

## **Is the Hegemonic Position of American Culture able to Subjugate Local Cultures of Importing Countries? A Constructive Analysis on the Phenomenon of Cultural Localization**

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### **Abstract**

It has been argued that globalization assists the USA to gain a hegemonic position, allowing it to export its culture. Because this exportation leads to the domination by American culture of the local cultures of importing countries, which are the key element in sustaining their citizens' national identity, citizens of these countries are unable to protect state sovereignty from this cultural invasion. In order to prevent a political crisis arising from such an invasion, these countries will adopt the strategy of cultural localization. However, this top-down approach overestimates the influence of hegemonic cultures and, thus, overlooks the dynamic nature of cultural development that is generated by people's agency. This essay rejects this top-down model by arguing that texts cannot command people, and that people determine their existence and value.

**Keywords:** globalization, national identity, cultural replacement, agency, cultural construction, cultural localization

### **Introduction**

As the policy of welfare socialism implemented prior to the Reagan era had accumulated a considerable amount of national debt, and was viewed as a key element in deteriorating national competitiveness, neo-liberalism became a new option for politicians. Promulgated by America because it is a typical capitalist country, neo-liberalism was finally constructed as a new world value, so that globalization acquired a supportive value to operate and grow. This major change wasn't only a great victory for imperialism, but also indicated a major transmission of power, shifting from many countries to transnational institutes that were under the control of America. This new era reveals that America has seized great power, enabling it to dominate the operation of globalization. It is argued that this hegemonic position assists America to export its culture, and in turn subjugates the local cultures of importing countries, which are the key element in sustaining their citizens' national identity. Because these countries want to pursue the considerable amount of capitalist profit available in a globalized market,

they cannot be free from this cultural invasion. However, in order to solve or at least to reduce this political crisis, they will adopt the strategy of cultural localization. In other word, globalization and localization become parallel phenomena, projecting dual intentions of these countries to obtain capitalist profit available in a global market without jeopardizing their own sovereignty.

However, this perspective tends to adopt a top-down model to define the phenomenon of cultural localization, because a hegemonic culture such as American culture is viewed as superior to others, so that it can replace the local cultures of importing countries. This approach overvalues the dominant force of American culture and, thus, overlooks the dynamic characteristic of cultural development. In reality, cultural development embodies a continuous process of interaction that is not generated by the texts but by people, because rational ability allows them to exercise agency, empowering them to be active participants in cultural construction. This constructive process is full of negotiation and participation, a dynamic which rejects the static assumption of the top-down model – a cultural replacement process. As people are the main agents initiating cultural development, the force of civil society overrules the other assumption of this top-down model, which is that cultures function as a political means in sustaining citizens' national identity and state sovereignty. In order to examine this relation, the following sections explore the argument of the relation between globalization and cultural localization and the dynamic characteristics of cultural construction that is generated by people's agency.

### **Globalization and Cultural Localization**

Welfare socialism, which was derived from the idea of great government argued by J. Keynes (Keynes, 1935), used to be a mainstream paradigm in politics, particularly in the European region. However, its influence significantly faded in the late 1960s because this approach had led to the accumulation of a considerable amount of national debt, which was viewed as a core factor in deteriorating national competitiveness. In order to get out this trap, many politicians viewed neo-liberalism as an alternative option. Neo-liberalists acquired a strong and legitimate voice in the 1970s when a world-wide recession, caused by the oil crisis, almost destroyed the legend of great government (Harvey, 2005). Eventually, neo-liberalism won the battle against Keynesianism in politics, starting in the 1980s when R. Reagan and M. Thatcher were in power, and intentionally implemented ideas such as privatization and deregulation, creating a huge space for the private sector to grow (Frieden, 2006; Glyn, 2006). In the name of efficiency, both of them undertook severe cuts in tax, governmental expenditure and public services (Miyoshi, 1996). After being implemented in such influential countries as America and Britain, the approach was gradually accepted by

the international community.

While neo-liberalism has been constructed as a prevailing new world value in supporting the expansion of globalization, more countries were fused into an interlocking body in the 1980s than ever. American policies significantly contributed to this fusion, as is evident by the fact that the deficit budget policy, adopted by the Reagan government in order to win the arms race against the Soviet Union, generated the notion of national bonds, which assisted the flow of international capital (Frieden, 2006). This approach later became a popular value in the world, as manifest in the fact that many European and Asian countries came to join this financial wager (Harvey, 2005; Chiang, 2011). Therefore, the international financial market not only grew itself, but also drove many countries into an interweaving network (Frieden, 2006; Glyn, 2006). This combination was further intensified by international investment from American and Japanese enterprises. The former was triggered by the liberalization in international trade notable as the phenomenon of the 'Eurocurrency Market' in the 1960s, indicating the huge volume of international investment from American transnational enterprises. The latter referred to large scale Japanese investment in the American real estate market, which resulted from an agreement signed at the G5 meeting in 1985 urging the Japanese government to conduct a strong yen policy, appreciating up to 100% against US dollar (Miyoshi, 1996).

As globalization is able to increase the size of a global market, which contains a considerable amount of profit, capitalists are eager to see this expansion. However, this expansion requires a supportive value, so being a typical capitalist country, the USA is desirous of enlarging the volume of international trade through globalization (Wallerstain, 2004). In accomplishing this mission, it is argued that America acts as a transnational corporation, exporting free market logic to the international community (Berberoglu, 2003; Chiang, 2011) through the channel of key international institutes such as the WB, the IMF (Heywood, 2003; Stiglitz, 2002), the WTO (Robertson, Bonal and Dale, 2006) and the OECD (Rizvi and Lingard, 2006), which all address the importance of free market logic and international trade. This exportation has significantly contributed to the construction of neo-liberalism as a new world value, convincing people to believe that globalization alone will bring a promising future for its participants (McCarthy and Dimitriadis, 2006).

Along with this new world value, globalization has significantly enlarged its sphere of influence, by fusing many countries into an interlocking body. It has been argued that this fusion will undermine their governmental authority, because globalization blurs the boundaries between countries, which used to be a crucial element in sustaining state sovereignty (Giddens, 1990). Furthermore, the creation of economic zones and transnational institutes highlights the primacy of economic force,

which shifts power from the domestic stage to the international arena (Ohmae, 2000). The WTO, for example, takes over the control of its member countries through tax policies on imported goods (Robertson, Bonal and Dale, 2006). By claiming the right to be involved in policy-making in domestic matters, the IMF transgressed the sovereignty of many countries, like Ethiopia and South Korea, when they were in desperate need of international financial assistance (Stiglitz, 2006). In order to obtain the considerable amount of capitalist profit available in a global market, many countries need to conform to the rules of globalization voluntarily, as witnessed by the fact that they have reduced their control over tax policy for imported goods (Dale, 2003). This situation indicates that transnational arrangements are able to remold the role of their member countries, shifting from that of self-deciding agent to one of administrative implementer, delivering the policies formulated by transnational institutes (Robinson, 2004). This may undermine the loyalty of international enterprises, prompting them to move from their home countries to international consumers and shareholders (Miyoshi, 1996). Globalization also diminishes citizens' loyalty to their countries as well, because neo-liberalism commands the state to reduce its role in the provision of public services (Rapley, 2004), and a global market favors the rise of a transnational elite class who gain strength from an international domain rather than a domestic realm (Robinson, 2004).

All these changes indicate that while globalization has sabotaged many states' authority, it actually delivers more power to America, because it has been a strong promulgator of globalization, as noted above. This transmission assists the USA to gain a hegemonic position that enables it to export its culture. Consequently, many social members in such importing countries voluntarily pursue American culture, a situation conceptualized as post-colonialism, and referring to how the importing countries promote American culture and devalue their own (Said, 2006). This situation will jeopardize the mother cultures of the importing countries and, thus, injure their citizens' national identity, because cultures are the basis for developing identity, which in turn functions as a crucial element in sustaining state sovereignty (Dale, 2003; Morrow and Torres, 2000; Schriewer, 2003). This political crisis is intensified by the phenomenon of 'disjunction' among people, indicating a disconnection between cultural roots and solidarity caused by globalization, which assists the rapid flow of people, ideas, and information. The development of advanced internet technology further triggers the mega speed of information transmission, which leads to the creation of a global cultural system, obstructing the receiver from tracing the root of any information. This can be conceptualized as the phenomenon of 'no sense of place'. Therefore, the global cultural system tends to decompose citizens' national identity (Appadurai, 2006).

In order to gain the considerable amount of capitalist profit available in a global

market, many countries need to comply with the rules of globalization, so that this cultural invasion from the hegemonic country – America – becomes unavoidable. However, these countries are able to employ the strategy of cultural localization in protecting local cultures from American cultural invasion and, then, sustaining their citizens' national identity. (Lingard, 2000; Rizvi, 2000; Schriewer, 2003). Green (2006) further argues that this cultural localization would be heavily reliant upon schooling, because schools are the main site for cultural cultivation and transmission.

According to the above analysis, globalization assists American to gain a hegemonic position, assisting it to export its culture to replace local cultures of importing countries. This replacement jeopardizes their citizens' national identity, which is a crucial element in sustaining state sovereignty. In order to solve or at least to reduce this political crisis, these countries adopt the strategy of cultural localization in protecting their local cultures and, in turn, their citizens' national identity can be maintained. This replacement argument adopts a top-down approach to viewing the phenomenon of cultural localization, because American culture occupying a hegemonic position can subjugate local cultures of importing countries, which are classified into the bottom level. Furthermore, this replacement perspective tends to frame a hegemonic culture in the form of an invasion. Therefore, such localization is derived from the motive of protecting sovereignty and resisting the cultural invasion of American hegemony. Cultures become a political means in constructing citizens' national identity. However, such a top-down perspective undervalues people's rational minds, which function as agency, allowing them to initiate actions rather than be subject to the top-down relation between texts and consumers. This agency permits them not to be passive receivers but active participants in cultural construction, a model of dynamic development that rejects the static notion of the replacement approach argued by the top-down model. This dynamic nature, initiated by social members, thus overrules the political/cultural consolidation against the hegemonic culture, such as American culture, in the context of globalization. The following sections will sketch these weaknesses.

### **The Rational Ability**

Skeptics allege that its hegemonic position enables American culture to suffocate or even replace the local cultures of importing countries. However, this replacement approach adopts a top-down model that overestimates the influence of the hegemonic culture and, thus, devalues people's agency. For the cultural skeptics, popular cultures, such as American culture, gain the power to dominate the cultures of importing countries. This situation can be viewed as a cultural invasion that suffocates local cultures and, in turn, diminishes people's national identity.

It is argued that this cultural invasion has fused into cultural consumption that has

gradually become the core component of people's daily lives. Lukács (1971), for example, argues that this fusion is rooted in the phenomenon of reification, which makes people appreciate the material illusion rather than spiritual essentiality. This material inclination buttresses the legitimate influence of science and, thus, remolds people's thoughts into the regime of instructional rationality (Chiang, 2006). As science functions as the key ingredient in enhancing the degree of material civilization that satisfies reification, people tend to appreciate this contribution. Consequently, they internalize scientific notions and logic such as objectivity, neutrality and general rules, and use them as a philosophy in daily life to evaluate matters in the outside world (Husserl, 1970).

This inclination to engage in reification is further reinforced in capitalist society in which instead of basic needs, desires are maximized by commercial promulgations. Commercial broadcasts are able to create a new consumption value in which famous brands embody symbols of nobility, such as fashion, style, taste and social status (Marcuse, 1964). This value, in turn, pushes people into an illusory domain in which exchange value is superior to use value (Marx, 1961), and people are unconsciously locked into a new realm of material shackles, termed as 'one dimension man.' In this phenomenon, people's critical thoughts are deprived by material desires, and their behaviors contain the characteristic of alienation, as manifest in the fact that people devote themselves to their jobs to make money for consumption (Marcuse, 1964). Consequently, people are confined within a dark cage of fantasy and desire without consciousness. Bell (1976) profiled such fantasia as hedonism, referring to the phenomenon in which people indulge themselves in a fantasy world in which their identities are constituted in material objects rather than spiritual elements. According to Bell (1976), this change involves a new consumption value, manipulated by capitalists, which is able to reallocate Protestantism into the production process and create extravagant consumption in holidays. The spirit of Protestants was originally preserved in the small towns of America. Society appreciated this spirit because it encouraged people to work hard and curb material desires. Under the impact of capitalism, it was reapportioned to the process of production in order to maximize the capacity of human power for the interests of capitalists. On the other hand, this spirit vanishes on weekends and holidays. People are encouraged to construct their identities in commodities that they purchase. Human subjectivity is, then, pushed from an inner spiritual domain to an outside material regime. Consequently, hedonism becomes people's ultimate paradise, so that work is no longer treated as a means for people to achieve self-actualization (Marx, 1961), but rather a tool for purchasing illusory desires.

Although these points highlight the notion of alienation, starting with the

phenomenon of reification, hedonism or one dimension man, which devalues human's subjectivity and deprives them of critical thought, people tend to be defined as passive receivers, who are subject to the illusive lexis manipulated by capitalists. Such a pessimistic perspective adopts a top-down model, because popular cultures are viewed as superior, occupying the top position with dominant force to subjugate those at the bottom – consumers. This model undervalues people's rational minds and, thus, overlooks their agency, which leads them to generate interactions between cultures. Its advocates contend that capitalists are able to construct certain types of values that dominate people's consumption behaviors. In other words, people are defined as a mass, whose value is neither critical nor independent. Capitalists might be able to manipulate the media to transmit a certain type of consumption value that benefits their interests. However, the success of such a strategy depends on some crucial elements, such as people's rational judgments and perceptions.

A series of studies have rejected this plausible assumption and discovered a contrast picture that people employ a rational mind to decide their behaviors. The development of supersize cities projects this characteristic. Florida (2008) argues that rapid immigration in the era of globalization facilitates the development of megacities. Although the cost of living in such cities is very high and even too expensive, many persons still want to move inside. This is because these cities offer great opportunities for people to exercise their talents. Such opportunities are constantly generated within a context in which supersize cities gather a considerable number of people who have different tastes, needs and styles. This diversity requires specific services that, in turn, create a large platform for people to practice their talents. Such incentives increase the scale of big cities and facilitate them to develop into a mega form. This relation shows that immigrants can use their rational ability to identify which contexts are best for them. According to Giddens (1979, 1984), people apply rationality, an innate gift, to identify structural rules/properties and evaluate their own abilities to develop creative action strategies, in order to be free from the structural constraints. Without this ability, humans become an appendage to social structure, so that social development ceases. Similarly, Schutz (1972) argues that this rational ability transforms human behaviors into a dynamic process of 'action', indicating that the actor is capable of organizing his/her action plans/projects and adopting a new or modified action plan heading to the final goal that he/she is pursuing.

For interactionalists, instead of stimuli, a rational mind is the crucial element in determining the pattern of human behaviors. Therefore, such behaviors no longer present in a reflective form because a rational mind lets people detect the gap between 'I' and 'me' and, then, develop an appropriate self through the process of consistent interactions with others. The actor is aware of others' expectations, which function as a

social mechanism in restraining his/her instinctive impulses, conceptualized as 'I'. This modification gradually reshapes 'I' into a socially accepted form, termed as 'me'. Without an innate gift – a rational mind, people are unable to engage in such social interactions and, thus, fail to complete this modification that benefits their social actions. Consequently, their responses would retain a reflective and mechanical form entirely controlled by stimuli (Mead, 1934). This rational ability further permits them to develop flexible strategies that maximize advantages for the actors to survive in a social world. Goffman (1959), for example, argues that like the actors/actresses at 'the front stage', people tend to present their best social images in order to win social respect from their encounters. On the other hand, they will hide their dark sides, conceptualized as 'the back stage', which jeopardizes their social reputation. Therefore, the presentation of self in everyday life requires a rational calculation; otherwise, people will engage in misconduct all the time. For Weber (1968), a proper social manner is not regulated by the actor's free will, but others' reactions. In order to win social acceptance, the actor needs to understand the encounter's perception before initiating appropriate behavior. Such understanding always involves interactive processes, including 'interpretation' and 'confirmation', which are guided by a rational ability.

All these theories point out that an ability to act rationally is a core element enabling people to develop best action strategies in order to survive in a social world. This relationship highlights the phenomenon that a rational mind is an innate gift for humans, assisting them to maximize the advantages of social actions. Without this ability, they would be locked within the scope of rigid and mechanical reflections that block creative thoughts and, in turn, obstruct social development.

### **Cultural Construction**

Beside this ability to be rational, the top-down model also takes the linkage between political intention and localization for granted. Rapley (2004) argues that the state functions as a political entrepreneur, building up a hegemonic ideology in order to win the trust of the people. However, neo-liberalism has forced states to make severe cuts in governmental expenditure, so that they are unable to conduct a resource-distribution strategy for achieving their political intentions. This weakness further disconnects the relation between cultural localization and national identity. According to Rapley, such localization does not derive from local resistance to the tide of cultural homogenization, but from those individuals who enjoy the fruits of globalization. When globalization pushes them into an era of great dislocation, their desire to search for a cultural identity becomes strong. Furthermore, people who are devastated by globalization will try to gain economic and cultural returns from their home environments.



Beside this political disconnection, the top-down model also neglects the dynamic process of cultural development, because it addresses replacement rather than interactive processes. This is manifest in its argument depicting cultural localization as a result of globalization, which assists hegemonic cultures to subjugate the cultures of importing countries. Featherstone (1996) argues that modernity cannot suppress local voices, and this is why cultural heterogeneity remains firmly in place. Globalization just opens a gate for increasing interactions between cultures. Therefore, the relation between globalization and localization is not dichotomous but increasingly interwoven. Their interactions tend to push society into the stage of post-modernity rather than modernity because localism, which is formed through the process of interactions and emotional investment in a certain space like a community, tends to have more power to initiate cultural digestion than globalization. As identity is adhesive to a certain geographical space and is further reinforced by collective memories, the community is a locality that produces symbolic meanings for its members and sustains localism. Unlike the community, the state lacks the advantages of localism, so that it remains at the stage of an imagined community. In order to avoid falling apart, the state needs to engage in the cultivation of a national identity that is able to unify citizens into an entity distinguishable from other countries. Therefore, cultures become a tool for sharpening a political awareness/boundary between us and others. Other cultures are thus viewed as a threat, capable of mobilizing and breaking down this national awareness. Therefore, the state, functioning as an educator, wants to mediate those overseas cultures. However, the state has lost its control over the world of the internet. Although the great flow of information through internet increasingly binds the local and the global, this combination doesn't generate cultural homogeneity, because consumers occupy a superior position to regulate the value and meaning of importing cultures. This is manifest in the fact that different forms of information and advertisements are designed to please certain types of consumers. Consequently, globalization will empower cultural heterogeneity rather than homogeneity.

A series of studies have documented a dynamic characteristic occurring in cultural interactions. The School of CCCS, for example, originally deriving from the notion of 'cultural hegemony' developed by A. Gramsci (1971), uncovered the phenomenon of cultural resistance, referring to how working class young refused to conform to the domination of capitalist society by adopting the strategy of self-decision, thus certifying that they were the masters of their own actions. Such self-decision functioned as a self/social mechanism to sustain their dignity and identity (Cohen, 1971; Corrigan, 1979; Hebdige, 2000; Willis, 1977). This relation suggests that popular cultures, including American culture, cannot subjugate or depress the cultures of importing countries. In contrast, they may adopt other strategies, including a way of resisting, to

maintain their voices through the channel of cultural development. In other words, the process of cultural construction may involve interaction between cultural contents and receivers. As their rational ability allows people to practice agency, consumers may be able to participate in this cultural construction. Storey (1997, 2003) argues that cultural development never remains static, but proceeds through an interactive process in which consumers possess a certain degree of power to negotiate with the texts. Although they cannot produce the texts, they are not so vulnerable to becoming subject to those texts. In contrast, their rational ability transforms them into an initiating agent by adopting the strategies of 'selection' and 'interpretation'. For example, they can select specific TV channels or use their viewpoints to interpret the contents of those TV channels that they dislike. Therefore, this rational ability reverses their status from passive receivers to active agents, so that they are able to participate in the process of cultural construction. Such participation not only produces unique meanings for a culture which excludes 'the outsider', but also highlights the dynamic process of cultural development (Schutz, 1971). This dynamic characteristic can be found in a picture painted by Tunstall (1973), indicating that the culture of a fishing village projected the community members' beliefs, values and life styles because of their participation. This persistent construction further drove this cultural development into a dynamic type.

In other words, a given culture will evolve its form and contents through the constructors' persistent involvements. As consumers no longer play like passive receivers, they are the masters to command the value of commodities so that there are consistent interactions between the consumers and cultural texts. Such interactions further benefit the constructors to cultivate and elaborate their cultural accomplishments, which function as a core foundation on which to base their identity. Rapley (2004) argues that although globalization assists the flow of cultures in the world village, this new context doesn't engender a global and homogenous culture. Instead, globalization has created an explosion in choice, termed as hyperdifferentiation. Therefore, the hegemonic cultures, including American culture, cannot replace the local cultures of importing countries, but function as an element in benefiting such cultural constructions. Food can be viewed as a typical case for narrating this relationship. Since Japanese economy became powerful in the 1970s, Japanese food has become very popular in many countries. However, its overseas consumers do not give up their original eating habits. Local cuisines still constitute the main part of their daily diet and Japanese food just provides a new option for them. Therefore, this prevalence doesn't deteriorate their national identity. Japanese food doesn't depress local cuisines in those importing countries. In contrast, functioning as a cultural infusion, Japanese food further triggers an evolution in the food industry, as manifest in the fact that its core elements, such as freshness, art decoration and service quality, are reborn in many

restaurants in order to increase their competitiveness in the food market. Furthermore, Japanese food functions as a new ingredient, enabling consumers to develop a new form of diet and cuisine. This cultural development triggers a process not of replacement but of assimilation, which enriches and elaborates its contents and forms. This relation is also clear in international cities, in which residents have more opportunities to access international foods. However, they still appreciate local cuisines and have a clear national identity. Likewise, international foods offer them more options and serve as a new ingredient for them in weaving a new form of diet. This phenomenon points to a principle: that international foods cannot determine the consumers. In contrast, their agency regulates the existence and value of international foods. The case of McDonald's in Paris once again testifies this principle. The introduction of McDonald's in Paris was originally viewed as a typical symbol of the cultural invasion of American imperialism, which would bring catastrophe to French cuisines and restaurants. However, this fast or junk food doesn't really endanger the reputation of French food or jeopardize the market force of French restaurants. It doesn't diminish French national identity either. This picture can be also applied to other cuisines, such as Italian food, Chinese food and even Mexican food.

All these cases show that the perspective of cultural replacement/invasion overestimates the influence of popular cultures including American culture and, thus, neglects the influence of a rational ability that allows people to behave as their own masters and to command the existence and influence of importing cultures. Popular cultures may be influential. However, if these cultures have no incentive to be adopted by the consumers, they will not be influential. The notion of cultural replacement just adopts a top-down model that largely ignores the notion of agency, an innate gift functioning to reverse people from passive containers to active initiators, capable of constructing their own cultures. Therefore, instead of being seen as a cultural invasion, popular cultures from overseas need to be viewed as a cultural infusion that provides new texts for the consumers, offering more options and elaborating their own cultures. Without such interactions, the cultures in many countries would have remained in a primitive form. Cultural development is never static, but dynamic. This dynamic development is not determined by cultures but people, because an innate gift – the rational ability – allows them to behave as cultural constructors. This agency permits people to occupy a superior position to command importing cultures, so that it transforms the impact of importing cultures from invasion/replacement to infusion/elaboration.

## Conclusions

It is often argued that because globalization assists America in occupying a

hegemonic position to export its culture, its culture suppresses the local cultures of importing countries and, in turn, injures their citizens' national identity. In order to obtain the considerable amount of capitalist profit available in a global market, these countries cannot be free from this cultural invasion. However, they will adopt the strategy of cultural localization to reduce this political crisis. In other words, this action is able to safeguard their ability to obtain such profit without jeopardizing their sovereignty in the context of globalization. The phenomenon of cultural localization is defined as a political action resisting cultural replacement caused by American cultural invasion in a hegemonic form.

Basically, this replacement approach adopts a top-down model that overvalues the dominant force of hegemonic cultures like that of America and, thus, fails to uncover the dynamic characteristic of cultural development, such as negotiation and infusion. This dynamic is generally created through a mechanism of agency, which is triggered by people's rational ability, and transforms them from passive receivers into active participants. This is manifest in their engagement in the process of selection and interpretation to determine the value of texts. This negotiation highlights an interactive process of cultural development, as opposed to a rigid and mechanical process of cultural replacement. Therefore, new texts, including hegemonic cultures, cannot subjugate local voices, but rather provide options for consumers to contextualize their new culture. In other words, this infusion generates not cultural replacement but cultural elaboration, which is initiated not by texts but by people. Such negotiation and infusion highlight people's agency and the dynamic characteristics of cultural construction, so that hegemonic cultures cannot undermine their identity, as was pointed out in the case of international cuisines.

Basically, the replacement approach tends to view localization as a result derived from the motive of protecting sovereignty and resisting the cultural invasion of hegemonic countries, notably America, so that cultures are treated as a means to defend cultural invasion and sustain citizens' national identity. However, as popular cultures need to be viewed as cultural infusion rather than cultural replacement, the phenomenon of cultural localization is not mainly triggered by political intentions for the sake of sustaining national identity. This civil society approach then rejects the argument of cultural/political consolidation. Without this political constraint, civil society becomes a crucial force in driving cultural development, so that cultural localization projects its citizens' expectations. However, such expectations may contain cultural creation and preservation. Regarding the issue of creation, the ability to be rational transforms citizens into agents, who are able to negotiate texts and to develop a new form of culture. Therefore, hegemonic cultures function as new options for them to engage in weaving new cultures. This creation steps away from the old cultures that they once appreciated.

As cultures are a core ingredient in human spirituality, some citizens try to preserve the past culture or the current culture in transformation. Therefore, cultural development functions in parallel with cultural preservation in the context of globalization. Without the political intention, such parallel development is not steered by the political intention of political society but by the cultural aspiration of civil society.

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