

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



August 30, 2017

Achieving True Social Cognizance

It is imperative for human beings to be well cognizant of the society in which they exist. They need to have such cognizance since it would be likely for them to realize their character, position, privileges and duties. In this manner, they would have the capacity to play a constructive part in the society.

Socio-political consciousness aids the individuals in the society to make thoroughgoing usage of shared life as it is by the dint of social life that human beings have made stunning accomplishments. The tasks and activities, which are else difficult to be achieved, become very common and are achieved without considerable exertion through supportive actions. Socio-political consciousness, however, is not in human character by instinct. It has to be settled within him through appropriate sustenance and inculcation. Socialization, in this regard, has a very compelling role. Children who are born in a society do not essentially become social in the actual sense of the word.

Particularly in today's society when the people have become very much motorized and worldly, it is tough to see children get effortlessly allied with the social and political collections. Social isolation is prevalent and social interactions are now upheld through technology. Having such a scenario in hand, it is vital that children are socialized suitably and this has to be instructed to them that their relation with the society is of great standing and they have a responsibility to the surroundings wherein they reside.

In this connection, the role of family is immense. As family is the primary institution in which human beings learn and practice their social lives, the outlook, conducts, thinking and notions that are settled in the start of family life are indeed very hard to disremember. Parents who are able to give sufficient time to their children and share love and warmth with them have the aptitude to make their children accountable social and political beings. Cooperativeness among the family members makes them comprehend how they can produce collaborations through collective exertions and make human beings human in true sense. Sense of responsibility, task-sharing, dependability and adoration can initially be developed in children through their families. It is really important for all the children to get cultured from their families and understand that all the people are central in one way or the other.

Schools, colleges and universities can also play a marvelous role, but eventually it is the overall society wherein the individuals get their education and involvements of socio-political lives. Hence, they have to obtain everything from the society. There are certain means that can be agreed within the societies by the individuals to develop socio-political consciousness. One of the most imperative steps in this regard is to have the nerve to play a role within a society in a productive way. Solution-oriented approach can play a remarkable role in this connection. An individual wishes to make sure that he has a role, in one way or the other, in the solution of skirmishes within the community or society. Some people strive to circumvent conflicts and are limited to their comfort zone; nevertheless, such an attitude would never benefit them be a responsible being. On top of the resolution of the conflict, an individual has to attempt not to let the conflict be erected and go out of control. In brief, he needs to play an active role in the conflict and end hiding himself behind others in such condition.

An important way of attaining socio-political consciousness is to have more info about the society nearby. It is central for an individual to know about the social issues and ills and attempt to play a part, no matter how small, in their eradication. Today, in human societies there are evils like poverty, bigotry, discernment, chauvinism and some others; they all play their role in making human societies suffer. It is essential for an individual to recognize them, receive them as issues and try to face them in certain techniques.

It is, without any doubt, easier to live a secluded life and always be limited to one's comfort zone. Yet, it is really significant for socio-politically sentient individual to come out of his comfort zone and be counted within the social life. It is also vital that an individual should be the part of multiplicity, and must strive to intermix with others so as to acquire from them. It will also develop a sense of broad-mindedness for others and supports in upholding coherence.

Displaying kindness and responsiveness can play a farfetched part in getting nearer to others and fastening the social bonds. Comprehending the pain of others when they are hurt and understanding their position is of key importance to invigorate the social responsibility. Courteousness and responsiveness are also obligatory in this regard. It is also central for an individual, who craves to develop socio-political consciousness, to be prepared to listen to others and ask them for response regarding his attitude and conduct. However, it should be kept in mind that the borderline between what is social and what is personal should never be despoiled as it is one of the rudimentary requirements of consciousness. Being excessively social may interrupt the social ties and associations, and may even cause skirmishes.



Private Domain from Psychological View

By Ali Rezaei

“Cut your coat according to your cloth”, this is a famous proverb. One of the concepts of this proverb is regarding personal space. Scores of books and commentaries have been written that how animals, birds, fishes and other species determine and protect their space. It has been discovered not long ago that mankind has also their own space. When one recognizes this fact and its significance, they will not be surprised with anyone's actions but rather predict the actions.

Edward T. Hall, an American anthropologist, was the first who introduced the idea of personal space for mankind. In other words, he talked about proxemics which is the study of human use of space and the effects that population density has on behavior, communication, and social interaction. According to Hall, the study of proxemics is valuable in evaluating not only the way people interact with others in daily life, but also “the organization of space in houses and buildings, and ultimately the layout of towns”. Proxemics remains a hidden component of interpersonal communication that is uncovered through observation and strongly influenced by culture.

His research leads us to a new phase of interaction with others. For instance, every space is a territory with specific boundaries which are, sometimes, protected by armed soldiers. Within all spaces, there are mini-territories in the form of province and district which are also divided into smaller parts such as villages and urban areas that are again divided to smaller parts for their inhabitants. The inhabitants of all territories are ready to protect them at the cost of their lives.

The space that a person claims to own is like part of their bodies and called privacy. The concept of personal space relates to the culture, custom, beliefs and historical background of a nation and they are diverse. The attitudes which prevail in a certain city, district, province, tribes, etc. will be jaw-dropping in another geographical place or even trigger a sense of rage and hatred for a particular nation. For instance, in Britain, the private domain of individuals is so significant that if one rolls their eyes to another, s/he can sue that person in court and the court will fine them. Therefore, those who travel to other countries are advised not to gaze at others or else they might get into legal or at least moral problem.

Psychologically, the realm of personal privacy or space is into two kinds: (1) physical privacy (2) mental privacy.

The space of physical privacy is equal to the length of a hand. That is to say, if we stretch out our heads or bodies towards others within this length, we have violated their privacy on the condition that they feel uncomfortable.

Mental privacy includes

(1) Personal information regarding one's private and family life.

(2) Investigating one's personal beliefs, thoughts and ideas which contain religion, sect, race, nationality, culture and way of life. Knowing one's beliefs and ideas regarding any issues, we will have to respect them despite being against them - this reflects one's respect to the life, rights and privacy of a person.

(3) Feelings: Investigating or interfering regarding one's feelings and tendencies is also counted violation of one's privacy. Unluckily, the individuals' emotional space is violated from their childhood in our society. For example, a child is asked whether it likes better its father or mother. Do you really think that a child has the ability to answer this question? This question is really disturbing.

The next example is the parents' interference in the feelings and tendencies of their children. Sometimes, parents will not allow their children to make friendship with others just because they do not hold a friendly relation with their families. Generally, a large number of people are not aware of children's rights which are stated in international instruments. Similar to an adult, a child also bears respectable privacy. However, imposing personal tastes and beliefs on others are common in our country within families. To sum up, one will conclude that investigating and interfering in people's personal information regarding their life, beliefs, thoughts, feelings and way of their life, when they are not willing to reveal them, are called personal space and we should respect them. However, since the boundaries are not noticeable easily, one simply enters others' personal space.

People commonly believe that to start a discussion or a relationship, asking personal question will be appropriate. In our country, people first enter one's personal space, then become sincere; whereas in developed countries, people first become sincere and then learn about their secret.

A question may arise that why the Universal Declaration of Human Rights emphasizes on personal space in particular and men's rights and freedoms in general. In my idea, one of the reasons behind this issue is considering respect and equality for all people regardless of their personality, race, religion, nationality, etc. and no one is supposed to be disturbed by others. This reflects the high status and dignity of mankind. One will respect people and their personal space when they understand the value and dignity of mankind. But since a large number of people are not aware of their rights in our country, they deem violating personal space very common as if they are accustomed to such issues. For example, when one gets on a vehicle, they are asked where they go, what far they go, where they work, how much salary they get, how old they are and so on. Within five minutes, they get all secrets about a commuter.

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The Global Economy's New Rule-Maker

By Michael Spence

In a recent commentary for the South China Morning Post, Helen Wong, HSBC's chief executive for Greater China, shows that China's rising generation of 400 million young consumers will soon account for more than half of the country's domestic consumption. This generation, Wong notes, is largely transacting online, through innovative, integrated mobile platforms, indicating that it has already “leapt from the pre-web era straight to the mobile Internet, skipping the personal computer altogether.”

Of course, China's rising middle class is not news. But the extent to which digitally oriented younger consumers are driving rapid growth in China's service industries has not yet received ample attention. Services, after all, will help drive China's structural transition from a middle- to a high-income economy.

Not too long ago, many pundits doubted that China could make the shift from an economy dominated by labor-intensive manufacturing, exports, infrastructure investment, and heavy industry to a service economy underpinned by domestic demand. But even if China's economic transition is far from complete, its progress has been impressive.

In recent years, China has been offloading its labor-intensive export sectors to less-developed countries with lower labor costs. And in other sectors, it has shifted to more digital, capital-intensive forms of production, rendering labor-cost disadvantages insignificant. These trends imply that supply-side growth has become less dependent on external markets.

As a result of these changes, China's economic power is rapidly rising. Its domestic market is growing fast, and could soon be the largest in the world. And because the Chinese government can control access to that market, it can increasingly exert its influence in Asia and beyond. At the same time, China's declining dependence on export-led growth is reducing its vulnerability to the whims of those who control access to global markets.

But China does not actually need to limit access to its own markets to sustain its growth, because it can increase its bargaining power by merely threatening to do so. This suggests that China's position in the global economy is starting to resemble that of the United States during the post-war period, when it, along with Europe, was the dominant economic power. For decades after World War II, Europe and the US represented well over half (and near 70% at one point) of global output, and they were not heavily dependent on markets elsewhere, other than for natural resources such as oil and minerals.

Now, China is rapidly approaching a similar configuration. It has a very large domestic market - to which it can control access - rising incomes, and high aggregate demand; and its growth model is increasingly based on domestic consumption and investment, and less on exports.

But how will China wield its increasing economic power? In the post-war period, the advanced economies used their position to set the rules for global economic activity. They did so in such a way as to benefit themselves, of course; but they also tried to be as inclusive as possible for developing countries.

The post-war powers certainly did not have to take that approach. It was within their power to focus far more narrowly

on their own interests. But that might not have been wise. It is worth remembering that in the twentieth century, following two world wars, peace was the top priority, along with - or even before - prosperity.

China shows every sign of moving in the same direction. It most likely will not pursue a narrowly self-interested approach, mainly because to do so would diminish its global stature and clout. China has shown that it wants to be influential in the developing world - and certainly in Asia - by playing the role of a supportive partner, at least in the economic realm.

Whether China can achieve that goal will depend on what it does in two key policy areas. The first is investment, where China has moved aggressively by introducing a variety of multilateral and bilateral initiatives. For example, in addition to investing heavily in African countries, it created the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in 2015, and, in 2013, announced the “Belt and Road Initiative,” meant to integrate Eurasia through massive investments in highways, ports, and rail transport.

Second, how China manages access to its vast internal market, in terms of trade and investment, will have far-reaching consequences for all of China's external economic partners, not just developing countries. China's domestic market is now the source of its power, which means that the choices it makes in this area in the near term will largely determine its global standing for decades to come. To be sure, China's current position on domestic-market access is less clear than its economic ambitions abroad. But China will most likely move toward an open, largely rules-based multilateral framework. The lesson from the post-war period is that this approach will do the most good externally, and will thus enhance China's international influence. At this stage of China's development, such an approach will have few if any costs, while most likely conferring many benefits.

What remains to be seen is how China's relationship with the US fares. The US is suffering from non-inclusive growth patterns and related political and social upheavals. And it now seems to be departing from its historical post-war approach to international economic policy. But even if the US is isolating itself under President Donald Trump, it is still too big simply to ignore. If the Trump administration enacts aggressive policies directed at China, the Chinese will have no choice but to respond. Still, in the meantime, China can continue to pursue a rules-based multilateral approach, and it can expect broad support from other advanced and developing countries. The key is not to be distracted by America's descent into nationalism. After all, it is anyone's guess how long that will last. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

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