

The Changing Contours of “Stateness” and Prospects for Democracy under Neoliberal Globalization*

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Abstract : This paper sets out to differentiate among connotations of political concepts concerning the state so that we may better understand the changing contours of statehood under contemporary neoliberal globalization. More particularly, it introduces the concept of “stateness” which can help us grasp ongoing de(re)articulation of socio-economic relations through the transformation of liberalism. Additionally, it explores the potency of the state in visions for democracy.

The paper consists of five sections. It starts from a differentiation of concepts concerning the state on the grounds that it is necessary to distinguish between the particularities of each state. Second, it ideal-typically traces the difference of “stateness” in the US and Japan to illustrate its meaning in state theory. Third, as capitalism and liberalism have an inseparable, co-evolutional relation, the paper sketches the genealogy of liberalism, and summarizes its successive phases: protective, reformative and neoliberal. In the fourth section, regarding the regime shift of the contemporary capitalist state, the paper investigates some characteristics of neoliberal state, and in conclusion, emphasizes the relative autonomy of the state rather than its decline, and stresses the continuing importance of the state as a foothold for internal and worldwide democratization in theory and practice.

I. Introduction

Neoliberal globalization has given an additional impetus to the compression of transboundary socio-economic relations and has not yet lost its momentum. We are living in a “Time of Transition” in which neoliberal reconstruction of the world has been significantly reforming the internal constitution of each state and correspondingly the mutual relations between them. The changing contours of international relations have also posed a new set of problems to be solved globally.

Contingent conjunctions of the socio-economic relations in history have resulted in

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particular configurations of statehood. In an analytical approach to the contemporary state, it is necessary to differentiate the concept of “stateness” from the state and statehood so that we can analyze the present restructuring of social formation under ongoing globalization. Although almost all states can be broadly understood by employing the concept of the capitalist state, each “nation (or national) state” has a particular configuration owing to variations of its formation in time and space. Such a variegation apparent in “stateness” is due to the different modes of articulations of socio-economic and cultural dimensions by state power, and a country-specific political culture also constitutes a particular socio-political structure. This is recognizable, for example, in the dissimilarity of state formation between the US and Japan. Put differently, social formation is a contingent and particular articulation of the socio-economic relations in given historical conditions, and such a creation requires some principle or ideology to sustain it, in recognition of the actual and incessant possibility of conflicts and cleavages in society. Consequently ongoing neoliberal reconstruction of social conditions has a particular tendency and counter-tendency in each state. Stateness is an analytical concept which can help us understand variations in statehood in the context of the present reformation of socio-economic relations under neoliberalism. It is important to dissect the mechanism of the social structure in each state and to classify the (dis)similarity of its form. The concept of stateness is a heuristic tool for discerning the (dis)similarity in articulation of socio-economic dimensions under ongoing neoliberal globalization and for making a typological-topological map of the changing contours of each state.

The nation (national) state is a relational entity bounded by territory. State apparatus has incorporated some ethno-cultural communities into the statehood, and has infiltrated some hegemonic ideology into the society. In addition, inhabitants in a given territory have mutated themselves into a political “people” through the concept of citizenship. One means of social integration and political legitimation in the liberal democratic state has been the incorporation of social sectors or sociological categories into a social formation via an extension of the suffrage and the representation of interest groups. Nationalism arose as a consciousness of an imagined community in the co-evolutional process of state- and nation-building. In these complex conjunctures in history, the concepts of population, nation, and statehood have assumed an interchangeable connotation under a comprehensive notion of the state. In other words, the state is an abstracted expression of the given politico-economic and socio-cultural relations. In these contexts, the state appears as an element of cohesion, and the governing apparatus in statehood emerges as a concretization of such an abstraction and speaks on behalf of the relational entity and in the “national interest”. In a relational approach, it should not be recognized that the state is dissolving into a world state. But, the state is changing its internal configurations under ongoing neoliberal globalization. These transformations are mainly caused by changes of socio-economic relations and political attempts to alter them by the government. The state remains a core of cohesion in each country and is a constituent of international relations. Put metaphorically, the state is a “container” of territorialized relations

and a “power-connector” of international ones. We can, therefore, use the state and are obliged to have recourse to it as an indispensable foothold for the further democratization of social relations and for the hopeful prospect of global democracy because the world system is an interdependent complex composed of micro-, meso-, and macro-levels. Any project of global democracy, even only as an “experiment in thought,” is inseparably related to these levels, although needless to say, the democratization of each state is primary in respect of the self-rule by the people of that state.

II. An Ideal-Typical Comparison of Stateness between the US and Japan

The fundamental attribute of capitalism is a profit seeking economic system which is mediated through the market based on fictitious commodities including labor power, and capitalism is basically systematized in the state, albeit connected by cross-national linkages beyond national boundaries. In this respect, every capitalist state is the same, although each has its own particular configurations. Taking the view that each trait of a social formation comes from the different conjunctions of institutions and ideology, the difference in state formation between the US and Japan would appear to be relevant to an explanation of stateness. So, their distinctive features will be ideal-typically explained in the following section.

First, the US is a compound state comprising of 50 states and some territories, in contrast to Japan, which is a unitary state. In the case of the US, state formation has occurred as a union of sub-states constituted from a relatively autonomous entity. Put differently, the US is a state of 50 states. And this feature of having its own inter-state relations has been reflected in a particular view of the world and the propensity to see international relations by analogy with its own state formation. This inclination will supposedly lead to an expansionistic disposition to be taken for granted.

Second, in terms of the concept of state form, the US is regarded as a republic in contrast with Japan, which is a variant of constitutional monarchy. Third, corresponding to the state form, the US has adopted the dual representation of Congress and the presidential system, whereas Japan has adopted a unitary parliamentary cabinet system like the UK, and its bureaucracy has traditionally had a strong influence in policy-making. These features of the political regime are assumed to be a remnant of the pseudo-constitutionalism and militarism which was based on absolute loyalty to the Emperor and the quasi-feudalistic landlord system. These absolutist elements inherent in the prewar Japanese regime were forcefully eliminated during the post-war occupation, and in the present Constitution the Emperor is restricted to being a symbol of the state without any political power.

As alluded to very briefly above, institutional constituents of the state are certainly an essential factor in the composition of stateness. But we cannot ignore the fundamental principle or ideology which articulates the socio-economic elements into a unity as the

statehood because ideology or principle is a constituent that (re)constructs the socio-economic relations into the state. Without any such ideology or principle, politics would be irrelevant. Ideology is the frame of reference for inducing a concurrent or opposite way of thinking about the society, and some hegemonic ideology generally works as an article of faith or *Weltanschauung* in its relative autonomy. Accordingly, ideology is not only a determining form of the society but also determined by the society.

Ideology is an idea (*Idee*) of society which reflexively expresses itself in the variable form of a politico-social formation. It is just a form of soft power, but assumes the guise of hard power as “common sense”. As the dominant ideology infiltrates the society and is imbedded deep in the subconscious of the given inhabitants, common sense is an expression of a hegemonic ideology, albeit accompanying a varied counter-hegemonic one.

Liberalism is a native ideology of the US. It is a founding principle of the Republic rather than a theory to control the government as it is in Western European thought. Liberation (independence) is the birth certificate of the US. The idea of a liberal republic has been firmly inscribed in its indigenous political belief. Liberalism in America is an essential constituent which integrates the multinational-multiracial faceted country into a cohesive entity, whereas the hegemonic ideology of prewar Japan was based on an organic concept of society, undifferentiated from the state ruled by the Emperor who was regarded as an incarnation of transcendental deity, and its imperialist expansion was justified by an application of Social Darwinism to East Asia under the fabrication of a concord among five nations.

Capitalism has developed in an inseparable relation with liberalism, and, as illustrated in the next section, liberalism has been revised whenever deemed necessary and in response to the transformation of capitalism. In the political culture of the US, American society has always been assumed to be in a process of incessant self-development. This has resulted in a propensity to conjure up America’s “past” in order to infer the “present”, and to reflexively project the “present” into the “future”. Such a general propensity to find a identity in national memory has been underling in American political culture. And there has been little discrepancy between domestic and foreign policies in American politics; both have been integrated in the belief of Manifest Destiny as a “chosen nation”, which is no more than the promulgation of its liberal democratic system beyond its boundaries through infiltration of its hegemony, and even the resort to force when necessary. The concept of imperial American exceptionalism should be grasped in these politico-economic and ideological contexts.

The postwar world restarted amidst the appalling devastation caused by the Second World War and it was reconstructed under a Pax Americana. Japan was incorporated in this during the US occupation and its politico-social structures were transformed, although some reactionary elements remained dominant within them. In the wake of the Cold War, however, Japanese politics was forced to change in accordance with American military and foreign policies. This resulted in the coexistence of two glaringly inconsistent ordinances: the Constitution and the military treaty with America. One of the deep-rooted confrontations in Japanese politics stems

from the contradiction between the principles of the Constitution on the one hand and the duty to observe the military alliance with America on the other. This has given rise to a situation in which reformists try to conserve the Constitution whereas conservatives tenaciously try to reform it. Such a coexistence in conflict is a political configuration in Japan, and it may appear strange to foreigners because the political position of each is generally reversed.

Liberalism is inseparably related to the capitalist system, and individual liberalism has been traditionally inscribed in American belief as a kind of civic religion. On the other hand, owing to Japan’s nation-building Japanese nationalism has a propensity to be absorbed into statism by state power from above, and has been bolstered by an entrenched mental climate in which local patriotism is conjured up and imagined into nationalism, or more appropriately, statism. These political cultures are a thin kind of liberalism in relation to state power, but thick in conjunction with the state project for (re)constitution of the capitalist-system. Such a tendency is more or less discernible in East Asian countries although there are differences in its respective constellations.

III. A Brief Genealogy of Liberalism

The base value of liberalism is, to be sure, “freedom”. But freedom has notoriously escaped easy definition in spite of being an everyday word. One of the reasons for its kaleidoscopic character is traceable to the mutual relation between liberalism and capitalism and the way they have co-evolved interdependently. This is recognizable in the habit of adding the prefix “neo” (or “new”) to liberalism owing to the necessity to make it applicable to the altering conditions of capitalism. Capitalism has developed in conjunction with liberalism whose core tenets have been inter-subjectively rooted in a habitual praxis.

Politics and society are relatively separate from one another in the capitalist state, and each is relatively autonomous in its organization and function. This relative autonomy originates in the separation of *productionsmittle* (means of production) and labor power, but this separation is relative, not absolute, and both are integrated in the capitalist state. This means that the liberal capitalist state can keep its unity in functional specialization. The relative autonomy of the state enables it to independently make a varied response to latent as well as actual conflicts with policies to dislocate them in time and space. There is no guarantee that these policies bring a favorable outcome, however, because the situations are always in flux.

Although socio-economic relations also have a relative autonomy from the state apparatus and are subject to a particular mechanism, they cannot exist without a politico-legal order institutionalized by the state, in other words, by an extra-economic compulsion. Structuralization of the socio-economic relations and their rectification by the state is inevitable although the scope and limits of state intervention always depend on a contingent necessity in history.

(1) Protective Liberalism

Regarding the views mentioned above, liberalism in politics has mutated itself in response to the historical transformation of capitalism. This means that the development of the capitalist state entails a co-evolution with the transformation of liberalism. Its malleability emanates from the necessity of managing the discrepancy between the hope for the development of individual capacities and the golden rule of commodity. Accordingly, the capitalist state has developed in two directions and assumed two faces : a minimum state and an interventionist one. Liberalism has changed its features with a sort of pendular swing in which the state has also changed its political functions as a matter of contingent necessity. The minimum state can be characterized as a *supervisor* of society, while the interventionist state may be understood typically as an *administrator* of society, although the principle of profit-seeking mediated through the market runs through both like a red thread. More accurately, liberty of possession, whether by individuals or artificial persons, underlies the capitalist system as an essential principle. The flexibility of liberalism in the capitalist state consequently has a close connection with the shifting configurations of capitalist society, and a desire to realize the conditions completely free from constraints by the state will paradoxically provoke a strong state willing to apply overt coercion for its purpose. There are limits to how far the pendulum of liberalism can swing, and its movement depends on the intensity and tenacity of social conflicts and on the necessity for the development of the socio-economic infrastructure by the state project. We can identify a periodization of liberalism according to its metamorphosis in history : protective liberalism in the formative phase, reformative liberalism in the transformative phase, and neoliberalism in the era of ongoing globalization.

In Western intellectual history, liberalism has its origins in the application of natural science to social theory in which an individual was assumed to be a basic constituent of society like an atom as a single entity in the physical world, and an associative community was regarded as an aggregate of utilitarian persons. Such a “possessive individualism”¹⁾ was optimistically presupposed to be the spontaneous source of economic movement for social development. Protective liberalism in political thought was connected with a relative autonomy of society in opposition to the absolutist state. As a result, intervention in society was generally regarded negatively as meddling by the state, albeit within a legal framework, to settle conflicts among possessive individuals. Liberalism, however, mutated itself into a corporate form after the organized production of the means of production became possible under capitalism.

(2) Reformative Liberalism

The capitalist state structurally began to change its configurations from the 4th quarter

1) C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*, 1962, reissued with an Introduction by Frank Cunningham, Oxford University Press, 2011.

of the 19th century onward under the tendency towards monopolization in the economy and territorial expansion by the state. The beginning of the 20th century was also a transitional period that witnessed the transformation from a rural-agricultural community to an urban-industrial one. These changing conditions of Anglo-American society caused an expansion of transaction and an eruption of groups in society. There also appeared an acute anomy about the future. In addition, the industrializing states were under the strong pressure of imperial expansionism. These contingencies urged reformation of socio-economic relations from above. So-called social imperialism encouraged the mutation of protective liberalism into an interventionist liberalism as part of the structural transformations of society and the consequent transfigurations of social forces.

Intervention in socio-economic relations became strikingly prominent in the UK and the US. This has been called a reform liberalism or progressive liberalism, and its distinguishing features can be characterized as a combination of interventionism by the state and the social control of individuals by groups, for in the age of organization the “group” began to be regarded as the basic constituent of society rather than the individual. The English version of liberalism in this period has been called a “new liberalism” which appeared in opposition to conservatism and socialism as a necessity for social policy based on an idealistic theory of the state. On the other hand, the American version is a theory of “interest group liberalism”, and the American vision of social integration was connected with a selective regulation policy against the selfish aggrandizement of major corporations. There appeared, however, a discrepancy between a sort of corporatism and a traditional individualism in American political thought. The antinomy of both has been solved by the concept of social control in which the interests of individuals may be assumed to be realized by the shared attitude in a group. Consequently, society has been regarded as an aggregate of manifold interest groups composed of overlapping memberships, and a political decision is considered to be a result of pressure from these interest groups on government. These politico-social visions are congruent with a pluralistic perception of American society and a nascent philosophy of pragmatism.

Liberalism in the UK and the US were both characterized by the reformations of socio-economic relations by state intervention. In addition, the compound regime of Fordism and Keynesianism from the 1930s onward became a prevalent trend in the (re)production of economy and fiscal policy in America, and in these historical contexts, protective liberalism became a conservative liberalism, albeit tenaciously maintaining a foothold in political culture as individual liberalism.

(3) The Rise of Neoliberalism

Reformative liberalism was generally imbedded in the socio-economic systems of capitalist states under Pax Americana. Although its configurations entailed a certain variation in response to the outstanding particularities of the postwar conditions of each state, it had a

close relation with the project to reconstruct the capitalist world under the hegemony of America and in opposition to the erstwhile socialist world. Accordingly, postwar reformative liberalism also took on the hallmark of Cold War liberalism.

Interventionist welfare policies under the Fordist-Keynesian regime had, however, reached a stalemate caused by a gradual accumulation of economic contradictions during the postwar *belle époque*. These problems became prominent as a dollar crisis and stagnation in the 1960s, and led to the theory of “crisis of crisis management” or “crisis of legitimacy” based on a growing distrust of government among electors²⁾. In addition, there appeared an assertion of “ungovernability” caused by the overloaded government³⁾. Reducing inputs (demands) that were beyond the capacity of the political system to deal with was recommended as a strategy for resolving the unstable situation, and public choice theory demanded the introduction of a 3E policy (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) for the reorganization of government. In these contingencies, privatization of governmental functions became an aim of the state project, and there appeared cooperative governance between public and private domains with a devolution of some governing functions to quasi-autonomous nongovernmental organizations (Quangos).

Rearrangements of socio-economic relations have been closely related to neoliberal globalization because they were a response to an increasing interdependency among nation-states as well as to the state project to build a “strong state” in the competitive-exclusive world. Neoliberalism has been a discourse about rationality in governability for the further globalization of socio-economic relations. But, a tendency toward a “competitive state” inevitably entails numerous conflicts among states. The annual Summit meeting, which started at Rambouillet in 1973, shows the necessity of reaching agreements among the leading capitalist states. The concept of “structural adjustment” is an expression of this. And we can also recognize the conspicuous growth of supranational and cross-border organizations from the 1970s onward in the form of IGOs and INGOs.

The neoliberalization of socio-economic relations is none other than a transformation of reformative liberalism into a “post-interventionist liberalism” in political thinking. The shift to neoliberalism is, however, not a retroliberalism, but a new liberal discourse on society, and it has emphasized the reorganization of society in accordance with the fundamental principle of the market in place of the administration of society by the state. This strategy involves a two-pronged policy for a response to and an advance for ongoing globalization. The core principle is epitomized in the buzz phrase, “liberalization, privatization, and deregulation” as exemplified in the “Washington Consensus.”

The neoliberal creed is resonant with the theories of *Ordoliberalen* in the erstwhile West Germany and political economists of the Chicago School. Although to begin with their ideas

2) C. Offe, *Contradictions of the Welfare State*, MIT Press, 1984.

3) M. Crozier, S. P. Huntington, J. Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, New York University Press, 1975.

did not gain so much attention except as a clear refutation of totalitarianism, the Mon Pelerin Society (Société du Mont Pèlerin, founded in 1947) and some major conservative think tanks continued to disseminate a neoliberal ideology, and Reaganomics and Thatcherism basically followed neoliberal socio-economic policy as another accumulation strategy.

A distinguishing aspect of *Ordoliberalen* is its theory of social market economy (*Soziale Marktwirtschaft*) in which the relation between the social nature of market and the competitiveness of entrepreneurship is designed to be integrated into a company-oriented society. The social vision of the Chicago School is an economic constitutionalism aimed at constructing a market-centered society. Put differently, a profit-oriented culture should be imbedded in society, and an innovative entrepreneurship was regarded as a mechanism for economic development. Both visions of the capitalist state share a common attribute in regard to the reduction of public spending caused by governmental intervention in society, albeit involving considerable differences in social policy for keeping order in economy.

As neoliberalism acceleratingly gained ground, labor power was increasingly regarded as a cost rather than a source of demand. One of the economic principles of neoliberalism is based on the concept of “*homo economicus*” having some property. In the theory of human capital, labor power is assumed to be a commodity at the disposal of each laborer, and laborers are compared to entrepreneurs because of their inherent capacity to sell their labor power. Although such an assumption is only a fiction without any basis in the reality of economic relations, it has a considerable cogency on account of the rationales it provides for capitalism. In these theoretical contexts, neoliberalism urges the reconstruction of socio-economic relations in accordance with the principle of market economy and the infiltration of this market principle into society as a common culture. Corresponding to neoliberalism and due to the necessity of reorganizing socio-economic relations, there appeared greater flexibility in employment and a reduction of welfare spending by government.

Neoliberalism has a deep affinity with the “Washington Consensus” because both share the vision of (de)rearticulating socio-economic relations by embedding the principle of free market fundamentalism in society and the economy. Its project has led to another phase of liberalism owing to the practical necessity to respond to ongoing globalization.

IV. Co-Evolution with Market Fundamental Liberalism

Whether large or small, “social space” is a limited expanse of socio-economic relations and will have relevance only when arranged in some system. “Territory” is a socio-political space in the given state and is demarcated as an aggregate of multilayered relations. Each state has a particular legal system and political institutions, but, its autonomy is only relative because the nation-state is only relevant in multi-tiered relations among nation-states. A relational social space called “territory” is not, therefore, a closed autarky, but located in world relations that are constantly shifting.

Social “scale” has, whether dense or sparse, a relevancy in some systematization of relations. Statehood is an aggregate of various social scales in the given space, and its entity is a contingent result of internal and external relations within and beyond borders. Accordingly, social relations extend beyond and/or across the limits of the state, and are a dialectical result of subjective and objective moments. Globalization has been a very long process in history, albeit one accompanied by deep hiatuses and interruptions. Contemporary globalization has been inspired by neoliberal ideology and spurred by the IT revolution. As this is not a revolution in fuel, but in intelligence, one of its distinctive attributes is the compression of time and space beyond borders. But, it is a sort of “technological fetishism” to see a homogenization of social relations in IT, and its dynamics are unavoidably connected with the expansionist propensity of capitalism to spread the (re)production relations beyond the given limits and to dislocate its inherent conflicts and contradictions in time and space. Accordingly, neoliberal globalization has both negative as well as positive implications for democracy, as we will consider later.

As mentioned above, the capitalist system has a profound connection with liberalism, and liberalism has been forced to mutate its attributes into forms suitable for the prevailing capitalist system. Such a covariation has brought a regime shift in the state because social coherence is more or less dependent on a coincidental articulation of socio-economic relations by state apparatuses. Taking these considerations into account, it would be fair to say that the contemporary capitalist state has a general tendency to reorganize the social formation into a market-oriented one. We may regard the contemporary form of the capitalist state as a market fundamental one. These propensities appear in the levels of socio-economic infrastructure and of governmental organizations. Some features of the regime shift under neoliberal globalization are summarized as follows.

First, more emphasis has been laid on individualistic liberalism under the hegemony of corporate liberalism. In conjunction with neoliberalization, the ratio of unionized workers that could act as a counter-veiling power has been gradually declining while there has been an increase in irregular employment (e.g., “hire and fire”, flextime) in the project to dismantle traditional “neo-corporatism” or tripartism. In addition, governments have switched from welfare regimes to workfare as their response to the unemployed.

Second, such characteristic activities of national or local government as the provision of postal services, railways and welfare services have been handed to private subcontractors, and administrative reorganization has been attempted more than once at national and local levels, as illustrated by administrative reform in Japan since the 1980s. This has been brought about by the national necessity to contrive a social formation that is suited to the current trend towards a “competitive (competition) state,” and there has been a transition from government to governance as indicated in the theory of new public management.

Third, neoliberal globalization has brought about a dramatic increase in economic and social inequalities, both internally and internationally. This increasing disparity in income has

been due to the imposition of burdens on a weak social category and the displacement of contradictions to peripheral areas. This further increases polarization in income. Extreme poverty has resulted in an eruption of social conflicts, and a great influx of immigrants into the developed areas has evoked a chauvinistic populism and neo-Nazism in response. On the other hand, in Japan there has appeared a “recapture campaign” under the conservative governing party, aiming to restore the lost traditions of Japan. Although this lingering political mindset is often accompanied by a tenacious justification of the former invasions of Asian countries under Japanese militarism, it is more deeply connected with a desire to integrate the nation into a “strong state” by an appeal to the current rise of unrest in East Asia. These can probably be seen as an expression of the instability of the present situation which has brought about discontent with and distrust of the restructuring of the socio-economic system under ongoing neoliberal globalization.

V. Some Concluding Remarks Related to Democracy

State Theory and theories of International Relations face a critical problem in responding to ongoing neoliberal globalization. This is discernible in the rise of a theoretical contest between “retreat of the state” and allegations of its “mythology.” We can certainly recognize an expansion of social relations beyond borders and the emergence of an inter- and/or supra-national regime called the “global governance complex,” but these facts do not fall in the same category as ‘destatization’ and ‘denationalization’. Even in the age of globalization, the state remains standing as a basic meta-regulator of the horizontal and vertical contradictions inherent in the socio-economic relations within a territory. The integration of inhabitants in the state depends on its political power, and some kind of taxation and fiscal policy is unavoidable for the state’s existence. In addition, inhabitants may share a strong national identity, and their rights and duties as citizens are basically legalized by the state. Taking these conditions into account, the nation (national) state is a basic matrix of socio-economic integration and a crucial element for social cohesion. Therefore, the state will be the main springboard to further democracy, without which we would lose a foothold for democratization in theory and practice.

From the viewpoint of international law, there have appeared some tensions between national laws and international ones, and there has also been a decline of intermediate social groups in political representation systems. But, although some political powers have been devolved to supra-national authorities under the principle of subsidiarity and intergovernmentalism, the assignment of “normative goods,” as exemplified in the legal protection for life and property or the policies of economic development and welfare, belongs exclusively to the state. The state as the final decision-maker retains a political power and obligation to the people. To be sure, the contemporary state is in the process of changing its contours, but without losing its essential attributes.

Second, we face another problem of how to understand nationalism under ongoing neoliberal globalization, especially in the age of “competitive advantage” among nations. This concern forces us to reconsider the emotional impetus that reveals itself as a perception of “exclusion / inclusion” in the given nation. Its propensity will become prominent in a crisis of confidence because awareness of national particularities awakens an acute consciousness of “self and others.” This means that consciousness of kind stems from identification of the same social belonging, in other words, that identification of differentia logically follows from recognition of self in comparison with others. To draw a distinction is just to recognize some sort of heterogeneity in character; otherwise everything would be plainly subsumed into a homogeneity. Although it is possible to distinguish both sides of the same coin, it is just one unit. Elimination of others logically leads to a loss of chance to identify oneself because an encounter with others provides an opportunity to relativize oneself. This is applicable to relations between individuals as well as organizations, including nation-states.

The space and scale of social relations are relative in time and space, and consciousness of kind does not necessarily entail any sort of parochialism, much less a relation between “friend and enemy.” Viewed from this perspective, nationalism and / or nationhood ontologically exist in relation to other nations, and internationalism can be viewed normatively as spiritual medium that can connect localities while recognizing the relative autonomy of each nation. But such a remark is a well-worn truism. It has often been noted that historically nationalism has transmuted into imperialism, and that an appeal to some threat from abroad has been a familiar device of political power to induce internal integration. Taking these conditions into consideration, what is needed is the setting up of some principle of inter-state relations in conjunction with democracy.

A forceful imposition of one’s own values or *Weltanschauung* upon another cannot escape the charge of arbitrariness, even though these values accord with the principles of democracy. For selection of regime basically remains with the people of each country. Democracy has endured many severe trials and deep skepticism in history, and has cumulatively enriched its principles in connection with the establishment of citizenship. Democratic citizenship includes civil liberties, universal suffrage and the right to live in peace, but these principles have not been substantively realized. In other words, they may be little more than procedural, even in the context of the nation-state seen as a “container”, not to mention internationally. Regarding human rights, they should not be treated as if they were national and/or corporate interests. We face the daunting problem of how to override these sorts of trivialization.

Third, neoliberalization in the economy has the propensity to transform a citizenry into a consumer-centered public, and will lead to a declining participation in politics so long as consumers can expect to benefit from the “trickle-down” effect. This means that a minority increasingly holds political power in the name of “the people’s will”, and that the executive comes to assume the dominant position in governmental decision-making. These trends defy

the principles of democracy, and in fact, increased democracy would constitute a potential threat to the re-election of politicians, provided that the people could have been an informed knowledge of public affairs. In addition, the executive is liable to restrict information to itself, or to keep it secret. It is important to keep the government subject to the principles of accountability and openness, otherwise democracy will be dysfunctional.

Nevertheless, at short intervals and intermittently there have occurred anti-neoliberal movements. In this respect, two recent social movements in Japan are noteworthy. One is the movement of citizens against US military bases in Okinawa, and another the movement against nuclear power which has been prompted by the ongoing crisis at the Fukushima nuclear plant following the great earthquake of 2011. Although the central Japanese government has been trying to resist both of these socio-political movements, they draw attention to pressing national problems, and future prospects for peace and security depend on their proper resolution. We should also be vigilant against the possibilities of armed conflict in East and Southeast Asia and must address to the causes as well as a peaceful solution of it as a matter of urgency.

Democracy has achieved many praiseworthy results, but it has also left numerous problems for us to deal with. In the age of ongoing globalization, we need to enrich the principles of democracy and extend them in time and space. Put differently, it is necessary to take future generations and other peoples of the world into account. Internationalism should be pursued in a way that will lead to global democracy as opposed to neoliberal globalism. Although globalization is proceeding under the neoliberal hegemony which threatens to further exacerbate present conditions, the globalizing trends may also improve the prospects for global democracy by an appeal to counter-hegemony. In addition, there has been a reappearance of cosmopolitanism in the process of globalization, albeit involving a difference in its theoretical trend. Cosmopolitanism involves the perplexing problems of how to combine cosmopolitan politics with a national framework of democracy and is, presumably, relevant to the global democracy so long as it does not bow to neoliberal imperialism. At any rate we are in a critical phase in terms of whether we can look forward to the prospect of a worldwide democratic “great society.”

One of the vital principles of democracy is the right to live in peace. This right is cosmopolitan in nature and is essential to the wellbeing of everyday life which requires that violence, including structural forms of violence, should be eradicated. Without the right to live in peace, other human rights would be futile because we should have to live in the grip of fear. War and terrorism are the worst of all, even though there are sometimes attempts to justify them on plausible prettexts. According to Hobbes’s definition of war, it consists “not in battle only or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battles is sufficiently known” (*Leviathan*, Part I, chap. XIII). Needless to say, war is nothing but the destruction of humans and nature, which results only in a negative legacy of mutual hatred.

We are, to be sure, not at peace. A lingering negative legacy of the “30 years war” (from

1914 to 1945) remains in East Asia, the “Arab Spring” is in a confused situation, and civil wars have frequently occurred in parts of the former Soviet Union. Of course, the world is unstable. But nevertheless, globalization may be a turning point for the development of democracy beyond borders because it has been deepening worldwide socio-economic relations, albeit involving an apprehension that antagonism between states may result in a crisis. A competitive exclusion between states and/or disputes about jurisdiction over territory can by accident trigger armed confrontation, unless they are settled peacefully through strenuous deliberation rather than with the threat of forces.

This paper concludes with some short remarks on how the concerns mentioned above are related to our common topic. The topic set by the host university is very important for understanding regime shifts under ongoing globalization in East Asia. The shift of one regime to another in the state emerges with a (de)rearticulation of socio-economic relations and brings a change of stateness through political intervention in the social formation. It is also closely connected with changing relations between states. Taking these views into consideration, it is necessary to analyze the present conditions of neoliberal regime shift in conjunction with international relations, especially in the convergence and divergence of interstate relations in East Asia. This paper does no more than provide the following suggestions for the next stage of our inquiry.

- (1) To assist us in making comparisons, we need a definition of “neoliberal regime shift” in each state under ongoing globalization.
- (2) We need further analysis of structural transformations in urban-rural relations, employment patterns, social stratification, and family form in connection with the changing form of socio-economic relations.
- (3) There happens a reorganization of governing apparatus, especially in the executive, and therewith changes of political process. We need a comparative approach to rearrangements of governing regime and political movements of the people, including in China after its “reforms and door-opening policies.”
- (4) We need to improve our understanding of economic interdependence, and an approach to the trends of “convergence and divergence” in economy, from the point of view of competition and co-operation of economic linkage in East Asia.
- (5) There is a need for propositions for regional governance so as to consider a “common good” beyond borders from an international normative point of view, and proposals for a common approach to this in East Asia.

(These 5 points are, I hope, suggestions for our future work)

Although the world as a whole is not at peace and the waves of the Japanese Sea (or East Sea) are rising high, geographically speaking, the strait is only narrow and we have had a long history of friendship from old times. We, the people as scholars, should defy the high waves to develop closer inter-college relations. As globalization involves a negative as well as

positive momentum, we can and should take advantage of its movements to develop democracy in theory and practice. Here is our starting point.

Thus, this paper concludes by emphasizing the necessity of further collaboration in research for the “globalization of democracy”, or at least, for the “regionalization of democracy” in the hope that it may spread globally in the not too distant future.

