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**作为决定因素的责任与贡献，礼宾礼仪主权平等原
则的合理化解释**

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Responsibility and contribution as determinants of hierarchy: Rationalizing the principle of sovereign equality within diplomatic protocol and etiquette

Abstract: The core principle of protocol and etiquette in modern diplomacy is Sovereign Equality. However, some exceptional cases of protocol and etiquette in modern diplomacy prove that the Principle of Sovereign Equality remains an elusive ideology; with an intrinsic sense of hierarchy evident in international relations.

The Principle of Sovereign Equality derives from the pursuit of equality and the denial of hierarchy. This paper attempts to argue that hierarchy among countries is an undeniable reality, and that hierarchy can have positive impacts. To optimally harness this inherent potential to impact positively on international relations, a new system needs to be designed that recognises the reality while protecting every country's interest; thus preventing large states from intimidating small states.

The paper concludes by emphasizing the need to pursue balance between hierarchy and equality; power and right. Every country in the world should find its hierarchical position, no matter how big or small; weak or strong. The status of a country functionally corresponds with the international responsibility it may, and can, take. Thus, the rationale of hierarchy could refer to the power of a nation state as it relates to its capacity to bear a corresponding responsibility; not as it relates to its dominance as a hegemon.

Keywords: Modern diplomacy, protocol and etiquette, hierarchy, exceptional cases, principle of Sovereign Equality

作为决定因素的责任与贡献，礼宾礼仪主权平等原则的合理化解释

摘要: 现代外交中的礼宾礼仪核心原则是“主权平等”，然而，现代外交中的一些礼宾礼仪特例说明了主权平等原则依然是一个无法确定准确内涵或者说是一个概念模糊的意识形态，国际关系中存在着内在的等级性。

主权平等原则是追求平等与否则等级的结果，这篇论文尝试去说明等级是国家之间不可否认的现实，等级可以成为积极因素，由此，很有必要最大限度地利用这一固有的特质使之对国际关系产生积极影响。我们需要在承认现实的基础研究一种新的制度设计：一方面保护每一个国家利益，另一方面防止大国欺压小国。

论文的结论是应该追求一种平衡：等级与平等，权力与权利。每一个国家应该找到自己在国际社会中的位置，不管是大国还是小国，强国还是弱国。国家的地位是和其所愿意承担和能够承担的国际责任相适应的。大国之所以成为大国是指其担负的责任，而不是其实力主导的霸权与支配。

关键词: 现代外交 礼宾礼仪 等级 特例 主权平等

RESPONSIBILITY AND CONTRIBUTION AS DETERMINANTS OF HIERARCHY: RATIONALIZING THE PRINCIPLE OF SOVEREIGN EQUALITY WITHIN DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL AND ETIQUETTE

Firstly, the Principle of Sovereign Equality is the primary principle of diplomatic protocol and etiquette

The Congress of Vienna in 1815 established equality between states as a principle—a crucial precursor to the Principle of Sovereign Equality.¹ However, the concept of sovereignty was shaped exclusively within Europe; only becoming a fundamental code within the world system over a century later. Since the end of World War II, with smaller and less powerful nations increasingly achieving independence and national liberation, the voice of sovereign equality has become progressively more intense. The United Nations Charter, signed in 1945, confirmed the Principle of Sovereign Equality, which is explicitly stipulated as follows: ‘The organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all member states.’² This marks a global popularisation and practice of the concept of sovereign states.

Thus sovereign equality is the basic principle of the United Nations Charter, indicating that nations are all equal, regardless of their size and strength. Diplomatic protocol and etiquette have been developed to ensure equality of rights and interests of all countries, allowing them to express their opinions freely.³ Diplomatic protocol and ceremony adhere to the principle of equality between states.⁴ Sovereign equality is among the main reference principles for building diplomatic protocol norms—for example respecting national symbols, honouring the domestic and foreign affairs of one country, and ensuring equal access to diplomatic contacts.

Secondly, exceptional cases of protocol and etiquette show that the Principle of Sovereign Equality is unable to be fully realized

Exceptional cases substantiate the reality that sovereign equality is not fully realized. The United States of America (US) is an ally of the Republic of Korea (ROK). Although the two countries have a good relationship, some diplomatic protocol problems still exist. According to Chosun Ilbo’s report,⁵ published in March 2013, the White House National Security

¹ Tim Chapman, *The Congress of Vienna 1814-1815* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012); Tanja E. Aalberts, ‘Rethinking the Principle of (Sovereign) Equality as a Standard of Civilisation,’ *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), pp. 767-89; Jordan Branch, ‘Mapping the Sovereign State: Technology, Authority, and Systemic Change,’ *International Organization*, vol. 65, no. 1 (2011), pp. 2 & 19; Behrooz Moslemi, ‘Principle of Sovereign Equality of States in the Light of the Doctrine of Responsibility to Protect,’ *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies*, December (2015), pp. 687- 697.

² United Nations, Charter, Chapter One, Article 2:1, accessed August 30, 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/>

³ 周启朋, 杨闯著: 《国外外交学》, 中国人民公安大学出版社, 1990 年版, 第 353 页。Qipeng Zhou, Chuang Yang, *Overseas Diplomacy* (Beijing: The Chinese people’s public security university press, 1990), p. 353.

⁴ Oana Iucu, ‘Diplomacy and Diplomatic Protocol,’ *Manager*, vol. 8, no.1, (2008) p. 16.

⁵ 戚易斌: 《韩媒称韩国遭遇美国“外交失礼” 政府未提抗议》, 2013.3.13, 访问于 2016.3.5。 Yibin Qi,

Advisor, Donilon, revealed that ROK President Park Geun-hye would visit the US during the Asia Society Conference, which opened on 11 March 2013 in New York. According to diplomatic practice, countries involved should jointly announce the time of a state visit following mutual agreement. Rather than announce news of the impending visit via a White House spokesperson, the US disclosed the news through an official on an unofficial occasion; after which it was published on the White House's official website.⁶

Awkwardly, the ROK and the US had not yet determined the final time of the summit, hence did not reach an agreement on relevant issues. This behaviour demonstrated disrespect toward the ROK. Chong Wa Dae belatedly expressed that the ROK and US were still consulting regarding President Park Geun-hye's visit to the US in March.⁷ In short, the US's unilateral act annoyed the Korean side, and this was not the first time the ROK had experienced what they perceived as a lack of diplomatic respect from the US.

A similar event took place in 2008. Former ROK President Lee Myung-bak invited then US President George W. Bush to visit Korea during his first term. Both sides reached agreement on a state visit and summit talks from 5 to 6 August 2008. However, rather than announce this important news jointly with the ROK, the US issued a statement at a press conference delivered by senior aide Dennis Wardlow, National Security Council for Asian Affairs, on 2 July 2008.⁸ The White House also posted Wardlow's speech on their website. Consequently, Cheong Wa Dae was compelled to announce the summit agenda officially after a few hours. The Korean side was dissatisfied with the US, yet received only a lacklustre apology for Wardlow's diplomatic blunder.

According to the report by Chosun Ilbo, despite the serious 2013 diplomatic indiscretion in unilaterally and unofficially declaring the visit of president Park Geun-hye, no apology was forthcoming from the US.⁹ The ROK government had to protest at the lack of protocol.¹⁰ The US had clearly not paid sufficient attention to the diplomatic faux pas of 2008. Cultural differences were blamed, with a reference to the more casual approach to protocol customary to the US. The ROK, on the other hand, had paid meticulous attention to etiquette—with the careful regard afforded to all issues of protocol.

While cultural discrepancies carry some validity, a more blatant issue relates to the discrepancy of power between the two countries. While the ROK is not a weak entity, the difference in national strength and international status between the two countries is undeniable. Notwithstanding the ROK's expectation of equality and respect from the US, and

'The Media said that the South Korea experienced United States' 'diplomatic faux pas,' Government did not protest,' March 13 (2013), accessed March 5 2016, <http://www.chinanews.com/gj/2013/03-13/4640344.shtml>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

despite the intention of both countries to uphold the principle of equality, the exceptional cases prove that full reciprocity and equality remains elusive.

Where the inequality demonstrated in this case caused discontent on one side, the following cases reveal that non-equivalence among countries has a certain degree of rationality. China and Pakistan are allies. When Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan, he was offered a warm reception; with Pakistan dispatching eight jet fighters to escort Xi's plane.¹¹ When Xi arrived at the airport, Pakistan's President Hussein and his wife, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his wife, as well as military leaders greeted Xi Jinping and his wife, welcoming them to their country. When Xi Jinping completed his state visit and departed from Pakistan, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his wife again accompanied President Xi and his delegation to the airport, and eight jet fighters again escorted Xi's plane. When Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang visited Pakistan, he also received a warm welcome, such as six jet fighters escorting Li's plane, and both the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan welcomed him at the airport.¹² However, despite the close relationship between China and Pakistan, the Chinese President and Premier did not reciprocally welcome Pakistan's President and Prime Minister at the airport when they visited China.

Despite being a small country, when China's President Xi Jinping visited the Netherlands on 22 March 2014, Royal Netherlands Air Force fighters escorted the President, and the Dutch King and Queen personally welcomed him at the airport. However, when the Dutch King and Queen visited China on 25 October 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping did not reciprocally welcome them at the airport.¹³

One of the reasons for the non-equivalence in welcome ceremonies between countries is a difference in cultural protocol. For example, although many countries hold welcome ceremonies at airports, China does not. China moved the welcome ceremonies from the airport to the East Gate of the Great Hall of the People on 1 September 1980.¹⁴ There are significant practical reasons for non-equivalence, such as the country's size, population, and the workload of national leaders. Even the number of state visits differ, with most Western countries accommodating no more than 10 visits per year. Many leaders visit China, including heads of state, deputy heads of state, chiefs of government and deputy chiefs of government. The protocol reform taken in 1985 limits the number of visits to China to two to three per month, including all delegates from each country.¹⁵ According to this standard, 24

¹¹ Xinhuanet 'Pakistan dispatches 8 fighters to escort Xi's plane on state visit,' April 20 (2015), accessed August 30 2017, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-04/20/c_134167315.htm

¹²张静:《盘点中国领导人访巴基斯坦接受到的那些礼遇》, 2015.4.20, 访问于 2016.4.5。Jing Zhang, 'The most courteous reception received by Chinese leaders when they visit Pakistan,' April 20 (2015), accessed April 5, 2016, http://www.china.com.cn/guoqing/2015-04/20/content_35364238_2.htm

¹³ China Daily, 'President Xi begins Europe visit,' China.org.cn, March 23, (2014), accessed August 30 2017, http://www.china.org.cn/world/2014-03/23/content_31873114.htm

¹⁴ 马保奉:《经历礼宾改革》, 载《世界知识》, 2003 年第 14 期, 第 56 页。Baofeng Ma, 'Experiencing the protocol reform,' *World Affairs*, no. 14, (2003), p. 56.

¹⁵马保奉:《邓小平倡导下的外交礼宾改革——我所亲历的外交礼宾工作之二》, 载《秘书工作》,

to 36 visits occur each year. In addition to receiving official visits, the Chinese President and Prime Minister also have demanding visitation duties. Therefore, it is not plausible for them to welcome and farewell state guests from foreign countries at the airport.

In terms of fighter plane escorts, although the head of state of China has received escorts from many countries, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Russia, the Netherlands and Belgium, China does not—in turn—escort the heads of state of other countries. China cancelled plane escort ceremonies following the Cultural Revolution.¹⁶ Since then, the only exception was on 21 February 2002, when US President George W. Bush visited China. In this instance, Air Force One was escorted by China both when it entered and left Chinese territorial air space.¹⁷ Being shortly after 911, the US attached great importance to security issues, and strict measures were considered imperative to protect the US President. In addition, Sino-US relations at the time were relatively smooth, with both sides moving in a more constructive direction; further facilitating this exception. This was the last public report of China escorting a visiting head of state.

Based on China's large area, population and unique national conditions, the non-equivalence of diplomatic protocol tends to be accepted and understood. China and Pakistan's relationship has not been damaged, and other countries have not protested publicly or caused diplomatic dissent as a result of the discrepancy in etiquette.

Thirdly, reflection on the Principle of Sovereign Equality

Based on the above exceptional cases of diplomatic protocol, a conflict is revealed in the quest for equality in theory and inequality in practice. Although the United Nations Charter denotes sovereign equality as the most important principle, this is not wholly respected due to a lack of law enforcement mechanisms among the international community that nonetheless accepts the sovereign state unit.¹⁸

The reason that sovereign equality is difficult to realise is complex, and can be divided into subjective and objective aspects. The first aspect is the subjective influence of power politics. Differences in conditions and strength mean that power plays an important role in international political ranks. A nation's power determines its level of sovereignty, its political reach and its status in international relations.¹⁹ This causes countries to channel power

2008 年第 12 期, 第 54 页。Baofeng Ma, 'Deng xiaoping initiated the reform of diplomatic protocol--- diplomatic protocol I have been working on II,' *Office administration*, no.12, (2008) p. 54.

¹⁶马保奉:《经历礼宾改革》,载《世界知识》,2003 年第 14 期,第 56 页。Baofeng Ma, 'Experiencing the protocol reform,' *World Affairs*, no. 14, (2003), p. 56.

¹⁷环球时报网:《沙特埃及派 12 架战机为习近平护航 体现对贵宾尊敬》,2016.1.21.访问于 2016.4.5. *Global Times Network*, 'Saudi Arabia and Egypt sent 12 jets to escort Xi Jinping,' January 21 2016, accessed April 5 2016, <http://mil.huangqi.com/china/2016-01/8419777.html>

¹⁸武善学,刘亚丁:《主权与平等的融合进程》,载《当代世界与社会主义》,2010 年第 01 期,第 148 页。Sanxue Wu, Yading Liu, 'The integration process of Sovereignty and Equality,' no. 1, (2010), p. 148.

¹⁹夏云珍:《试论国家主权平等面临的困境》,载《知识经济》,2010 年第 2 期,第 179 页。

politics to construct a hegemonic order, which deliberately damages the principle of sovereign equality.

Another reason underlying the difficulty of realising sovereign equality is the objective differences among countries. The different capacity of nations means the role they can play and the contributions they can make are quite different. Hence, it's almost impossible to achieve full equality; and an artificially induced, absolute equality will inevitably reveal factual inequalities. Therefore, national sovereignty becomes equality in form and inequality in reality. Thus the norms of diplomatic protocol and etiquette reflect the 'ought to be' of sovereign equality, but the exceptional cases reveal the fact of sovereignty inequality.

If one theory cannot explain reality, it needs to be reflected upon and revised. The Principle of Sovereign Equality pursues equality and opposes hierarchy, but reality shows the opposite. The exceptional cases mentioned above show that hierarchy still exists, even if it is taken as dross and criticised. Hierarchy is the result of the development differences among countries. Differences and hierarchy do not conform to narrow human morality, but conform to harsh reality. Divergence is the true nature of human society, but as Bell states: 'Without rituals, desires are unlimited, leading to contention, leading to disorder, and leading to poverty.'²⁰ Thus the pursuit of sovereign equality in diplomacy whilst essential to abrogate human ills, may yet be achieved through a more authentic path, one built upon a rationalization of theory and reality.

This paper expresses the view that differences among countries reveal hierarchy as a *universal* law. Eternal differences will exist among countries, as they do among human beings. Objectively speaking, many standards of protocol simply represent the recognition of hierarchy and differences. Consider the reality of having the best to the worst seats in order of precedence, the number of salutes between heads of state and chiefs of government, and the system design of 'the five permanent members' in the United Nations Security Council.

Two intertwined problems are presented in this context. Firstly, undeniable objective differences will cause hierarchy. Secondly, there is the question of how to implement fairness despite differences. The problem with the Principle of Sovereign Equality is that it links the two problems. What it advocates is that nations are all equal; no matter how big or small, strong or weak. Yet the desired state of equality cannot be reached, because the differences are not taken into full account.

Consequently, this paper advocates rationalizing the Principle of Sovereign Equality. Hierarchy exists extensively in international society. This is irrefutable. Yet hierarchy is not necessarily obstructive. To optimally harness the potential of hierarchy to impact positively

Yunzhen Xia, 'Discussing the dilemma of sovereign equality of States,' *Knowledge Economy*, no. 2, (2010), p. 179.

²⁰ Daniel A. Bell, 'Hierarchical Rituals for Egalitarian Societies,' in David Soloman, Ruiping Fan, Ping-cheung Lo (eds), *Ritual and Moral Life: Reclaiming the Tradition* (London: Springer, London 2012), p. 179.

on international relations, a new system needs to be designed that recognises reality while protecting every country's interest; thus preventing large states from intimidating small states. There is a need to pursue a balance between hierarchy and equality; power and right. Each country should find its position; no matter how big or small, weak or strong. A reasonable solution would be to use responsibility and contribution to define countries' respective roles and positions. The status of a country would correspond with the international responsibility it may, and can, take. Thus, the rationale of hierarchy is that a nation is powerful due to its capacity to be responsible for global affairs, and not simply based on its dominance as a hegemony.