

Contemporary World in Transition: Politico-Social Movements of Inclusion and Exclusion

Yoshikazu Nakatani *

I. General symposium issues

This inter-college symposium was planned by the “Globalization and East Asia” team adjunct to the Institute of Ritsumeikan University. The planning group established the purpose of this symposium as part of an approach to the changing socio-economic configurations of East Asian countries and resulting changes in inter-relations among them. This plan is based on the awareness that the world is in the process of rapid transition following contemporary globalization. This project is primarily based on the recognition that social scientists should explain about globalizing society in which we live, where it stands in history, and what we should do. In addition, the planning group also intends to search for a path toward further mutual understanding and cooperation among East Asia countries in our international and inter-college symposium.

Whereas countries in East Asia are geographically contiguous and have kept close cultural relations from ancient times, antagonism and irritation have emerged from the deep underlying past negative legacy. With respect to these conditions and in consideration of the fact that each country in East Asia has both its own particularities and shares the contemporality of history in

* Professor Emeritus and Senior Researcher of Institute of Humanities, Human and Social Science at Ritsumeikan University.

international relations, the planning group established the following as our common topic: "A Comparative Approach to Socio-Economic Transition and Trends of Political Reintegration in East Asian Countries under Contemporary Globalization" and put forward the outline of the symposium as follows.

Socio-economic structures have been in transition under neoliberal globalization, and some problems have apparently erupted around the world. In these conditions, each country has been attempting to contrive new policies of national reintegration and a new international cooperation system. Supposing that the present burdens with which we are confronted require a response, we decided to hold this inter-college research conference.

Based on the summary presented above, we are living in a world burdened by a multilayered structure of tendencies and counter-tendencies as well as multifaceted contentions between traditional ideologies and counter-ideologies. I will attempt to cursorily explain some my basic points of view, in reference to our common topic.

II. Some Basic Concepts for an Approach to our Problems

Globalization represents the cross-bordering of territorialized socio-economic relations. Ongoing globalization is undermining the relatively cohesive formation of nation-states which is the fundamental organization of international relations. Thus, it forces a reconsideration of the correlation between the state and nationalism whose compound configuration is an integral constituent of the nation-state. In these present conditions, there have emerged many perplexing phenomena. We must reconsider the present

conditions from the perspective of the state and nationalism. Before embarking on an explanation of the emergence of socio-economic cleavages on a global scale, some basic concepts relevant to these problems should be defined, in my opinion, albeit briefly.

(1) State and Government

First, it is necessary to form a concept of the state and to explain why it is generally identified with government as a political apparatus. Although the concept of the state is polysemous owing to the polymorphism of its existence in time and space, statehood is ontologically a totality or a cohesive whole of political, socio-economic and cultural relations in a demarcated territory and is epistemologically representative of this relational entity. To put it differently, the entity of the statehood is composed of different kinds of socio-economic relations articulated by boundaries. The state is not a thing or an artificial person, but an abstract represented by a relational aggregate determined by extant socio-economic structures, and government is a figurative concrete of the state.

The political and social life of the capitalist state, at least formally, assumes the form of interdependent components of liberalism and democracy and appears as a container. On the other hand, the government is an agent of the state that articulates the given socio-economic relations into the demarcated statehood as a relatively independent relational entity. The state is usually identified with the government or power organization, because concept of the state is a political abstraction of the given socio-economic relations. This relational abstract cannot represent itself and is necessarily externalized by the government. The government practically provides a cohesiveness to these relations through law-making, executive works, and military-police functions.

Its particularity represents itself internally and externally in the concept of the state. This means that statehood could not exist without government. The concept of the state is a signifier of statehood exteriorized by government. The double connotation of the state emanates from the inseparability between statehood and government. In other words, a relational existence is concretely exemplified by a political apparatus. In this context, both have been traditionally used as interchangeable concepts, which means there is a necessity to dethrone the state in view of the relational approach.

Ongoing globalization is certainly a correlational movement across and beyond boundaries, and it has made the world system more intricate and interdependent than ever before. Nevertheless, it does not progress in a one-sided trajectory but, instead, entails a compound movement of divergence and convergence in resonance. Therefore, the introduction of a relational approach to state analysis is necessary to find clues to the dynamics and correlations among countries, which is indispensable for avoiding statism (*etatisme*) or the mythology of the state as reason (*Vernunft*). It is also necessary to not regard the state as a given actor in concrete analysis. In addition, this relational approach provides an incentive to find the causes of solidarity and antagonism among countries, because inter-state relations have been inferred from inter-personal relations within the state. Inter-state relations have been traditionally understood as expressions of intercourse across the state, whose configurations and concerns of the people are defined by the particularity of socio-economic relations and political regime of each state. Globalization, however, demands another approach to international relations.

(2) The nation (or National) State and Nationalism

Second, it is necessary to elucidate the concepts of nation-state and

nationalism in relation to our symposium. Needless to say, nation is composed of inhabitants in a given territory, and nationalism is psychologically and spiritually the most cohesive element of socio-economic relations in the state. A nation is a compound aggregate composed of a relatively homogeneous ethnic culture. Therefore, it appears as a communal entity, because dwellers have a common relation of identity based on emotional attachment mediated by a real and/or imaginary relation among them. A nation is also inseparably coupled with statehood as a relational entity. In other words, a nation cannot exist without a state. Therefore, the state appears as a nation-state. A relational ingredient demarcated by territory is conventionally expressed in the concept of nation-state, and it provides strong momentum in international politics. However, a nation-state is no more than an ideal-type and is generally composed of many nations (accordingly, a national state). It figures as an unstable equilibrium among ethnic groups under the hegemony of some dominant nation and inherently involves a predisposition of separation and a centrifugal propensity, which is generally endogenous in the compound state. Additionally, in times of social reformation, social cleavages surface as conflicts within the nation-state, especially in cases where the past negative legacy remains as a grudge or irredentism. These incidents are also discernible in antagonism between nation-states in connection with nationalism. Many such present antagonism can be traced back to the geopolitical divisions of the extant nation by dominant imperialist powers and a compromise between them concerning territory at the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that nationalism is an artificial emotion cultivated in time and space, whose configuration depends on a constellation of social forces and manipulation of political leaders as a subject of political power (*Machtkern*).

Nationalism is the most cohesive element for integration of inhabitants in

the territory and creates momentum to awaken identity among them, because ethnicity, among others, represents the commonness of indigenous culture and works as a symbolic effect of nation. Ideological contours of nationalism are framed in time and space, and recognition of its particularity is formed through self-confirmation in encounters with other nations. It goes without saying that affection for the given regime is remarkably revived in times of transition. Patriotism is an extension of affection for one's native country, but it is not synonymous with statism. Statism appears when the state is idealized as a myth abstracted from its relational substance, and it has a self-subsistent impetus in combination with an authoritative element. In this vein, the inclusion of the national community is inclined toward exclusionism in the name of the "national interest." However, "interest" refers to not only economic material concerns but also political and/or cultural concerns. Additionally, exclusionism entails the liability of inviting a self-caused sacrifice, because it induces other nations' counter-movements and opposition. On the other hand, nationalism has the potential to inspire internationalism, because the consciousness of particularity entails a reflexive self-recognition that demands cooperation with others. Given the tenacity of nationalism, it is necessary to connect it with democracy.

Nationalism and Publicity The national interest is assumed to be a general concern of nationhood. Although national interest is just an artificial element to integrate the people into a nation, its connotation and efficacy should be reconsidered in terms of ideas and practice.

National interest is inseparably related to the concept of publicity (*Öffentlichkeit*), because personal interest can only be realized in the public sphere, and its domain is typically described in fundamental law. Therefore, there arises the significance of democracy in theory and practice. Put

differently, “freedom” is certainly connected with democracy and would be void without the concept of social relations. We can amplify the concept of publicity to the global level of developmental democracy in ongoing globalization.

Still, it is important that nationalism is not isolated. It connects with other ideologies, and has social valence as long as it receives support from another dominant ideology. In this respect, it is important to reconsider the relation between nationalism and democracy. In addition, we can retrospectively recall that nationalism in prewar Japan was its ethno-nationalistic character, which assumed paternalistic-Confucianist authoritarianism connected inseparably with deification of the Emperor. The regime transformed into imperialist militarism and induced the incumbent government to invade Asian countries to resolve the accumulated internal contradictions. By contrast, the nationalism of Western Europe is typically based on the tradition of liberal nationalism.

III. Liberalism and Neoliberalism

It has been pointed out that contemporary globalization has a close connection with neoliberalism. Therefore, the third point is to outline the concept of neoliberalism in the genealogy of liberalism, albeit briefly. Liberalism is a fundamental principle or basic value of the capitalist state and an essential element for articulating socio-economic and political relations in a capitalist state.

Liberal ideology was an original motive power for liberation from the feudal system and has been embedded in a substratum for (re) production of capitalist relations as a meta-ideology of the liberal democratic state. Liberalism is overdetermined in the economic, cultural and political matrix of

the capitalist state. Under this principle, the rule of law is presupposed as a doctrine of order in contrast to rule by person, and the rule by the ruled is a principle of democracy, although it is complicated in theory and practice.

In Anglo-American intellectual history, political liberalism was translated from ancient republicanism and constructed as constitutionalism. Economic liberalism has been manifoldly transformed in the historical context. Its metamorphosis is mainly caused by the need to make changes in response to the changing contours of capitalism, as is apparent in its designation as classical liberalism, social liberalism, neoliberalism and so on. In other words, liberalism has been obliged to demonstrate its flexibility in resonance with the oscillation of capitalism (or market society). Such flexibility originates in the inherent principle of liberalism which traditionally means freedom of individuals, including artificial persons. Needless to say, while market society is based on free competition for profit, it cannot work without some political institutions supporting its functions.

Neoliberalism is also the contemporary variant of liberalism, which originated in the need to convert the accumulated contradictions into a new order after the golden age of the postwar era. Its project is reorganization of the state apparatus and socio-economic relations according to the fundamental principles of a market society. Neoliberalism brought about a makeover of the welfare state, with the emergence of workfare, discernible in austerity policies of social welfare and flexicurity in labor. Neoliberal globalism has been closely related with a structural adjustment policy whose initiative was first assumed by international organizations in concurrence with summit meetings of developed countries.

While a nation-state is limited in space, the liberal democracy based on it has, at least in principle, a valence that can develop around the world.

However, it is noteworthy that when the liberal nationalism of a specific state is regarded as a universal principle, it induces a messianic expansionism on the pretext of its supremacy, as exemplified by American exceptionalism. We can, however, find its fragility in the ongoing recovery movement of Trumpism (“Make America great again”). On the other hand, China is rising in the world economy, despite having many contradictions of its own. Contentions over authoritarian populism in South America are apparently owing to economic troubles and dissatisfaction among the people. Additionally, the EU is under reconstruction provoked by Brexit. Moreover, Central East and Africa are in an unstable condition. Given this nebulous situation, the world is in search of a new world order.

IV. Emergence of a Social Fault Line under ongoing Globalization

As a prelude to our common issue, this paper has so far introduced some basic concepts related to our common issue. It is now necessary to explain some noteworthy concerns of our time, based on the remarks above.

“Fragmegration” is a term coined to designate the contemporary globalization characteristic of conversion and diversion. In other words, globalization entails a compound movement of attraction and repulsion, or the dynamics of centrifugal and centripetal movements. We can discern such a double movement in globalism and neo-populism. The latter assumes neo-nationalism, and both are inextricably intertwined in the nation-state. Neo-nationalism is emerging as neo-populism which appeals to nationalism

Neo-populism A nation is the ethnic expression of a relational entity in the territory, and its political will must be expressed as the people’s will. Therefore, the collective will of a nation appears as a representation of

populistic nationalism prescribed by historical conditions.

On the other hand, the regime of representative (indirect) democracy entails an oppositional component of rule by the people and government by representatives, based on popular (national) sovereignty. It implicitly entails a unity-in-contradiction in the sense that the ruled, at least formerly, are the rulers in an indirect (or representative) democracy. This tense relation inherent in representative democracy is not generally recognized in accustomed conditions. But the transitional period awakens self-consciousness to carefully examine the given regime. There appears as two faces of actual and formal political agents in a real political system; that is, populistic and popularist elements in a delegate system. The former is a direct and participatory element, while the latter is a representative one in which the government has been understood as a “government for the people,” rather than a “government by the people.” This is an unavoidable state of affairs in the representative democracy of a nation-state.

Populistic elements in representative democracy appear in two faces at the transitional conjuncture, whether it is left- or right-wing. Neo-populism attempts to interrogate the image of representative democracy in the nation-state and places an emphasis on the equivalency between electors and the elected in an appeal to the nation and the people. It has strong valence, because the nation and people are a fundamental substratum of the modern state. Therefore, populism also has two faces: right and left in political movement. However, it should be emphasized that populism should be examined according to the character of political ideas and agents, including its support base in the social category.

When a majority party or coalition cabinet cannot canalize the discontent and anxiety of electors into its support in the period of social transition,

populism, whether left or right, erupts as a social movement. In addition, neo-liberal conservatives can resonate with a movement of right-wing neo-populists, so long as both groups are concurrent in their suspicion of the welfare state and social democratic public policy, in opposition to left-wing neo-populists, who assume a social democratic tendency. In these current trends, neo-populism, whether left or right, enjoys popularity around the world.

These remarkable trends have become apparent in the right-wing neo-populism of Europe and Trumpism in the US (“populist explosion”). This conspicuous trend of the present day assumes political expression fraught with the propensity for authoritarian exclusionism. It divides people into two groups in a very simplified rhetoric of dichotomy which differentiates one’s own nation from others in the national interest. Right-wing neo-populism is deeply connected with a discourse of national interest as is confirmable in the strong opposition to immigration. We are encountering a paradoxical phase in exclusion and inclusion under globalization, which is to be reconsidered in terms of democratic governance.

Populist nationalism Formation of nation is a sort of mobilization of bias in reference to others, and nationalism is a substratum of the nation-state connected with a “popular (national) sovereignty”. The global explosion of populism is a repercussion of the interactive development between a reorganization of international production system and its subsequent reshaping of domestic socio-economic orders. As neoliberal globalization provoked the supranational (emi) immigration of labor forces and capital flight, its impact brought latent social fissures to the surface. The middle class and “poor whites” in declining areas of industry feel the threat of immigration from abroad. This is discernible in the movements of chauvinistic exclusionism

connected with populist nationalism that have been spreading like wildfire as counter-movements to globalism. Additionally, disputes over the international trade agreement have become tangible, as is apparent in the EU and regional economic partnerships. Moreover, the cry for the autonomy of ethnic groups has arisen in areas that were scramble for colonies and were geographically divided without consideration on ethnic uniformity. Among others, difficulties of policy adjustment among developed countries have arisen with the ascending position of China in world politics. Considering only these contemporary nationalistic trends, the world is unstable in connection with geopolitical and geoeconomic changes after globalization.

Although it is prevalent to speak of de-nationalization or de-statization in a political space, populist nationalism rolls back its momentum in times of globalism or regionalism. The reconstruction of statehood in international relations demands a reconsideration of ethnic nationalism. We are living in an age of tendencies and counter-tendencies characteristic of inclusion and exclusion in both external and internal relations. This means that nationalism needs to be integrated into a concept of global democracy based on the domestic democratization of each country; otherwise, populist nationalism is likely to fall into the exclusionism of others. On the other hand, there also appears the theory of global democracy. It reflects recognition of common problems beyond borders.

V. Political Trends in Contemporary Japan

The postwar politico-economical regime of Japan has developed in two compound basic axes: capitalistic development in the economy and the military alliance with the US. The former is an endogenous element, while the

latter is an exogenous one imposed by the Japan-US Security Treaty. These basic elements have pre-eminently prescribed the basic course of the postwar politico-economic development of Japan. But the military pact involves a latent discrepancy of the three basic principles of the Japanese Constitution. Its core principle is the right to live in peace and is epitomized in a conjoined expression of basic human rights, permanent pacifism and national (popular) sovereignty.

Economic development has been generally advanced under the state project to advance capitalism. However, discrepancies between the principles of the Constitution and the military alliance have often appeared in the development of the US world strategy, and the incumbent party in power has been repeatedly impelled to alter the Constitution. This is also relevant to the present political conditions, which result in the propensity to build a strong state based on authoritarian nationalism rather than on democracy.

First, a series of laws related to security and types of espionage was enacted under the pretext of aggression from abroad. Second, in connection with this political project, the lawmaking of collective self-defense was developed, although it has been traditionally regarded as unconstitutional. This connotes that the executive substitutes itself for parliament by means of interpreting the law. In other words, it connotes the increasing delegation of mandates to the executive. Third, there are trends toward historical revisionism related to the negative stigma associated with the Japanese imperialistic invasion during the Second World War, which has been lingering in the consciousness of conservatives. The traditionalists of the governing party recognize the necessity to erase this stigma to reconstruct patriotism through the retrospective values latent in the Japanese patriarchal-paternalistic culture. Fourth, the structure of national finance relies on a huge debt that is nothing

less than the postponement and imposition of its burdens on future generations. Fifth, austerity policy in the neoliberal ideology incurs 'flexicurity' and 'workfare' projects, as is the case for other developed countries of the world. These policies are also deeply connected with the state project to build a state of economic competition.

Although these contradictions are likely to lead to populist mobilization, there is definitely no populist third party in Japan, albeit there is a similar one. The incumbent party holds a relative majority supported by a firm electoral base and the people's hope for "trickle-down effects" in the reinforcement of a competition state. However, there is the possibility for populist politics with a right-wing propensity to emerge in the case that some opposition parties do not successfully form a coalition at election around the core principles of the Constitution. Parenthetically, it should be added that the principles of the Constitution are the means for the present reform.

There remains a strong conspicuous trend and consciousness to maintain the fundamental principles of the right to live in peace and welfare guaranteed by the Constitution. The political controversy over the Constitution produces an indescribable image abroad. Postwar Japanese politics over the Constitution have been depicted as a "strange" political typology, because conservatives have insistently claimed amendments to the Constitution, while progressives have declined them. In other words, the former appears progressive, and the latter demands the preservation of its principles. Contention about amendments to the Constitution will continue to be one of the critical issues, because interpretation of its principles determines the future of Japan and its relations with other countries.

VI. Some Concluding Remarks

The world is likely searching for an alternative order in the age of a declining world hegemon. The present conditions can be briefly epitomized as movements of exclusion and inclusion around the world; simultaneous movement toward the exclusion of outsiders and the inclusion of insiders. These trends come into view as a compound movement in domestic politics and international confrontation over the world hegemony. The world is full of paradoxes in that particularity is co-occurring with generality at both national and global levels.

Contemporary globalization certainly brings about the need to reconsider intersubjectivity from the relational view of subject-object interrelation. This means that it demands a reconsideration of the causes of threat and anxiety around us and a relativization of the impact of one nation's behavior in relation to others. Put differently, while we are living in growing intersubjectivity under the ongoing globalization, there emerges a tendency toward a "double movement" of exclusion and inclusion, which implies a paradoxical movement of inclusive and exclusive developments of inter-relations under globalization for political reintegration. It can be found in the neo-populistic tendencies of Euroscepticism and Trumpism. On the other hand, there emerges an awareness of the need to make governance able to cope with global issues such as climate change, refugees, terrorism, peril of nuclear weapons, and so on. Considering these imperative problems to be solved, we should not remain indifferent to the present crucial conditions of the world. Even these conditions can be legitimized on the pretext of national interest, they cannot be justified to future generations of each nation and of the world.

The theory of global democracy appears cogently, although it is thought

experiment. However, it could not be apposite for theory and practice without taking nation-state and nationalism into consideration. A transnational organization is not independent from the state, and the latter remains the fundamental entity of international politics. Accordingly, a theory of global democracy that excludes the people in the nation-state would be rootless.

It is also noteworthy that political democracy cannot take a firm hold without the creative spontaneity and communality of individuals in their way of life. For the creation of democratic nationalism, it is indispensable to democratize the internal way of life in external relations between the constituents of each nation-state, because nationalism is a reflexive consciousness of self-identification through others. Therefore, it is necessary for the democratization of nationalism to relativize the internal socio-economic relations in connection with other nations and in dialogue with the present and the past. These national dispositions induce transactions among individuals and nations, rather than actions or interactions among them, because they necessitate a higher consensus that will be progressively reached through the exchange of controversial opinions in mutual recognition and from a perspective of democracy.

Based on the above remarks, it is demanded that a reconfirmation of the identification of each nation should be based on an awareness of the interdependence of nations. It is also necessary to democratize the given socio-economic relations at multiple levels that shape the configuration of each statehood, and to develop liberal democracy, because it denotes political inclusion and participation based on civil liberties in the state. The development of democracy is based on a unity-in-contradiction, in which the unified will of the people is incessantly constructed under the pressure of the autonomy of society. For these principles to be related to a perspective of

developmental democracy, there is also the need to cooperate in social solidarity beyond boundaries, a project that necessitates the advancement of a co-active movement between people of different countries under ongoing globalization.

This paper may address many fallacies and misconceptions, but I hope that our common topic can involve a positive message through which the negative legacy of the past in East Asia can be transformed in the future. This introductory paper concludes with the hope that this symposium will be a good occasion for coordination and solidarity among us, recalling the indescribable victims of the previous war and their earnest desire for peace.

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