Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies 21 (1989) 79-85. © The Hitotsubashi Academy

DISCUSSION

HIDEO YAMADA

Three panelists in Session I spoke on the theme of "Aspects of the Transformative Period in the Modern and Contemporary World."

Professor Immanuel Wallerstein (State University of New York), noted for his interpretation of modern world history using world-system theory, made the first presentation. In March of 1986 Wallerstein came to Japan and gave a talk on "Japan and the Future of the Capitalist World System" (printed in *Kokusai mondai*, Vol. 315, June 1986) at an international conference. In that paper he stated that the capitalist world economy that came into being in Europe from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries later came to cover the entire globe as a result of a process of continual expansion—in both name and reality it functioned as a world system. Today, he maintained, this capitalist world system has entered into a period of transition in a dual sense. At present we are in the period after the hegemony of the U.S., which lasted from 1945 to 1967, and from the 1970s to the end of the century the long wave (Kondratieff cycle) will move in the opposite direction. Japan and Western Europe are now fighting over who is to be the successor to the U.S., and the capitalist world system itself is in the midst of a structural crisis. Wallerstein predicted that this will eventually force a transformation to a new historical system. In this talk, however, he did not directly address the issue of the transformative period; instead he approached this by tackling the question of culture and its uses and abuses within the capitalist world system.

According to his talk, the "culture" or the idea-system of this capitalist world-economy is the outcome of our collective historical attempts to come to terms with the contradictions, ambiguities, and complexities of the socio-political realities of this particular system. The question is, how is this done? Since it is obvious that interests fundamentally diverge, the very construction of culture becomes a battleground, the key ideological battleground in fact of the opposing interests within this historical system. The heart of the debate, he argues, revolves around the ways in which the presumed antinomies of unity and diversity, universalism and particularism, humanity and race, world and nation, person and man/woman have been manipulated. He states that universalism on the one hand and racism and sexism on the other are the two principal ideological doctrines that have emerged in the history of the capitalist world-economy. On the surface these two ideologies seem to be in direct contradiction with each other. In fact, he stresses, they are not opposites but a symbiotic pair; their "right dosage" has made possible the functioning of the system, one which takes the form of a continuing ideological zigzag.

He next tries to show how the ideologies of universalism and of racism-sexism help contain each of the six important contradictions inherent in the capitalist world-economy, and why therefore the two ideologies are a symbiotic pair. This point is the core of his

report. As his paper is printed elsewhere in this proceedings, it may be sufficient to indicate here how his arguments run relating to one out of the six contradictions he cites, i.e., Case 2.

Case 2: Wallerstein notes that the historic expansion of a capitalist world-economy, originally located primarily in Europe and later incorporating other parts of the globe, created the contradiction of modernization versus Westernization. The simple way to resolve this dilemma has been to assert that they are identical: Insofar as Asia or Africa "Westernizes," it "modernizes." This is to say, the simplest solution was to argue that Western culture is in fact universal culture. Of course, this sometimes took the slightly more sophisticated form of arguing that only Western civilization, of all world civilizations, was somehow capable of evolving from a pre-modern form to modernity. In a sense, this is what Orientalism as a discipline clearly implied. Clothed in the legitimation of particularism—Islam or India or China represented complex, high cultures which a Westerner could only appreciate after long, difficult, and sympathetic study—the Orientalists also suggested that these high Oriental cultures were historically frozen and could not evolve, but could only be "destroyed" from without. Various versions of anthropological theory led to the same conclusions. The West had emerged into modernity, the others had not. Inevitably, therefore, if one wanted to be "modern" one had in some way to be "Western" culturally. If not Western religions, one had to adopt Western languages. And if not Western languages, one had at the very minimum to accept Western technology, which was said to be based on the universal principles of science. But while the universalist ideologies were preaching the merits of Westernization or "assimilation," others were also preaching the eternal existence and virtue of difference. Thus a universalist message of cultural multiplicity could serve as a justification for educating various groups in their separate "cultures" and hence preparing them for different tasks in the single economy. At the same time, racism and sexism can be justified by a rejection of Westernization which can take the form of legitimating indigenous ideological positions (a so-called revival of tradism) that include blatantly racist and sexist themes. At which point, we have a renewed justification of the worldwide hierarchy.

Finally, he touches on the ideological role of the presumed opponents of the existing system, the antisystemic movements. He maintains that the ideologies of universalism and racism-sexism have also served as ideologies of transformation in their slightly different clothing of the theory of progress and the conscientization of oppressed groups. This has resulted in extraordinarily ambivalent uses of these ideologies by the anti-systemic movements. According to this evaluation, what the antisystemic movements, such as socialist movements, have done over 150-odd years has been essentially to turn themselves into the fulfillers of the liberal dream that universalism will triumph over racism-sexism; while claiming to be its most fulsome critics, they actually teach more science and more assimilation.

Only recently, particulary since the world cultural revolution of 1968, these movements, e.g., the green movements and the countercultural movements, or at least some of them, have begun to evidence doubts as to the utility, the reasonableness of "science" and "assimilation" as social objectives. As long as the antisystemic movements remain at the level of tactical ambivalence about the guiding ideological values of our world-system, he asserts, they are in no position to fight a war of position with the forces that defend the inequalities of the world. In the concluding remarks to his paper he raises the following questions: What are the implications of systemic opposition to universalism? Is the opposite of universalism particularism? Is the opposite of "science" and reason dogmatism and irration-

ality? It is in the correct posing of these questions that lies one of the key debates affecting the outcome of the present world-historical transition from capitalism to something else.

The next to speak was Professor Bipan Chandra (Jawaharlal Nehru University), president of the Indian Historical Association. The title of his talk was "Aspects of the Transformation Period in the Modern and Contemporary World." In the paper he submitted, Chandra makes his aims clear from the outset. He raises the question whether a peripheral ex-colony can develop an independent economy, especially on the basis of capitalism, and attempts to deal with this question with special reference to India.

Chandra questions the basic assumption of Paul Baran, Gunder Frank and others that no such development is possible unless the ex-colony goes over to socialism. The model fails, he asserts, to provide a framework in which changes within post-colonial societies can be analyzed. It fails to distinguish between the peripheral and underdeveloped character of a society under colonial political domination and that under an independent polity. Such models put their entire emphasis on external economic constraints, ignoring countervailing forces. Chandra examines, therefore, the forces which favor or disfavor independent development and their inter-relationship. In the case of India, he asserts that the linkage of dependency and subordination with world capitalism is being increasingly transformed, and discusses the following factors which are responsible for this phenomenon:

(i) The nature of the colonial experience.

(ii) The political strengths and ideological framework of the anti-imperialist movement and its leadership.

(iii) The crucial role of the state in structuring colonialism and also in its possible destructuring in post-colonial societies.

(iv) The process of class formation, the evolution of class structure, and the roles of different classes.

(v) Major changes in the economy, especially in relation to foreign capital and other linkages with the world economy.

(vi) The process of nation-making.

(vii) Changes in the social, cultural, and ideological realms.

While not wishing to repeat the lengthy and detailed discussions concerning these factors, I will only refer to some of the more important points that Chandra stressed. As for factor (i), he remarks that one important feature was that India, although having an economy that was structurally colonial, had a far more developed and independent (Indian owned and controlled) industrial base than other colonial and semi-colonial countries and a far more substantial capitalist or entrepreneurial class. He next stresses the importance of factor (iii) in view of the possibility of independent development in post-colonial Indian society. Thus he maintains that the post-independence Indian state has been playing a large and leading role in reshaping the economy in a self-reliant direction, especially on the basis of planning, the public sector, and large-scale expenditures. He also notes that the state has played a very large role in making Indian agriculture self-reliant.

As for factor (iv), he asserts that the nature of the class bloc that constitutes the ruling classes is perhaps the most important determinant of the fate of efforts to develop independent capitalism. In this connection he tentatively suggests that the Indian capitalist bloc as a whole—and not merely the big bourgeoisie—the agrarian bourgeoisie and the middle classes are the politically dominant elements in India and perhaps constitute the

ruling bloc. All three, in their own ways, have been struggling for independent agrarian and industrial capitalism, with sections of the middle classes even being committed to the socialist path of development.

Finally, he presents a profile of the Indian economy as it has developed since 1951, using statistical data in order to refute the Baran-Frank paradigm.

The third panelist was a political scientist from Japan, Professor Tetsuro Kato (Hitotsubashi University), who spoke on "The Age of 'Japamerica': Taking Japanese Development Seriously." His presentation closely follows the framework of Wallerstein's capitalist world-system theory; he sees the period from the 1970s as a time of dual transformation, whereby there is both a decline of U.S. hegemony within this system as well as a period of crisis for the system itself, which will last until the end of the century. Kato sees "Japamerica" as the new hegemonic leader of the capitalist world system, which is why he calls the present the "Age of 'Japamerica'."

"Japamerica" refers to the military, political, and economic complex comprised of the U.S., which is a declining superpower, and Japan, which rapidly advanced to become an economic giant. The term "Japamerica," Kato states, was derived from Brzezinski's use of the term "Amerippon" and F. Bergsten's "U.S.-Japan Bigemony." He asserts that the Japan-U.S. complex, or the world hegemony of their combined power, is in existence today, but he also inserts the caveat that there are internal contradictions in this complex and that it is unstable and transitional.

Kato's discussion of "The Age of Japamerica" is based on the following three theoretical implications. The first relates to hegemonic replacement theory, as found in the field of international politics. As stated above, Kato calls the mid-term and transitional phase in the process of decline of Pax Americana the age of Japamerica, corresponding to the new hegemonic leaders. In contrast, political scientists and journalists in the U.S. and Europe refer to the phase after Pax Americana as Pax Americana-Sovietica or the Tripartite Model or Pax Pacifica. Kato analyzed these one by one and came to the conclusion that the age of Japamerica best describes the conditions of the contemporary world.

The second point concerns the foundations of Japamerica. One foundation is the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, another is the accumulating regime, known as Fordism, or the capitalist system that the two countries share in common. Influenced by Antonio Gramsci and the French Regulation School, Kato emphasizes that Fordism is a particular stage of a capitalist accumulating regime. He defines Fordism as a mass production and mass consumption accumulating regime that came into being in the 1920s in the U.S. and then spread to Western Europe and Japan after 1945.

In the U.S. and Western Europe from the 1960s Fordism was in crisis as a result of declining rates of profits, labor opposition and pressures to increase wages, and increasingly outdated technology. While there was a groping for a post-Fordist regime in these countries, Japan was enjoying a sound economy and managed to ride out two oil crises as a result of reduced operational expenditures and a flood of exports. Because in Japan management directly controls labor as a result of enterprise unions and intra-enterprise welfare policies, the introduction of new machinery and the relocation or shuffling of personnel was carried out smoothly, thus allowing firms there to flexibly develop small-scale and varied production based on the widespread diffusion of robots and computers. Many scholars in the U.S. and Europe interpret this as, if not Post-Fordism itself, then its precursor.

Kato rejects this view, asserting that they distort the facts. Compared to the Fordism of the U.S. and Europe, which are predicated on industry-wide labor negotiations and a welfare state, workers' rights are hardly recognized in Japan and workers' opposition is very weak. In this sense, Kato maintains, those who assert that Japan is a post-Fordist regime are wrong; rather, Japan represents an improved form of Fordism, or is a type of ultra-Fordism. He thus treats the rise of Japamerica, based on the commonality of Fordist accumulating regimes, as a combination of the following: a deterioration of the early benefits of the American type of original Fordism, the strengthening of the international competitiveness of Japanese ultra-Fordism, and the transformation of Japan into a production base and the U.S. into a consumer market.

The third point concerns cultural transformations in postwar Japan. What Kato seeks to do here is to show that the new labor and production forms associated with Fordism—or, more correctly, the improved version of ultra-Fordism—creates a new type of man, as Gramsci indicates, and this was the case in Japan in the postwar period. Using public opinion polls, Kato analyzes the Japanese people's views toward the U.S. and their values. In regards to their views toward the U.S., from 1945 to about 1973, which included the period of recovery from war and high-speed economic growth, there was an Americanization process. From the latter half of the 1970s, however, after the period of high-speed growth, there was an increasing de-Americanization trend. The question concerns the nature of this de-Americanization. While at a glance this process, reflected in increasing nationalism and the revival of new religions and conservatism, appears to be a return to traditional Japanese values and consciousness, Kato sees it more as the stage of ultra-Fordism. Its essence is the materialist orientation of the Japanese people, with their belief in capitalist efficiency, and this is at the heart of Americanism itself.

Professor Yuzo Kato (Yokohama City University), the commentator for Session I, offered a number of thought-provoking remarks concerning the three talks. The gist of his comments was that there were three transformation periods in modern world history, the implications of which must be analyzed:

1. Around 500 years ago (increasing globalization as a result of improved communications and the manufacture of goods and agricultural products from the fifteenth century);

2. Around 200 years ago (from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, when there were complex international political images of four types of systems: the Great Powers—from Portugal to the U.S. and Soviet Union; colonies—India, etc.; defeated treaty countries—China, etc.; and countries that negotiated treaties—Japan);

3. The last 30 years (from the 1960s, when there was a cultural crisis brought on by "unnatural obesity").

What is interesting is that these three periodizations correspond to Wallerstein's conceptualization of world history in his modern world-system theory and in *Historical Capitalism;* periods 2 and 3 also correspond to that in B. Chandra's and T. Kato's presentations, respectively. But Y. Kato did not directly criticize the three panelists' presentations; it was more of the nature of adding a supplementary or critical presentation of the problem. Each of the three panelists asked how they were to reply to his remarks; his presentation required that the panelists have enough time in advance to respond. As the chairperson of this session, I thus decided to refrain from trying to get a response from each of the three panelists to his remarks.

At the beginning of the discussion period and before the start of questions and answers, due to the lack of time I thought it would be perhaps best, unless there were any unexpected questions from the audience, to take up the matter of India, related to Chandra's talk, and the question of Japan, related to T. Kato's presentation. Wallerstein's presentation took up the problem of "culture" and, although it was extremely interesting and contained many theoretical insights, it did not have much in common with the other two presentations (the gist of Wallerstein's presentation was argued in Chapter 3 of *Historical Capitalism*). I thus believed that, since his paper was not going to be discussed, it would be appropriate to take up the arguments advanced in the other two presentations.

I first asked the audience for comments. The first two questions were to Wallerstein, but concerned not his talk but his views on the other two papers. From this I understood where the interest of the audience lay, so I then decided to move from questions from the audience to asking for comments from each of the panelists. As expected, the comments of the three panelists revolved around the above two discussion points. Below is a rough outline of what was discussed on each of these two points.

The first discussion point concerned Chandra's argument that India succeeded in independent capitalist development in the process of transforming from a colony to an independent country. I asked Wallerstein to follow up on a question from the audience earlier and sought his feelings on this. Wallerstein suggested that over the last 100 years, from the nineteenth century to the present, India has witnessed a relative decline in its position within the world system and that it has in fact dropped into the category of a less developed country. (He also discussed the question of Japan in this regard, but I will leave this for later.) Wallerstein was thus critical of Chandra's interpretation of modern Indian history.

T. Kato next asked Chandra a two-part question. Kato asked if Chandra agreed that his view that democratic development in India delayed economic growth but ensured independent development was in stark contrast to Japan's experience, where because the economy expanded at too rapid a pace, democracy was unable to take hold and the country linked with the U.S. The second point concerned "independent development." Wallerstein once stated that there were three ways to move from the periphery to semi-periphery of the capitalist world system: "seizing the chance," "introducing foreign capital," and "independence." If, as Chandra stated, Indian economic development was "independent," would it not differ, then, from the "introduction of foreign capital" method employed by Korea and other countries? Chandra responded that it is true that India is economically poor, but while pursuing democratic, independent development it has gradually been able to solve the problems of famines and unemployment. Compared to subordination to foreign imperialism and becoming a colony, India has followed an independent road that was suited to local conditions; the problem in the future will be internal class struggle, which was a precondition for independence. Chandra's response clearly resembled that of an historian of "economic nationalism in India," and there was a strange discrepancy between his response and T. Kato's original question. Kato's question was set within the framework of Wallerstein's world-systems theory in that it revolved around the above three ways in which a country moves from peripheral to semi-peripheral status. In the first place, the question of how to evaluate democarcy in India is not an easy question but, leaving that point aside, Chandra maintains that the development of an independent Indian capitalist economy was achieved autonomously while still heavily relying on the introduction

of foreign capital. His interpretation does not follow the framework followed by Wallerstein and T. Kato, and perhaps there was a problem for that reason.

The second discussion point related to T. Kato's presentation, in other words, the position of Japan in the contemporary world. After his remarks on India, Wallerstein stated that he agreed that Japan has followed the path of rising to become a hegemonic country, but because the contemporary capitalist world system itself is in a period of transformation, it would be impossible to reach a hasty judgement concerning Japan's position within that system. He also stated that he was not in agreement with T. Kato's concept of Japamerica.

I next asked T. Kato to explain the rise of the Japan-U.S. complex, in particular the economic union of the two countries. In his talk, as well as in his book *The Age of Japamerica* (in Japanese), I felt that his discussion of this included only an intuitive deduction and little analytical explanation of this phenomenon. But apparently he misunderstood my question and responded that there was more to "Japamerica" than simply the economic aspects; it also included a military alliance. After this response, T. Kato immediately asked a question to Chandra, so I refrained from following up on this.

The discussion period ended shortly after. Not only did the three panelists differ in the way they understood the term "transformative period," in their debate among themselves they often seemed to be talking at cross-purposes. Because not all of the participants had directly taken up the question of the "transformative period" in their talks, the discussion seemed at times to lack focus. I also wish to add that I was very impressed by Wallerstein's use of the phrase "something else" to describe the system that will take the place of the capitalist world system. It very much captures, I believe, the intricacies of the world in which we live.