

Neo-Weberian Concept of Easternization in the Realm of Western Cultural Adaptation

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Abstract: Colin Campbell is a neo-Weberian critic who defined self-easternization of the West based on Max Weber's concepts of subculture, class and status. Social before Max Weber believed social matters are the result of internal movement, without the involvement of humanity but Weber in sociology of religion concentrated on social action and human life in society. Campbell describes how the gradual import of Eastern values Easternized the West based on the open, secular values of Westerners. It is also the influence of the East over the culture of the West and the West's image of the East, without accepting any domination over Western culture. This cultural adaptation of what was originally an Eastern worldview by the West is defined as "Easternization."

Key words: Easternization, Max Weber, Western culture, Eastern worldview, social

INTRODUCTION

The term "Easternization" was first used by Raphael and Posthuma (1994) in *Easternization: the Spread of Japanese Management Techniques to Developing Countries*. The book considers the spread of oriental management techniques to the West. It discusses the industrial strength of Japan and its developing superiority which leads Western firms. Although, the book was about economic adaptations of the West from Far East countries it now refers mainly to cultural changes. Colin Campbell, the former British Emeritus professor of Sociology at York University, used the term to explain that Western civilization has been deeply affected by ideas derived from Asia. He published *Easternization of the West: a Thematic Account of Cultural Change in the Modern Era* which became the second and the last book published under the "Easternization" title to define this gradient until now. The suffix "ization" as the last syllables of the term "Easternization," means "make, convert or give new characteristics" and the suffix "-ize" which is added to adjectives and nouns, shows a change in behavior, process or conditions. In the preface, Campbell describes Easternization of the West as a work to show "changing beliefs and values" and an evidence "to the history of the penetration of the West by Eastern forms of thought" (Colin, 2007). Like the former book by Kaplinsky and Posthuma, Campbell studies changes in the West since the end of World War II but in the cultural field.

Campbell is a neo-Weberian critic and neo-Weberians are European modernizers whose works relate to differences in life chances in the class positions of

individuals, based on Max Weber's concepts of class and status. German philosopher, Max (1993), conceived the idea of subcultures-groups with certain values, lifestyles, ethnicities, religions and regions within a culture. Weber also explains that people use symbols to express their worldviews. The concept of worldview originates from the German word *Weltanschauung* which refers to a socio-cultural interpretation and interaction with the world. Worldviews reflect a global concept of cultures to make sense of the world. Campbell defines Easternization or "East in the West" as a worldview that relates to people's behavior and beliefs, based upon Weber's concept of culture.

Weber in *Sociology of Religion* mentions mankind's attempt to conceive the world as an ordered "meaningful" "cosmos" to express their cultural beliefs. Social scientists and especially positivists before Max Weber believed social matters evolve as the result of internal movement, without the involvement of humanity. In contrast, Weber concentrated on social action that objectively considers human life in society. He saw social growth as a result of people's intent, developed in understanding and intentions over time. Weber tries to understand the meaning of social behavior. Realization for Weber is the meaning of an act or a social relationship and he tries to understand the course of action in human behavior which he calls sympathy or empathy which is a reality that must be considered through the perspective of individual self-study, not from the perspective of the researcher.

Campbell believes that the self-Easternization of the West does not happen by force. He emphasizes that the beliefs and values characterized by the West are not

necessarily Eastern in nature and their birthplace is not necessarily Asia. Easternization refers to an ideal worldview that is arbitrary for both East and West. In addition, Easternization is not promulgated within Eastern civilization and does not claim that nothing remains of Western civilization and its worldview. Campbell asserts that "all that the Easternization thesis involves is the claim that what was formerly the major component of Western civilization now occupies a minority position". During the height of the colonial era, Western missionaries "acted as the primary agents of Westernization" to impose their values systematically on the East. The system was reversed with the interest in Eastern spiritual wisdom in the late 18th century the age of Enlightenment in Western intellectual history where by the West became open to the spiritual teachings of the East and was developed by writers, intellectuals and artists. Campbell describes how the gradual import of Eastern values Easternized the West based on the open, secular values of Westerners. This cultural adaptation of what was originally an Eastern worldview by the West is defined as "Easternization." Briefly, Easternization identifies "what are essentially Eastern worldviews" that "exist within the civilization of the West". Although, Easternization is "a process of de-Westernization" for Campbell it is also the influence of the East over the culture of the West and the West's image of the East, without accepting any domination over Western culture.

Campbell describes Easternization of the West as a process that although, the West is not colonized by the East, the East influences Western values, beliefs or briefly their worldview. The process of Easternization is the Easternization of an individual Western citizen's thought and view. In 1942 Howard Wilson, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the editor of the Harvard Educational Review, used the "easternization of America" to define what he called "the 'glib' talk for years about the 'Westernization of Asia'" (Shaffer, 2001). Campbell finds culture a kind of overarching system of worldviews rather than a compilation of behavior and meaning.

Through Weber's Sociology of Religion, Campbell constructs two ideal types of religious and cultural orientations. The "Eastern" religious orientation concentrates on an immanent divinity of souls in the highest level of the eternal divine principle. The "Western" mode, represented by Judaism, Christianity and Islam, suggests a personal god whose power is beyond the world and its creatures. For Campbell, both religious and cultural orientations are logical and not empirically derived. Thus, although for Campbell there were always elements of "East in the West" as well as the

"West in the East" he states that these are ideal-typical religious orientations in the Weberian senses that "no one religion and certainly no one civilization can be directly equated with either. For any real religious philosophical cultural complex or civilization will in reality be a mixture of the two types" (Colin, 2007). Campbell's main argument is that a totally secular and scientific worldview turned to the East because there was no other alternative.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON EASTERNIZATION

Ever-continuing tension between the local and universal is a familiar topic for humanities researchers who have debated this topic for years. The majority of thinkers believe that the "global" perspectives of today follow a hegemonic Eurocentric cultural vision that assesses other cultures based on its own values. Thus, the assimilative nature of global perspectives in cultural discourse is up for debate. Bryan Turner in *Orientalism, Postmodernism, and Globalism* reminds us that sociology suggests we cannot choose modernization for instance, without its cultural system of thought. For example, we cannot judge the Islamization of knowledge if our knowledge is modernist or anti-modernist. He says the world religions have always claimed to be global but the important point is the processes of globalization and understanding the concept of the world from the perspective of different cultures. Considering Islam within a problematic relationship to rationalist modernity and to the Christian West is a kind of Occidentalism as a reaction among Asian and African scholars against Orientalism or against the global civilization imposed by the West. Moreover, making a distinction between high and low culture is part of the process of globalization.

Bhabha (1994) thinks that globalization "must always begin at home". He affirms that globalization's progress is measured by "how globalizing nations deal with 'the difference within'" and how this "imagined community" solves the problems of diversity and minority rights. Globalization raises the possibility that all cultural systems are local cultures because it is difficult to sustain the idea for example that British culture is a global culture. Reflexivity and cultural propinquity in a global context also produces a new focus on the self in postmodernity because the relation between individual and national identity becomes highly unstable and uncertain (Bryan, 1994). For Campbell, globalization has the same meaning as Westernization because cultural globalization is influenced by Western movements happening in the West.

Hannah (1973) thinks that some communities are judged by other organized communities in the new global political organization because “there was no longer any uncivilized spot on earth” and also people live in “One World”. Global cosmopolitanism finds the world as global communities that consist of national societies. Globalization challenged much of the traditional dominant cultures of nation-states, represented by multiculturalism. Nation-states have to investigate the character of their national cultural identities. Globalization results in a variety of traditions within a community and produces a new level of cultural diversity and multiculturalism. Multiculturalism which is derived from the European Enlightenment, led hermeneutics to see even scriptural texts as secular classical texts. It describes the establishment of multiple cultural traditions within a single one and judges equally in terms of cultures associated with ethnic groups. This judgement is one of a variety of different positions. Besides, “cosmopolitan” means “citizen of the cosmos” which takes a skeptical view toward local customs and traditions. This definition is similar to the Weberian worldview used by Campbell in defining Easternization.

Appiah refers to cosmopolitanism as the universe and not just the earth. He adds that cosmopolitanism as a study originally rejects “the conventional view that every civilized person belong to a community among communities” (Anthony, 2006). Based on Appiah’s ideas, two fields interlock in defining the cosmopolitan concept: first, We have obligations to others based on citizenship. Second, we can learn much from human differences in the life styles of different societies. These two ideals assume a universal concern about each other and a respect for each other. Therefore, cosmopolitanism is a solution to conflict. Anthony (2006) thinks defining cosmopolitanism is worrying because you need to define a universal term with its local responsibilities. The confusing term in this process is “nationalism” because “if national allegiances are reasons for actions they will sometimes interfere with the reasons presented by more local and ‘thicker’, allegiances” (Tzvetan, 1982). Campbell’s Easternization looks more realistic than cosmopolitan society because Easternization is based on evidences but cosmopolitanism is based on an imagined world of equal rights.

Former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami introduced the idea of “Dialogue Among Civilizations” as a response to Huntington (1996)’s theory of a “Clash of Civilizations.” In November 1998, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the year 2001 as the “United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations” or as Todorov calls it, a “dialogue between civilizations”. Aime Cesaire admits a contact of different civilizations

and that is because “for civilizations, exchange is oxygen” (Cesaire, 2000). He believed Europe was lucky since there were “crossroads” because it was “the locus of all ideas, the receptacle of all philosophies, the meeting place of all sentiments,” so as a result it was “the best center for the redistribution of energy” in which “energy” meant elucidating theoretical ideas. Cesaire criticizes dogmatic fans of Eurocentric views who think that “the West invented science” or “the West alone knows how to think” so that, consequently at “the borders of the Western world there begins the shadowy realm of primitive thinking which dominated by the notion of participation, incapable of logic is the very model of faulty thinking”. Cesaire approves an admixture of different worlds and finds that opinionated assertions need to be colonized inside minds “at the same time that we decolonize society”. Benedict Anderson says that modern Western social philosophy in its global perspective is “limited by the contingencies of global power” and “Western universalism’ no less than ‘Oriental exceptionalism’ can be shown to be only a particular form of a richer, more diverse and differentiated conceptualization of a new universal idea” (Gopal, 2012). Likewise, Hans-Georg Gadamer describes “a global uniformity which is ‘unity in diversity’” (Pantham, 1992). He says humanity should “appreciate and tolerate pluralities, multiplicities, cultural differences”. He warns that the hegemony or “unchallengeable power of any one single nation” is “dangerous for humanity because it goes “against human freedom”. He finds this concept as “the heritage of Europe”. Such unity in diversity should be universally extended because “every culture, every people has something distinctive to offer for the solidarity and welfare of humanity”.

According to Campbell, globalization is the process of international integration of world views and cultures. One of the phases in the history of globalization is Archaic globalization which refers to globalizing the earliest civilizations until the 17th century. Early modern globalization spans two centuries and is followed by so-called Modern globalization in the 19th century. The history of globalization shows that without the traditional ideas from the East, Western globalization would not have occurred as it did. Campbell says that the concept of globalization that was established in the 1970s is simply “another name for Westernization” (Colin, 2007). He discusses how arguments over cultural globalization occur within the context of Western values and events in the West: Westernization is occurring throughout the globe, then either the West has attained some kind of apotheosis of Westernness and hence will effectively remain culturally unchanged from now on or

Westernization is proceeding apace here too in which case presumably the West is destined to become even more intensively Western than it is at present. ...Indeed it is as if academics and commentators are so attuned to the idea that countries all around the world are increasingly coming to adopt... the West there exists a certain blindness to the possibility that something different might be happening in the West itself (Colin, 2007).

EASTERNIZATION AND WEBERIAN SOCIAL CONCEPT OF THE WEST

Based on Max Weber's ideas, Campbell points out that "although dualism characterizes the philosophical outlook of the West, the East rejects dualism altogether, regarding the world as a completely connected and self-contained cosmos". Weber believes that the dualism between the worldly and spiritual, mind and body or consciousness and nature is maintained in the Western worldview. The Western worldview psychologically increases desire to control nature. In contrast to the materialistic dualism of the Western worldview, the East regards nature as a world pervaded with spirituality. This attitude forms East-West division.

For the replacement of the traditional Western dualism by an Eastern-style metaphysical monism should mean that the universe is no longer seen as a vast and essentially alien entity, set over and against mankind. On the contrary... will be seen as uniting mankind directly with the cosmos... to understand how everything is connected including the far distant and the close at hand and the past with both the present and the future.

Researchers have to realize in advance that we cannot come to a conclusion about Western ascendancy and its great impact on cross-cultural understanding. One of the responsibilities of Easternization is the use of hermeneutics to solve this problem of whether people can really understand other people from foreign cultures or not-even if relativism requires that there are no universal criteria of rationality, truth or morality but our knowledge of the world is subjective, not objective. Our ideas or points of view are dependant on our interpretations, emotions, personal opinions and judgments. We are supposed to tell that the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche had a great impact in developing Weberian sociology and his anxieties about bureaucratization and culture associated him with the process of modernization. Nietzsche's "Death of God" means that God must have been a human creation in the first place and that the religious morality of slavery would eventually die.

Weber considers capitalism to be the product of Protestantism. By use of 'value-free sociology' Weber asserts that sociologists should value neutrality while conducting social research. Weber's sociology was to provide an historical account of the uniqueness of the West. According to Weber, in Europe, cities became independent from the state economically and politically, but in the orient, cities were not economic centers. Turner wrote how Weber and Marx had similar explanations about the presence of history in occidental societies and its absence in the Orient which can be regarded as "another version of that more ancient system of accounting, namely 'oriental despotism'" (Bryan, 1994). Turner says that in Weber's sociology of Oriental society, "an accounting system is created in which the Orient simply lacks the positive ingredients of Western rationality. Oriental society can be defined as a system of absences-absent cities, the missing middle class, missing autonomous urban institutions and missing property".

Any Eurocentric dominant worldview ends binary notations of "us" and "other" or the East (the Orient) and the West. Campbell refers to Weber's "Ideal (pure) Type" conception of reality which emphasizes the subjective chaos of social reality in an antipositivist way and reminds us that the social sciences depend on abstract and hypothetical worldviews. In opposition to Weberian rationalism which brings about the distinctive opposition between the irrational and the rational, East and West or primitive and civilized, Fred (1996) thinks that the rational modern mind is not able to comprehend forms of multiplicity. He honors Bataille for remaining in the realm of experience rather than rationalization. Easternization, also, remains in the realm of evidence rather than rationalization.

The advent of global popular Western culture or "pop culture" in postmodernity and everyday life makes it easy to define new aspects of contemporary culture. The beliefs, ideas and values of a culture emerge in artifacts. Although, Easternization is an evidence-based thesis it is supported by cultural exempla, like artifacts. As human beings we inhabit culture which is the product of constructed values. Anthony Appiah declares that there are two confusing uses of culture: cultural heritage or as Appiah terms it "cultural patrimony" which refers to artifacts based on human creativity that need a knowledge of social and historical context are not individual concepts and are rarely universal; and other concept of "cultural patrimony" refers to the products of a culture which belong to specific groups that are "heirs to a trans-historical identity, whose patrimony they are" (Anthony, 2006).

Edward (1983) said asserts that current definitions of culture are interrelated with a sense of identity and nation. This definition results in differentiation as a process of xenophobia which creates an attitude of “us” against “them.” Edward said calls this definition a return to traditional perspectives on culture which are against “liberal philosophies of multiculturalism and hybridity”. These “returns’ have produced varieties of religious and nationalist fundamentalism”. Dallmayr says, “liberalism heralded an emancipation from parochial bondage and from the fetters of social inequality” that ends up as “a new and different kind of maturity. one where freedom is willing to recognize and cultivate cultural diversity”.

The question of cultural difference is not acute in the contemporary period anymore. Some use culture to show the gap between “us” here and “them” there. Also, Edward Said reminds us that the continued interpretation of Western culture itself made the world take a new look at it. It was done by reading their archives after imperial division in a new way. Using the Gramscian theory of hegemony which criticizes hegemonic culture and bourgeois common sense, new interpretations through comparative literature and cultural studies help us to “challenge the sovereign and unchallenged authority of the allegedly detached Western observer”. Said describes the relationship between the West and “its dominated cultural others”. He thinks if we are to understand cultural forms accurately we have to study “the formation and meaning of Western cultural practices themselves”.

Bryan Turner thinks that for comparatists, culture possesses some “essential characteristics in terms of which other cultures are seen to be deficient” (Bryan, 1994). He states that “positive and negative attributes are thus established by which alien cultures can be read off and summations arrived at”. Subsequently, historical positions in the analysis of culture are an important clue to the selection and arrangement of information they are obliged to interpret judiciously. If we stress cultural differences it means that we respect the uniqueness of particular cultures. According to Homi Bhabha, cultural difference signals “new forms of meaning and strategies of identification, through processes of negotiation where no discursive authority can be established without revealing the difference of itself” (Bhabha, 1994). He thinks Cultural difference should be understood apart from national “polarities and pluralities” because it “addresses the jarring of meanings and values generated in between the variety and diversity associated with cultural plenitude; it represents the process of cultural interpretation formed in the perplexity of

living in the disjunctive, liminal space of national society”. Cultural diversity is the recognition of pre-given cultural contents and customs; held in a time-frame of relativism it gives rise to liberal notions of multiculturalism, cultural exchange or the culture of humanity. Cultural diversity is also the representation of a radical rhetoric of the separation of totalized cultures that live unsullied by the intertextuality of their historical locations, safe in the Utopianism of a mythic memory of a unique collective identity. Cultural diversity may even emerge as a system of the articulation and exchange of cultural signs in certain early structuralist accounts of anthropology (Bhabha, 1994).

CONCLUSION

Easternization or “East in the West” (Colin, 2007) is based on people’s behavior and beliefs or briefly their worldviews. It is a compilation of “Eastern worldviews” that “exist within the civilization of the West”. Easternization for Campbell is not the process of de-Westernization but the impression of the East upon Western culture without any domination. It should not be identified as colonization of the West: rather it can be a way to confront renewed Western values and worldviews. Campbell thinks that secular, rationalist and scientific worldviews have appeared in the East because there was no other choice. He thinks the birth place of Eastern beliefs and values are not essentially Asian but are ideal worldviews for both Eastern and Western cultures. Consequently we can summarize Easternization as cultural adaptation and assimilation of Eastern worldviews in the civilizations of the West or the choosing of Eastern values in the cultures of the West. The Easternization thesis is impossible to describe apart from Max Weber’s theory of culture. Weber defined subcultures based on certain values or worldviews. Worldviews are important because they give us a sense of the world and also help us to understand a global concept of culture. Weber accepted the world as a meaningful cosmos. He believed in rationalization and neutrality in social research. He defined ideal (pure) types to show that the social sciences are abstract and uncertain. As a neo-Weberian, Campbell defined Easternization based on Weber’s ideas. Social scientists before Weber were studying human life in society objectively. Weber tried to understand the meaning of social behavior through concepts such as sympathy or empathy through interpretive realization which means that reality should be considered through self-study, not from a researcher’s perspective.

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