

Global Focus on Knowledge/Winter Semester 2008

# Whole Concept of Humanities and Social Sciences in Japan amid Globalization

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【After this lecture's topic was set up, the global capitalism plunged into a crisis in the magnitude beyond my expectation. While afflicted by a thought to discuss this financial crisis making an alteration to the theme of my lecture, in light of overlaps with other instructors' lectures, I decided to stay on my initial subject as previously announced. For reference, I will distribute a copy of my essay regarding the financial crisis this time written up in Nihon Keizai Shimbun, which you are suggested to read in your spare time.】

# Globalization

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005
Trade volume (\$ trillion)	0.4	1.9	3.4	6.3	10.0
Capital movements (\$ trillion)	0.0	0.1	0.5	4.0	6.0
Migrant population (100 million persons)	0.8	1.0	1.6	1.8	1.9
World real GDP (\$ trillion at price of yr 2000)	12.0	18.0	24.0	32.0	36.0
Internet users (100 million persons)	0.0	0.0	0.03	3.6	9.6

# Background of Globalization

19th century- the early 20th century: (new) classical economics and laissez-faire principles

1929-30s: the Great Depression

1936: the Keynesian revolution (publication of *The General Theory* )

From the latter 1960: neoclassical counterrevolution (M. Friedman, etc.)

1980s: the revolutions of Reagan (US) and Thatcher (UK); easing of regulations and financial liberalization

1989: the disintegration of socialism

1997: Asian currency crisis

2007: from the subprime crisis to the global financial crisis

## Question:

Amid globalization of science, why is it that the research on humanities and social sciences is behind the one in the field of natural science in terms of “globalization” in Japan?

It is possible to assume a defiant attitude saying that Japanese economy, Japanese society and Japanese cultural studies are “domestic-consumer oriented.” (Some of thoughts in sociology, jurisprudence, and, even policy debate)

Nonetheless, every scholarship, as long as it is scholarship, should be expanded.

# 1. Problem of English Proficiency?

Except for fields that require more mathematical proficiency than English, such as new classical economics and the theory of games.

Even in the field of economics, an applied area is close to sociology of humanities. (However, internationalization is in progress with economic history.)

←Lack of education for reading and writing in English

(The history of Japan's modern times, and solid academic research conducted domestically since Meiji Era have a negative effect contrariwise.)

← Anglicization is required in the graduate school level.

But it's not so simple as being good at English or not.

← Is a language just an “expressive medium” of a theory?

**Yes**, in natural science.

But how about in science of humanities?

## 2. Cultural, Social and Economic Research as “Universality”

Internationalization has already progressed in theoretical economics and the theory of games. This trend ought to advance through mathematical modeling and experimental studies of a number of social science subjects. (polimetrics, social psychology, mathematical sociology, etc.)

← Only under the major premise:

Common to culture, society and economy, there is only one “universal” model as in natural science.

And yet,

in the humanities and a number of social sciences, it is impossible to separate expressions in words from contents of “theories.”

It’s the problem of the translational impossibility.

(“Poetry” is a pure form of this; self-sufficient in the world of words. The same sort of factor lies in philosophical thoughts.)

There exists, not a “textbook,” but a “classic work.”



# Accumulation of Extensive Research in the West (Text and Context )

Fundamental concepts are traceable to Greece, Rome, and the Bible.

It is not easy for people brought up in different languages and cultures to engage in controversies having their origins in the accumulations. (One spends the whole life with studies on a thinker?)

Furthermore, if a Japanese researcher having a good command of these concepts, should speak on a big theme like, “What is the modern era?,” it would be even more difficult for him/her to gain an international recognition.

Then:

What are appropriate things researchers of humanities and social sciences in Japan should do?

A) Specialize in a mathematically “universal” model?

In which case, do they live in a sense of discomfort?

B) Migrate to Europe or North America and make the foreign land their final home?

In which case, do they become Asian minority?

Aren't there any other ways to live?

# To Look at the Past —Dispute over Prewar Japanese Capitalism

Worker-farmer School— Japan is, albeit inconclusive, a capitalistic nation.

(Although behind Europe and USA, Japan is in modern times and will catch up with them eventually.)

*Koza* School— Japan is still in semifeudal landlordism.

(It's stabilized carrying down pre-modern elements.)

Contents of dispute are meaningless at the present time.

← In order to grow into socialism;

One stage of revolution is good enough (the worker-farmer school = the Socialist-Party-related).

Two stages of revolution are necessary (*Koza School* = the Communist-Party-related).

But, looking at Japanese economy and society either as being <delayed> in “universality,” or,

“deviation” (<particularity>) from <universality>

→ The prototypes of the two concepts concerning the study of Japan

# Japanese Universality Theory and Japanese Particularity Theory

## Universality theory

→ To adapt theories developed in the West to Japanese society and economy as they are  
( a typical example: new classical school of economics )

→ Possible to put out a certain level of international achievements

Which, however, are “adaptational” researches more often than not.

# Particularity Theory

→ To emphasize particularity of Japanese culture

For example, “field theory,” “Japanese-style management,” etc.

Boom of the “theory of Japan” for a number of times

(= transforming the peculiarity's negative value into positive one)

○ Possibility to internationalize particularity:

The best example is a translation work of Masao Maruyama. (who obtained internationalism having excellently applied the analytical concept of the Western social science to Japanese society)

Many tend to be limited to interchanges with foreign (the Western) academics engaged in Japanese researches. Turned into native informants?

Is there a third path that is neither a “delay” theory nor a “particularity” theory?

← Two possibilities  
(not a choice of one or the other )

# Possibility 1: Plural Equilibrium Model

To position the Western society and the non-Western society including Japanese society:

Not as a rivalry between the advanced and the delayed,  
Nor as a confrontation between universality and particularity,  
But in a way they can be understood as the two forms of universality,

By creating a “meta universality” model.

**W**

Plural equilibrium model and historical pathway dependence



This approach contains a significant possibility exactly for researchers of Japanese and other non-Western societies ?

For, researchers of non-Western societies have no other choice but to be “bilinguals.”

→ a “meta”-oriented point of view

Example:

Mr. Masahiko Aoki’s theory of comparative economic systems

Mr. Toshio Yamagishi’s model of “structure of trust” (?)

(Plus, this lecturer’s theory of corporate double-decker)

However, this view tends to lapse into “universality theory” or “particularity theory.”

## Possibility 2: Modes Related to Cornerstone/Non-cornerstone

Three perspectives as to globalized world structure:

1. The UN-style official egalitarianism = cultural “relativism”  
But it’s a mere wishful thinking. **X**

2. Dominant/non-dominant relation → American hegemony  
(empire) logic  
Remains of a one-time “leftist” ideology **X**

→ Both are sure to make their appearances repeatedly in the future!

(Patterns of thought a human being falls into in the nature of things)

### 3. Modes Related to Cornerstone/Non-cornerstone ○

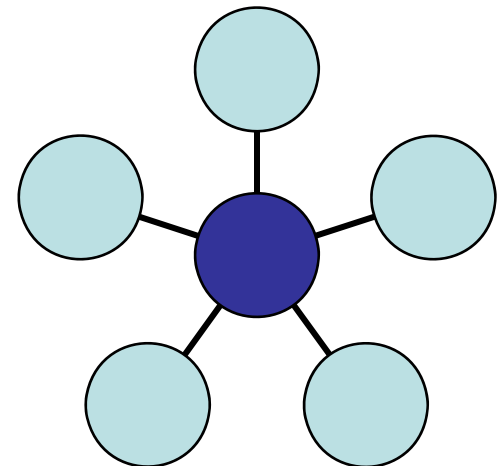
→ Once the whole West was, now the U.S. is, the cornerstone.

The dollar as a key currency

English as a key language

American diplomacy as a key state.

What is a “cornerstone”?



Example:

One uses the dollar not to buy goods of American make but to trade with Chile; Chile receives the dollar not to buy goods of American make but to trade with Korea, too; and Korea...too.

Independent of American economic power, cultural power and military force, through a “self-circular argument,” the dollar, English language and American diplomacy constitute the “intermediation” of the world economy, culture and politics.

← Historical opportunity = the U.S.’s overwhelming being right after WW II

But once a self-circular argument gets established, it’s an autokinetic movement.

Whereas the U.S. itself has false ideas often.

→ Behavior as a hegemon

Examples: the neoconservative Iraqi war in the world politics, and the classical-school type of policies in its economic development

Non-cornerstone countries also get the wrong ideas.

→ Al-Qaeda type way of thinking

= Raids on the U.S. positioning it a hegemon

Owing to the grave misgovernment of the Bush Administration, there appeared a symptom of the decay of American cornerstone footings on the dollar and diplomacy. And yet there is no country to take the place of the U.S. for a while, and at least for the English language, its footing is supposed to grow stronger increasingly.

History of Japanese modernization



First experienced the non-cornerstone footing in these cornerstone/non-cornerstone relations ever in the modern world history

← ought to possess “universality”