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Peace studies and peace politics

Multicultural common security in North–South conflict situations

Kinhide Mushakoji

Common security building in North–South situations

This chapter will deal with the specific type of situation that we call ‘North–South situations’. It is based on the author’s experience in trying to transcend conflicts between the citizens of the North and the migrant workers from the South in Japan. The citizens, including NGO activists in Japan, share a common prejudice about the migrants from the South. This prejudice is especially intense in the case of ‘illegal’ migrants and trafficked sex workers.

Under the media campaign which treats all foreigners as potential terrorists, Japanese citizens, even feminists concerned by gender inequality, believe that the foreign migrants are a potential danger to their security. They cannot imagine the seriousness of the sense of insecurity of the migrants who experience daily the suspicion of the police as well as of the neighbours, at home, at their workplace and at school. The belief prevailing in civil society that the migrant workers are a threat to the security of that society increases the state of insecurity of the migrants, and a ‘security dilemma’ follows. The more the citizens become suspicious, the more the migrants feel insecure and, the less they open their heart to the suspecting citizens.

This chapter deals with the need to build an awareness among the ‘good’ citizens of the reality of the present globalizing world, where a new kind of North–South relation becomes part of the daily reality of the civil societies. It is necessary to understand the asymmetrical situation which exists between the citizens protected by the State and its legal system and the migrant workers, especially the undocumented ones who are in the eyes of the State and civil society part of the criminal underworld.

It is crucial to build an awareness about the different aspects of this new North–South situation among the citizens so that they can understand the structural constraints causing the anxiety and insecurity of the migrants from the South in the North, and empathize with them. This approach has been developed in Japan and needs adaptation to the different concrete situations. We believe that the concepts used in this chapter can be applied *mutatis mutandis* in other industrialized societies as well as in the developing societies among the citizens of the ‘North’ sectors of the South, where the middle class lives in a relatively secure society more and more detached from the increasingly insecure situation of the South in the South.

The neo-liberal capitalism and the neo-conservative war

We live in a time when humankind faces a major crisis, the crisis of Western modernity. It is a global crisis in the sense that it engulfs the globe, also in that it covers all aspects of human life and of human civilization, political, military, economic, financial, cultural and social. It is a global crisis in that it is a crisis of globalization, of the globalization of Western modernity. We will attempt in this chapter an identification of the major characteristics of this crisis, in an historical context, which enables us to choose our paths in this global crisis, full of danger, yet full of opportunities.

The contemporary global crisis cannot be grasped unless the true nature of 'global finance' and 'global hegemony' are understood. First, 'global finance'. The contemporary neo-liberal version of capitalism subordinates production to financial speculation of a global free market, and turns the states into 'welcome states' losing interest in the 'welfare state' model. (Mushakoji 2004:23–5) Second, 'global hegemony'. The United States has built its neo-conservative hegemony, by using its absolute military-economic supremacy to unite the states into a global coalition to protect the security of the capital and of the global financial casino economy (Mushakoji 2004:31–7).

The above considerations on 'global finance' and 'global hegemony' do not automatically lead us to understand the insecurity of the migrant workers and trafficked people from the South. The speculative nature of the global finance is believed to be natural by the media, and by many citizens, under the influence of the neo-liberal economic analysis as enacted by the IMF. The War on Terror initiated under 'global hegemony' can be supported and justified from the point of view of national or international security.

We have to raise the ideological and civilizational questions of the present globalization under the guidance of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism, because the two ideological positions are systematically opposed to the fundamental values which underlie the human security benefited by the civil societies of the North. It is insufficient to 'democratize' the South if the North is unable to overcome its discriminatory culture against the migrants from the South.

The citizens of the North must realize that 'democratization' or 'modernization' is not an answer to all forms of insecurity, in spite of the claim by the media that democracy brings peace. We must build awareness of the fact that modernity at this phase cannot conceal the contradictions between the universalistic values it proclaims with the ideas of the greedy *homo economicus* and power thirsty *homo politicus* at the base of its national economy and its state order (Mushakoji 2004:213–20).

Our guiding principle in this exercise will be a deliberate choice to look at the world, not from the point of view of the market and the state, but rather from the vantage point of the peoples, whose rights, security and development are put at risk by the actions, institutions and structures of the present global neo-liberal/neo-conservative order. Human rights, human security and human development, applied to the most vulnerable individuals, will provide us with a way to look at the global realities, different from the conventional views based on the states as the unit of analysis, and the universal values defined by Western civilization as the basis of our evaluation of a world order based on the two ideal types of human persons already mentioned.¹

It is important to build awareness among the civil society agents of the fact that the choice to look at global realities from this point of view is based not only on moral principles. It is grounded on a belief that any efforts to transcend a conflict between the beneficiaries of this system and anybody who is excluded from it will

have to be based on the Gandhian principle of 'antiodia'. That is, that unless the well-being of the smallest is taken into consideration, the

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whole society will not survive. The citizens of the North must be able to understand that if they want their rights, security and development to be sustainable, they have to take care of the rights, security and development of the most vulnerable peoples, e.g. the migrants from the South. The citizens must become capable to undertake, on their own, a critical analysis of the present globalization from the vantage point of those excluded from its security and from its benefits.

We need therefore to build, in any North–South situation, an epistemic community among the citizens, which sees that their community cannot have a sustainable future unless it cares for its most insecure members within the present neo-liberal and neo-conservative globalization. The citizens of the North must realize that they have to build ‘common sustainability’ between them and the insecure members of the society who migrated from the South if they want to build a sustainable world where they can live in peace.

The migrants from the South and global colonialism

Let us, therefore, look at the present state of globalization, not from the point of view of global finance or national security, but from the point of view of human (in) security, i.e. the freedom, or the lack of freedom, from fear and wants of peoples in most insecure situations. As we have seen, these situations can be defined in terms of two of the major causes of their fear, i.e. the neo-conservative War on/of Terror, and the reason of their want, the global neo-liberal economy.

Superficially, it seems that these two causes of their insecurity are unrelated, one military-political and the other economic. We must put the War on Terror and the global neo-liberal economy in a deeper historical context, from where they both emerge, in order to find that they are closely interlinked. This historical context is nothing but ‘colonialism’.

The history of colonization of the non-Western world by the Western powers (and by Japan, which was an exceptional case of a non-Western colonial power) is characterized by an economic exploitation of the colonized societies by the colonial powers’ rule backed by their military supremacy. This geo-historical age of colonial rule ended in the 1950s and 1960s, and the post-colonial age which followed was characterized by a new structure of exploitation, where the exploiters were the industrialized countries of the North, and the exploited were the developing countries of the South. This neo-colonialism was also combining an economic exploitation with a political/military subjugation. The combination of a global neo-liberal structure of exploitation with the military-political hegemony can be interpreted within the historical trajectory of colonialism and its most advanced phase, which we propose to call ‘global colonialism’ (Mushakoji 2004:216–27).

Seen as a single phenomenon with two sides, an economic aspect characterized by neo-liberalism, and a military-political side characterized by the War on Terror, the present process of globalization can be seen as a final phase of the colonialism which began in the sixteenth century. Traditional colonialism and neo-colonialism exploited and extracted surplus, created by value-added industrial production and services, first from the colonies and later from the developing countries. Now that there is no more frontier left to colonize, global colonialism extracts surplus from the ‘multitudes’, the peoples who are not protected by the states like the citizens. Such people exist in the South of both the South and the North.

The clear divide between the South (provider of primary products) and the North (specialized in value-added industrial production) which existed during the neo-colonial period does not exist any more in the age of global colonialism. There is now an outpost of the North in the

South, where the cheap labour of the South is exploited by the North in its high-tech industrial production, including information technology (IT) and bio-technology. 'Ciberabad' in India and 'Ciberjaya' in Malaysia are typical examples of this emerging North in the South.

This outpost creates a new middle class, and a small ultra-rich minority, while leaving in abject poverty and insecurity the rural communities and the urban informal sectors in the 'deep South' where the large majority of the people live. In many urban centres of the North, there are expanding informal sectors where the diaspora communities of migrant workers from the South live in a chronic state of insecurity, as a result of the massive exploitative migration from the South, often undocumented and 'illegal' (Mushakoji 2004:146–57).

This situation where a great number of people live unprotected by the state and overexploited by the transnational corporate agents, both in the South and in the North, is a typical manifestation of global colonialism. Traditional colonialism has been a system where states and civil societies of the Western colonial powers had established a contractual relationship, with the former monopolizing all means of violence in exchange for their commitment to protect the security and welfare of the latter. This contract between the states and the civil societies did not cover the multitude living in the colonies. The people living in the Deep South and in the informal diaspora communities in the North are in the same insecure situation of exploitation as the colonial multitude, in terms of the lack of state protection of their security and welfare. Global colonialism is nothing but this new form of exploitation of the global South by the global North.

It was extremely difficult for the expatriate colonial ruling class in the traditional colonial situations to understand the feeling of frustration and insecurity of the subjugated colonized peoples. In the same way, the citizens of the North constitute a majority insensitive to the human insecurity of the minorities. It is crucial for them to realize the high degree of insecurity of the diaspora communities, and become aware of the colonial relations which exist between the civil society and the diaspora communities.

The economic exploitation, the political subjugation and the psychological exclusion which turn the dwellers of these often impoverished sectors of big cities into an insecure community. They reproduce a frustrated identity feeling, which is often strengthened by the majority citizens joining in the colonialism of the global governance often taken for granted as sustainable. Yet it creates an environment making unsustainable the communities where different cultures are forced to live together, reproducing their exploitative relationships.

The War on/of Terror and the military/police security system

The 9/11 incident has become a pretext for George W. Bush to legitimize his neo-conservative hegemonic agenda. The neo-liberal global economy is promoting the worldwide application of free market economy, attributing a minimal role to governments. This minimal role, however, concerns the security of the state, the society and especially the market.

The role of the state in traditional liberalism has often been characterized by the concept of the 'night watchman' state. The agenda of the Bush administration, as expressed in the report on 'The National Security Strategy of the United States of America', limits the role of the American state to this security function. The United States promises to play the role of an invincible night watchman, with a worldwide deployment of military bases backed by weapons of mass destruction, for the global market, promoting free market principles, as well as freedom and democracy, against possible attacks from the 'terrorists' and the 'rogue states'.

This 'War on Terror' has transformed fundamentally the Westphalian world order, which has

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characterized Western modernity. This world order was based on the ‘balance of power’ between sovereign states, which were recognized as having an absolute right to guarantee the security of their citizens, domestically through their police force, and internationally through their military. The principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states was combined with the principle of clear separation between domestic security controlled by the police, and international security maintained by the military, both under civilian control, and which was supposed to provide the institutional conditions indispensable for domestic and international democracy.

Now, the aforementioned report by the government of the US officially declares its non-compliance with these principles as it engages in the War on Terror. The right of this global hegemon to wage preemptive attacks on the rogue states, and the policy to merge military and police activities indicate the hegemonic decision to ignore the above basic rules of the game adopted by all the law-abiding members of the Westphalian inter-state order.

The new military strategy of the War on Terror has put an end to the modern separation between the military and the police, an arrangement which so far had helped avert a threat to democracy, a likely scenario when the military is permitted to intervene in civilian affairs. The military-police security is based on a systematic anti-human rights surveillance, control and punishment system where ‘uncivilized’ others, such as the prisoners in Guantanamo, are treated as objects of fear rather than of humane compassion. They are treated as evil people who do not deserve any elementary sense of justice.

The War on Terror is, in a sense, on the antipode of a state where human security prevails. The United Nations Human Security Commission Report points out this fact by criticizing this war in the following way:

What is now being described as the ‘war on terrorism’ dominates national and international security debates. In addition to military actions, it has increased attention to other tools to fight terrorism, such as tracking (and blocking) flows of funds, information and people. It has given rise to new areas of international cooperation, such as sharing intelligence. Yet these actions focus on coercive, short-term strategies aimed at stopping attack by cutting off financial, political or military support and apprehending possible perpetrators.

Equally, state-sponsored terrorism is not being addressed, while legitimate groups are being labeled as terrorist organizations to quash opposition to authoritarian government policies. And fighting terrorism is taking precedence over protecting human rights and promoting the rule of law and democratic governance. ... [T]he ‘war on terrorism’ has stalled that progress (i.e. multilateral strategies that focus on the shared responsibility to protect people: insert mine) by focusing on short-term coercive responses rather than also addressing the underlying causes related to inequality, exclusion and marginalization, and oppression by states as well as people.

The War on Terror is, as the report on ‘Human Security Now’ denounces, not only refusing to address the root causes of the insecurity it is supposed to face, but is becoming in itself a major source of human insecurity. This is not because of any miscalculation by the hegemon. It is necessary to realize that it is because of the very historical nature of this ‘war’. As the aforementioned report on the national security strategy of the hegemon so clearly states, the War on Terror is providing the ground for a special reading of history particular to the neo-conservative hegemon. The present situations, opened by the War on Terror, are defined as an unprecedented age of peace among nations, which have renounced waging wars between them for the

first time in history. The War on Terror creates a situation where no more wars can be envisaged by any states of the world. They all joined in with the hegemon in combating terrorism.

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The War on Terror is, in this sense, a Trotskyite revolution in reverse, a permanent counter-revolution uniting the states, the transnational corporations and the technocratic elites in their common fear of the multitudes. The war is not supposed to end in a victory, but rather to continue indefinitely, justifying the monopoly of economic and military power by the global hegemon.

The permanent counter-revolution is targeted especially against the dwellers of the informal sectors of the North. The 'illegal' migrants living in the impoverished sectors of the civil societies of the North are an object of constant fear. The security of the rich requires the surveillance of the poor, the security of the national majority requires the control of the foreign minorities. This is so, in different ways and different degrees, in the trilateral regions of the North, North America, Western Europe and Japan. The 'terrorists' provide an ideal scapegoat for the surveillance, control and punishment campaign against the 'others'. The global media produces and reproduces an image of the 'threats' of the migrants, especially harsh in the case of the migrant communities where Muslim peoples live.

It is crucial, if a multicultural community is to be built in a sustainable manner, to develop among the citizens and the administrators (national and local) an awareness of the insecurity experienced by the dwellers of the migrant communities, constantly under surveillance by the police. The 'good conscience' of the citizens, believing that they have the right to be protected by the police from the potential threats from the 'illegal' migrants, should be shaken down by an education for sustainable multicultural development disclosing the unsustainability of the permanent war on terror. The citizens must learn to understand that the insecurity of the migrants is increased by their search for security under the 'War on Terror' regime, and that they must build a relationship of 'common security' between 'us' the citizens and 'them' the foreign migrants.

Global fascism calling for a new contract of citizens and multitudes

We have seen already that the present combination of two sources of human insecurity, neo-liberal global economy and neo-conservative War on Terror, is a new form of colonialism. We will also argue that it is a global form of fascism, and that it should be combated by a new anti-fascist common front.

Just as traditional fascism of the 1920s and 1930s had established itself using the fear of a proletarian revolution and of Zionist hegemony among the middle classes, the new fascism exploits the fear of the multitude and Islamophobia propagated by the global media. We must eliminate the fear and the sense of insecurity of the citizens vis-à-vis the multitudes.

It is sad to realize that the two fascisms are closely linked by the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The fear of being accused of anti-semitism is forcing an important sector of world public opinion to accept Islamophobia. The recollection of the Holocaust by the fascist states does not permit public opinion to criticize state terrorism, as so well pointed out in the report on 'Human Security Now'.

The fear of a proletarian revolution has disappeared in most parts of the world, with the exception of the Philippines with its NPA, and Nepal with its militant Maoist movement. There is, however, a new target for the fear of the middle class in both the North and the South. It is the 'multitude', identified by Negri and Hardt as an emerging sector of the empire, which can play a key role in destabilizing its global rule (Virno 2002).

The multitude is seen as represented by the terrorists, thanks to their indiscriminate violence that is manipulated by the War on Terror coalition of states and media. More generally, the 'illegal' migrant workers, and the transnational

criminal organizations, which exploit them, are

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also sources of public fear. They bring into the global North different sources of human insecurity. They bring in drugs, trafficked sex workers supposed to bring in HIV-AIDS, and disturb the public order with their crimes.

Seen as a human security problem, the insecurity of the middle class is just a mirror image of the insecurity of the multitude, i.e. all the peoples, in North and South, unprotected by the states engaged in the War on Terror. To overcome the mutual insecurity, and the 'security dilemma' which causes a vicious circle between the mutual threat perception of civil societies and the multitudes, it is indispensable to build a 'common security' between both groups.

Global fascism not only denies the rights and security of the multitude, but also the rights and security of the citizens. It also denies recognition of the multilateral system guaranteeing the rights and security of the states. A new contract must be signed between the multitude and the citizens, and should be extended to the states. They do not want to stay mere 'welcome states' in the global colonial scene.

As proposed by Antonio Gramsci in the era of national fascism, we must develop an anti-fascist common front suited to the conditions of global fascism, as the Porto Alegre World Social Forum proclaims that 'another world is possible', in opposition to the hegemonic alliance represented by the Davos World Economic Forum, which excludes any alternative to neo-liberal global governance.

This common-front argument suits better the social activists and NGOs who specialize in advocacy about specific issues, such as ecology or landmines. The citizens engaged in these social movements in specific local communities must be convinced that their objectives cannot be reached unless they cooperate with the excluded minorities in building a sustainable multi-cultural community. They must realize that global fascism divides the citizens and the foreigners, as well as other minorities, in order to rule on both the majority and the minority communities.

To break this hegemonic cooption of the majority citizens, it is necessary to overcome the majority and minority divide which originates in the contract between the state and the civil society = the majority, excluding the multitude = the minorities. A new contract should be signed between the civil society = the majority and the multitude = the minorities. The common security between the civil society and the migrant communities can be contextualized within this new contract metaphor.

Global fascism invites the civil society to sign this new contract. As was, if well understood, the case in the past, the abuse of the fundamental rights of the foreigners and the minorities is just the beginning of a process where the rights of the majority will sooner or later become the target of restriction and violation. The lessons from past fascist regimes must be learned by the citizens as a preparation for a sustainable multicultural community. The citizens who are not participating in any social activities should be made to realize that even the 'illegal' migrants should be considered as part of 'us' when it comes to face a greater danger of losing freedom in an Orwellian world.

An epistemic community for sustainable multicultural development

If we want to transcend the North–South conflicts which begin to proliferate in the neo-liberal global world of today, it is necessary to build a new awareness among the civil societies of the North about the need to cut with the past and build a new rapport with the global South represented by the migrant workers, especially the 'illegal' migrants and the victims of human trafficking. Awareness of the need to build a common security with them needs to be supported by a good knowledge and understanding of global North–South relations. The nature and

structure of globalized colonialism, of the military-police complex, and of global fascism must be well grasped, not only by the social movements but also by the civil society at large, otherwise it is difficult to overcome the prejudices produced in the educational system and reproduced by the press, and to make it possible for the 'good' citizens to empathize with the minorities, especially with the 'illegal' migrants.

It is difficult to imagine, in the face of the present reality where xenophobic reactions prevail in many parts of the civil societies in the North, that such a new awareness will emerge in the North. This is where we have to refer ourselves to the concept of 'epistemic community' coined in connection with the rapid spread of an ecological awareness reaching the governments, the corporate sectors and the international organizations. The concept of the epistemic community was proposed in the literature of international relations where the existing paradigms were unable to explain the international agreements by states, accepted by MNCs, about regulating state and corporate activities breaking the sustainability of development. The *homo politicus* and *homo economicus* models do not explain altruistic decisions implied in all the environmental legislation. National interests and the interests of the firm seem opposed to the demanded sacrifices. This is where the theory of epistemic community provides a plausible explanation.

The awareness-building activities of the ecologists, which continue since the 1970s, succeeded in forming a number of ecologically concerned citizens who entered into the different decision-making institutions, be it governments, business firms or international organizations. Their insistence on the necessity to build ecological sustainability influenced the different institutions they infiltrated, and this made it possible for the states, the firms and the international organizations to agree, in spite of their interests, to different measures to build a sustainable world. They created an epistemic community of citizens convinced of the crucial role of ecology, and this community is now represented in the different decision-making agents of the global community.

If the ecological sustainability of the world has become today a matter of global consensus thanks to the ecological epistemic community, it is possible also to form an epistemic community aware of the necessity of developing social sustainability by building a common security awareness between the citizens and the multitude, the majority and the minorities, and especially between the citizens of the North and the migrants from the South. This chapter is meant to begin a process of epistemic community building as a small but crucial beginning indispensable for a sustainable multicultural development of the citizens' communities in the North. This includes not only the North in the North but also the North in the South, where the rapid growth of a new middle class often makes invisible the insecurity of the peoples living in the South of the South.

Note

- 1 On 'human security', cf. Commission on Human Security (2003) *Human Security Now*, New York: United Nations.

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