



華東師範大學
EAST CHINA NORMAL UNIVERSITY

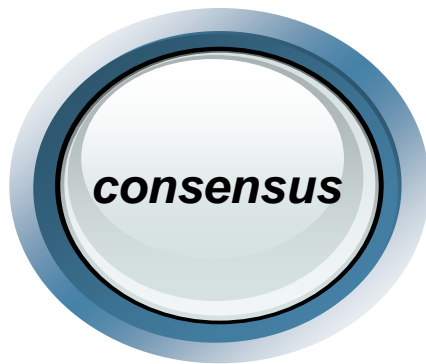
Consensuses Could be Reached for Different Reasons

Tong Shijun

(Department of Philosophy,
East China Normal University)



- ◇ “**Consensus**” is perhaps one of the most frequently used words these days, and very possibly just because there is a serious lack of consensuses both in international and domestic politics in our times.
- ◇ we may have already got some level of consensuses or some kind of consensuses, because **people can reach consensuses in quite different ways.**



convention



convergence



coercion

Consensus

- ◇ Consensuses are typically reached by people with each other willingly, self-consciously and on the basis of reasons.
- ◇ Reasons are inherently connected with consensuses, and that is why consensuses are different from conventions and so on.

- ◇ Consensuses are very often reached among different people on the basis of same reasons.
- ◇ The most typical case here is the consensuses reached among scientists on scientific problems.



They can be said to agree with each other not only when they accept a certain conclusion, but also when they draw the conclusion from same premises.



In late 1970s in China, Chinese people of all walks were aware of the necessity of eradicating the ideological and institutional elements that had led to the disastrous period of the Cultural Revolution.

But a certain consensus can also be reached among different people on the basis of different reasons, and this can be said in the following cases.



No.1

Different people can reach agreements on different types of issues.

No.2

Different people can reach agreements on a certain issue in different forms.

No.3

A certain social project can be accepted by people from different perspectives.

No.4

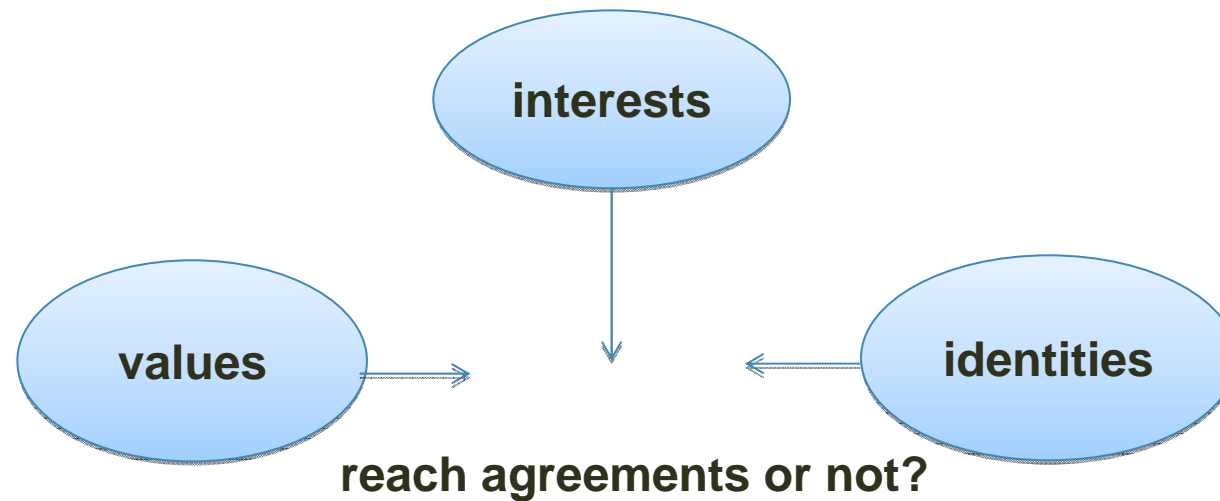
A certain conclusion can be reached from different premises.

No.5

Different people can try to reach an agreement again and again even if they may never be able to reach it.

No.1

Different people can reach agreements on different types of issues.



►the problem of “peasant workers” in China

No.2

Different people can reach agreements on a certain issue in different forms.

- ▶ They can reach agreement on issues of interests either in the form of mutual yielding or in the form of mutual benefiting, and **a more justifiable interest-relation between two parties is a mutual benefiting one.**
- ▶ They can reach agreements on issues of values either in the form of mutual tolerance or in the form of mutual understanding. **A more justifiable value-relation between two parties is a mutual understanding one.**
- ▶ They can reach agreements on issues of identity either in the form of co-existence or in the form of solidarity, and **a more justifiable identity relation between two parties is one based on solidarity instead of mere co-existence among people with different particular identities.**

No.3

A certain social project can be accepted by people from different perspectives.

Eg. the project of “socialist modernization with Chinese characteristics” in contemporary China

be accepted by:

those who are more appealed to by the vision of reviving the Chinese nation;

those who are more attracted by the idea of modernizing the Chinese society;

those who are more interested in the ideals of the socialist movement.

“China Model” or “China Story”

No.4

A certain conclusion can be reached from different premises.

Eg. Mencius and Xun Zi: **the importance of learning**



Xun Zi (**human beings are evil**)



Mencius(**human beings are good**)

No.5

Different people can try to reach an agreement again and again even if they may never be able to reach it.





華東師範大學
EAST CHINA NORMAL UNIVERSITY

Thank You!

