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Political Cultures Do Matter: Citizens and Politics in Western Europe and East and Southeast Asia

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Abstract

This article is concerned with the examination of the attitudes of the ‘common man’ in two regions of the globe, both with respect to basic relations between citizen and state and with respect to the extent to which ‘globalisation’ affects these relations. These questions have too long been discussed primarily at the level of elites or on the basis of assumptions or ‘hunches’ about what the reactions of the people at large may be. By providing at least some evidence pertaining to both these questions, the study thus aims at beginning to fill a gap which has long needed to be filled and at giving the debate on ‘convergence’ and on ‘globalisation’ some of the empirical basis which it badly needs.

Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba, in their pioneering survey-based study of political culture (1963), made a powerful statement on political culture. Although the work aimed primarily at providing evidence for a distinction among three types of political culture (cf. Banfield and Fasano, 1958; Solomon, 1971; Zonis, 1971; Pye, 1988), it also suggested the probable convergence of popular attitudes and orientations toward what is broadly called modernisation including democratisation across countries of the world (cf. Almond/Coleman, 1960; Binder, 1962; LaPalombara, 1963; Pye, 1963; Pye/Verba, 1965). The study of political culture ceased to be an attractive field of study in much of the fourth quarter of the last century, a development which went in tandem with the decline of the popularity of modernisation theory, however. It is evident from a browse through major science handbooks (Polsby/Greenstein, 1975; Goodin/Klingemann, 1999; Finifter, 1983, 1993; Katznelson/ Milner, 2002; cf. Inoguchi 2001).

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The concept of modernity has continued to play an important part in the study of political culture, especially in work based on survey data. The ingenious invention of post-materialism by Inglehart (1977) has thus established a strong continuity between modernity and post-modernity in the fourth quarter of the last century. It seems that such concepts as critical citizens (Norris, 1999) and gender equality (Norris/Inglehart, forthcoming) as well as post-materialism go in harmony with modernity. For this reason, the voice against the use of post-modernity has been recently raised (Wilensky, 2002). Furthermore, during the same period the rapid democratisation process which pushed the number of democracies from 35 to about 120 enabled the concept of modernity to be revived in the form of the buzzword called comparative democratisation (Inoguchi, 2001).

As if to counter this trend of modernisation continuity via 'post-modernisation', 'critical citizens', and gender equality, another trend has become fashionable, especially in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall and of the collapse of the World Trade Centre in New York. Lucian W. Pye (1988), Samuel Huntington (1993), Robert Putnam (1993), Francis Fukuyama (1996) and Peter Berger and Samuel Huntington (2002), to name a few, have come out with a wholly different message. Their message is that each and every culture and civilisation is distinct. This is in a stark contrast to the notion of a seemingly observed continuity and of hoped-for eventual convergence. For Pye it is the distinctive difference of Asian conceptions of power. For Huntington it is the 'clash of civilisations'. For Putnam it is the seemingly unbridgeable gap between a Republican and a non-Republican past in Italy many centuries ago. For Fukuyama it is the clear contrast between a low trust and high trust society. For Berger and Huntington it is the diverging responses to many globalisations.

The study which is outlined here is meant to be an enquiry of the latter type. It is concerned with the political cultures of citizens in eighteen countries of Western Europe and East and Southeast Asia. It is based on the answers to surveys conducted at the end of 2000 in both areas with an identical questionnaire, each with a one-thousand sample size. It is indeed the first systematic and comprehensive academic study of patterns of political culture in the two regions. While being based on sample surveys administered simultaneously at both edges of the Eurasia continent, it carries the message that cultures matter. That message is to be substantiated in the two objectives of the study which are to analyse how citizens relate to state and society and how they view globalisation.¹ This article describes in broad terms the conceptual

¹ The concept of globalisation is obviously markedly more stringent than, but it is a sub-set of the concept of international influence: the concept of globalisation refers to the existence of a situation in which the world is being viewed as 'one', principally economically, but secondarily politically as well; international influence does not assume the existence of such a unity. While it is to be expected that most citizens in most countries believe that they and the state in which they live is subjected to international influence, it is far from being equally evident that the same can be said about globalisation. One of the major objectives of this study is to endeavour to assess how far globalisation is being perceived by citizens and thus to distinguish between

framework adopted in building the questionnaire: it constitutes only a provisional statement of the study which is still in progress.

The key questions with respect to the two objectives can be summarised in the following way. First, is there a convergence of citizens' values across the world and in particular in the regions which have moved towards what used to be called 'modernity' and may be labelled, according to some, 'post-modernity'? Second, does the process of 'globalisation' which is felt to be taking place reduce the traditional role of the state and affect its 'capacity', in part at least because support for the state among citizens is being undermined by the globalisation process itself?

This work follows the example of *The Civic Culture*. That volume opened a line of systematic empirical inquiry into the social and political universe of the 'common man', by using the survey method, not just in the context of the electoral process, as had primarily been the case up to then, but in order to discover broader sets of attitudes and of judgements of populations about politics and society. Such an approach meant undertaking the analysis with the help of techniques which have made it possible to go beyond impressionistic statements backed by little evidence.

The personal values of citizens: The Civic Culture and beyond

Naturally enough, as Verba stated in *The Civic Culture Revisited*, edited by Almond and Verba (1980), 'the concerns expressed in *The Civic Culture* were products of their times. This, as we have pointed out, was reflected in the use of survey techniques and the focus on democratic stability' (408). Far from being a temporary mechanism of investigation, survey techniques have come to play an increasingly large part in the gathering of social and political data. On the other hand, the problem of democratic stability and, one might add, of democratic stability in four Western countries out of the five being studied is probably not as high in the list of priorities as it was in the middle of the twentieth century.

To account for democratic stability in the countries that were covered, *The Civic Culture* concentrated on participation, a subject that was also high on the priority list in the early 1960s. As the authors emphatically stated in the opening sentence of the first chapter: 'This is a study of the political culture of democracy and of the social structure and processes that sustain it' (1963, 3). The work was to become a classic because it showed for the first time that a systematic and empirically grounded study of political culture could be a central subject of political research; but the concrete aspect of political culture on which it focussed ceased to be as critical, at any rate in

what is merely regarded as sets of international forces and what is regarded as globalisation.

One particular difficulty with the concept of globalisation concerns the part played by regional organisations such as the European Union, Mercosur or Asean. If one considers these organisations from the strict point of view of a 'global village', they do not form part of the globalisation process: indeed they have often been built in order to prevent world international influence from having too strong an effect. On the other hand, these organisations do undermine the state and, as a result, may render it and its citizens more vulnerable to globalisation.

Western democracies. This is not to say that the 'political culture of democracy' should not be studied elsewhere in the world; indeed, it must continue to constitute a central aspect of the analysis of political developments in many countries. It is obviously of crucial importance for the study of Eastern Europe since the fall of communism in particular; the works on that region of Rose *et al.* (1998) in particular thus rightly concentrate on aspects of political culture which echo many of those of *The Civic Culture*. Yet the 'concerns of the times', at the beginning of the twenty-first century, go beyond these preoccupations, at any rate in the West and, we submit, in East and Southeast Asia. It is indeed probable that these concerns will not be ephemeral. These 'concerns of the times' at the beginning of the twenty-first century are at the root of the two objectives of this study.

The question of the convergence between values arises as a result of the extremely rapid development of East and Southeast Asia in the last decades of the twentieth century. That development makes it imperative to study the political culture of that region alongside and on the same basis as the political culture of Western Europe. Western Europe and East and Southeast Asia are the two areas which have come to be the most economically and indeed socially 'developed' regions of the globe together with North America. Many of the problems which East and Southeast Asia faces are therefore likely to be of the same character as the problems faced by Western countries. A truly worldwide study of political cultures will have to be undertaken at some point in time, to be sure. However the most sensible first step in this direction must be to undertake an in-depth and geographically representative comparative examination of the political culture of the two regions which are most similar in their economic achievements, but which also appear to be – and are often regarded as being – different in many ways. It is no longer sufficient to confine the analysis of political culture to the West; but it is unrealistic to attempt a truly comprehensive worldwide study as such a study will raise so many theoretical and practical problems that the result is unlikely to be satisfactory.² As a result, at a time when, outside the West, East and Southeast Asia plays such a critical economic, social and cultural part, it is best to follow an intermediate course and study, but study comprehensively and fully comparatively, the political culture(s) of both Western countries and East and Southeast Asian countries.

Yet, while it may be expected on grounds of classical 'modernisation' theory that the prevailing cultures of the regions of the world being studied here should become increasingly closer to each other, not just the literature which was mentioned earlier and for instance the work of Huntington (1993), but a large amount of literature explicitly concerned with East and Southeast Asia has focussed on possibly profound differences in the basic political culture of the two regions. It is thus apparently widely believed that the political relationships which prevail among East and South-

² Inglehart analyses findings relating to 40 countries only in the context of the 'World value survey': half of these countries are Western, a quarter are Eastern European and therefore only a few cover the rest of the world.

east Asian populations are based on a somewhat more ‘collective’ or ‘communitarian’ view of society, in contrast with the equally widely believed notion that Western citizens display greater ‘individualism’. These viewpoints are merely based on impressions which have never been rigorously tested among the populations of the two regions. Moreover, such viewpoints about differences between the political culture of East and Southeast Asian populations and the political culture of the Western populations are also necessarily based on the assumption that each of these regions constitutes a broadly homogeneous cultural block; such an assumption is *prima facie* difficult to accept as correct. *The Civic Culture* itself and many other works have shown that it does not apply at all well to Western countries.

Meanwhile – and this constitutes the key link between the two objectives of this study – work undertaken in the twenty-first century must also differ and indeed enlarge on *The Civic Culture* in that it must raise the question of the relationship between the state and the citizen, since the international setting in which the state operates might be expected to affect the role and importance of the state in the eyes of these citizens. To explore this question systematically, one must examine in depth the whole institutional framework to which people refer when they think of state and society, however. This institutional framework is simply not mentioned at all in *The Civic Culture*; states are the units of analysis. It has therefore to be concluded that, for the authors of that study, the supremacy of the state was not regarded as problematic. The analysis was conducted as if it was axiomatic that the state was the framework within which the culture of democracy had developed or was developing. Such a standpoint was probably an oversimplification at the time: that oversimplification was perhaps justified then, but it is no longer acceptable at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

There are two major reasons why the views of citizens about the state must be carefully examined. At one extreme, the question of the strength of the attachment of citizens to a variety of ‘sub-national’ bodies poses in many cases serious problems, in particular when that attachment relates to ethnic and/or religious ‘entities’. At the other extreme, as we just noted, the process of internationalisation or of globalisation is regarded as taking place at great speed and as taking place not just in the economic field but in other fields as well. Yet, while there are many studies devoted to the analysis of the strength of communal sentiments, there is a dearth of empirical work, especially of a comparative character, relating to the weight which citizens attribute to the international environment. If one is to examine how the state ‘fares’ currently in the minds of citizens and how far it is undermined by the globalisation process, one must examine the nature of the relationship between citizens and the international environment.

It is indeed rather surprising that the institutional frame of reference of citizens should have scarcely been explored empirically in a comprehensive manner since *The Civic Culture* was published. Although the literature on ‘globalisation’ has come to be very large, it is almost entirely based on statements raised occasionally almost to the

status of axioms about the way in which citizens are reacting to the processes which are taking place. It seems to be believed that citizens – and even states – have no alternative but to accept globalisation as a fact.

It is equally surprising to see such a standpoint being so prevalent as two sets of empirical evidence raise doubts about the extent to which citizens may react to international developments, which can affect the extent of their attachment to the state. The first set concerns the European Union. It is widely recognised that the ‘Europeanisation’ of the ‘minds’ of the citizens in the Union is very slow and at best partial: when interviewed, most Europeans state that they are above all nationals of their country; only a minority describe themselves as being both nationals of their country and European citizens (Blondel, Sinnott and Svensson, 1998; Niedermayer and Sinnott, 1995). If people are ‘reluctant Europeans’ despite a process of European integration having lasted for half a century, how can one assume that people are likely to embrace easily the view that they are involved in an inevitable process of internationalisation, let alone of ‘globalisation’?

The second set of empirical evidence relates not to the supra-national but to the sub-national level. The second half of the twentieth century has shown, often dramatically, that there were powerful movements at that level. These have led to the break up of some states and are continuing to lead to demands, often violent, for the break-up of others or for the secession of parts of these states. These movements have taken place, as is well-known, even in states which have existed for long periods and in particular in Western states. Britain, France, Spain are affected in a significant manner, while the continued existence of Belgium and Canada as we have known them is in serious question. The importance of this problem has been highlighted in much of the academic literature: the question of the strength of the ‘communal’ groups to which people refer has occupied for decades a major place on the agenda of social scientists and in particular of sociologists and political scientists. It was perhaps felt originally that ‘communalism’ characterised ‘developing countries’ only, but events in the Western countries which have just been mentioned, in particular, have shown that this was not the case. That political scientists should have noted the point is indicated for instance by the volume by Putnam on Italy (Putnam, 1993). The fact that this work is widely quoted surely demonstrates that ‘communalism’, whatever its form, is regarded as being a crucial problem.

Yet the question of the institutional frame of reference of citizens has not been placed squarely on the agenda of studies of political culture. Why this is the case can only be a subject of conjecture. Two points appear relevant in this context, however, and they will be examined in greater detail in the course of this paper. First, despite the problems which the state faces in many parts of the world and indeed despite the fact that it is well-known that the state is not equally ‘strong’ everywhere, political scientists and other social scientists continue to see the state as the key framework within which citizens think and act politically. This assumption is therefore considered not to be in need of being empirically tested. Second, studies of culture

have typically taken place in the context of an explanatory model based on a single factor deemed to be crucial. As was noted at the outset, in particular at the time when *The Civic Culture* was written, that factor was subsumed under the general label of 'modernisation'. As we also noted, the concept was somewhat revived when 'post-modernisation' came to be put forward, mainly by Inglehart (1977, 1997); it was indeed presented by him not so much as an alternative but as a sequel to modernisation.³ As a result, attention has tended to be concentrated on two interrelated matters: one was the stipulation that a single explanatory factor was at play and the other was the consequential view that culture needed to be studied mainly in order to assess the extent to which this single factor did account for contemporary political, social and economic developments.

This last point relates directly to the question of the presence or absence of a trend towards value convergence. The literature devoted to East and Southeast Asian values directly or indirectly emphasised the fact that these values were different from those of the West and therefore that the culture characterising the countries of that region differed sharply from Western culture. Yet the conclusion has not been correspondingly drawn that such an observation meant that there were different cultural patterns across the world and that the notion of a single explanatory factor, be it modernisation or post-modernisation, was *ipso facto* being challenged. The point is raised by Inglehart, admittedly, but in a somewhat incidental manner only. The key comment is the following:

Although frequently stereotyped as having authoritarian cultures, China, Japan, and South Korea all emerge near the pole that emphasises thrift rather than obedience. The three East Asian societies in this survey rank highest on Achievement Motivation. . . The scale reflects the balance between two types of values: one type of values – emphasising thrift and determination – supports economic achievement, while the other – emphasising obedience and religious faith – tends to discourage it, stressing conformity to traditional authority and norms. These two types of values are not necessarily incompatible: some societies rank high on both, while others rank relatively low on both. But the relatively (*sic*) *priority* accorded to these two types of values is strongly related to a society's growth rate. (Inglehart, 1997, 221–222)

This is scarcely a comprehensive answer to the question of 'Asian values' which

³ Inglehart's studies are primarily based on the use of batteries of attitudes to specific issues. This author's well-known 'post-materialist' 'syndrome' has been constructed on the basis of reactions to twelve specific issues, indeed referred to by the author as 'items' (1977, 40–53). They consist of wanting more say on jobs, wanting a less impersonal society, stating that ideas count, supporting more say in government, favouring freedom of speech, and wanting more beautiful cities (these being the 'post-materialist' attitudes), while feeling that rising prices should be fought, wanting strong defence forces, favouring economic growth, favouring a stable economy, wanting a fight against crime and maintaining order form the set of 'materialist' attitudes.

has agitated so many in the course of the last quarter of the twentieth century. Surely the single explanatory factor approach needs more detailed empirical evidence to support it if it is to be sustained.

We need therefore to examine the extent to which there are or there might be cultural 'convergence' across the world and in particular in the regions in which a process of 'modernisation' or 'post-modernisation' has taken place. We need also to explore the ways in which citizens react to the globalisation process – and to begin with are aware of this process – in the context of the attachment of these citizens to the state to which they belong. It follows that the first task must be to explore the components of this popular attachment to the state. Given that citizens can be expected to relate more or less to the state, what are the variables which lead to an increase or a decrease in this attachment? This is the object of the coming section.

What popular support for the state consists of: Identity, trust and satisfaction

The support of citizens for the state – as the support for any other organisation – is based on three components and together these components cover what can be referred to as the 'societal' values of these citizens. These three components are identity, trust and satisfaction. *Identity* is the psychological bond between citizens and the bodies that they recognise around them and the state in particular. The question of the strength of identity *vis-à-vis* the state and of the impact of other identities on the capacity of the state has naturally been among the preoccupations of social scientists for generations. While it might have been felt, in the early part of the twentieth century, that the power of 'other' identities would gradually decline, the experience of the last decades of that century did suggest that this was not the case, far from it.⁴

Second, the bond of identity of citizens with groups and in particular with the state may be strong but the judgements about the way in which such a body is run may not be favourable. Citizens may find that the state, for instance, is operated by authorities in a manner in which they do not have confidence; they may, on the other hand, feel that they can have confidence, and *trust* what the organisation is doing. The impact of trust, too, has been analysed carefully in social science literature, though more in general than in the context of its relationship with identity.⁵

There is, third, contentment or discontent. If the bodies to which citizens are closely linked undertake policies which they like, they will experience *satisfaction* with what is occurring; if not, citizens will be dissatisfied. This may arise even though they

⁴ The literature on identity is vast, although little has been done so far to render it truly precise, let alone measurable.

⁵ The analysis of trust is not normally closely associated to the analysis of identity, as the concept is viewed as being automatically related to the relationship of individuals to the state, to other organisations and indeed to each other.

rate the body to be important to them and feel that the organisation is run in ways which they consider trustworthy.⁶

The assessment of the support of citizens for an organisation – and in particular for the state – entails therefore acquiring information about all three elements. It has to relate in the first instance to the pattern of *identities* which enter the landscape of citizens: these may lead to severe conflicts in their minds. It has to relate to the extent citizens *trust* the bodies with which they feel they have a link, as well as the leaders of these bodies. It has, third, to relate to the extent of *satisfaction* which is experienced by citizens, or the frustration or even anxiety which may be experienced as a result of what is achieved by the bodies to which citizens feel closely associated.

Identity

Citizens relate to the world around them by identifying more or less with the structures they discover in the society, that is to say by the extent to which they feel close to a variety of bodies, institutions or organisations. The state is expected to occupy a key position in this landscape. It is typically believed that other groups at the sub-national level attract less strong feelings of identity, while supra-national bodies are regarded as being weak. Whether this is the case or not, it is manifest that few citizens are likely to identify with one organisation only, be it state or any other: total identification with one body is not likely to occur outside primitive societies, for instance where a tribal organisation dominates the life of everyone. Thus the state is only one of the bodies with which individuals identify – and, indeed, some individuals may not even identify at all with the state. Moreover, the distinction is not dichotomous. Identification is not present or absent. It varies. It varies in particular over time: the degree to which individuals identify with the state or any other group may – probably will – change as a result of a whole series of circumstances.

The extent to which citizens identify with the state is obviously of major importance with respect to the ability of the state to act both within its borders and on the international plane. What counts in this regard is not whether the citizen also identifies with other bodies, but whether the identification with the state is considered by the citizen to be of greater ‘weight’ than the identification with other bodies or, as occurs frequently, whether the identification with the state is associated with the identification with other bodies. Thus individuals may identify with the state if they judge the state to be closely associated with the geographical, ethnic or religious groups to which they belong. If this is not the case but the citizen strongly identifies with one or more other bodies, whether of an ethnic, religious or regional character, the basis of the whole edifice of the state is shaken, so to speak. If many feel that way, the situation becomes dangerous for the strength of the state and even its

⁶ Satisfaction with the authorities and with the regime in general is even less closely related to identity than trust. There is therefore only a limited literature which is relevant to the analysis which is conducted here.

stability. The same kind of ‘destabilisation’ may be brought about by globalisation, while, correspondingly, a state with which many citizens do not identify will be less able to respond to the challenges of globalisation.

Trust

Support is manifestly linked in part to the extent to which citizens trust the groups to which they are attached. The object of the trust can be either institutions or individuals. Thus, in some cases, alongside the trust in a body, trust will relate to the rulers of that body. Since, however, many citizens may not know who these rulers are, they will display trust in whoever runs the organisation they trust. As is the case with identity feelings, feelings of trust vary: they can vary from very high trust to total distrust.

Trust is less ‘basic’ than identity, as it assumes that the framework, which is provided by the identities, is accepted. It is also intrinsically distinct from identity, as citizens frequently distrust the leaders of the state or of any other groups with which they identify. One needs therefore to know both the extent to which citizens identify with a given body and the extent of trust that they have in the way these bodies are regarded as acting.

Trust can be ‘passive’ or ‘active’. Individuals may trust the state or another organisation or the leaders of the state or that organisation because they genuinely believe that the policies that the state or that organisation or its leaders pursue are good; but they may only have only a vague idea of what these policies are. In such cases, trust is passive: at the limit it may even be given ‘as a matter of course’. A link is sometimes made, rather unduly, with ‘personal’ values as if trust was automatic on the grounds that there is a tradition of a general respect for the idea of ‘authority’.

The level of trust in bodies ‘above’ the state level needs to be sought, as international bodies have grown in importance and as trust in the state may be indirectly affected. Some may trust the state because it participates in international activities; others may on the contrary distrust the state because it accepts international ‘diktats’ or is unable to launch a serious resistance to what international bodies might be pressing the state to do.

Satisfaction

There is finally a somewhat vaguer feeling of general satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Those who trust the state or the bodies with which they strongly identify may none the less not be entirely satisfied with the way these bodies function and in particular with the policies which they perceive that these bodies pursue, whether this perception is correct or not. Admittedly, levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction are to an extent related to the temperament of individuals. Some may be more ‘pessimistic’ by nature than others: they may therefore be dissatisfied, frustrated or even anxious, although they may not pass strongly negative judgements about any of the bodies to

which they are attached. Moreover, whole societies may be characterised by greater 'collective pessimism' than others: Americans are often said to be more optimistic in their outlook on society than, for instance, Western Europeans. Yet, despite or at any rate over and above the differences which result from individual personality traits or from the 'basic' culture prevailing in a society, satisfaction or dissatisfaction about an organisation and in particular the state may arise from diffuse impressions about the way that organisation acts; even if these are more 'superficial' than feelings of identity and even of trust, they do need to be registered as they provide an impression of what citizens feel about the body or bodies to which are close.

The question of state capacity

The three components of support that have been analysed here provide a comprehensive picture of the way citizens relate to organisations and in particular to the state. In relation to the state, these three components, when considered jointly, determine the subjective segment of 'state capacity' and form one part of the resources on which the state can rely to be able to act; but state capacity also has an 'objective' segment, constituted by its economic, social, political and administrative structure.

Thus the communication infrastructure, both physical and electronic, as well as the strength of the industrial network of the country affect state capacity. Among the social characteristics which contribute to the development of state capacity is the infrastructure in education, health and the social services in general: a country with a healthy and well-educated population is likely to render the state efficient. 'Social capital', in particular the network of associations and interest groups, contributes to the ability of that state to act, although the decision-making process may become more complex and although, as a result of the activity of associations, some citizens may be drawn away from the state either towards local or regional bodies or, and more and more, towards supra-national attachments, for instance with the development of international NGOs. State capacity is also enhanced as a result of the political and administrative structure of the country: a democratic system tends to strengthen state capacity, as support for state actions as a result of the participation of the population in the process of decision making is likely to be larger. The structure and traditions of the civil service and of administrative agencies in general also have a significant effect on the capacity of the state: if these agencies are efficient, the state is likely to be able to act.

In both Western Europe and East and Southeast Asia, in contrast to most other areas of the world, except for North America and the Old Commonwealth, Israel and, since the fall of communism, a small number of Eastern European countries, the 'objective' segment of state capacity is well-developed and the state is therefore strong. The economic infrastructure is large and solid; in the social field, educational and health services are given a high priority and are spread widely across the population. The development of associations is generally more recent

and more patchy in East and Southeast Asia than in the West, but it has been rapid in the Eastern region as well, not just in Japan but at least in some of the other countries. The political aspects of the capacity of these states is large almost everywhere. Democracy has been spreading throughout both regions: in the West, it is not so long ago that Spain, Portugal and Greece were dictatorships, and the movement in the direction of democracy has taken place later in East and Southeast Asia, except in Japan. Civil servants have a tradition of competence, almost everywhere, in part because of the high levels of education which prevail. Overall, the administration of the state penetrates deeply and is 'embedded' in most societies of both regions, a characteristic which is typically uncommon outside 'advanced capitalist states', although there are some variations and although these variations are larger in this respect within East and Southeast Asia than among Western European states.

'Objective' components thus constitute highly significant elements in the build-up of state capacity alongside 'subjective' components, even if it is not possible to measure the extent to which these elements contribute to the 'strength' of a given state. Two further points must be made, however. First, the subjective components of state capacity are more likely to vary over time, increases or decreases being due to changes in the feelings of identity, trust and satisfaction which citizens experience in relation to the state. Second, state capacity is affected by the actions taken by those who run the state: leaders may endeavour to change the image of the state in the hope that citizens will react more positively as a result. Thus subjective components of state capacity are affected by a two-way relationship between citizens and the state.

Are there different cultural patterns across the world?

While, as we saw, 'mainstream' political scientists have tended to support the view that 'modernisation' or, more recently, 'post-modernisation' is leading to cultural 'convergence', other social scientists, social psychologists for instance, have stressed the need to explore cultural differences in a more open-minded manner. Thus Hofstede (1980), in his *Culture's Consequences*, does not aim at providing an explanatory factor, whether single or not: he describes the basic 'dimensions' of culture which may exist among nations. As the author states at the beginning of his work:

This book explores the differences in thinking and social action that exist between members of 40 different modern nations. It argues that people carry 'mental programs' which are developed in the family in early childhood and reinforced in schools and organisations, and that these mental programs contain a component of national culture. They are most clearly expressed in the different values that predominate among people from different countries. (Hofstede, 1980, 11)

Inglehart's viewpoint, which accounts for the statement mentioned earlier about

observed differences between East Asian and Western respondents, is stated in the strongest possible manner in *Modernisation and Postmodernisation*:

Brilliant and instructive books have been written about the ways in which given societies differ from others. This book focuses on the general themes underlying the cross-national pattern, not because we are uninterested in the unique aspects of given societies – few things are more fascinating – but because the common themes are *also* interesting, and because any book that undertakes to deal with more than 40 societies almost inevitably *must* focus on what is common, rather than on what is unique. The evidence examined here indicates that common underlying themes *do* exist: it suggests that roughly half of the cross-national variance in these values and attitudes can be accounted for by the processes of Modernisation and Post-modernisation, while the remaining half of the variation reflects factors that are more or less nation-specific. (Inglehart, 1997, 84, italics in the text)

It is difficult to confront two statements which are more distant from each other: yet they are made on the basis of evidence drawn from a population of countries which is similar in number and only in part dissimilar in character: in both cases, Western states constitute about half the total of about forty countries. The difference lies in the fact that, in Inglehart's study, a further quarter is made up of Eastern European countries, with the result that the number of Latin American cases is small (four) and that of East and Southeast Asian cases tiny (two, including Japan); in Hofstede's work, on the contrary, there is only one East European case (Yugoslavia) – not surprisingly given that the study was undertaken before the fall of communism – but there are seven Latin American cases and five East and Southeast Asian cases besides Japan. It is therefore easier for Hofstede than for Inglehart to draw meaningful comparisons among the cultures of the Latin American, East and Southeast Asian and Western countries.

Behind these two statements lie two profoundly different manners of handling the analysis of culture. Hofstede states that '*Culture's Consequences* aims at being specific about the elements of which culture is composed. It identifies four main dimensions along which dominant value systems in the 40 countries can be ordered and which affect human thinking, organisations, and institutions in predictable ways' (Hofstede, 1980, 11), these four dimensions being 'power distance', 'uncertainty avoidance', 'individualism' and 'masculinity'. On the contrary, Inglehart states at the opening of his 1997 volume: 'Economic, cultural, and political change go together in coherent patterns that are changing the world in predictable ways.

This has been the central claim of Modernisation theory, from Karl Marx to Max Weber and Daniel Bell. The claim has given rise to heated debate during the last two centuries. This book presents evidence that this claim is largely correct. (Inglehart, 1997, 7)

Since Inglehart strongly emphasises the fact that he is interested and believes in the influence of culture on what might be described as 'development', be it of the

'modern' or of the 'post-modern' variety, but since he downplays, as we saw, the cultural differences which may exist among countries, his approach faces difficulties. This is probably why he finds it necessary to draw 'maps', as at pages 93, 335 and 349 in the 1997 volume, of the location of various 'geographical cultures' in relation to two variables which he considers critical, 'rational-legal authority' and 'post-modern values'. The purpose of these maps is very different from the purpose which maps fulfil in Hofstede's work, however. The latter draws maps in which he locates countries in relation to his four dimensions of culture on a pair-wise basis, as at pages 316 and 324 of his volume: the aim, which is consistent with Hofstede's general descriptive purpose, is to see whether certain combinations of dimensions tend to occur and whether they occur in some regions rather than in others. Inglehart's aim, which is consistent with the overall goal of demonstrating that 'modernisation' or 'post-modernisation' is the crucial explanatory factor, is to show that, although there are differences in the location of countries and of regions, these differences do not undermine the general approach. This goal is only achieved in part. On these maps the Northern European region appears to be more 'developed', given that the countries in that group score higher with respect to the two variables which appear to him to be critical, 'rational-legal authority' and 'post-modern values'; other regions lag behind.

There seem to be two kinds of possible explanations for these differences in location. One kind was mentioned earlier in the context of the contrast between East and Southeast Asia and the West: the suggestion is that the difference does not matter much and that the overall direction – economic growth – is the same in both regions. The other kind is presumably that countries distant from the top right-end corner of the map where the Northern European countries lie will move towards that corner as economic development occurs. This last interpretation resembles closely the one which Almond and Powell (1966) put forward in their volume on *Comparative Politics*. In a diagram which appears at the end of that book, Western countries are rated as more 'developed' than other countries because they are found to score higher with respect to the two variables which the authors deemed most relevant, in this case 'structural differentiation' and 'sub-system autonomy' (Almond and Powell, 1966, 308). Inglehart parallels this approach on the cultural plane: the overall direction is that of a modernisation and/or a post-modernisation process for which a set of universal variables are found.

Inglehart, as Almond and Powell earlier, is thus not really concerned with the differences in the patterns of political culture which may exist across the world: what concerns him is to suggest – and find evidence for – the view that, whatever the cultural characteristics, what counts is the path towards modernisation and/or post-modernisation, a path in which cultural characteristics may play a part. The approach is similar to that of *The Civic Culture*: the fact that such an approach is adopted explains why, although the political culture of Italy was found to be very different from that of Britain and America, the authors of the 1963 study did not conclude that

they were confronted with two distinct cultural patterns. They concluded on the contrary that the Italian culture was not 'civic' and needed to change appreciably to become 'civic'; the assumption is presumably that this change will occur. Yet there could be a different reading of the Italian case – one which would be more consistent with the interpretation put forward by Putnam (1993) – it would consist in stating that the political culture of Italy (Putnam might confine this point to Southern Italy) is intrinsically distinct from that of countries such as Britain or America. Italian culture must therefore be described as it is, without assuming that it will ever be similar, let alone identical to that of Britain or America; moreover, it becomes an empirical question as to whether the consequences will be the same for the countries concerned.

This matter is naturally important in itself; it is especially important in the context of the present study. It can no more be assumed that Western countries – in the case of this work Western European countries – have an identical political culture than it can be assumed that all the countries of the world are moving towards a similar set of cultural characteristics as a result of their 'development', be it of the 'modernising' or of the 'post-modernising' type. Indeed, the assumption of a similar cultural pattern among Western European countries does indeed go against the view, so often expressed, both in daily remarks and in the academic literature, that there are many differences among the cultural characteristics of these European countries, a point which was for instance strongly made by Weber in connection with the role which he attributed to protestantism. Indeed, one of the criticisms against the European Union is that that organisation attempts to create a uniform culture, that it does so against the will of the nationals of many of the member-states and that that trend must be resisted. If this view is an illusion, why is it so widely believed? And, if it is believed, should not the matter be systematically examined?

It is surely at least arguable that cultural patterns may well vary sufficiently to result in appreciable differences in the attitudes and judgements of citizens. It is indeed particularly important to examine the extent to which these variations in cultural patterns cut across such major 'fault lines' as the ones between East and Southeast Asia and Western Europe. It is not axiomatic that all the countries in one region are culturally closer to each other than to all the countries in the other region, a point which it is difficult for Inglehart to examine, given the fact that only South Korea and Japan are part of his sample for the Eastern region. The present study thus follows Hofstede's approach and does not assume that there is necessarily a single overall goal which all countries adopt. While following Hofstede's approach, however, it is more specifically political in that it looks for the characteristics of the political culture – in the broad sense of the word – and does not inquire into the fundamentals of the personality which *Culture's Consequences* investigates. The emphasis is on personal values in so far as they relate to politics and to the general position which the individual perceives to have in society. This makes it possible, for the first time, to assess how strong is the evidence for the claim that citizens of East

and Southeast Asia hold a cluster of 'personal' values which correspond to what has been often described as 'Asian values' and how strong is the evidence for the claim that Western European citizens hold different values. It is also possible to determine the extent to which there are variations among the citizens of each region with respect to these values and thus to conclude whether the two regions are indeed separated by a massive 'fault line' or whether one is confronted with a markedly more complex panorama.

Support for the state and perception of globalisation

Meanwhile, on the basis of the recognition of the three components of the support of citizens for the state described earlier, one can examine the relationship between this support and the globalisation process and specifically, in the present context, the relationship between support for the state and the perception of the process of globalisation by the citizens. Admittedly, a cross-sectional study does not make it possible to discover whether time has elapsed between the moment globalisation is perceived and changes in levels of support for the state, but one can at least find out what relationship currently exists between perceived globalisation and support for the state. Perhaps more importantly, there will be a relationship between support and globalisation only if globalisation is perceived. Such a perception cannot be assumed, however; nor can it be assumed that the perception will be commensurate to the extent of the phenomenon. Yet there are general circumstances in which that perception is likely to be low or even non-existent.

Perception and lack of perception of globalisation

Perception of globalisation is likely to be limited or non-existent in three types of situations. First, knowledge of or interest in public affairs may be so low that the very concept of globalisation does not have any resonance in the minds of citizens. When little or nothing about politics is known, the perceptions of worldwide developments are also likely to be limited or non-existent. Second, someone who is parochial and whose vision of the world is almost entirely limited to family, neighbourhood and workmates is unlikely to draw a distinction between what goes on in the country and what goes on beyond the borders of the country, a situation likely to occur when the values and the broad ideology held by the citizen are highly traditional. Generally, the more traditional the values and broad the ideology, the smaller the probability that the process of globalisation will be perceived. Third, support for the state itself can limit the perception of globalisation. Citizens who are fully satisfied with the society, who trust the authorities entirely and who identify fully with the state in which they live are unlikely to bother about a world 'beyond' the country or to think that such a world may affect them. Indeed, these three sets of characteristics reinforce each other. The feeling that the country is 'perfect', so to speak, is more likely to prevail when someone's mind is almost exclusively focussing on the immediate environment. There is also

a ranking: those who know nothing about politics are the most 'shielded'; those who are primarily 'parochial' are in an intermediate situation; those who are fully positive about their country have the best sense of the existence of the political system and are potentially most likely to perceive the existence of worldwide developments. Finally, these views are likely to change as a result of new experiences or the influence of others: those whose horizons are limited to their near-environment or whose admiration for the state in which they live is very high may discover ways in which globalisation occurs; those who do not perceive the process of globalisation because of their lack of knowledge may become aware of worldwide developments affecting their lives.

The impact of the perception of globalisation and support for the state

If citizens perceive more or less accurately the existence of worldwide influences and in particular of globalisation, all three components of the support for the state – satisfaction, trust and identity – may be affected. Four 'intervening' factors play a part in the process. First, whether the reaction of citizens to globalisation is positive or negative does matter. Indeed, the reaction can be more or less positive or more or less negative. Second, the manner in which the perception of the globalisation process emerges in the minds of citizens does matter; that perception may come suddenly or slowly and almost imperceptibly. Third, a citizen who strongly supports the state is unlikely to be affected markedly, at least to begin with, by the perception that globalisation is taking place. Fourth, the reaction depends on the actions taken by the authorities. The first three of these factors modify the 'direct' relationship between the perception of globalisation and support; the last factor is concerned with an assessment of the indirect effect which globalisation has on citizens via the part played by the state.

Views of citizens about globalisation

Citizens' standpoints about whether globalisation is good or bad are likely to vary strongly. Some may feel that globalisation is beneficial to them and to the country; others may fear its spread, for instance because globalisation shakes traditions and habits; while yet others feel restricted by traditions and habits and welcome at least a degree of internationalisation. This is true in relation to trade, but also to other fields, even though many may worry about the effect of globalisation on culture or employment.

As a result, the perception of globalisation can be expected to have a different impact on support for the state if it has any effect at all. There may be cases in which satisfaction with the state increases with perceived globalisation; trust in the authorities and the extent of identification with the state can also depend on the extent to which the authorities and in particular the state authorities appear to citizens to share the same views as their own, a point to which we shall return.

Perception of globalisation and impact on support for the state

Globalisation may be perceived as widespread or limited: below a certain threshold, it is unlikely to have an impact on support for the state. Globalisation must also be perceived as not being 'normal' or 'natural': for instance, foreign trade may come to be regarded as 'a fact of life'. The perception of a large amount of globalisation may once have had an impact on the support of citizens for the state, but the situation may have been stabilised after a period if there are no apparent negative consequences of the process. Citizens then become accustomed to whatever amount of globalisation there is: a plateau is reached. There has therefore to be a change, indeed a rapid change, as support for the state is likely to be affected if citizens come to discover, almost overnight, that they are subjected to new worldwide forces which they had not expected. It is the discovery that a sudden change has taken place in the extent of globalisation which tends to affect support.

Two types of factors are especially likely to have such an effect. One of these results from the emergence of new techniques of entry of 'the world' into the life of nations. The opportunity to make instantaneous capital transfers at the end of the twentieth century is an example, as this resulted in a brutal change in the credit position of some East and Southeast Asian countries in the late 1990s and provoked a widespread loss of confidence. The media are a second type of factor. They orchestrate and indeed amplify the role of foreign firms and agencies and thus contribute markedly to feelings of insecurity among citizens, especially since, by and large, the reporting of the consequences of such developments tends to be both sensational and negative rather than measured and positive.

Perception of globalisation and perception of support for the state

The perception of globalisation can be expected to be muted, as we saw, if citizens strongly support the state; conversely, the impact on support is likely to be largest among citizens whose views about the state were already highly ambivalent before these citizens began to perceive globalisation as a significant problem. Generally, the less one is satisfied with what the state 'is' and 'did' prior to the moment when any perception of globalisation takes place, the greater the impact on support is likely to be. The impact will be first on levels of satisfaction, and later on levels of trust, and, finally, on feelings of identity. Thus, for a given level of change, even rapid, in the perception of globalisation, the manner in which citizens relate to the state is likely to vary appreciably depending on whether citizens were previously highly supportive of the state or not. The more the state is 'at risk' in the minds of its citizens, the more it comes to be 'at risk' as a result of globalisation, at least among those for whom globalisation is synonymous with 'problems' for their country.

The response of the state to globalisation and the extent of change in support for the state

Being confronted with a globalisation process affecting their country, state

authorities have to respond. Their response can vary between fully accepting or fully rejecting globalisation and they may be more or less successful in their response. Citizens will be affected if they do perceive the reaction of the state and, when this occurs, the judgement which they pass will be based on a combination of three elements: their own views about the worth of globalisation, the direction which the response of the state authorities is seen by them to take and the apparent success of the policies which have been adopted. For those who agree with the line taken by the state authorities and who feel that the action of these authorities has been effective, not only will their feelings *vis-à-vis* the state not be more negative, but support for the state will increase. The converse will occur among citizens who disagree with what the state authorities do and/or who believe that the action taken is ineffective. Thus, paradoxically, globalisation may give state authorities an opportunity to acquire more influence among some citizens and to 're-nationalise' the political system. This is so insofar as state policies coincide with the line which most citizens prefer, a condition likely to induce state authorities aiming at pleasing everyone to propose ambiguous responses to globalisation. Yet ambiguous policies cannot be pursued indefinitely. State authorities cannot both open up the nation to the world and protect that nation against the ill-winds of that process. They have to choose – and, in so doing, they are likely to alienate some groups of citizens while attempting to please other groups. In the process, the strength of support for the state may oscillate. Thus, while the perception – and the reality – of globalisation gives leaders of states opportunities to increase their appeal among those sections of citizens who were already favourable towards them, or whom they manage to convince, the opposite effect may also spread and have a detrimental effect on the stability of the political system.

The relationship between the perception of globalisation and support for the state is complex and dynamic. Changes in levels of perception of globalisation may have a different impact depending both on the 'terrain' – the extent of support – and on the way in which the players – the state authorities – are perceived as confronting the issue. In the background, the values and the broad ideology of citizens also contribute to shaping some of the characteristics of the relationship. Thus support for the state is more likely to remain unchanged where the values and the ideology are traditional. Hence the need to monitor patterns of relationships systematically, as only in this way can one hope to build gradually a realistic model of the link between values, the extent of support for the state and the part which globalisation plays in shaping and being shaped by these values and the amount of this support.

As was stated at the beginning of this article, the study which has been outlined here is concerned with the examination of the attitudes of the 'common man' in two regions of the globe, both with respect to basic relations between citizen and state and with respect to the extent to which 'globalisation' affects these relations. These questions have too long been discussed primarily at the level of elites or on the basis of assumptions or 'hunches' about what the reactions of the people at large may be.

By providing at least some evidence pertaining to both these questions, the study thus aims at beginning to fill a gap which has long needed to be filled and at giving the debate on ‘convergence’ and on ‘globalisation’ some of the empirical basis which it badly needs.

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