

THE PRACTICE AND VISION OF CONSCIENCE CULTURE: A GLOBAL CIVILIZATIONAL OPPORTUNITY THROUGH MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION

Jason Cherng¹

Abstract: In today's era of rapid globalization and change, humanity enjoys unprecedented convenience and connectivity, yet faces value conflicts, social injustice, and cultural homogenization that threaten global peace and coexistence. Confronted with this global moral crisis, Conscience Culture is emerging as a vital pathway for building consensus and restoring a shared ethical and value-based foundation. As a universal value that transcends religions, cultures, and ideologies, conscience serves not only as an inner moral compass for individuals but also as a crucial driver of practical action, international cooperation, and mutual trust. This paper draws on the Ti-Yong (Essence-Function) concept of Tai Ji Yin-Yang Philosophy, positioning conscience as the core essence (體, *ti*) of culture and morality, while its external expression (用, *yong*) is realized through moral intuition (良知, *liangzhi*) and moral capability (良能, *liangneng*). Together, these guide individual action and institutional design, achieving an organic integration of inner awareness and the practice of justice. Using Tai Ji Men's global conscience and peace initiatives as examples, this paper demonstrates how the cultural resilience of Conscience Culture—flexible yet firmly rooted—can help resolve the tensions and challenges posed by contemporary globalization. It further shows how Conscience Culture can guide humanity toward peace, fairness, and the moral renewal of humankind, opening new horizons for "global civilization."

Keywords: Conscience Culture, Ti-Yong Philosophy, Moral Intuition, Cultural Resilience, Global Civilization

¹ Dizi, Tai Ji Men Qigong Academy; Fellow, CAES, MIT, USA; SME Consultant, Taiwan, email: jscherng@gmail.com

Introduction: Contemporary Global Challenges and the Necessity of Conscience Culture

Amid accelerating globalization and growing social fragmentation, humanity stands at a civilizational crossroads. Advances in technology and economic interconnection have brought prosperity and convenience, yet they have also intensified conflicts of values, cultural uniformity, religious tensions, and institutional dysfunction, which undermines fairness and justice worldwide.

These crises—whether political, social, or spiritual—are not merely problems of governance or resource allocation, but mirror a deeper moral disorder at the heart of our civilization.

In the face of this global moral predicament, a fundamental question arises once again: What can still bind humanity together?

This paper builds upon the core perspective presented in the author's previous work, *The Wisdom of Cross-Cultural Revelations* (Cherng, 2024): that conscience, as a universal value transcending religions and ideologies, is a crucial force for sustaining consensus, achieving justice, and rebuilding trust in contemporary society. Conscience is not only an inner moral compass for individuals but also an ethical foundation that supports institutional design and international cooperation.

However, ideals alone are not sufficient to drive transformation. The real challenge lies in how they can be embodied in everyday life and the public sphere. In this context, the *Ti-Yong* (Essence-Function) concept in Tai Ji Yin-Yang Philosophy offers vital insight. *Ti* symbolizes the inner core value: conscience, while *yong* represents its outward functions: moral awareness, ethical judgment, and concrete action. When *ti* and *yong* are in harmony, conscience extends from inner awareness to daily practice and collective governance, becoming an active force shaping culture and society.

Therefore, this paper examines how "Conscience Culture", rooted in the universal value of conscience, responds to the challenges and disruptions posed by globalization through education, cultural exchange, and multilateral cooperation, thereby promoting moral awakening and civilizational renewal. Taking Tai Ji Men as a concrete case study, this research analyzes how this cultural, public-interest spiritual community—rooted in ancient wisdom—has applied Conscience Culture in a global context through personal cultivation, conscience advocacy, and cross-cultural dialogue. In doing so, it contributes to global harmony and the common good, guiding humanity toward a renewed vision of "global civilization."

1. The Universal Foundation and Inner Power of Conscience Culture

1.1. Historical Roots and Philosophical Traditions of Conscience

Culture forms the bedrock of human civilization, encompassing thought, belief, values, and norms of conduct. Conscience Culture, by placing conscience at its core, permeates individual life, societal progress, and international cooperation, ensuring that the choices made by individuals, enterprises, and states adhere to the principles of morality, justice, and sustainable development.

Human conscience often transcends time and space, continually reminding us to uphold moral principles. This innate moral force is not limited by geography, culture, or era. Wherever they may be, people are likely to feel unease when they violate their conscience. The French thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau confessed in his *Confessions* (Rousseau, 1782) that a lie he told as a child caused a young woman to lose her job—an episode that tormented him for forty years and ultimately compelled him to write his autobiography as an act of atonement. This example demonstrates that conscience is an intrinsic moral mechanism: no matter how much time passes, when one strays from the right path,

conscience serves as a persistent call to return. This is precisely the universality of conscience as a shared moral standard for humankind.

Conscience Culture is not a fleeting ideal but rather the result of historical refinement, gradually deepening into a universal value. Rooted in humanity's innate moral instincts, it has taken shape through historical events, religious and philosophical thought, and the evolution of legal and social institutions, ultimately becoming a globally recognized ethical foundation.

Historically, Conscience Culture has driven many pivotal social transformations. Numerous great movements for peace and nonviolence have been rooted in the power of conscience and the belief in justice. For instance, Martin Luther King Jr.'s commitment to nonviolent resistance advanced the American civil rights movement, while Mahatma Gandhi's principle of *Satyagraha* ("holding onto truth") provided the moral foundation for India's struggle for independence. These historical examples demonstrate that Conscience Culture carries significant moral appeal and underscore that its realization requires institutional safeguards and collective societal responsibility in order to achieve profound social change and sustainable development.

In religious and philosophical thought, Confucius' idea of *ren* (仁, benevolence), Buddhism's emphasis on compassion, Christianity's doctrine of universal love, Islam's teachings on integrity and responsibility, Hinduism's concept of moral duty and cosmic order, and Kant's moral philosophy all advocate moral and ethical principles as guides for action. These ideas have not only shaped social ethics throughout history but have also influenced the value systems of modern society. As a result, Conscience Culture transcends personal moral cultivation, extending its impact to the development of modern law, education, and human rights, and serving as a core value in social and national governance.

In legal and institutional contexts, the Greek goddess Dike symbolizes moral order and just judgment, while the truth-weighing of the ancient Egyptian goddess Ma'at emphasizes individual honesty and moral responsibility. Both illustrate that judicial systems should be grounded in truth and justice, with conscience at their core. Historically, from the signing of the Magna Carta to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Conscience Culture has continuously advanced the development of the rule of law and human rights standards, becoming principles observed and upheld worldwide.

Modern legal systems likewise embody this principle. For example, the constitutions of Japan and South Korea explicitly require judges to adjudicate in accordance with the constitution and laws while upholding their conscience, thereby ensuring judicial independence and fairness. These legal principles demonstrate the profound influence of Conscience Culture on contemporary legal frameworks, showing that law is not only normative in function but also carries the core values of morality and justice.

In an era marked by the challenges of globalization and the accelerating pace of technological transformation, Conscience Culture serves not only as a moral compass but also as a key to maintaining social stability, promoting international cooperation, and advancing sustainable development. Only by adhering to the principles of conscience can humanity uphold justice and peace amid constant change and drive truly enduring civilizational progress.

Liangzhi (良知, innate moral intuition) refers to the inner moral awareness within conscience (良心, *liangxin*), a concept explored deeply in both Eastern and Western philosophy. Mencius (Mencius, trans. Lau, 2003) distinguished between *liangzhi*—"knowing without deliberate thought" and *liangneng* (良能)—"being able to act without learning." He argued that humans are born with the capacity for moral judgment (*liangzhi*) and the ability for moral action (*liangneng*); even without formal instruction, one can discern good from evil and act accordingly. He further emphasized the "extension of the sprouts of goodness," highlighting that innate moral intuition must be nurtured and expanded through continuous self-cultivation. This idea resonates closely with Western moral intuitionism.

G.E. Moore, a leading figure in moral intuitionism, argued in his *Principia Ethica* (Moore, 1903) that "good" is an indefinable basic concept that cannot be determined through logical inference or empirical observation but must instead be apprehended directly through intuition. This direct grasp of moral value illustrates how conscience serves as a universal moral guide that transcends cultural, religious, and political boundaries, demonstrating a shared ethical resonance across humanity.

However, it is important to note that, unlike the modern human rights principle of "freedom of conscience"—which primarily aims to protect individuals from state interference but can at times become ideologically charged or divisive—Conscience Culture places greater emphasis on responsibility in practice, from individuals to communities. It transforms moral intuition into concrete action and an ongoing social consensus, offering a bridge for connection and cooperation across diverse cultural contexts. Therefore, the value of Conscience Culture lies not only in historical and philosophical discourse but also in its enduring cultural vitality.

1.2. Culture Is Not Mere Expression but Inheritance: Conscience Culture as Cultural Resilience

Although Conscience Culture is rooted in profound historical and philosophical traditions, it still faces significant challenges in practice. One major obstacle is the lack of widespread understanding and practical methods for effectively integrating it into personal life, social ethics, legal systems, civil rights, religious beliefs, cultural diversity, and international cooperation.

Moreover, different countries and cultures often interpret moral standards in diverse ways, making it difficult to build a genuine global consensus. While many people recognize the value of Conscience Culture, practical pressures or institutional constraints often prevent them from translating this recognition into concrete action. Therefore, advancing Conscience Culture requires not only broader dialogue and education but also mechanisms that foster cultural exchange and shared values, helping to bridge the gap between ideals and practice.

Despite these challenges, globalization has also created new opportunities for the advancement of Conscience Culture. It has accelerated cross-cultural exchange, enabling people to transcend geographical, religious, and political boundaries in pursuit of shared values. In addressing global challenges, such as human rights and social justice, there is an increasing demand for moral solutions through international cooperation. Moreover, the strengthening of international organizations and multilateral platforms has amplified the momentum behind Conscience Culture, expanding its global advocacy and enhancing its practical effectiveness.

Against this backdrop, Conscience Culture, as a flexible and universal value system, is demonstrating its potential and cultural resilience in responding to global challenges.

Culture is not merely a slogan; it is a spirit that can be felt, emulated, learned, and carried forward. The key to the spread of Conscience Culture lies in those who step forward to lead by example, persist in practice, and continually inspire others. Tai Ji Men is a vivid example of this in action.

What makes Conscience Culture so valuable is its cultural resilience. Cultural resilience refers to a society's capacity to uphold moral values and shared beliefs, even amid external pressures, rapid change, or institutional failure. Unlike rigid moral doctrines, Conscience Culture is an adaptable value system that can continually adjust to an ever-changing global environment. Even when facing the tension between value convergence and cultural diversity, it still holds to its moral core, upholds respect and tolerance, and transforms itself through dialogue, education, and cross-cultural practice into a shared ethic for pluralistic societies. This steady yet adaptive quality makes Conscience Culture a crucial cultural force for responding to the uncertainties and disruptions of globalization.

Deepening our understanding of Conscience Culture and integrating it into education, policy-making, and daily practice is an important pathway for realizing fairness and justice. As more people raise their awareness and cultivate self-reflection, they help transform the wisdom of Conscience

Culture from historical insight into modern action, enabling humanity to turn the challenges of globalization into a resilient cultural force for global civilization.

To make Conscience Culture a living force in daily practice, one must understand how its inner essence (*ti*, the fundamental) and outward function (*yong*, the application) interact and mutually transform each other.

1.3. *Ti-Yong Philosophy: The Essence and Function of Conscience*

To translate these insights into practice, we need more than inspiration—we need integration. In this regard, the concept of *Ti-Yong* (Essence and Function) within Tai Ji Yin-Yang Philosophy (Zhou, 2009) provides a profound and generative framework. *Ti*, like Tai Ji itself, represents the undivided primordial essence—the core of human nature and fundamental moral foundation; in this context, it refers to conscience as the moral root. *Yong*, like the dynamic interplay of Yin and Yang, illustrates how this inner essence unfolds into moral awareness, ethical judgment, and concrete, purposeful action in daily life. When *ti* and *yong* are in harmony, conscience is not only experienced inwardly but also expressed outwardly—through personal behavior, social practice, and institutional design. In this way, it becomes a vital force that shapes both culture and public life in tangible, transformative ways.

The practice of Conscience Culture relies not only on individual willingness but also on the reinforcing power of social norms, elevating individual behavior from “what I want to do” to “what I ought to do.” Yet in reality, even when moral principles are understood, both individuals and societies often encounter multiple barriers, leading to the persistent problem of “knowing but not acting.”

First, human nature and social habits can make it difficult for individuals to act according to their conscience. In highly competitive environments, for example, people may sacrifice moral principles for short-term gains; social pressures and prevailing norms can distort individual judgment, prompting compromise or avoidance. Moreover, external forces such as media, politics, and economic pressures can further entangle moral choices in dilemmas and contradictions.

At a deeper level, human perception and cognition are often shaped by inner experiences and external circumstances, which can introduce biases into moral judgment. Many philosophical and religious traditions echo this idea—for example, the old Yiddish proverb “*Man plans, God laughs*” illustrates how human reasoning is prone to habitual patterns and preconceived notions. In psychoanalysis, this is described as “unconscious projection”, while phenomenological psychology refers to it as the “constructed reality of the mind”. This suggests that even when individuals possess an inner compass of conscience, without clear awareness and discernment, ingrained cognitive patterns can still hijack their actions and lead them astray from moral integrity.

The theoretical foundation of *Ti-Yong* can also be viewed through other lenses. In Western philosophy, the notion of *natural law* emphasizes an inherent moral and orderly essence, corresponding to *ti*; while *social contract theory* focuses on the implementation of laws and norms, reflecting *yong*. This conceptual framework underscores the unity of *ti* and *yong*, highlighting the interdependence and transformation between inner values and outward actions. It applies not only to individual cultivation but also to the formation of Conscience Culture and approaches to social governance, offering a multidimensional perspective on both personal development and collective progress. The following four dimensions illustrate how this principle operates across individual and societal contexts:

1. Deepening Individual Cultivation: *Ti* symbolizes an individual’s inner nature or true self, while *yong* is realized through mindful awareness of internal processes and the ability to respond freely and with composure. When the mind is clear and undisturbed by fleeting emotions or thoughts, one can live with ease and wholeness. Just as a kite soars freely yet remains aloft because its line is properly held, steady awareness sustains one’s deep connection with their original nature, maintaining the unity of *ti* and *yong* without being overtaken by habitual

patterns. This seamless integration of *ti* and *yong* resonates with the Confucian principle of *Zhonghe* (中和, balanced harmony) (Cherng, 2024) and serves as a key principle of personal cultivation.

2. Moral Cultivation: *Ti* represents an individual's inner conscience, forming the foundation of moral judgment, while *yong* is expressed through *liangzhi* and *liangneng* in practice. *Liangzhi* enables intuitive awareness of right and wrong, allowing for sound ethical discernment; *liangneng* then transforms these judgments into tangible actions, making the unity of knowing and doing—the seamless integration of *ti* and *yong*—a lived reality.
3. Formation of Conscience Culture: As more individuals develop and apply their *liangzhi* and *liangneng*, these coalesce into a shared moral foundation that guides society toward ethical advancement and peaceful development—ultimately forming a Conscience Culture. This process aligns with Socrates' view on the *unity of knowledge and virtue*, as well as Adam Smith's emphasis on moral sentiment and empathy in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which underscores their critical role in upholding the social fabric.
4. Application to Social Governance: Building on the foundation of Conscience Culture, the *Ti-Yong* principle provides a theoretical basis for social governance. For instance, the Daoist idea of "governing by non-interference" (無為, *wuwei*) emphasizes alignment with natural laws and the maintenance of social order through minimal intervention—an approach resonant with modern concepts of flexible, decentralized, and adaptive governance. Similarly, Kant's "moral law" proposes that individual actions should conform to universal principles, thereby aligning personal choices with the common good—an idea that reflects *Ti-Yong*'s emphasis on integrating inner values with outward practice to foster social justice and harmony.

The seamless integration of *ti* and *yong* applies not only to individual cultivation but can also extend to various applications of *Ti-Yong* Philosophy, including organizational management, education, and social development. While it may not be necessary to maintain perfect seamlessness at all times in these fields, it remains essential to establish mechanisms for ongoing reflection to ensure that *ti* and *yong* stay aligned and that practices remain true to their original purpose and essence.

Although concepts like *Ti-Yong* and the unity of knowing and doing may appear abstract, they translate into simple, everyday practices. The cultivation of Conscience Culture, along with awareness and *liangzhi* (moral intuition), does not require esoteric theories or remain the preserve of spiritual practitioners alone—it grows through daily observation, reflection, and human interaction. For example, facing choices with honesty, refraining from harming others for personal gain, or standing up to protect colleagues' rights within power structures—these are tangible expressions of the seamless integration of *ti* and *yong* and the living realization of knowing and doing as one.

Conscience Culture is not merely an abstract idea but a value system that can be flexibly practiced across diverse cultures. Recognizing that Conscience Culture resides not merely in the pages of moral philosophy but is embodied in our every choice and action allows it to evolve from abstract principle to concrete practice, serving as a key force for advancing modern civilization.

1.4. The Unity of Knowing and Doing: From Principle to Action

To bridge the gulf between knowing and doing—and to overcome the dilemma of "knowing but not acting"—two key capacities are essential. First, individuals must strengthen their present-moment awareness through self-cultivation. Second, they must activate *liangzhi* rooted in this awareness, transforming passive moral awareness into proactive ethical action, thereby realizing the unity of knowing and doing.

Awareness is the capacity to connect with one's true nature. It enables us to fully observe the interplay of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, and to understand how these shape our actions.

Awareness allows us to perceive our inner state, yet it does not by itself entail moral judgment. For example, a person may clearly recognize their own desires and attachments but still fail to make a morally sound choice. *Liangzhi*, grounded in awareness, is a form of moral intuition that connects us to our conscience, guiding us to discern right from wrong and to make morally appropriate choices. When an individual feels inner unease or guilt, it is often this *liangzhi* at work—prompting self-reflection on whether one's behavior aligns with moral standards.

This moral intuition emerges from within, yet it is wise and courageous action that enables conscience to become a tangible force in the real world. When inner awareness and outward action reinforce each other, conscience no longer remains a mere principle but becomes a living reality embedded in everyday life and institutional systems—a dynamic driver of social transformation.

It is important to note that individuals' sensitivity to awareness and *liangzhi* can vary greatly, depending on their upbringing, cultural context, educational experiences, and life history. Therefore, advancing Conscience Culture should not rely on a one-size-fits-all approach but should instead adopt diverse, flexible, and culturally sensitive pathways that help individuals gradually awaken and cultivate these inner capacities.

The following three practical pathways can help individuals develop *liangzhi* from awareness and ultimately realize the unity of knowing and doing:

1. **Cultivation and Self-Discipline:** Practices such as stillness and mindfulness help cultivate stable inner awareness, enabling individuals to uphold their principles even when facing external temptations or pressures. The essence of stillness lies in maintaining present-moment awareness. This is not merely a psychological method for meditation or relaxation but the starting point for moral self-awareness. When one strays from moral standards, the resulting inner unease is conscience's quiet reminder—a crucial moment to pause and re-examine one's choices.
2. **Cultural and Educational Nurturing:** Many cultural traditions contain practices that cultivate awareness and steadiness—such as martial arts, yoga, meditation, calligraphy, and music. These practices not only express cultural aesthetics but also strengthen concentration and moral sensitivity. In education, mindfulness exercises, breath observation, and conscious action can help learners return to the present moment, steady their emotions, and enhance their capacity for moral discernment.
3. **Social and Institutional Support:** Moral practice cannot rely solely on individual effort; it also requires the positive reinforcement of the social environment. For example, Christianity's "Golden Rule," Confucianism's principle of "cultivating the self, regulating the family, governing the state, and bringing peace to the world," and Islam's practice of *Zakat* (charitable giving) all draw on cultural and religious norms to encourage individuals to align knowing with doing, thereby strengthening everyday moral decision-making.

Among the many methods of cultivation, Tai Ji Men Qigong provides a distinctive example. By integrating breath, movement, and focused intention, it helps practitioners cultivate balanced harmony of body and mind, enhancing life energy and enabling them to remain calm and focused amid stress and change. Dr. Hong Tao-Tze, the leader of Tai Ji Men, encourages his disciples to engage in five minutes of stillness each day—listening to the voice of conscience, honestly reflecting on their actions, and carrying right thoughts, righteous energy, and righteous deeds into daily life. In doing so, they actively assume responsibility, act with courage and compassion, and offer prayers for the world—demonstrating the transformative power of love and conscience in practice.

From the perspective of *Ti-Yong* Philosophy, conscience is the core moral essence (*ti*) of culture and ethics. When awareness and *liangzhi* are continuously cultivated and embodied through action and institutional design (*yong*), ethical practice can grow from individual self-cultivation into broad-

er social transformation—ultimately shaping a sustainable cultural ethos and fostering institutional innovation.

Such an integration of the inner and the outer is the cornerstone of civilizational progress.

1.5. How Conscience Culture Connects Inner Essence and Outer Practice

In summary, Conscience Culture springs from humanity's shared moral intuition yet does not remain an abstract idea. Through the perspectives of Eastern and Western philosophy, the *Ti-Yong* framework, and cultural resilience, it demonstrates an inside-out dynamic that unifies thought and practice. It is not only an extension of individual moral awareness but also a bridge that connects self-awareness with institutional systems.

The next section will further explore how Conscience Culture, through diverse case studies, international cooperation, and civic engagement, fosters cross-cultural resonance and drives civilizational renewal in the face of challenges brought by globalization.

2. The Global Practice and Cross-Cultural Resonance of Conscience Culture

2.1. Historical Lessons and Contemporary Practice: A Case-Based Perspective

History reminds us that even a single moment of an individual's commitment to conscience can alter the course of justice—while silence, by contrast, may sow the seeds of disaster. After World War II, during the Nuremberg Trials, many Nazi defendants claimed they were "just following orders" when participating in atrocities. Yet they were convicted, establishing the enduring international legal principle that "obedience is no excuse for injustice" (Nuremberg Principles, 1950). The German theologian Martin Niemöller's haunting confessional poem *First They Came* (Martin Niemöller, 1946, as cited by USHMM) warns us that silence in the face of injustice only enables greater persecution. These historical lessons demonstrate that conscience is not merely a private ethical stance but a decisive force in shaping civilization and the rule of law.

Building on this historical context, modern society continues to witness acts of moral courage that shape the course of social development. A compelling example is the wrongful conviction case of Hakamada Iwao in Japan (BBC, 2024). In 1966, a young judge, Kumamoto Norimichi, privately harbored serious doubts about the evidence but, under pressure from more senior judges on the panel, was compelled to agree to sentence Hakamada to death. Kumamoto later resigned from the bench and devoted his entire life to advocating for Hakamada's exoneration. In 2024, after nearly six decades of tireless effort, Hakamada Iwao was finally acquitted. This case powerfully reminds us that even within rigid institutional structures, moral courage can open a pathway to justice.

In Taiwan, the Tai Ji Men case likewise demonstrates how Conscience Culture can confront structural injustice. Occurring during Taiwan's post-authoritarian era—a period when democratic transformation and human rights protections were expected to mature—the case instead exposed persistent abuses of power and structural injustices within the tax and judicial systems. As a moral struggle spanning nearly three decades, Tai Ji Men disciples have persisted with peaceful rationality and unwavering conscience in their pursuit of justice. This movement not only highlights institutional imbalance but has also drawn the sustained attention of international human rights organizations and scholars. The case has since been incorporated into global agendas on freedom of religion or belief and human rights, standing as a significant example of how conscience can resonate across cultures.

Yet the power of Conscience Culture does not lie solely in large-scale institutional challenges or collective resistance; it is equally rooted in the quiet acts of kindness woven into daily life. Countless

individuals—through a glance of empathy, a word of comfort, or a simple act of goodwill—gently yet resolutely build the social trust that sustains the local and universal vitality of Conscience Culture. Such moments remind us that goodness is not an imposed doctrine but an innate instinct. With the right environment and guidance of shared values, this everyday benevolence can resonate with larger efforts, becoming a seed for the global echo of Conscience Culture.

2.2. *Conscience Culture, International Cooperation, and Institutional Reform*

For Conscience Culture to exert greater social influence in a globalized world, institutional design and international cooperation are indispensable. The implementation of conscience-based values cannot rely solely on individuals and grassroots efforts; it must also be embedded in public governance and legal frameworks through coherent government policies and sustained multilateral cooperation.

In the contemporary context, Tai Ji Men has actively promoted the idea of “promoting a culture of peace with love and conscience” by engaging in global cultural exchanges, ceremonial blessings, the Era of Conscience Movement, leadership summits, and the ringing ceremonies of the *Bell of World Peace and Love*. Through these international initiatives, Tai Ji Men has strengthened dialogue and mutual understanding across cultures and religions. The advocacy of Dr. Hong Tao-Tze also contributed to the United Nations’ designation of the International Day of Conscience (April 5) and the International Day of Hope (July 12), elevating Conscience Culture from a grassroots practice to a global call to action. UNESCO has further encouraged countries to respond collectively, aiming to build a more peaceful, just, and sustainable global order. Moreover, community events and public reports around the world show that the International Day of Conscience is gaining increasing recognition at the grassroots level, reflecting a growing global awareness of the vital role of conscience in fostering peace and justice.

Furthermore, religious dialogue and intercultural exchange are also vital channels for advancing Conscience Culture. Since its founding in 1893, the Parliament of the World’s Religions has long championed global ethics and interfaith cooperation. Its *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic* (Parliament of the World’s Religions, 1993) emphasizes the importance of moral consensus, echoing the core ideals of Conscience Culture.

At its 130th anniversary gathering in 2023, the Parliament embraced the UN International Day of Conscience with the theme *A Call to Conscience: Defending Freedom and Human Rights*, highlighting how “conscience” has become an internationally recognized core value for peace and justice. During the event, Tai Ji Men conducted a traditional Heaven Worship Ceremony and the ringing of the *Bell of World Peace and Love*, inviting representatives from nearly ten different religions to pray together for world peace—demonstrating how Conscience Culture can transcend religious and cultural boundaries to unite universal values.

Taken together, through institutional design, international collaboration, and cultural dialogue, Conscience Culture can move from an abstract ideal to a tangible principle for governance, becoming a vital pillar for advancing justice and peace in the contemporary world.

2.3. *The Driving Force of Civil Society and Cultural Action*

Beyond institutional frameworks and international cooperation, civil society has always been a vital driving force for anchoring and expanding Conscience Culture. Countless ordinary yet resilient acts of civic engagement—through cultural preservation, community initiatives, media reporting, and transnational networks—transform the abstract ideals of conscience into tangible social change.

For example, since 1999, Tai Ji Men has independently organized and fully self-funded international cultural exchanges and the *Bell of World Peace and Love* ringing ceremonies, visiting more than one hundred countries without relying on any government funding. They have invited leaders from diverse nations and sectors to ring the bell and make wishes for peace, spreading a cross-border blessing of peace anchored in conscience. Through cultural performances rich in expressive body language and the exchange of heart and qi (vital energy), Tai Ji Men transcends language and cultural barriers, inspiring a deep inner resonance and goodwill that unites people across borders. Their sustained efforts have helped ease everyday tensions and even certain regional conflicts, earning them recognition as an “International Ambassador of Goodwill and Peace” and multiple international honors—demonstrating a growing global influence.

Since 2010, the Association of World Citizens (AWC) and the Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience (CAP-LC) in France have submitted statements to the United Nations Human Rights Council eleven times to draw international attention and moral support to the Tai Ji Men case. Since 2020, the Italian scholar Massimo Introvigne has published an ongoing dedicated column in the independent human rights magazine *Bitter Winter* (Bitter Winter, n.d.), providing continuous in-depth analysis of the case. Organizations such as the Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR) and Human Rights Without Frontiers (HRWF) have further amplified this support through forums, special publications, and books, galvanizing international academic solidarity and expanding the public impact of Conscience Culture. In 2021, twenty-five international scholars jointly signed an open letter to Taiwan’s president, calling for a fair resolution and visiting Taiwan multiple times to express their concern—underscoring that the case is not merely a tax dispute but rather an infringement on freedom of religion or belief and a stark warning of transitional justice failure.

These actions remind us that advancing Conscience Culture does not rely solely on grand international institutions but grows out of countless small yet sincere acts of goodwill. Civil society and cultural actions are indispensable forces for moving Conscience Culture from ideal to institutional reality, from resonance to reform—and they stand as a bedrock of contemporary civilizational resilience.

3. The Future of Conscience Culture: Co-Creating a New Era of Global Civilization

Conscience Culture, which emphasizes the unity of inner conviction and outward practice, offers nations a shared value pathway that transcends religious divides and ideological boundaries. When mutual respect and inclusiveness anchor conscience as a core principle for cultural dialogue and institutional design, globalization can progress toward pluralistic coexistence and the common good, rather than descending into the expansion of a single dominant value system.

3.1. Cultural Resilience and Moral Renewal Amid Global Challenges

In today’s rapidly intertwining landscape of globalization and diverse value systems, culture is not merely a form of expression but a vital vessel for carrying and restoring humanity’s moral consensus. Both historical and contemporary experience demonstrate that whether through religious wisdom or philosophical thought, conscience remains a profound force that enables humanity to withstand uncertainty and crisis.

What Conscience Culture emphasizes is not just an abstract ideal but a universal value that can be flexibly internalized within different cultural contexts. Through religious practice, artistic creation, educational transmission, and community action, it is continually activated and diffused in daily life, becoming a stabilizing force as humanity faces constant change.

In some cultural traditions, living out the Gospel itself is a concrete manifestation of Conscience Culture; in others, precious and distinctive forms of conscience-based action and ethical practice are preserved, showing that each society possesses its own wellspring of moral wisdom and resources for action. This reminds us that promoting Conscience Culture is not a one-way imposition but a process of rediscovering resonance and vitality within each cultural context.

When cultural dialogue returns to conscience as a universal point of origin—moving beyond superficial exchange to spark genuine mutual inspiration and the renewal of shared values—nations can find understanding and cooperation amid difference, co-creating new horizons of peace and justice.

Amid today's challenges of cultural homogenization, value confusion, and institutional breakdown, the question is how to draw on culture's innate resilience and regenerative capacity, transforming local wisdom into collective action that addresses global challenges. This will remain a crucial key to sustaining the ongoing development of Conscience Culture.

3.2. From Education and Governance to Daily Life: Rooting and Spreading Conscience Culture

For Conscience Culture to move from an ideal to sustainable action, it must be deepened through education, supported by sound governance, and embedded in daily life—shaping a practical pathway that can cross cultures and generations.

Education is the starting point for internalizing conscience and awakening critical reflection.

Today, many countries have begun to embed conscience and moral values into their educational systems, emphasizing students' independent thinking and ethical judgment. For instance, Finland's holistic approach emphasizes self-exploration and ethical inquiry; Canada's global citizenship education fosters cross-cultural understanding and responsibility; while Japan's philosophy of *kyosei* ("living together in harmony") promotes respect for differences and social cohesion. Education does more than transmit knowledge—it awakens an inner moral sense, empowering the next generation to make just choices in an ever-changing world. Curricula can weave together mindfulness practice, community service, and critical thinking, ensuring that conscience is not only theoretical but a living guide for real-world action.

Second, institutional design is a vital safeguard for embedding conscience into public governance.

In the face of complex global challenges, governments and international organizations should regard conscience as a core principle for decision-making and accountability, integrating it with mechanisms such as civic participation, ethical deliberation, and independent oversight. These measures help ensure that policies and systems align with fairness, justice, and the protection of human rights. In doing so, public policy and governance can better meet people's expectations for justice and trust, creating a positive cycle that strengthens and sustains Conscience Culture.

Finally, the realization of Conscience Culture must take root in everyday life and community interaction.

The power of culture does not lie in slogans but in its authentic practice and transmission through daily actions. Many seemingly small acts of kindness—a caring word, a look of understanding—build trust between people, making Conscience Culture a living standard that resonates and guides daily life. Tai Ji Men's promotion of five minutes of daily stillness and the Movement of An Era of Conscience are vivid examples of how conscience can be made tangible in everyday routines. These ordinary yet enduring acts not only strengthen people's awareness and sense of responsibility but, through cultural diffusion, accumulate social resilience and a shared moral foundation.

Taken together, when education inspires conscience, governance safeguards it, and daily life embodies it, Conscience Culture will not remain a mere slogan or abstract theory but will truly become a driving force for co-creating a new era of global civilization.

3.3. Three Key Calls to Action: Reclaim Conscience, Reform Institutions, and Co-CREATE Civilization

To make Conscience Culture a driving force for global civilizational renewal, this study calls for collective effort in three key areas:

1. Reclaim Conscience: Awakening Begins Within

Awakening is not a retreat from reality but a deeper engagement with it through recognizing the truth. Conscience is the cornerstone that sustains and renews human civilization. In an age increasingly fractured by ideological divides and manipulated by technological algorithms, it is more critical than ever for each person to rediscover inner reflection and awareness—turning kindness, empathy, and justice from abstract ideals into guiding principles for daily choices.

2. Reform Institutions: Align Governance with Core Values

When institutions stray from their core values, social injustice and cultural fragmentation inevitably follow. Nations must elevate the role of conscience in public decision-making, strengthen accountability mechanisms and human rights protections, and foster cross-cultural dialogue and civic engagement—ensuring that governance genuinely aligns with the principles of fairness and justice.

3. Co-CREATE Civilization: Cross-Cultural Collaboration for Global Good Governance

The ultimate vision of Conscience Culture is to transcend borders, religions, and cultural divides, becoming a shared foundation for humanity to confront crises and foster cooperation. Through education, cultural exchange, youth empowerment, and sustained multilateral collaboration, communities can weave together conscience-driven actions and local wisdom, jointly opening a new global era grounded in conscience.

These three actions are not idealistic slogans but a collective call of our time: from the inside out, from individuals to the international sphere, ensuring that Conscience Culture becomes an unshakable foundation for humanity to face the future. When conscience lights the path, transformation naturally follows.

Conclusion: Conscience—The Passcode to Civilizational Progress

Conscience Culture is not a utopian fantasy but an essential foundation for humanity's sustainable development and civilizational renewal. In an era of rapid change and growing division, conscience can restore the warmth of our shared humanity—binding policy to principle, returning law to justice, and ensuring that power bears responsibility.

From ancient moral wisdom to modern civic action, conscience has always been the deepest sustaining force behind humanity's progress—and our indispensable compass when confronting injustice. In the face of institutional imbalance and social unfairness, we can no longer afford silence, nor can we surrender our principles.

This study highlights that Conscience Culture, as a moral compass transcending religious, cultural, and geographic boundaries, not only shapes individual cultivation and social trust but also plays a crucial role in international cooperation. Inspired by *Ti-Yong Philosophy*, Conscience Culture em-

phasizes the integration of inner awareness and outward practice, offering a tangible and actionable path toward a truly global civilization.

When core values and institutions fall out of balance, cultural homogenization and the hollowing out of religion only accelerate—further underscoring the critical role of Conscience Culture in contemporary transformation. The long-standing example of Tai Ji Men demonstrates that when love and conscience form the bedrock, cultural action can be transformed into a real force for peace and transitional justice.

Conscience Culture is also a form of cultural resilience—flexible, inclusive, and anchored in core principles. It can continually adapt amid global uncertainty and, through education, cultural exchange, and institutional innovation, foster dialogue and build shared consensus.

Looking ahead, Conscience Culture will exert even greater influence across global governance, educational reform, and corporate ethics—offering practical solutions to global challenges while laying a foundation for sustainable development and civilizational renewal. For the younger generation in particular, Conscience Culture has the power to cultivate moral leadership and civic responsibility, becoming a vital catalyst for humanity's ongoing civilizational journey.

Reclaiming conscience is the “passcode” for humanity to reach a higher civilizational horizon. Through the concrete practice of Conscience Culture, we can steer globalization toward the common good and peaceful civilizational advancement.

Therefore, we call on the world to join hands: reclaim conscience, reform institutions, and co-create civilization.

This is a path that is demanding yet deeply hopeful—a transformative journey that begins with every individual willing to awaken their conscience and act upon it.

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