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Comparative Analysis of Cultural Practices of Togetherness in Ancient and Modern Hamland: Reflections on Future Global Peace Building

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Abstract

The study sets out to inquire into cultural intrusion and failure of resistance; factors that supplanted inclusivity with exclusivity; neutralization of community's collective security; motivation for communalism-individualism transition; and ascertained the theoretical explanation for the changes. Qualitative research approach was adopted, which utilizes Key Informant Interview (KII), and In-depth Interview (IDI) as measuring instruments to gather primary data. While secondary employed scholar's perspectives on the issue under study. The study discovered that, chains of individuals coming together as families, the latter forming communities but transformed into individualism now; Hyam and English/Hausa language hybridization exposed to endangerment; motivation of communalism-individualism transformation was driven by western ideals of wealth accumulation. The study suggested adoption of cultural integration instead of homogenization; individualism-communalism; dominant cultures owe the smaller cultures the moral responsibility of protective cultural integration; and promotion of protective measures against cultural hybridization.

Keywords: Hamland, Togetherness, Culture, Homogenization, Globalization, Peacebuilding

1.1 Introduction

African societies generally and Hamland in particular are replete with the principles of community's togetherness in terms of marriages, child bearing and naming ceremonies (Obodoegbulam Adeniyi, & Amadi; n.d). Hamland is the geographic location inhabited by Ham people of Jaba Local Government Area, Kaduna state. In Hamland, a child was considered a member of the community, whose upbringing was not just a function of the biological parents; but the community, who played a central role in his/her development. Ham society's maxim "We na ba shu fu na wizhini", which means "a child does not belong to one parent; but the community", pointed to the practice of communalism among Ham

people. In the past, barrenness was deemphasized as parents with children gave out some of theirs to those having none. These children would grow to belong to their foster parents as their biological parents.

Duchi, Iyalla and Shaibu (2023) pointed out that, male children were sent out to those giving birth to female children for the purpose of farmland cultivation, to avert famine among members of the community. They added that, when grains from a community's member finished, relations would rally round to replace the food in the night without the knowledge of the wife. This was to avert possible disrespect from the wife towards her husband; and destructive dispute relations. Practical expression of togetherness was within the context of cultivation of farmlands for food security, irrespective of family size, possession of male children or not. Organization of farming activities between friends known as "Shaa"; within families as "Zhiis"; and within the community as "Gbee" (Duchi et al, 2023). The whole community ensures that no one lacks food: prevent hunger as a precondition for harmonious living.

T. Titus (Personal Communication, 27th June, 2024) re-echoed the noble ideals of Shaa, Zhiis, Gbee and Shaa, when he added that Zhiis is a communal farming exercise within families or clans, while Gbee is a farm practice carried out within the larger community's context, and Shaa operates among friends only. It is a form of communal service or farming activities involving extended clans' system, comprising a large number of ablebodied male children, cultivating the farmlands for increased yield and averting hunger considered a taboo.

In the modern era, erosion of cultural strands of communalism is alleged to be associated with individualism. Kostopoulos (2009) conceives communalism to mean collectivity of production and the absence of private property and exploitation of man by man. Handwiki (n.d) stated that communalism is a system that integrates communal ownership and federations of highly localized independent communities. Kostopoulos' collective production assertion aligned with Hamland's notion of Shaa, Zhiis, and Gbee, geared towards providing food for all within the community. Historically, Ham societies forbade exploitation of their people, allowed private property ownership within the context of brotherhood and togetherness.

The notions of competition, confrontation and pursuit of individual interest, had supplanted group ideals of cooperation, collaboration and spirit of togetherness. The moral responsibility of disciplining a child is no longer that of community but the parent (Kahaka & Maundeni, 2022). Disciplining someone's child might lead to litigation. Western intrusion into African cultural heritage is adjudged to be the major neutralizer of indigenous Ham's social cohesion, principles of community and constructive togetherness witnessed in ancient times (Ihejirika, 2021). Ihejirika added that each individual was his brother's keeper, and communal interest was paramount in the community's social, political, economic and spiritual considerations.

Social cohesion was key to preventing housing, food and communal insecurity. T.Titus further added that ancient Hamland was devoid of famine and homelessness. People collaborate to collectively build houses for each other without charges, for children who have reached the stage of "Gha Ku", the phase of maturity. Competition and individualism were not accepted, until the advent of western cultural value systems which gradually weakened the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and togetherness akin to Ubuntu. Hamland, a central element of African culture, had lost and continually so, the cherished values responsible for its historic constructive transformation (Bisong, 2018). The redefinition of Ham society's communality principles retrogressed its indigenous togetherness. Ham people were conscious of the significance of unity in human progress

and development. They believed that "gbyab khi ra ki su tset da" meaning, unity is our strength. A united people will always blur the lines of differences which preclude conflict and for this reason, reinforces the noble ideals of peacebuilding, food security, law and order (J.J. Hayab, Personal Communication, 28th June, 2024). The transition from ancient generational cultural practices to modernity, presented a destructive transformation. Individualism supplanted communalism with negative implications on the people's ways of life that built sustainable peace for generations.

Resistance towards western cultural intrusion which neutralizes uniqueness and identities of smaller cultures, failed among dominant cultures like Confucius and Mandarin (Odinye & Odinye, 2012). Ham culture faced cultural adulteration due to globalization of western cultures, and hausanization locally, which relegated values, rules and mores of the society (John, 2015). The cultural transitional disconnection timelines, factors constituted the missing links in the literature. Historical accounts pointed to the passionate belief in inclusivity which had been replaced with exclusivity today, whereby Ham people stand with and for each other against freedom fear and want; but faced a significant deviation from communalism to individualism (Johnson, 2016; Wei, Rao, & Li, 2017).

The motivation for the ease of transition from communalism principles that hold the societies together among autochthonous Ham people, to individualism precept that had loosen the bond of love expressed in the spirit of togetherness, lacked adequate literatures. Bisong (2018) believed in individualism as the way forward, and failed to connect the abysmal failure of capitalism driven on the wheels of globalization. Communalism, a replica of Ujaama in Bisong's view, failed even when there were strong feelings in Africa. However, factors for its ineffectiveness were not pointed out. Theoretical validation of these transformations from communalism to individualism, requires in-depth review to expand the argument that advances the cause of humanism. The study sought to inquire into cultural intrusion and failure of resistance; factors that supplanted inclusivity with exclusivity; neutralization of community's collective security; motivation for communalism-individualism transition; and ascertained the theoretical explanation for the changes.

2.1 Literature Review

The study reviewed literatures from the perspectives of cultural intrusion, resilience, inclusivity/exclusivity, neutralization and transformation.

2.1.1 Cultural Intrusion

Systems of ideas formulated and taught across generations become the way of life in a society's material and immaterial objects. These include conceptualization and manifestation of human fundamental notions in music, technology, amongst others. Ideology which defined and refined human ideas, is central to cultural development. Griffin (2006) that cultural usage and meanings continue to change as thinkers have hope to do different things with it. Hamland's ways of life had continued the path of transformation from communalism to individualism.

Cultural intrusion into Hamland, could not have operated in the vacuum. Contact with missionaries and colonial powers was central to the inherent transformation. Colonization and globalization played a significant role in distorting the uniqueness of smaller cultural norms and values. cultural intrusion employed the instrumentality of the

mass media, cultural globalization, language of globalization, and urbanization. Hamland, led by Kpop Ku (King of the Masquerade) influenced the behavioral attitude of its people based on the believe in the supernatural, had become altered by colonialism and globalization (Duchi et al, 2023; Igboin, 2011).

Elizabeth (2020) stated the increasing concern generated by globalization from the perspective of compressing the global community into a single global village. This villagization of different societies into a single whole from a value-based angle, often generates difficult conflict that requires management but resolution or transformation. Hamland's communalism provide a human angle that considered the interest of all as members of the human family: therefore, preclude incompatibilities.

2.1.2 Cultural Resilience

Impliedly, a given way of life's practice across generations sustainability without distortion in the face of attack by an intruding cultural tradition, entails resilience. Claus-Ehlers (2010) considered cultural resilience as communal and individual ability to overcome adversity. Claus-Ehlers contended that adaptation to adversity is not static but dynamic that includes character traits, individual cultural background, values, and supportive aspects of the socio-cultural environment. Instead of adapting to adversity to maintain its uniqueness, smaller cultures and their languages faced an intrusion that supplanted its existence. Loss of identity by smaller cultures, due to inability to resist replacement by dominant cultures provided the basis for value-based conflict

Smaller cultures during intercultural exchanges with dominant cultures get submerged. Bogoliubova and Nikolaeva (2017) stated that, contact between cultures arose from a variety of reasons such as intercultural exchanges, expunging barriers between cultures; forming new cultural phenomena, new cultural ideas; which blur the lines between foreign

local cultures; and therefore, new trends and authors of cultural exchange appear. They added that preservation of cultural diversity became the major problem facing humanity. Bogoliubova and Nikolaeva (2017) believed that current trends in cultural globalization had opened up new forms of cultures based on close relationship between culture and economy, leading to culturalization of economy. Dominant cultures employed the instruments of villagization, disrupting and destroying smaller cultural heritage, in the interests of global capitalism that favors individual accumulation of wealth at the expense of community. Dominant cultural hegemony instead of cultural integration, embarked on cultural assimilation of smaller cultures, throwing it into the dustbin of history. It continues to leave in its trail, chaos and violent conflict.

Hepler and Cheprasov (2023) stated that cultural globalization entails the systematic transmission of values, ideas and experiences of specific cultures across the world. The process came with significant effects on international relations and interactions between different cultures within the same country. Hausanization, which is the intrusion of Hausa culture and language on the minority ethnic groupings in north central Nigeria, whereby the Hausas gave names of indigenous communities in Hausa language; without recourse to its originality is facing significant rejection now.

Lambu (2020) pointed to evidence that, Hausa language had swallowed up Fulani, Kanuri, Bura, among others. These actions created structural conflict, exacerbated animosity

between minority groups against dominant majority Hausas. British and American cultures had permeated a substantial number of cultures but the Mandarin, Spanish among other cultures. Introduction of Christianity and Islam, had destroyed the bond of brotherhood and togetherness among our people. Relatives practicing these religions, most often do not see themselves as one family. In the days when African Traditional Religion was the only instrument of worship for a supreme deity, the community were united in the spirit of brotherhood.

2.1.3 Inclusivity and Exclusivity

Hamland was traditionally an inclusive society. They believed in working for and with others together. One's individuality is secured by communality. Individuals were protected in community with others within the society. Appiah, Arko-Achemfuor and Adeyeye (2018) believed a well-managed diverse environment fosters inclusion which can translate into growth and development. Inclusion implied bringing people together in community with others. The communal nature inclusiveness in Hamland was replete with cooperation and collaboration, devoid of competition and confrontation. In the spirit of togetherness, Ham people organized their agricultural activities from within friends (Shaa), family (Zhiis), and community (Gbee).

The principles of together abhorred exclusion and individualism; but inclusion and communalism. The global society adopted communalism within the context of individual nations and their citizens' movement of capital for investment. This is followed up with importation of natural resources from poor nations, and exportation of finished products into these countries. Cultural globalization of technology is exclusive to developed nations but third world states. Villagization western ways of lives, arts, music, technology among others, could not have been representative of neither a given continental cultures nor global cultures: due to cultural peculiarities (Ayele, 2012).

2.1.4 Cultural Neutralization

Elizabeth (2020) defined globalization as the removal or elimination of barriers to trade, communication, and cultural exchange. Contact with other cultures brings about a destructive transformation, within the context of cultural hybridization with the dominant culture neutralizing the smaller cultures. Individualism in Hamland had become predominant over and above communalism.

This is a function of cultural exchange occasioned by the advent of colonialism and indirect rule system, employing the Hausa emirate system as an instrument of cultural exchange of language, mode of dressing, and attitudinal behaviors. The dynamics of human interactions resulted in the replacement of communalism with individualism, thereby dislocating the generational cherished value system holding society in peace and tranquility. Cultural

exchange between Europeans and Hausas altered significantly the cultures of Ham People, which neutralizes its efficacy in comparison with the past (Igboin, 2011).

Cultural neutralization finds expression using the instrumentality of globalization of language, arts, technology, music among others. Samuel (2005) conceptualized globalization as inexorable integration of global markets, nation states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before in a way that enabled individuals, corporations and nation states, spreading business interest across the globe faster, farther, deeper and cheaper than ever before; the spread of free market capitalism globally.

2.1.5 Cultural Transformation Motivation

Gardner (2024) conceived cultural transformation to mean when an organization engages in a process to realign the culture to its vision, mission, and core values to achieve its strategic objective. He added that cultural change is a form of organizational transformation. The current wave of villagization is realigning smaller cultures to achieve the objective of dominant cultures, using its technology and language to spread its ideals through print and electronic media.

Hacker (2015) stated that cultural change is challenging. The change from communalism to individualism in Hamland had brought significant destructive changes to the ideals of togetherness. Concerns for the wellbeing of others no longer holds true. People think about themselves first before others. Standing with and for those in need, based on the precepts of togetherness which had become alien tradition in Ham societies.

3.1 Methodology

This research adopted a qualitative research approach. The research design was a descriptive survey which utilizes Key Informant Interview (KII), and In-depth Interview (IDI), as measuring instruments to gather primary data. While secondary employed scholar's perspectives on the issue under study. Data sources, drawn from the research participants, who were native Ham people with a rich history of Hamland's cultural heritage.

The scope covers Ham villages with elders and youths who are enthusiastic about the transformation of Ham society's ways of life in its present phase. The determinants for participation were based on one's knowledge of the history of the people either through oral history, folktales, or documented evidence.

4.1 Result and Discussion

4.1.1 Results

The question of cultural intrusion disclosed that, participants stated that:

Prior to European and North American Missionaries coming, the Ham people had existed as one entity, driven by the principles of unity as our strength. Our individual strength became operational in community with others. The precepts of togetherness were central to our collective individual's identity but today (KII/M/64/Ghikyaar/2024).

The notion of we are one people, no longer holds true for us today. Instead of individuals coming together as one united family; the families coming together as one community within a society: things have transformed destructively, destroying the spirit of togetherness that bound us as one indivisible entity (IDI/F/56/Zhebzhi/2024).

Everyone is operating within the context of individual survival as against community: instead of working together for all, to avert hunger considered a taboo (KII/M/60/Zheik/2024).

Instead of globalization of world cultures bringing about cultural unity but homogenization, supplanting minority cultural norms and values. Structural and physical dislocation of our people's ways of life, impinged on our cherished norms and morals. Generally, we perceive globalization as an imminent danger to our cultural traditions in the interests of globalist imperialism (IDI/M/34/Ghiny/2024).

Globalization of cultures in its operational sense, implied internationalization of western cultures; and elimination of smaller cultures. They dominate our thinking for the purpose

of resource exploitation and control of political power in smaller nations through technology (KII/M/40/Nok/2024).

On the factor cultural resilience in smaller cultures, the study pointed out that:

Our people cannot speak purely our own language without mixing it with either Hausa or English languages. To understand and speak languages other than my mother tongue is not bad. Speaking other languages is not bad but leaving your native language entails loss of identity. Most of our smaller languages and cultures are facing threats of extinction (KII/M/58/Ghaat/2024).

Ham people's way of life according to our forefathers had faced a significant shift that undermined our principles of togetherness. The spirit of brotherhood, and living for each other had been transformed destructively toward individual accumulation of wealth and greed (IDI/M/70/Fai/2024).

We no longer unite to enforce discipline in our communities. A child no longer belongs to the community but the parents. Collective efforts towards fighting hunger

and poverty through cooperative farming systems no longer operate like before (IDI/F/46/Dung/2023).

Interrogating the notions of inclusivity and exclusivity, research participants stated that: We consider hunger a taboo in our society. Thus, we often avert through cooperative farming. Both the strong and weak, will be made to plant crops. We organized Shaa, a family cooperative farming system to cultivate the land for both those with male children, and those without (IDI/F/74/Kawet/2024).

Ham societies generally believed excommunicating a member of the society entails exclusion. The individual is accordingly exposed to the vagaries of life. Such punishment was for the gravest of offenses (KII/M/67/Bomsuri/2024).

Investigating the notion of cultural neutralization, research participants asserted that:

In Hamland, we believed in you and I live. Our strength found practical manifestation in our unity. No one is strong without his brother. We have a semblance of an Ubuntu system, where a person is a person because of others (KII/M/45/Njhon/2024).

Ham's cultural values and traditions, that sustained us for generations, are unique to us. Hausanization and colonization adulterated our language, our belief system, our world of individualism best attained in communalism (SB/M/42/Ngarshang/2024).

Our societies political and religious institutions entrusted in Kpop Ku, administer justice, maintained law and order, during the advent of indirect rule system, were supplanted with Kpop Kpaar (Hausa imposed Chief). Our people often perceived the current traditional system as an exclusion of Hamland's pristine trado-political system (IDI/M/72/Nduyah/2024).

Inquiries into neutralization of smaller cultures, research participants asserted that:

Our community, prior to now, took it as a duty to support children who moved to other communities for education with food stuff, and contribute money for their upkeep in school. However, when the child returns home, he no longer feels responsible to the community but his parents. This distorts our sense of individual personality subsumed under communal interest (KII/M/29/Haruma/2024).

Our people believed that the child belonged to the community. The security and wellbeing of the child is the primary function of both the parent and the

community. If the child becomes indiscipline, it is the parent's responsibility to bring the child to the community, to bring the child back to societal cultures (IDI/F/67/Ntong/2024).

Our people became knowledgeable; but more of western principles of individualism. Education has pushed the ideals of community aside, and ushers in the notion of children belonging to their parents (KII/M/46/Jarje/2024).

We most often listen to western or foreign music other than our local music. Our mode of dressing will only make sense with English cultural attires, otherwise, a person may be considered unfashionable (IDI/M/37/Njit/2024).

In examining the cultural transformation, research participant stated that:

Our contact with European and Hausa colonizers brought a transformation of our Ham culture from communalism to individualism. European ideals of individual accumulation of wealth laid the foundation for bastardization of noble ideals of community first, then the individual (KII/M/34/Dzyagbyat/2024).

4.1.2 Discussion

The study sought to provide answers to the questions of cultural intrusion and resilience; reasons for inclusivity and exclusivity, cultural neutralization; and motivation for cultural transformation. Using descriptive research design, the study adopted Key informant interview, in-depth interview, snowballing instrument; and secondary sources to gather data for analysis and interpretation.

On cultural intrusion, it was discovered that, the chains of individuals coming together as families, the latter forming communities but transformed into individualism now; cultural homogenization is endangering Hamland cultural values. Ham society's ways of life, like most smaller cultures, is continually facing the danger of obliteration due to consistent and progressive intrusion resulting from villagization by dominant cultures. Balogun and Aruoture (2024) measuring the impact of social media on cultural homogenization stated that its emergence had a fundamental impact on continual decline of native languages and customs around the world. Technology, being the catalyst for globalization, is neutralizing communalism that sustained positive peace in Hamland, and giving way to individualism, which breeds dispute due to incompatibility of interests. The research pointed out that, the mixture of Hyam and English/Hausa languages exposed it to possible endangerment; individualism undermined spirit of brotherhood and togetherness that checked destructive conflict; security and wellbeing of community's

members faced imminent danger; while Abrahamic religions displacement of traditional religions had expanded the conflict atmosphere. John (2015) stressed the danger faced by

smaller languages in terms of possible elimination. The resilience of smaller cultures and its languages are at the mercy of dominant cultures. This is based on advancement in

technology, language among others. Most smaller languages lacked literature. Their existence is centered on oral history and folktales.

In Hamland, study showed that cooperative farming systems like Shaa, Zhiis and Gbee fought hunger; communal funding of children's education and their discipline operationalized inclusivity; and togetherness abhorred exclusion but inclusion and communalism. Food and educational security of the members, reinforced togetherness, eliminated hunger and maintained discipline of the children. Individualism favors exclusive access to wealth, education among resources, through competition, which ushers in conflict and violence. The principle of tranquil and harmonious society in the past, seems elusive for the future. Appiah et al (2018) notion of well-managed environment fostering inclusion transforming in development is within the atmosphere of community of individuals working with and for each other to advance their cause.

The study established the neutralization of institution of Kpop Ku, with Kpop Kpaar (Hausa imposed Chief); hybridization of Hyam with Hausa/English; superimposition of individual on the community; children security and wellbeing, the primary function of parent and community but distorted; the suffocation of Ham cultural music, technology dance among others; and the utilization of technology and mass media to neutralize smaller cultures. Ham pristine communities had an effective law and order due to constructive respect and fear of the trado-political institution of Kpop Ku. However, colonization replaced it with Kpop Kpaar. The fear of retributive justice for committing sacrilegious offenses is fading, and therefore eroding constructive political stability inherent among the people, is facing extinction. While technology enhances expression of cultures, this awareness is weak among smaller cultures (Balogun & Aruoture, 2018). The study understood the motivation of communalism-individualism transformation was driven by western ideals of wealth accumulation. Obnoxious feelings for self alone, instead of self in community with others based on the noble ideals of an individual is an individual in community with others, become alienated. The Hamland cultural notion "gbyab khi ra ki su tset da" which means "unity is our strength" find expression in the wider Zulu "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" meaning "a person is a person through other persons" (Beight, 2007). One's individuality is a function of belonging to a community; and one cannot be without others.

4.1.3 Cultural Transformation Theory (CTT)

Riane Eisler (1987) developed the CTT. The theory proposed that the earliest cradles of civilization sprang up in the more fertile areas of the globe oriented more partnership system; then during a period of chaos, there was a shift in dominator direction. In analyzing transformation from communism-individualism, the dominant factor is the dominant culture of individualism displacing communalism. Though individualism cannot stand

alone; but in community with others; and every individual performing a set function, for the effective functioning of the community.

4.1.4 Functionalism

This theory seeks to explain the inter-relationship among component parts working together for the attainment of the goals and objectives of either a community or an organization. Survival is the driving force. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2024) stated that, all aspects of society from the institutions to norms, roles, among

others, serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long-term survival of the society. Norms and roles of society are observed by humans. Individuals are the reasons for the generational survival of communities. Communities do not exist in vacuum but the individual.

While CTT pointed out that dominant culture replaces a weaker culture, functionalism explains that individuals in community with others performed certain functions that are the prerequisite for the community's survival. The individual in community with others sustains the communal existence. A symbiotic relationship is established when communalism encapsulates the interests of the individual for the interest of the community.

5.1 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that cultural homogenization, erasing smaller cultural traditions will deny the global community the richness of Hamland principles of togetherness exemplified in gbyab khi ra ki su tset da. Humanity saving grace lies in human principles spread across cultural traditions globally, like Ubuntu and gbyab khi ra ki su tset da. Cultural unity but obliteration, within the context of, we are first human before any other thing; will lay the foundation for future peace, the global order yearns for. Imminent danger of cultural extinction, language, technology and others, creates a value-based conflict that potent danger to future peacebuilding. The eroded principles of community's members 'security and wellbeing practiced through Shaa, Zhiis and Gbee, had resulted in stealing for survival. The spirit of togetherness and brotherhood abhors social vices, individualism pushed humanity into.

The study believed that communalism favors inclusiveness, reinforced togetherness and eliminated exclusive desires for excessive materialism that undermined interpersonal harmony: a prelude to divergence of interest. Communalism operating on the wheels of togetherness eliminates hunger, emphasizes children's discipline that conforms to societal norms as communal responsibility; and ensures a harmonious future. Cultural neutralization and consequent hybridization of traditional political institutions facing extinction, had watered down the effectiveness of maintaining law and order at the microlevel.

5.1.2 Recommendations

The study suggested:

- The adoption of cultural integration instead of cultural homogenization tapped the benefits of smaller cultures that are central to human development. Development and integration of multiplicity of constructive cultural practices that recognizes humanism, should be the main focus of cultural globalization. The tradition of human unity distorted by realism principles of individual nation state interest, could be addressed by gbyab khi ra ki su tset da. States in this perspective, would be considered as individuals in the wider global communalism; but aliens from outer space.
- The adoption of individualism-communalism. This entails promotion of individual responsibility to the community, in unity with other persons. This enhances the spirit of brotherhood and togetherness, therefore blurring the lines for conflagration of destructive dispute relations. Conceptualizing this implied consider

- The dominant cultures owe the smaller cultures the moral responsibility of
 protective cultural integration. Cultural homogenization promotes clashes with
 attendant difficulty to either resolve or transform. The current generation owes
 the future generations the duty of discarding cultural assimilation witnessed in
 the globalized age.
- The promotion of protective measures against cultural hybridization to eliminate possible cultural extinction among smaller cultures.

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