional quality, and a trend toward Westernization in the contemporary educational system. Studying the humanities and the science of art in this way can only result in talent shortages and mother-tongue inferiority. After all, English should only be the secondary measurement of a nation’s education, while the native language and majors should be of priority.

Chinese language crises are not only embodied in the higher education system, but also in our daily life. People have suffered character amnesia in the age of computers. The randomness and individuality of Internet language and micro-blog language make Chinese language less standard and more vulgar. Nowadays, some people like to speak pidgin or Chinglish. Besides, as a result of the marginalization of the classical Chinese, the heritage of traditional culture is neglected. Therefore, many students make lots of errors in writing, sometimes their Chinese expression even doesn’t make

sense. With such a poor logic, they can even hardly write a notification or a note for leave, let alone write articles or appreciate calligraphy.

Furthermore, there was a so-called “Theory on Abolishing Chinese Characters” during the ideological trend of Chinese cultural nihilism in the 20th century, which has led to a result that the Chinese language is no longer a divine presence but has come to seem an evil one. In fact, Chinese characters came into being with a divine glory. It is said that during the Huangdi period, Cangjie began to write on the basis of the markings of birds and animals. According to *Huai Nan Zi*, when Cangjie began to write, grains fell from heaven and ghosts cried in the evening. This was probably because our ancestors were awed to the mysterious unity of spirit and material, of human and nature which are reflected in the unique creation of Characters.

Entering China’s grand unified period, Chinese characters served for the governors. The power of characters makes ideas immortal, following virtue and good deeds. It is only the written language that is able to record the flowing ideas. At the same time, it is also written language that can bring about ideological accusation which might be fatal.

What’s worse, influenced by the Western culture, the voice of overall Westernization was higher in the 20th century. Under these circumstances, Qian Xuantong declared that “Chinese characters are difficult to identify and hard to write, which makes it an obstacle to the popularity of education as well as the spread of knowledge”. He believed that “replacing Chinese characters with alphabetic writing is the solution to solve the problem while simplifying current Chinese characters can treat the symptom” and “the solution is the essential thing at present”. Therefore, Chinese characters, which have helped record Confucianism and Taoism “should be abolished”. Chen Duxiu held that “Chinese characters cannot express new things or new theories and they are the source of those decadent ideologies and, therefore, should be abolished”. Lu Xun also believed that “the Chinese language is a powerful tool for obscurantism... and the ‘tuberculosis’ in China’s toiling masses”, so that “Chinese characters and Chinese people are extremely antagonistic”¹. According to the above-mentioned views, it seemed that Chinese characters were already out of date and should be replaced by an alphabetic language. Chinese characters, in this way, fell from the peak of divinity to the abyss of being outdated and evil. The simplification of Chinese characters started in the register of post-colonialism, so, in the 1980s, people considered Chinese characters not suitable for the information era, simply because they were hard to input into computers. However, this viewpoint was later proved to be wrong when Professor Wang Xuan invented

computerized Chinese characters.

As a matter of fact, the Japanese were the first who came up with the idea of abolishing Chinese characters. In December 1866, Baron Mitsu Mayejima presented “On Abolishing Chinese characters” to Japanese general Tokugawa, saying that “the reason for China, a vast country with a large population, being so flagging, savage, and being bullied by Western countries is their hieroglyphic and their neglect of universalized education; abolishing Chinese characters does not mean to abolish all Chinese characters, but just record them in *katakana*... not abolishing Chinese characters would steal Yamato spirit because of the influential Chinese spirit.”[□] It can be seen that Japan has already connected national spirit with the use of written language. However, if we advocate abolishing Chinese characters along with Japanese, it will do great harm to China.

The Chinese pattern of thought is the essence of Chinese and the epitome of Chinese culture. This means we need to think about China’s reality and future in our native language. I am not denying the English pattern of thought; on the contrary, I think it is important to introduce Western thoughts into China in this globalized world. Nowadays, under the shadow of terrorism, separatism, racialism, fundamentalism, hegemonism, and unilateralism, the former glorious sino-sphere exists now in name only and has already been besieged by Western cultures and the cultures of surrounding countries. Can China make “re-sinicization” a revival of both the Chinese character culture and cultural China?

Fortunately, “Chinese fever” in the Western world has increased these days, especially in the United States. Quite a lot of American students choose Chinese as their major. And the TCFL (Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language) centers in China’s universities are crowded with the foreign students.

As far as I am concerned, the Chinese language crisis, in nature, is the oriental cultural crisis, which is a result of Western cultural hegemony. Therefore, resolving Chinese language crisis is the prerequisite for introducing oriental culture, and the only way for China to become a cultural power. Only by rebuilding the sino-sphere in the process of “re-sinicization”, can we build Chinese people’s awareness of and confidence in the Chinese language and can bring world culture to a really equal conversational table.

V Cultural Strategies of Great Powers and Cultural Hegemony

In the modern world, countries compete for cultural hegemony, which drives China into multiple crises. American culture and fast-food culture bring many nega-

tive effects on our whole society, such as utilitarianism, McDonaldization, and economic imperialism. As to the revival of European culture, Germany and France are more active in cultural expansion. As far as I can see, China’s cultural soft power needs to be improved; thus the proposal of cultural power building is a good cultural strategy proposed urgently. I spent nearly half a year studying on how many works were translated into Chinese from English, French, German, Italian, and Russian from 1900s to 2000s. The answer is more than 100680 works. After that, I did another research on how many works have been translated from Chinese into Western languages in the 20th century. And the answer is only about 800, which is the same as that of the GAPP (General Administration of Press and Publication). How dangerous is this large cultural deficit! We know too much about the Western world, while they know too little about us. In these days, “China Threat”, “China Collapse” and “Yellow Peril” linger in our ears. How comes the continuous emergence of these terms? It’s because we do not try to make a dialogue with the Western world based on equality. China is now trapped in multiple passive crises.

Western powers are changing the world into a “global village” through globalization, while China’s rise limits their powers. The core of China’s cultural strategy in the new century should be exportation of Chinese culture. We should pay attention to our national image in the context of internationalization based on the cask principle—no matter how tall the cask may be, it is the shortest board, not the longest one, determines how much water the cask can hold. In other words, all cultures have to deal with the same problem related to their external images. A nation’s image is composed of different aspects in which its international image is always determined by the most disadvantaged one.

The culture situation of East Asia is amid mounting tensions and has become an area full of instability and conflict in the contemporary world. The United Nations warns that during the material modernization, one percent of the population has mental diseases, one percent has AIDs, and one percent commits suicide. People’s spiritual and cultural ecology is faced up with serious problems, including loquacious cultures, fragile lives, void values, and vulgar spirit. Therefore, China should learn a lesson and persist in its spiritual modernization even, amidst its material modernization.

Modern European cultural strategy, named cultural law of the jungle, includes three kinds of competition: competition between individuals, competition between groups, and competition between nations. Over half a century, the post-modern cultural strategy of America is spreading three American cultural products throughout the world, namely, blockbusters, potato chips, and

computer chips. The blockbusters control our vision entertainment; potato chips control our stomach; and computer chips, our creativity and cultural security.

It is very dangerous for “Three-Harmony Culture” of family harmony, society harmony and international harmony, as the core of Chinese culture, to be long absent from the international cultural strategies. Therefore, this “Three-Harmony Culture” should be one of the important supplements to the Western cultural strategy. And China’s cultural strategy might be correction of Western unilateralism and hegemonism.

Over the past decades, China’s four great inventions have been frequently challenged. In 1966, Korea found a Buddhist scripture, to deny China as the inventor of the block printing accordingly. A Korean woman Ph.D in France found a movable-type printed book, Point, published in 1377, and then denied the fact that Bi Sheng was the inventor of movable type print. India denied Cai Lun’s invention of paper making, believing that Indians were the first to make paper 374 years earlier than China. A Japanese archaeologist perjured himself for 28 years, extending Japanese history from 30,000 years into 700,000. We have to be alertly aware that our cultural heritages have being seriously encroached.

Let’s take a look at the problems China has encountered: in 1985, a Japanese scholar from Tokyo University put forward that China should be a great power in the world in 20 years and there was one way to stop its progress—the independence of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Korea, North China and South China, through which China will be divided into several parts. It was described in *On Seven Countries*, a book that Li Denghui has published in Taiwan. You may think it cannot happen, but look at USSR, the former second largest country in the world. It disintegrated into five countries. Putin, president of Russia has announced that Russia is no longer in the list of the great powers, because its GDP only account one seventh of China’s.

VI Cultural Innovation and the Anti-demonization of China’s Image

With these terms such as “Yellow Peril”, “China Threat Theory”, and “China Collapse Theory”, China’s culture image is being demonized. During the cultural cold war, some Western countries intentionally misinterpreted and calumniated the rise and development of China. Deng Xiaoping’s idea of “keeping a low profile and doing our work well” was translated by the US military into “hiding the claws and teeth in order to find an opportunity to counter-attack”. They also translated China’s dragon into “Chinese Dinosaur”, or “Chinese Lizard”. If we don’t work on our culture, we will definitely suffer from the demonization of China’s

image. Cafferty, the host of the Voice of America, once insulted China, saying that the country was a mean and inferior nation. France posted a huge poster of handcuffs and foot chains on the Eiffel Tower before 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, saying that China was a state of dictatorship. In a Korean commercial poster, the image of Chairman Mao on the Tian’anmen Square was transformed into a wolf. The circulation of a Japanese book *An Introduction to China*, reaching two-thirds of its population, contains a large number of malicious comics defaming China’s one-child policy, election system, pension system, medical system and even education. All these prevent Westerners from treating China’s prosperity objectively and rationally. Margaret Thatcher was even worse. Three years ago, she said something we will never forget: “China will never become a superpower, because they do not have an international theory to propel their power and impair western countries. Although China’s economy grows fast, it will only be a big country of production. For the output of spiritual and cultural innovation, China is just a tiny country that is not worthy of our attention.” □

China has already risen in the estimation of the World Bank. Some people think rich countries are great powers since they believe the men of wealth are the ones of high position. However, in my opinion, they are totally different. As a matter of fact, in history China began to collapse right after it enjoyed its richest period. Innovation, national spirit, and cultural confidence are essential for a country to move from being rich to being a great power.

Cultural innovation becomes increasingly important. If we start from scratch without our cultural heritage, we could never catch up with the world. We can make cultural exportation and innovation based on our great and harmonious culture. I believe the Chinese concept of harmony cherished by Chinese people from generations to generations can be shared by all humankind as an efficient solution to prevent the future world from nuclear war.

An internal obstacle of cultural innovation is China’s cultural defeatism. Externally, China’s cultural image is presented as blurry, and sometimes even very dangerous. To be short, the biggest problem of China’s culture is the inner emptiness and the external vacillation. Cultural innovation needs the cultivation of an ecological field with sufficient sunshine and rain, namely, inner coordination and solidarity, and external vitality. The new civilization will be a post-traditional era, in which the essence of traditional culture, such as the “harmony and integrity”, still has great influence on the world. And China’s cultural innovation will come into a new era. The development of the space civilization and the advancement of the cultural worldview will

provide a healthy environment for China's culture, including its innovation of systems, categories, art, and literature. China's literary criticism should be a window of cultural innovation. The greatest mission in our age is to construct the spirit of the Chinese culture and art, as well as to rebuild China's image.

As a rising great power, we are obliged to introduce the Chinese culture to the world, in order to avoid cultural wars caused by the escalation of cultural conflicts. Besides, we should seek for a dual dialogue in domestic and international academia and shift the "total Westernization" of the 20th century to the "interaction between East and West".

China's sustainable cultural exportation is crucial to our cultural security. On the academic frontier we have witnessed important thought transitions in contemporary China, from clarifying the relationship between multinational capital operation and cultural hegemony, to resolving the spiritual secularization in the digital time; from clarifying the fact that US-globalism era is coming to an end, to pointing out the significant role China plays in Asia culturally. We cannot let hedonism and consumerism corrupt our national spirit.

A tide of "return to the classics" is rising in the contemporary world. Chinese scholars should attach importance to both innovation and the heritage of classics, achieving spiritual modernization in the process of material modernization. China's modernization should go beyond the national height to an international height based on independent innovation in the culture import and export, sharing valuable Chinese thought with all humankind. In the new century, China's cultural innovation should also conform to the following rules: re-recognizing Eastern culture, returning to the classics, being innovative, and carrying forward Chinese Culture. Only in this way can China move towards an ecological and innovative culture.

According to the forecast of Goldman Sachs, an American investment bank, China will exceed the United States and become the largest economy of the world no later than 2027. American scholars begin to realize that Western countries are not the only power in the 21st century; China, on its way to being a great power, will attach more importance to the values inherited from its ancient civilization and create a modernized new model—the Chinese Model. Culture is the key to the world competition and harmony is the only way of human development. The world culture is now at the turning point when China should abandon its ossified elements and promote its spirit of ecological culture, thus making our own contribution to the happiness of all human beings.

The rise of China does not mean that China is becoming similar to the Western world, but that it will contribute its own experience and wisdom to the world. A wise leadership group should have the courage and vision to adjust the world's cultural progress and fight against the "China Collapse Theory" and "China Threat Theory". We should keep a low profile, but not close our doors; we call for peaceful coexistence, but we do not attempt to accomplish nothing. After all, as I have said, culture is the key to the world competition and harmony is the only way of human development.

(Translated by Wang Nina and Hu Wenxiao)

¹ Essays from a Semi-concession (Qie Jie Ting Za Wen) by Lu Xun.

² Li Qing, *History of Japanese Sinology*, Volume I. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Languages Education Press, 2002, 106.

³ *Phoenix Weekly*, 2006 (16).

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