

TWOFOLD-AFFECTING MODEL

A Cultural Pattern of Social Change from a Comparative Study between the China and Russia cases

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Abstract:

Political phenomena can usually be interpreted from various angles. This study intends to contribute to understanding the process of social and political change in a society from a *cultural* angle. In this paper, a new explanatory model is offered based on a modification of Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel's cultural change model. The new model argues two cultural dimensions, *updating culture* and *enduring culture*, influencing the transformation trajectory of a society instead of the single socioeconomy-culture-expression dimension in the cultural change model. The application of the two-dimension model on the comparative analysis between the development paths of China and Russia demonstrate a higher explanatory power of the new model. It is proposed to provide a framework for a more tractable approach to investigating the *complex and invisible* impact of culture on society and politics. Moreover, the comparison between China and Russia with the new model reinforces a more general perspective from the cultural angle, which is also applied in many social change studies from other angles. That is, in the social and political changes, old regimes are usually not "necessarily dismantled and replaced, but recalibrated or 'functionally recovered' in part or in whole."

Key words: Twofold-affecting model, enduring culture, updating culture, China, Russia, path of development

Political phenomena can usually be interpreted from various angles. This study intends to contribute to understanding the process of social and political change in a society from a *cultural* angle. In this paper, a new explanatory model is offered based on a modification of Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel's cultural change model. The new model argues that there are two types of cultural elements: *updating culture* and *enduring culture*, influencing the transformation trajectory of a society. Updating culture refers to a continually updating value system led by socioeconomic changes. Enduring culture involves relatively long-standing beliefs and values rooted in historical experiences and customs. In the cultural change model, the influences of the two elements mentioned above have been considered. However, that model argues that these elements oppose each other. In the new model, these two cultural elements are considered as two components working together to impact social changes.

The new model is applied to provide explanations of China and Russia about their present social and political circumstances and potential changes. The societies of

both states are experiencing certain processes of change, though each has different characteristics. A comparative perspective is given in order to explore the origin of these differences. This approach is valid in that certain factors can be controlled for to some extent because of the similarity between two countries, such as territorial area and natural resources, some historical and political backgrounds, complex social structures, and significant regional and global political roles.¹ In this case, a comparison between them is more valuable than comparing either China or Russia with a small country, a secondary world power, or a state without a history of Communism. The study respectively uses the two models to analyze the contemporary social situations and possible future of China and Russia. The new model shows more explanatory power. The explanation from it not only offers support to the validity of the new model, but also deepens the understanding of the two changing societies of China and Russia.

A VIEW INTO THE CULTURALIST PERSPECTIVE

A perspective of culture is usually important to study the social transformation issue for societies such as China and Russia. As for China, scholars have recognized that, for a country with an over four-thousand-year continuous civilization, it is impossible to overlook the influence of culture, when the country's developing route are discussed.² In the study of Russia, students also emphasize the close association between the democratization of the state and its culture.³ Although the cultural influences in two societies may be different, cultural analyses are always valuable to deepen the understandings the development characteristics of Chinese and Russian societies. However, a successful cultural analysis is usually based on a proper analytical model. That requires the model able to sufficiently take into consideration the distinctive nature of a culture and the possible influences stemming from it in order to dig out the unique impacts of cultural elements on a society. In this case, some early culturalist theories, such as Max Weber's "spirit of capitalism," Charles Taylor's "inner teleonomy" theory, and Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's "Civic Culture" theory, may not be entirely applicable. More or less, they are either rooted in western culture with a conspicuous Western-value oriented criterion or treat culture as too monolithic.⁴

The newer approaches have freed themselves from the Western-central flaws. Nevertheless, some of them still have some other defects which may cause overestimation or misreading of cultural impact on society. These theories can be roughly put into two categories, "cultural essentialism" and "cultural conditionalism." The former theories consider traditional culture as a determinate factor of a country's developing route. The representative scholars of this type of cultural theory involve Lucian Pye, Edward Said, Robert Putnam, etc. In Pye's theory, for example, political

¹ Susan Turner, "China and Russia after the Russian-Georgian War," *Comparative Strategy*, 30:1 (2011): 50-9.

² Tu Weiming, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," *Daedalus*, Vol. 120, No. 2 (Spring, 1991):1-2.

³ Mariia Ordzhonikidze, "Russians' Perceptions of Western Values," *Russian Social Science Review*, 49:6 (2008):

4.

⁴ Howard J Wiarda and Esther M Skelley, *Comparative Politics: Approaches and Issues* (Lanham, [Md.]: Rowman & Littlefield Pub. 2007), 75.

influences with respect to culture in China and Asian countries are specifically discussed. The theory argues the current developing characteristics of China can be basically attributed to unique Chinese cultural features. His point was then developed by several scholars to be a more extensive concept, that of “Asian values.”⁵ Of course, in this type of theory the unique role of culture in the countries is emphasized. But, along with this highlight, the changing aspect of a culture is somewhat overlooked. This goes against the second criteria of this study which is to choose an analytical model. As previously mentioned, this study considers that there are two cultural elements impacting social changes, updating culture and enduring culture. A proper model is expected to analyze both rather than only one. Accordingly, concentrating on enduring power too much is regarded as preventing the cultural essentialist theories from drawing a comprehensive understanding of the culture impact on a state’s social and political developments. It also makes them ineffective when they are faced with questions such as “why can some Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, and some Southeast Asian states put into practice western democratization constitutions, even though they are influenced and deeply affected, by ‘Asian values.’”⁶

Comparatively, the cultural conditionalist theories may provide a better analytical tool. Firstly, they are sufficiently concerned with the influence of culture on a society. Secondly, when they pay attention to one type of cultural element, they do not overlook the other. The theory referred to in this study is Inglehart and Welzel’s cultural change theory/model, which is a seminal theory of cultural conditionalism. It argues that culture is a *direct factor* impacting the transformational process of a society. It is because of the distinctiveness of cultures that different societies show different development routes.⁷ However, different from cultural essentialism, the cultural change theory does not consider that cultural traditions are the only factor influencing a society’s development. Instead, it argues that culture impacts a society’s development in “two major dimensions”: traditional culture “taps the polarization between traditional values and secular-rational values,” while updating culture “taps the polarization between survival values and self-expression values.”⁸ Based on these dimensions, Inglehart and Welzel argue that the development of a society is reached by two steps. The first step is the replacement of the traditional values by “secular-rational” values, that is, “giv[ing] human beings increasing control of their environment, diminishing their deference to supernatural power and encouraging the rise of secular-rational values,” which is accomplished by industrialization/modernization. The second step is the replacement of “survival

⁵ Lee Kuan Yew, and Fareed Zakaria, “Culture Is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73 (1994):109-26; John B. Thomposon, “The Survival of Asian Values as ‘Zivilisationskritik,’” *Theory and Society*, vol. 29 (2000): 651-86.

⁶ Zheng Yongnian, *Will China Become Democratic? : Elite, Class and Regime Transition* (London; New York: Eastern Universities Press, 2004), 79.

⁷ Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy*, 20; and Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2, 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 6. Actually, in Inglehart and Welzel’s theory, the term “updating culture” does not appear. However, the definition of the changing part of a culture has no essentially different from the concept of “updating culture” in the new model. Hence, considering the parsimony principle, the updating culture is applied in both model referring to the shifting part of a culture along with the socioeconomic changes.

values” by “self-expression values,” that is, “nourish[ing] a sense of human autonomy or lead people to question absolute authority, which persists in secular ideologies,” which is completed by post-industrialization/postmodernization.⁹ Additionally, the entire replacements are regarded as a process driven by socioeconomic development:

(1) socioeconomic development brings increasingly favorable existential conditions; (2) this gives rise to mass self-expression values, which place a high priority on human freedom and choice; (3) these values mobilize social forces that seek the adoption of democracy, if it is not yet in place, and favor the survival and deepening of democracy, if it is already in place.¹⁰

In this model, the essential dynamic of social transformation in the cultural change model is social economy. Cultural factors are important mainly because they are the *intermediary* between social economy and social structure and the direct factor in conducting social changes. Also, the influences of cultural factors are considered as substitutive. At the beginning, the power of traditional culture is strong, due to the history, custom, and low socioeconomic level. Nevertheless, its impact is gradually substituted by the updating of culture along with the development of social economy. Hence, the divergence in cultural and social changes of different societies or the “path dependent” characteristic of societies does not refer to an open tendency of development. Essentially this divergence can be understood as “different positions on a single trajectory” towards the goal where social economy leads to, the “genuine democracy.”¹¹ It refers to a social circumstance not only with institutional democracy but also realizing the “effective” democracy—the “ultimate emancipation of human being.”¹² Nevertheless, the cultural change theory also points out that the influence of traditional culture is “remarkable durability and resilience.”¹³ This means that, unless entering the second step (postmodernization), a society will maintain its main pursuit of socioeconomic development. Therefore the social structure would be essentially unchanged, even if there is the increasing impact of the updating culture.¹⁴

In their 2005 book, Inglehart and Welzel attempted to use data from 1980 to 2003 by the “World Values Survey” (WVS) to support the above model. There were some exceptions that appeared, such as Singapore, India, and China.¹⁵ But, these exceptions were attributed to the durability and resilience of culture, that is, the perspective that the cultural changes are usually not clear and salient until a long period is observed. Hence, two students predicted that these odd cases may show more suitability to the cultural change model when there is a longer observation period and new data are added.¹⁶ In the following study, the data by WVS of a new observation period spanning from 1990 to 2006 is used with some other observed data

⁹ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰ Ibid., 172.

¹¹ Bob Hancke ed., *Debating Varieties of Capitalism: A Reader* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2009), 7.

¹² Ibid., 45, 152

¹³ Ibid., 6, 20.

¹⁴ Ibid., 19, also refer to Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3-32

¹⁵ Ibid., 161.

¹⁶ Ibid., 161-2.

from studies on China and Russia to retest the cultural change model. The analysis shows that the data on Russia generally fit the model, while the data on China shows a conspicuous difference.

RUSSIA AND CHINA

Prior to the test, the study states that the socioeconomic levels of both Russia and China generally went up from 1990 to 2006. (In fact, the estimation of society's socioeconomic level is usually complicated. So far, there are no extensively accepted indices for that. In this study the situation of the national economic development with other relevant data are used to give a general understanding of two states' socioeconomic situation. The study states that, basically, from the end of the 20th Century to the present, the socioeconomic levels of both Chinese and Russian society show an ascendant trend.) In this case, according to the cultural change model, the impact of traditional culture in both societies should decline, and correspondingly updating culture ought to rise along with the socioeconomic development. The WVS data for Russia from 1990 to 2006 (Figure 3.1) generally fit this inference.

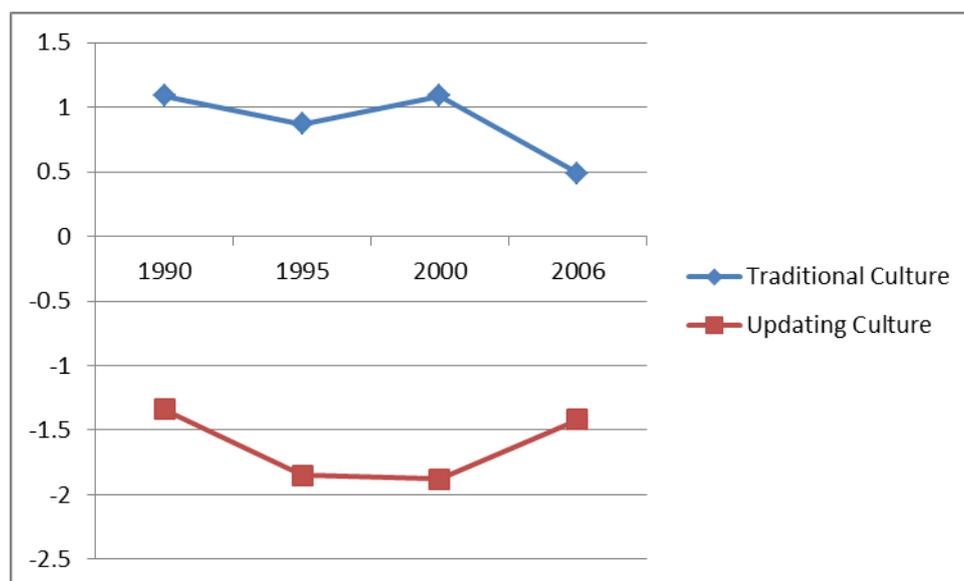


Figure 3.1 World Values Survey of Russia¹⁷

The curves above show two tendencies of Russian society. Firstly, along with the socioeconomic development, the updating culture gradually increases. Secondly, the development curves of updating and traditional culture are generally opposite. Both inferences suit the cultural change model as discussed. Then, based on the model, it may be predicted that updating culture will finally replace traditional culture and conduct the Russian society towards effective democracy, or toward a direction which the Western postindustrial countries are also going toward.

Observed data from relevant studies partially support the above inferences. Data shows that, in the period of the Soviet Union, Russian people displayed little interest

¹⁷ Source: Ronald Inglehart, "National-level Value Scores by Country," *World Values Survey: Findings*, accessed Nov. 7th, 2011, http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs/articles/folder_published/article_base_111.

in pursuing democracy and political freedom, which matched the contemporary socioeconomic level of the Russian society.¹⁸ But, with an “[e]conomic growth averaging 6–8 percent a year and annual growth of 10–15 percent in real disposable household incomes” and social stability in the first ten years of the 21st century, the social economy of Russian society has had some development.¹⁹ The data show correspondingly, the social and political wills appears stronger in the same period. For instance, an investigation by Levada Center shows that the percentage of respondents who support freedom of speech increased from 65% in 1993 to 78% in 2001; the percentage of respondents who prefer to join in the social communities increased from 63% to 81%.²⁰ In the same time span, the number of social organizations, particularly non-governmental organizations, had a considerable increase. In one city only (Nizhny Novgorod), the number of registered non-governmental organizations had grown to twenty-two thousand in 2001, compared to sixty four in 1991.²¹ These reflect to some extent the growing impact of updating culture in the society. Nevertheless, the general social values and structure of Russia has not shifted towards democracy too much. According to the latest estimation of Freedom House, in the past ten years, the social freedom situation in Russia has not changed much, and continues to be at a low position relative to other countries around the world.²² According to cultural change model, this situation associates with the relatively low socioeconomic level of Russian society, although it has elevated. The theory considers that social structure would not change until the socioeconomic level reaches a high level (roughly, the level which the existing developed countries have reached) and the democratic pursuit becomes a common will for the majority of the society.²³ This explains why the current Russian authoritarian political regime “does not run a serious risk of regime collapse,” although it “is not immune to” the possibility of social changes, which possibility has been enhanced by the changes of public opinions and “the ‘democratic’ institutional features of the regime.”²⁴

What the model does not adequately explain about Russia is some short-term changes. For example, if the impact of social economy is continual, why, without great socioeconomic fluctuations, did the institutionally democratized degree of the Russian Federation decrease in the Putin and Putin-Medvedev periods, compared to Yeltsin period?²⁵ Also, the model is not concerned about whether the cultural impact, which produces the current political pattern of “managed democracy” in Russia, may

¹⁸ See Vladimir Shlapentokh, *A Normal Totalitarian Society: How the Soviet Union Functioned and How It Collapsed* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2001).

¹⁹ Kirill Rogov, “Democracy 2010: The Past and Future of Pluralism in Russia,” *Russian Politics and Law*, 49:3 (2011), 29.

²⁰ George E. Hudson, “Civil Society in Russia: Models and Prospects for the Development,” *The Russian Review*, 62:2 (2003): 214.

²¹ Marcia A. Weigle, “On the Road to the Civic Forum: State and Civil Society from Yelstin to Putin,” *Demokratizatsiya*, 10:2(2002):120.

²² Freedom House, “Russia,” *Freedom on the Net 2011*, accessed Nov. 8th, 2011, www.freedomhouse.org/images/File/FotN/Russia2011.pdf.

²³ Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy*,

²⁴ Gerrits, “Exploring democracy in the Russian Federation,” 37.

²⁵ Andre W.M. Gerrits, “Exploring democracy in the Russian Federation: political regime, public opinion and international assistance,” *Contemporary Politics* 16:1(2010):34.

have any profound influence on the grand development route of Russia.²⁶ Many scholars argue that a “hybrid pattern” of governance, which involves both democratic and authoritarian elements, will be the tendency of Russian politics in the foreseeable future rather than the direction toward effective democracy that the cultural change model predicted.²⁷ Nevertheless, it is still able to say. But, for China, this may not be the case.

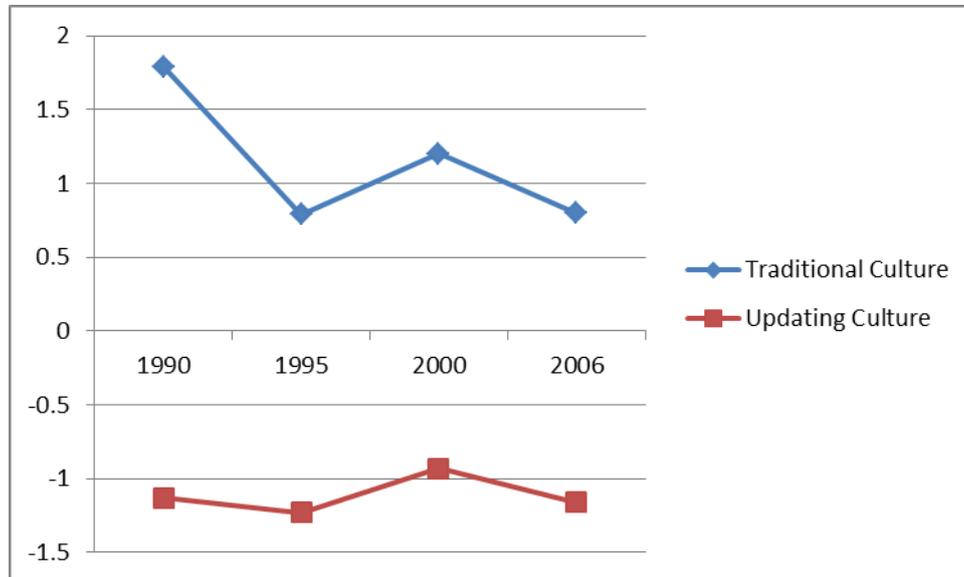


Figure 3.2 World Values Survey of China²⁸

Figure 3.2 shows the curves of traditional and updating cultures in China, which are apparently different from Russia’s. Firstly, the general directions of the development of the two cultures are similar: when traditional culture goes down, so does the updating culture, and vice versa, although they are supposed to be in an inverse relationship according to the cultural change model. Secondly, compared to Russia, Chinese traditional culture has sharper fluctuations, while the change of updating culture is much less conspicuous, though in the period China enjoyed unprecedented economic growth, which is bound to bring corresponding changes in the social economy. Both above differences make the cultural change model unsuitable to the China case.

The observations of Chinese society and political situations also offer counterexamples to the model. First, the influence of traditional culture seems more popular rather than going down. This is the case that a will to protect private rights and political democracy has been more and more frequently expressed by the social elites, even including the main leaders of the government, along with China’s economic growth.²⁹ However, against the model, the influence of traditional culture

²⁶ Rogov, “Democracy 2010,” 35.

²⁷ See Vladimir Shlapentokh, “Big Money as an Obstacle to Democracy in Russia,” *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 24:4(2008):512; Harley Balzer, “Managed Pluralism: Vladimir Putin’s Emerging Regime,” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 19(2003): 227; Gerrits, “Exploring democracy in the Russian Federation: political regime, public opinion and international assistance,” 33.

²⁸ Source: Inglehart, “National-level Value Scores by Country.”

²⁹ E.g., Malcolm Moore, “Wen Jiabao promises political reform for China,” *The Telegraph*, Oct. 4th, 2010,

does not go down at the same time. On the contrary, not only does the government advocate the idea to “protect and develop the traditional culture,” but, among people of China, there is an enthusiastic “Chinese classics craze” (*Guoxue Re*); Chinese people view learning and practicing their traditional culture not only as a way to protect and preserve their national character, but also as a growing fashion.³⁰ Secondly, the general political environment also does not change much with the growth of updating culture. Although there are always voices from both the high level of the government and the public about political democracy and reformation, neither the democratic regimes in the government nor in the single ruling party have remarkably improved for decades.³¹ Some trails to democracy both in the intra-party and at the basic level of the society have also stagnated to some degree.³² All these phenomena go against the cultural change model. Hence, for more a comprehensive understanding of what happens in the China case, and why it is different from the Russia case, a new model is constructed in this study. It offers explanations for the Chinese social and political changes and the effect of culture on them. Also, it gives some responses to the issues in the Russia case which the cultural change model does not cover.

THE TWOFOLD-AFFECTING MODEL OF CULTURE

The new model is named “twofold-affecting model” of culture on social development. Two cultural elements are involved in the model. One is updating culture (U). This type of culture refers to social values and expectations that are continually updating. Its updating dynamics stem from socioeconomic progression. Hence, the updating culture can roughly equate to the universal cultural force in the cultural change theory that pushes human societies towards the democratic pattern which the postmodernizational countries are going forward. The principles of the updating culture in impacting social changes have been elaborated by the cultural change theory. The other cultural element is enduring culture (E). It refers to the relatively stable part of a culture. The culture usually roots in traditional belief systems and historical customs, which have been continually reinforced by a societal, internal self-identification consciousness and external cultural challenges, such as various disseminating and assimilating actions by other cultures. This culture has profound impact on the formulation of the social and political preferences of a society. But it is broader than the concept of traditional culture in the cultural change model. The enduring culture includes the traditional values which oppose the influence of the updating culture (T_O) (this is what traditional culture usually refers to in the cultural change theory), but also the cultural components differ from the content of updating culture while not explicitly go against it (T_D). Therefore,

accessed Nov. 8th, 2011,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/8040534/Wen-Jiabao-promises-political-reform-for-China.html>.

³⁰ See Shuguang Zhang, et al., “Review ‘Guoxue Re’ and the Study of Chinese Classics,” *Social Science in China*, 3(2009).

³¹ Zheng Yongnian, *Will China Become Democratic?* 12.

³² *Ibid.*, 321-333.

$$E = T_O \pm T_D \quad (1)^{33}$$

This is the first significant difference of twofold-affecting model from the cultural change model. The latter defines the traditional culture as exactly the opposite cultural force to the updating culture. The new model emphasizes the possibility that certain cultural components in the tradition of a society may be different from the updating culture but not necessarily going against it. Instead, they will work with updating culture and conduct the development direction of a society together. That is why the concrete development trajectories and goals (D) of societies appear diverse—because the combined effect of different updating and enduring cultures are different in various societies, viz.,

$$D = \sqrt{E^2 + U^2 + 2 \cos \theta EU} \quad (0 \leq \theta \leq \pi) \quad (2)$$

The combined effect is regarded as long-term and always in concurrence during social developments and changes. This is the second significant difference between the twofold-affecting model and the cultural change model. In the new model, neither cultural element would cancel out or replace the other one. The effects of both cultures are indispensable in analyzing the cultural impact on a society. Chart 4 presents a more visual understanding of how the two components of the new model work. The two cultures are depicted as two forces in a mechanical kinetics system. Their resultant force represents the final tendency of a country's political development. That means, the direction of the two cultural forces may have a relative difference ($\angle\theta$), but they work together and finally yield one result: the development.

From Chart 4, it can be also seen that the direction of social development is unfixed. This is the third significant difference of the new model from the cultural change theory. In the cultural change theory, although societies are considered to be path-dependent, all of them are in the same trajectory. Social economy is considered to be the determinant factor for the social preference and pursuits. It may not directly impact the society, although it does have an impact via culture. At the same socioeconomic level, societies are supposed to show similar pursuits and development directions. A support of this perspective is that, despite the differences in development speed throughout history, current developed countries show similar social values and development pursuits. However, this perspective may have overlooked an important implied condition that most current developed countries more or less accepted the specific cultural elements, such as values, that originated in the Western culture, such as democracy, freedom, and private rights. This may become a reason why they have similar development pursuits. This can be also shown in the twofold-affecting model. Suppose there are Country 1 and Country 2. If their updating culture and enduring culture are as that:

$$U_1 = U_2; E_1 = E_2$$

then their development route will be:

³³ The letters in equations of this study actually represent vectors. For the convenience to show the relations between vectors, this study use letters to note vectors rather the \vec{E} style or \mathbf{E} style. The operation symbols are not to record the changes in quantity. Instead, the vectors connected by “-” refer to that they are in opposite directions; vectors connected by “+” refer to vectors in non-opposite directions, i.e. in the same direction, or there is an angle from one vector to the other.

$$D_1 = D_2$$

Similarly, in the visual model, if the vector of each enduring culture is fixed (a similar type of culture is shared), the vectors of development of those societies should be similar (having similar social value and development pursuits), assuming the direction of updating cultures (deriving from certain socioeconomic levels) is given. However, the twofold-affecting model includes the situations where the enduring cultures of two societies are different, and their impact will not be cancelled out by the updating culture ($E_1 \neq E_2$).

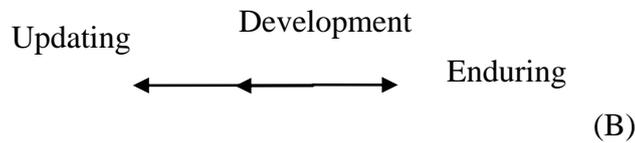
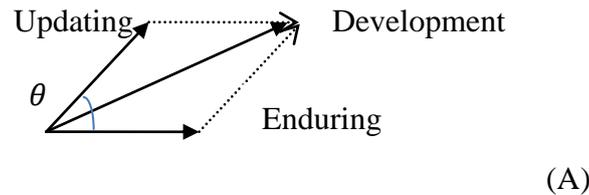


Chart 4. Twofold-Affecting Model

In a sense, the cultural change model can be regarded as a specific situation of the twofold-affecting mode, that is,

$$D = U - E, \text{ when } \angle\theta = \pi \quad (3)$$

or say a monodimensional expression (pattern (B) in Chart 4) of the bidimensional twofold-affecting model (pattern (A)). In terms of this, according to Lakatos' "scientific research program theory," the twofold-affecting model shows its "progression" to the cultural change theory, because the former not only "has as much content as the predecessor," but also "has some excess empirical content over its predecessor."³⁴

In the following study, the twofold-affecting model is applied to explain the China case and modify the explanation of the cultural change model on the Russia case. The analysis indicates that the cultural change theory actually works on the China case, while it does not cover all the aspects, particularly the effect of enduring culture. The twofold-affecting model fills this flaw. It is also useful to explain why there are similarities and differences in social and political development between China and Russia in a cultural view.

CHINA: COMMON OR SPECIAL?

The twofold-affecting model points out that only when both enduring and updating cultures are considered can a comprehensive understanding of a society exist. This means the principles of updating culture (elaborated by the cultural change

³⁴ Imre Lakatos, *Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 33.

theory) may still work on the China case. But because it only focuses on a partial fact, it results in the data not being completely explained. Actually there are some observations demonstrating the impact of updating culture in the Chinese society. Firstly, a fact easily neglected owing to the impressive economic achievement is that the socioeconomic level of the country is not high.³⁵ According to the latest available statistical data, there were about 12 million Chinese people living under the global poverty line (1USD per day per person).³⁶ Only nine Chinese cities' national income per capita reached 10,000 USD.³⁷ If statistics of life expectancy, literacy and levels of unemployment are involved, a more accurate description of the socioeconomic level of Chinese society can be gained.³⁸ But generally they show that the livelihood of Chinese people stay in a relatively low position, especially compared with the societies of those postmodernizational countries. In this case, it is understandable why the power of updating culture should grow owing to the socioeconomic development while its impact seems very limited in Chinese society. That is what the "updating culture" curve in WVS data shows (Figure 3.2). According to the principle of updating culture, a structural change pushed by the updating culture would not occur until the social economy elevates to a higher level. The fact in Chinese society also demonstrates this principle of updating culture in a sense as the Russia case. In the past two decades, as the livelihood of Chinese people has been somewhat improved,³⁹ public opinion pays more attention to social and political issues,⁴⁰ and some trail to democracy were made at both the basic political level and the intra-party level.⁴¹ Nonetheless, the integral social and political structure of China does not show a conspicuous tendency towards democratization. Even though there have been some projects of the existing government to do political reformations and promoting political democracy is always listed as a "significant" task for Chinese government and supported by the public opinion, the steps of all of them seems terribly slow.⁴² So far the principle of updating culture explains some aspect of the present Chinese society, while, according to the twofold affecting model, it is not the whole story. For a comprehensive understanding of Chinese society and its development route, the effect of enduring culture should be paid attention to as well.

³⁵ The following analyses will focus mainly on the political development and relevant situations of China in post Deng-Xiaoping era, the period after Deng Xiaoping dominating the top power of China, i.e. years of Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao administrations.

³⁶ UNDP, *Human Development Indices*, 2008, accessed Mar. 5th, 2010, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDI_2008_EN_Tables.pdf.

³⁷ "2009 nian zhongguo bufen chengshi renjun shengchan zongzhi" (The GNI per capita of some cities of China in 2009), accessed Oct. 15th, 2010, <http://www.chinacity.org.cn/csfz/csjj/60013.html>.

³⁸ See IMF, *World Economic Outlook Database*, accessed Mar. 5th, 2010, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2010/01/weodata/weoselgr.aspx>; CIA *The World Factbook*, 2009, accessed Mar. 5th, 2010, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2102.html>; *Human Development Report 2009*, Table H, published by the United Nations Development Programme, 172.

³⁹ Yu Jianxin and Shi Dejin, "The Developmental State and Beyond: The Case of China," *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3: 4 (2010), 42-66.

⁴⁰ State Statistical Bureau of China, "The Report of Main Data of 2007 National Survey of People's Sense of Security" (2000-2003), accessed Nov. 8th, 2011, http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjgb/qtjgb/qgqqtjgb/t20080108_402456900.htm.

⁴¹ Zheng Yongnian, *Will China Become Democratic?* 321-2.

⁴² Wen Jiabao, "Report on the Work of the Government," paper published for The Third Session of the Eleventh National People's Congress, Mar. 5th, 2010, accessed Mar. 7th, 2010, http://www.gov.cn/english/official/2010-03/15/content_1556124.htm

Conceptualizing existing studies, this study argues that there are two enduring cultural elements that mainly influence Chinese society and politics.⁴³ One is “affinity.” This is one of the most pervasive cultural notions of China. “Affinity” in Chinese culture is an extensive concept, which involves the entire social network tied by family relationships, friendships and other personal linkages. Generally, it is based on three emotional links: the filial piety for parents and eldership (*Xiao*), the fraternal love among relatives (*Ti*), and ties of friendship in certain social groups (*Yi*). Their direct impact on political life is more about confidence in personal relationships (*Guanxi*) than institutional relationships or contractual relationships and the adaptation of the compliance mechanism from top to bottom. This enduring cultural element leads to a preference of stability and a pervasive indifference of institutional orders in politics, because only in a stable political environment can the personal relations work best and once personal relations are regarded as effective, the institutional orders would be considered possible to be transcended or evaded. It also breeds a preference of patriarchal pattern throughout the political structure of China. It involves three aspects. First, the rulers are regarded as the “parents” of their people, i.e. so-called “parent-like rulers” (*Fumu guan*). Second, one most important criterion that an official could be promoted is his obedience to his superior, i.e. “loyalty” (*Zhong*). And third, the whole state is formed as a huge family which includes and relates all the small families in it, i.e. “state-family” (*Guojia*). A significant feature of this pattern may be the consciousness of compliance rather than defiance in the majority of social members vis-à-vis the rulers.

The second enduring cultural element is “morality-dependence.” That is, morality is closely related to the implementation of development processes and the evaluation of development results. The governance effect is regarded as assessable, partially by measuring the overall performance of citizens’ moral levels; governances are regarded not only as political processes but also as moral spreading processes. Rulers themselves are considered more than officials. They are seen as role models of morality. Hence, “what makes the Chinese state peculiar is its emphasis on morality as the basis of politics, as emphasis on rule of law makes Western states peculiar.”⁴⁴ Also, as for development goals, individual societal members may put more weight on their immanent morality and self-cultivation than on expressing their views; the whole society prefers a more harmonious and ordered status as described by the Chinese classical works of politics and philosophy rather than a challenging-reflection interaction pattern.

⁴³ See John W. Lewis, “The Study of Chinese Political Culture,” *World Politics*, 18 (1966):503-24; Lucian W. Pye, *The Spirit of Chinese Politics: A Psychocultural Study of the Authority Crisis in Political Development* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1968); Richard W. Wilson, *Learning to be Chinese: The Political Socialization of Children in Taiwan* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1970); R. W. Wilson, *The Moral State, A Study of the Political Socialization of Chinese and American Children* (New York: The Free Press, 1974); R. W. Wilson, “The Learning of Political Symbols in Chinese Culture,” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 3 (1968):246-54; Robert Jay Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism: A Study of Brainwashing in China* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1963); and Charles Price Ridley, Paul H. B. Godwin, and Dennis J. Doolin, *The Making of a Model Citizen in Communist China* (Stanford, Calif.: The Hoover Institute Press, 1971); James R. Townsend, *Politics in China* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974); and Harold C. Hinton, *An Introduction to Chinese Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1973).

⁴⁴ Zheng Yongnian, *Will China Become Democratic?* 82.

This study argues that these enduring cultural elements shape the political preferences of China regarding stability in front of reformation and preferring the supervising pattern⁴⁵ to the challenging pattern. When updating culture drives the society toward a common and relatively predictable direction,⁴⁶ the aforementioned influence of enduring culture joins into the game and conduct the Chinese society together. The impact of enduring culture always goes along with the impact of updating culture. That is why the WVS data of the China case shows that the changes of two cultures are in the same direction. Such function of the enduring culture can be clearly observed in the formulation of the “Chinese style of democratic politics.”

After the promulgation of the first Constitution (1956), a political structure of concentration of administrative power was constructed. In this political structure, state polity, administration, jurisdiction, and procuratorial systems are distributed into three relatively independent departments. A function of mutual inspection is included in the relationship among the three systems. However, all three are not only responsible to the People's Congress, but also led by the Communist Party of China (CPC). In party polity, there is no opposition party, but there is a “multi-party cooperation and political consultation” pattern.⁴⁷ In this system, “democratic parties” appear only as a consultant in the political process without any real power over policy decisions or implementation.⁴⁸ “The CPC consults with the various democratic parties and personages without party affiliation on major state guidelines and policies and key state affairs before making decisions and in the process of implementing the decisions.”⁴⁹ Based on these political patterns, the will of democracy driven by the updating culture is still perceivable. At least, superficially, there is an independent court system and procuratoration. The governance is realized by the “cooperation of the CPC and the democratic parties” rather than the dictatorship of one party; “[t]he CPC and the other eight democratic parties supervise each other.”⁵⁰

The impact from enduring culture on this structure is obvious: governmental officials are not only the managers but also the authority of the society. They can be supervised by the supervision department of the state or the Party and their power can also be recalled by their superiors. Nevertheless, there is no mechanism to challenge them. The CPC still holds the entire country's absolute power position; it can be “supervised” by democratic parties, but cannot be challenged. This is referred to as the “state dominion of society” and “party dominion of state” by some scholars.⁵¹ Employing these patterns, a generally stable and orderly society is constructed and maintained in China, which meets the political preferences rooted in enduring culture.

Furthermore, by twofold-affecting theory, a prediction of the political development of China can be given. The prediction disagrees to the perspective of

⁴⁵ That means that there are mutual inspections among parts however led and supervised by an integral leadership.

⁴⁶ Inglehart and Welzel, *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy*, 20.

⁴⁷ State Council Information Office of China, *White Paper on China's Political Party System*, accessed Oct. 26th, 2010, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/news/231852.htm#2>.

⁴⁸ See Hu Yue, “An Analysis of Political Position of the CPPCC from the Angle of Political Science,” *Journal of Tianjin Institute of Socialism*, vol. 1 (2009):19-23.

⁴⁹ State Council Information Office of China, *White Paper on China's Political Party System*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Zheng Yongnian, *Will China Become Democratic?* 7.

cultural essentialist theories that the enduring culture will keep China totally away from the prospect of democracy to the extent of genuine democracy. Nor does it agree the perspective of cultural change theory that China will finally undermine the “Chinese-style” towards the democratic pattern which the postmodernizational Western countries are going to. The twofold-affecting model argues that the future China may share some same basic social pursuits with Western societies, such as self-expression. However, the content and expressive patterns of the pursuits may not be the same due to the impact of enduring culture. Meanwhile, the inherent social development goals from Chinese enduring culture, such as the elevation of individual morality and self-accomplishment and the harmony of the whole society, will jointly influence the grand direction of the Chinese development. They may combine with the impact of updating culture to formulate a distinctive trajectory of the social and political development of China. In this case, it may be sufficient to say the development of Chinese society is similar to the other societies impacted by the updating culture based on the socioeconomic development, while distinct from the others because of the influence of its unique enduring culture.

RUSSIA: WESTERNIZED OR HYBRID?

As discussed at the beginning, unlike China, Russia seems fits the cultural change model well. Does this mean that the twofold-affecting model does not have value on the Russia case? Otherwise, why can the Russia case be interpreted without considering the effect of enduring culture?

To answer these questions, two comparisons may be helpful. One is the comparison of the compositions of Chinese and Russian enduring cultural elements; the other is to compare the difference of objects investigated in the two models. The former comparison will further explain why the cultural change model can fit the Russia case but not the China case, while the twofold-affecting model suits both. The latter comparison uncovers the aspect in the Russia case that is overlooked by the cultural change model.

It is necessary to compare Chinese and Russian enduring cultures. It is obvious that there are only two cultural elements involved in the analysis and the influence of one of them. The updating culture can be regarded as similar, since neither of two societies has a significantly higher socioeconomic level than the other. Hence, it is more possible that the difference may come from the enduring culture side. By comparison, there really are structural differences between the two countries’ enduring cultures.

Chinese enduring culture is a complex combination. It does not only refer to Confucian thoughts. Daoism, Legalism, Mohism, and Buddhism all contribute to the construction of Chinese culture and its value system.⁵² For instance, the aforementioned characteristic of “affinity” in Chinese culture does not merely come from the Confucian thought of caste system, but from Mohism “universal love”

⁵² Yue Hu, “Culture and Diplomacy: A Comparative Study of A Canadian and Chinese Case,” (Mast. Thesis, University of Regina, 2010).

concept. The individual pursuit of moral perfection is also influenced by Daoism to pursue self-genuineness (*Xiu Zhen*). This produces a multi-component structure of Chinese enduring culture. Additionally, it is an independent cultural system. In this case, if taking the Western culture as a base line, it is inappropriate to say Chinese culture is “far from the line.” A more accurate depiction is that Chinese culture is “outside of the line.” That means that there are so many differences between Chinese and Western culture. But it is difficult to say that the former stands at the opposite side of the latter. Students argue that many significant components of Chinese culture, particularly those from Daoism and Mohism, in a sense support the Western citizen culture and democratic thoughts.⁵³

Compared to China, Russian enduring culture has a relatively simple composition. Generalized from some existing studies, there are three main traditions in Russian (political) culture, *centralization*, *personification* (leaders usually play significant role to identify a political group), and *idealization* (potential messianic complex from the tradition of the Eastern Roman Empire and the Communist Internationals).⁵⁴ Scholars consider that all these traditions point to the authoritarian preference in Russian politics.⁵⁵ An additional fact is that the Russian culture also involves experiences of democratic practices and closely relates to the Western culture. Usually the authoritarian tradition of Russia is regarded as having begun since the Evan IV period.⁵⁶ However, the history of the democratic institutions of the country is actually much longer than that. It can be traced to the citizen committee in north Russ in around 1 C.E.⁵⁷ In Kievan Russ (around the 10th Century), there were democracy-like regimes implemented in the Boyar Duma. From 1549 to 1685, “zemsky sobor” played an important role in the national politics of Russia, in which a proportional representative regime was adopted. In the periods of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, Western enlightenment thoughts were introduced into Russia and attracted the attention of the rulers. In the Alexander II period, local autonomy was extended. Meanwhile, except for the years controlled by the Mongols, Russia maintained connections with the Western world, affecting both religious and political cultures.⁵⁸ In brief, Russian culture can be considered as a dualistic structure with two opposite components, authoritarianism and democracy, although, in most cases, the influence of the former seems stronger. In addition, compared to the independent and complex enduring culture of China, Russian enduring culture shows a relatively high association with the Western culture.

⁵³ Zhu Jiexian, et al., “The Rconciliation of Chinese Traditional Culture and the Democratic Construction in Modern China” *Policy Research & Exploration* (2008).

⁵⁴ Vladislav Surkov, “Russian Political Culture: The View from Utopia,” *Russian Social Science Review*, 49: 6 (2008):86. Also refer to Lilia Shevtsova, “What’s the Matter with Russia?” *Journal of Democracy*, 21:1 (2010): 152-159, Laurence Jarvik, “Cultural Challenges to Democratization in Russia.” *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs*, 50:1(2006): 167-186; and Andreas Schonle, “Ruins and History: Observations on Russian Approaches to Destruction and Decay,” *Slavic Review*, 65:4(2006): 649-669.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁵⁶ Pierre Hassner, “Russia’s Transition to Autocracy,” *Journal of Democracy*, 19:2 (2008): 6.

⁵⁷ Maxime Kovalevsky, *Russian Political Institutions: The Growth and Development of These Institutions from the Beginnings of Russian History to The Present Time* (Chicago: The University of Chicago press, 1902), ch. 1.

⁵⁸ Mariia Ordzhonikidze, “Russians’ Perceptions of Western Values,” *Russian Social Science Review*, 49:6 (2008): 4.

The reason for taking the Western culture as a base line is that it is a significant difference between the cultural change model and the twofold-affecting model when they are compared. As discussed in the model, the updating culture contains cultural components driven by the socioeconomic development, which drives societies to democracy. The opposite components are categorized into traditional cultures. However, if the components of the updating culture, such as freedom of person, freedom of speech, private rights, and democratic decision-making preference, are analyzed, they more or less have a special relation with Western culture.⁵⁹ This property of cultural change model may cause different results when it is used to measure a society culturally close to the West and a society different from that. In the twofold-affecting model, this bias is avoided by classifying cultural elements not by their effect to promote societies towards the postmodernizational-Western-country like society, but by the different origins of culture. This leads to broader scopes of two elements in the twofold-affecting model than those two in the cultural change model. Some phenomena which revealed in the twofold-affecting model will not be shown in the cultural change model. But it does not mean that the two models are antithetical theoretically. The analysis of the Russia case below shows that the twofold affection model not only includes the reasonable part of the cultural change model, but complements the aspect it overlooked about Russia.

According to the equation (1) of the twofold affecting model, the enduring culture of Russia (E_R) is composed by two elements:

$$E_R = T_{RO} - T_{RD}$$

By the twofold-affecting model, two elements as a whole E_R always impact the Russian society and politics together with the updating culture U_R . That is, when U_R increases, E_R increases as well. Nevertheless, as discussed above, the composition of Russian enduring culture has a dualistic structure, within which T_{RO} is in the same direction as U_R , while T_{RD} is in the opposite. In this case, although the enduring culture is taken into account, the direction of the resultant is not affected ($D_R = U_R + T_{RO} - T_{RD}$). The two cultural elements work in the same dimension, i.e., the equation (3). This equation is also the expression of cultural change model in the twofold-affecting model. This explains why the Russia case seems to fit the cultural change theory. Correspondingly, in the China case, the direction of enduring culture is not in the dimension of the updating culture. So, the cultural change theory fails to work on that case.

However, for the Russia case, the twofold-affecting model offers more explanation, especially on Russia's development tendency, at least in two points. Firstly, in Russian society, updating culture is not the only force conducting the society towards democracy. A part of the enduring power does the same work. This explains why in the early era when the socioeconomic level was very low, there were still democratic or democracy-like institutions appearing in Russia. That is because both cultural elements always work together; even if the impact of updating culture

⁵⁹ Joseph Henrich, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan, "The Weirdest People in the World?" *RatSWD Working Paper*, No. 139 (2010), accessed Nov. 11th, 2011, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1601785>.

might not offer sufficient support to democratic institutions, enduring culture can partially compensate this impact if it involves democratic components. Correspondingly, in the society of Chinese culture, since the enduring culture does not include democratic components, there is almost no democratic institution born, unless the Western (democratic) culture is embedded into the cultural system (e.g. the Taiwan case).

Secondly, again, the cultural change theory predicts that all societies have a relatively similar tendency towards the genuine democracy. In accordance with this perspective, the authoritarian characteristics will be finally eliminated along with the socioeconomic development of Russia. Differently, the twofold affecting model indicates that because two cultural elements always work together, the enduring culture of Russia will permanently participate in the process of social and political construction of the country. The authoritarian component may be undermined by the growth of Russian social economy and the impact of its updating culture. But it would not disappear. This echoes some studies about the development tendency of Russian society and politics that suggest that the current semi-authoritarian regime presents some characteristics of the future social and political regime of Russia, which may not easily be changed by either external forces or internal changes.⁶⁰

CONCLUSION

There are two comparisons throughout the study: the comparison of two countries, and the comparison of two models. The former comparison reveals that when the material conditions (such as territory size, geographic position, power position in the region and the world) are, in a sense, controlled, the development situations and tendencies of two countries may still be different. There can be various perspectives to explain these differences. This study uses a cultural angle. Of course, the other perspectives and interpretations are by no means ineffective, even if a cultural explanation is provided. Instead, a cultural perspective is more helpful to give a comprehensive understanding of the basic principles of social development than to argue other research perspectives. The latter comparison uncovers that the way culture impacts a society is complex and multi-dimensional. The diverse development trajectories of societies in the current world provide an opportunity for students to compare these cases and to seek the reasons in-depth, rather than harshly attributing the diversity to the different links of a single time chain as the cultural change model does.

The twofold-affecting model, based on these two comparisons and the methodological strategy to analyze two cultural elements together, provides a framework for a more tractable approach to investigating the *complex and invisible* impact of culture on society and politics. Moreover, it reinforces a more general

⁶⁰ See Rogov, "Democracy 201," 45; Ordzhonikidze, "Russians' Perceptions of Western Values," 27; Shevtsova, "What's the Matter with Russia?" 158; Jesus de Adres, "And Putin Found the Way: Institutions and Political Regime in 21st Century Russia," *UNISCI Discussion Papers* 17 (2008): 11; Nikolai Petrov, "The Political Mechanics of the Russian Regime: Substitutes Versus Institutions," *Russian Politics and Law*, 49:2 (2011): 66-7; and Daron Acemoglu, et al., "Reevaluating the Modernization Hypothesis," National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Working Paper Series, accessed Nov. 25th, 2011, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w13334>.

perspective from the cultural angle, which is also applied in many social change studies from other angles. That is, in the social and political changes, old regimes are usually not “necessarily dismantled and replaced, but recalibrated or ‘functionally recovered’ in part or in whole.”⁶¹

⁶¹ Kathleen Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States, and Japan* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 34.

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