

## 2016 HDCA Conference “Capability and Diversity in a Global Society”

### The Idea of *Glocal* Public Philosophy and Its Relation to the Capability Approach

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*Very preliminary draft – please don't quote without permission*

My presentation aims to present my idea of *glocal* public philosophy, which I have been developing for the last ten years, and then to make a rough sketch of its affinities with the ideas of M. Nussbaum and A. Sen.

#### 1 The Idea of Glocal Public Philosophy

*Glocal* Public Philosophy means a practical philosophy that deals with universal public issues from the particular public world or place where each individual lives and acts. It attaches much importance to the correlation between the globality of issues and the historically, as well as culturally, characterized localities in which each human being lives. The global and local viewpoints are seen as interdependent, and public values and particularity of thinking are then viewed as hardly separable.

Based upon this viewpoint, firstly, *glocal* public philosophy *requires both normative and descriptive understanding of Public World, Self, and Others*, which I would like to call *Glocal Ontology*.

Secondly, *glocal* public philosophy proposes the *integration of a three-dimensional method of learning* in the sense of the process of gaining knowledge through studying.

a) *Empirical research on social realities in the past and present*. It relates to the philosophical question *what must we know?*

b) *Normative theory of present and future societies*. This relates to the question *what should we think, judge, and do?*

c) *The socio-political issue on the feasibility of norms for the future*. This relates to the question *what can we perform?*

What is important here is to integrate this tripartite method of learning “through interdisciplinary collaboration” in which each philosopher, social scientist, technologist, and even natural scientist takes part in his or her own way. As a matter of fact, there are numerous *glocal* public issues in the world such as war and peace, nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, global warming, human rights, justice, poverty, wellbeing, etc., that require public discussions and interdisciplinary collaborations. This fact then leads us thirdly to a *three-dimensional trans-national ethics* that consists of *positive and negative values, duty ethics, and virtue ethics of public ethics for the glocal philosophy*.

How do these ideas relate to the capability approach developed by Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen? Departing from this concern, I will first clarify these ideas of *glocal* public philosophy in detail and then try to point out some affinities with their idea.

## 2 Normative and Descriptive Understanding of Self, Others and Public World as Glocal Ontology

I would like to begin to introduce the idea ontological concept of *Multidimensional Self* that includes both the *Cosmopolitan Self* and the *locally situated Particular Self*. This *Multidimensional Self* understands him or herself, without losing its cosmopolitan dimension of the Self, in a multidimensional way, and also understands *Others* who lives in various cultural as well as historical contexts, and the *Public World* where each individual lives in a multidimensional way. I will develop this ontology in a more normative way so that the *glocal* public philosophy can obtain more practical traits.

I start from the viewpoint that each human being lives under his or her contingent conditions in the world. Concretely saying, each cannot choose his or her body with it he or she is born. Each cannot also choose his or her cultural and historical circumstances in which he or she is born. In this regard, it seems the human being is not free, but determined by nature. This fact is, however, only half a truth. Different from other animals, human being is capable of making his or her living as he or she wants. Human being is also capable of making the given world changeable into the better one. In this respect, human being can become free from fates and dooms and I call such a creative dimension of the human being the *Becoming Self*.

The *Becoming Self* in *glocal* public philosophy always makes efforts to change its mind for the better and consequently always understands him or herself as a *finite being* who can never reach the “Absolute Knowledge” as Hegel once assumed. In this regard, the *Becoming Self* must be also called the *Dialogical and Responsible Self* who is always ready for dialog with others and even *metanoia* (change in one’s way of living resulting from penitence of spiritual conversation).

As for the *Public World* in which each human being lives, it differs from the concept of “Life World” in the phenomenological philosophy and sociology in several points. First, it is conceived as the world of *various public values* such as peace, justice, human rights, environmental preservation etc. Second, it includes the *public bads or evils*, such as war, violence, injustice, violation of human rights, environmental destruction, and even natural disaster. In this point, we can still much learn from the heritage of the Critical Theory stated above. Anyway, the *Public World* contains both *public values* to be realized and *public bads or evils* to be eliminated. It is of great importance for the *glocal* public philosophy that *each Self* tries to tackle with such public values and bads or evils from each situation in cooperation with *Others*. Thus, the ontology of Self, Others and Public World in *glocal* public philosophy requires the *normative understanding* of Self, Others, and Public World.

## 3 Integration of Three-dimensional Method of Learning and Ethics

Base upon the statement above, I would like to propose the *integration of three-dimensional method of learning* in the sense of the process of gaining knowledge through studying.

a) *Empirical research on social realities in the past and present.* It does not matter whether its method is based on the ideal-type in the Weber's sense, or on the problem-solving method of Critical Rationalism in Poppers sense ([1957][1984]), or the critical insight about mass media that Lippmann ([1987/1922]) once did, so far as it relates to the philosophical question *what must we know?*

b) *Normative theory of present and future societies.* This relates to the question *what should we think, judge and do?* To this question, we have to develop critically the heritages of the public philosophers such as, Rawls ([1971]), Sen ([1995]), Nussbaum ([2006]), and Habermas ([1981]) further from the glocal point of view.

c) *The socio-political issue on the feasibility of norms for the future.* This relates to the question *what can we perform?* To this question, Poppers ideas of piecemeal social engineering (Popper[1957][1984]) can offer us a helpful example but we have to adopt a more holistic way of social policy such as system theory based on complex studies.

What is important here is to integrate this tripartite method of learning "through interdisciplinary collaboration" in which each philosopher, social scientist, technologist and even natural scientist takes part in his or her own way. As a matter of fact, there are so many *glocal* public issues in the world such as war and peace, nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, global warming, human rights, justice, poverty and well being etc. that requires public discussions and interdisciplinary collaborations. And this fact leads us to the *method of public ethics for the glocal philosophy.*

I would like to introduce the *three-dimensional trans-national ethics* that consists of ethics of *positive and negative values, duty ethics and virtue ethics*, which must be integrated into the glocal public philosophy.

#### **a) Ethics of positive public values and negative values**

The classical founders of the ethics of public or common goods were Thomas Aquinas and Friedrich Schleiermacher [2002/1812-17]. In the unstable age of globalisation today, the ethics of public or common good must include the public bad or evil, which I would like to call the public bad or evil *negative values*, while I call the public or common good *positive public values*. Therefore, I formulate this dimension of ethics as that of positive public values and negative values.

It is a very important task to develop this kind of ethics on the trans-national level. We can regard the world peace, human rights, world cultural or natural heritage, world health, and human securities etc. as trans-national positive values. On the other hand we can regard wars, terrorism, political oppression, starvation, contagious disease, environmental destruction etc. as trans-national negative values. As for the concept of "social capital" in the sense of value of network (Putnam [1993]), we have to judge

whether it is positive or negative value according to each case. Generally speaking, the social capital that contributes to trans-national positive value mentioned above can be seen as positive value too, and the social capital of Mafia, Terrorist etc. can be seen as negative values.

In this regard, I can make use of the project of a remarkable report by the United Nations Development Programme (Kaul, Inge [1999]). According to it, trans-national public values consists of “natural global commons”, such as the ozone layer, atmosphere and climate, “human-made global commons”, such as norms and principles accepted worldwide (e.g. universal human rights) and scientific knowledge, the internet etc. and “global policy outcomes”, including peace, health, and stable financial markets.

Trans-national negative values include the depletion of the ozone layer and increased levels of radiation, the risk of global warming, violation of human rights, injustice, lack of equal rights, exclusion and inequality of access in regard to information, wars and conflict, epidemics, and financial crises, among others. In addition, the weapons of massive destruction must be regarded as trans-national negative values. As regards nuclear power plants that caused public evils in Fukushima recently, the opinions would be divided whether it is a positive value or negative value.

What I would like to add to these elements, is the *trans-national public memory*. The memory of negative values means the memory of wars, starving, political oppression, arrogance of cultural imperialism, environmental destruction barbarous acts of modern sovereign states, suppression of one people by other people, religious intolerance etc. The memory of positive values includes the memory of peace, well-being of peoples, emancipation of peoples from oppression, the building of constitutional state etc. These memories must be shared and discussed on the trans-national level.

In order to put this kind ethics, we do need the *trans-national civil society and global governance*, which means the cooperation between civil society organizations such as INGO and United Nations organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEFF, ILO, WHO etc.

## **b) Duty-based Ethics (deontology)**

To realise the trans-national positive values and to diminish negative values, it would be necessary of *duty-based ethics concerning trans-national public rules and orders* not only of the institutions or organizations but also of the power of peoples.

In the *Perpetual Peace* published in 1795, Kant advanced his own ideas of the "Preliminary Articles and three Definitive Articles" (Kant [1970/1795] pp.93-108). I do not enter into details here and instead make certain that he emphasized then a league of free states as a basis of the law of nations and universal hospitality as a basis of the law of world citizenship. To establish such a world citizenship was regarded not as a duty of each individual but as peaceful governments.

Nowadays, the duty-based ethics for the trans-national values have to be pursued not only by governments but by trans-national civil society and global government. It is not enough that the cooperation between liberal societies and illiberal but decent

hierarchical societies as Rawls conceived in his last work *the Law of Peoples* (Rawls [1999] Part II 59-88). To perform this task, however, the cooperation between peaceful governments and trans-national civil societies is indispensable. Therefore, the narrow concept of “public reason” conceived by Rawls (ibid, pp.164-175) must be broadened into *trans-national civil society* cooperating intensively for the more peaceful and just societies.

### c) Virtue Ethics

Although the duty is an important component of ethics, it tends to evoke a limited and narrow impression among the people. *Glocal* public ethics that requires the normative orientation of the Self would probably only attain greater vitality through virtue ethics, which is centred on spontaneous or responsive human behaviour and the happiness of human being. Indeed, classic philosophy in both Europe and Japan developed on the basis of virtue.

As I cited in the previous chapter, it was a Spinoza who emphasized the virtue ethics for the peace. He said that “peace is not the absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition of benevolence, confidence, justice.” He conceived the best state (commonwealth) as one in which the people live in harmony. Such a state is established by a free people, who are led more by hope than by fear (Spinoza [1958]).

What is important especially for the virtue ethics is the happiness and benevolence.

According to Aristotle, the founder of virtue ethics in Western philosophy, it is nothing but the happiness that is regarded as the goal of human social behaviour. The happiness lies in an active reality of the soul in accord with virtue (*arête*) (Aristotle [2000]). In the East Asian classical ethics of Confucianism, goodness, justice, etiquette, wisdom and honesty are regarded as fundamental virtues. These virtues also provide the basis of the notion of *Keiseisaimin* 經世濟民 (social policy for relieving the suffering of the people), which has been widespread in Japan since the *Edo era*.

Trans-national virtue ethics must break the national boundary to which Aristotle and Confucians were limited and seek for the *Co-happiness* among the peoples all over the world.

As a concluding remarks, I would like to stress that these three dimensional trans-national ethics must be combined with the ontological basis of Multidimensional and Becoming Self who tackles with public issues from each glocal situation of public world in cooperation with Others. Thus, it is an imperative for the glocal public philosophy to integrate three-dimensional Ethics, three-dimensional Ontology of Self, Others and Public World, and three-dimensional Methodology of learning for the realization of more peaceful and just societies.

## 4 Trans-national Public Reason, Public Sentiment and Public Imagination

As was shown above, the public ethics in our sense consists of duty, virtue and public

values/negative values and the *glocal* ontology consists of our *multi-dimensional, dialogical, and becoming understanding of Self, Others and Public World* on the other hand. When we think about the trans-national solidarity for world peace and human rights in view of contemporary world, however, *the public reason is not enough* even though it means, contrary to the narrow understanding by Rawls who limited it to the level of the governmental officials, the reason shared by the people. I mean the other capacities such as *public compassion and public imaginations must be added to public reason* and strengthen by that our idea of trans-national public ethics and *glocal* ontology.

Indeed, public values such as peace, justice, and human rights must be not only recognized by reason, but also felt and perceived on the level of sympathy, and negative values, which makes the people all over the people suffer, could and must be understood on the level of compassion rather than reason. In this regards, the Schopenhauer's ethics of solidarity based upon compassion among the people is very inspiring. Different from Nietzsche who advocated *Zarathustra* to escape from the nihilism and contempt the secular world, Schopenhauer advocated the solidarity based on the compassion to overcome the sorrowful world. He even regarded it as the same as the love for one's neighbors in the sense of Christianity (Schopenhauer[1972/1859]Vol.4. § 66-67), while he seemed to be influenced by the Buddhist idea of *compassion* (慈悲).

Indeed, the value of compassion becomes more and more important after the tragic event of September Eleven in 2001, March Eleven in 2011 and refugee problem from Syria in 2015, war and terrorism all over the world. In such a catastrophic situation in the world, we really need the *trans-national solidarity based on the compassion*. Thus, *WA* as solidarity based upon compassion strengthens our idea of trans-national public ethics and our *glocal* ontology, which consists of multi-dimensional, dialogical and becoming Self in opposition to one-dimensional, dogmatic and inflexible Self.

## **5 A Rough Sketch of Some Affinities with Capability Approach**

Now, I would like to try to make a rough sketch of some affinities between my idea of *glocal* public philosophy described above and the idea of Nussbaum and Sen.

First, I would like to point out that both *Glocal Public Philosophy* and capability approach attach much importance not only to public reason but also *trans-national public sentiment (or emotion) such as compassion and public imagination* (Nussbaum [2013], Sen [2010]). Indeed, public reason is necessary but not enough to understand the various situations of public world. In this respect, I sympathize with capability approach more than with Rawlsian and Habermasian approach.

Second, the idea of *glocal ontology* has some affinity of Nussbaum's concept of *human being*. *Glocal Ontology* consists of *Multidimensional Understanding of Self, Others and Public world* in the both normative and descriptive sense. Nussbaum once listed the

*central human capabilities* as follows. 1) life 2) bodily health 3) bodily integrity 4) senses, imaginations and thought 5) emotions 6) practical reason 7) affiliation 8) other species 9) play 10) control over one's environment on the political as well as material level (Nussbaum [2000] pp.78-79). In my view, this list has been too universalistic conceived to take the cultural diversity of public world into account, but it is remarkable that Nussbaum thinks this approach can overcome the ambiguity of the concept of human rights and capabilities also provide an account of extremely important fundamental entitlement that can be used as a basis both for constitutional thought within a nation and for thinking about international justice (Nussbaum [2006]). On the other hand, Nussbaum regards herself as a cosmopolitan American and therefore seems to agree with the idea of *Cosmopolitan Self* (Nussbaum [1996]). I greatly appreciated her in this respect. It is a little pity, however, that she does not yet deepen the idea of *Particular Self* as an American and the *Public World* in view of contemporary international situations more ontologically.

Third, in terms of *methodology*, our method of *integration of a three-dimensional method of learning* which consists of a) *Empirical research on social realities in the past and present*, b) *Normative theory of present and future societies* and c) *The socio-political issue on the feasibility of norms for the future* has an affinity with what Sen calls comparative method framework in distinction from transcendental framework (Sen [2010, pp.115-18]). In this respect, I would like to emphasize especially *the need of interdisciplinary collaboration in which each philosopher, social scientist, technologist, and even natural scientist takes part in his or her own way*.

Forth, in terms of *ethics*, I would like to suggest that the *three-dimensional trans-national ethics* that consists of ethics of *positive and negative values, duty ethics and virtue ethics* would be necessary to enrich the content of capability approach.

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