

Kyoto Peacebuilding Center (KPC)

Global Peacebuilding Association of Japan (GPAJ)

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present

History Continues: Three Models of the Continuation of History

By

Ambassador Kicmari, Sabri.

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Kyoto University of the Arts, Jingumae Campus, Tokyo

Summary Report

This hybrid discussion meeting was attended by 20 participants in person at the venue and about 10 persons online. They first heard the presentation by Ambassador Sabri Kicmari and then exchanged their views and understandings of what constituted the driving force in the global community. The following is a summary of the presentation and the remarks made by the participants.

KICMARI Sabri



Ambassador Dr. Kicmari introduced the key points made in his book, namely *History Continues - Three Models of the Continuation of History* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). He asserted the return of ideological competition in international relations. After the publication of Francis Fukuyama's *the End of History*, liberal democracy was challenged by the three ideological models: Russian ultra-nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Chinese socialism. All three models see themselves as an alternative to liberal democracy. Reflecting on the philosophical interpretation of historical developments by Kant, Hegel, and Marx, Ambassador Kicmari emphasized that Kant predicts that history will have an end, while Hegel declares the end of history after the Battle of Jena in 1806. This makes Fukuyama's thesis about "the end of history" controversial. This primarily stems from Fukuyama's assertion that the term "the end of history" is not his own but is sourced from Hegel and Marx. In fact, in both Hegel's and Marx's concepts, the phrase refers to the end of history as an ideology. Hegel and Marx believed in the process of history, while empirical findings underscore that, from Fukuyama's perspective, most democracies today are Christians.

Unlike many other scholars, Fukuyama does not see religion and nationalism as a threat to liberal democracy. He finds that there is nothing incompatible; there is no essential conflict between

nationalism, religion, and liberal democracy (Fukuyama 2006: 215). It can not be easy to agree with this statement. Nationalism, in its extreme version, as well as religious fundamentalism, is today the main challenger of liberal democracy. Additionally, Ambassador Kicmari asserted that the twentieth century was characterized precisely by the anti-human slide of political and state systems in the form of totalitarianism. So, both the extreme right (Nazi fascism) and the extreme left (communism) managed to create their own undemocratic and aggressive extremist variants. Therefore, Nazi fascism and communism entirely meet the characteristics of totalitarianism. Both of these dictatorships were enemies of a free and democratic society. Fukuyama, unlike the representatives of realism, does not pay attention to power. His theoretical focus is not power but liberal ideology. However, not every country has a liberal ideology like that of Russian ultra-nationalism that has its ideological representatives. Among them, the most popular is Alexander Dugin. Russian philosopher Dugin is considered very close to the concepts of Vladimir Putin. What Dugin has presented on the theoretical level, Putin has realized or is realizing on the practical level. Dugin defends the view that after fascism and communism, liberalism has found its end. Russia developed a different system from liberal democracy and the one-party socialist system: an ultranationalist autocracy. This is a politically and economically controlled system by a strong leader and a clique around him.

Regarding the political landscape, Dr. Kicmari went on to emphasize that Political Islam has become a serious and complex challenge of the 21st century. Islamic fundamentalists aim to create a social order by force of arms, which is based on opposing political and social values of the liberal democracy. In Western societies, this religious and political claim is considered a serious danger. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers itself a principled alternative to liberal democracy and the system of the market economy. This is primarily because the basic feature of the Iranian system is the struggle against the Enlightenment and Western values. Just as the Soviets aimed to create the Soviet man *homo sovieticus*, so Iranian Islamism aimed to create the ideal Islamic man - *homo islamicus*. Dr. Kicmari emphasized that Fukuyama's thesis about the end of history managed to create a moment of triumph in the theoretical plane of liberal democracy. He understood this as the only sustainable political and economic system of the future. Therefore, Fukuyama's thesis has been refuted by Chinese political practice: an authoritarian government and a one-party system have been combined with a market economy system. Economic growth was followed within the framework of a communist (one-party) political system. The Chinese one-party system has opened up to the overseas investment market, making China one of the largest exporters in the world. China is one of the countries with a communist system that has stood the test of time for over 73 years. This will place China in first place in terms of the duration of maintaining the one-party system.

This model of stability has called into question the end-of-history concepts and theories that only liberal democracy and the market economy system is the model that can guarantee political stability and technical and technological development. While China has advanced in different areas, such as economics and technology, to name just a few., the one that the former has faced harsh criticism from the international community is that of ethnic problems such as Taiwan, Tibet, and Hong Kong. Therefore, China's leaders have consistently linked patriotism with socialism. According to them, only socialism saves China, and only through it can be realized national interests. In conclusion, Dr. Kicmari cited the quoting of the American philosopher, Michael Sandel, who predicts the future of China in the following way: "My own impression, as a sympathetic observer, is that after a period of astounding economic growth, China is now in search of a public philosophy beyond GDP, seeking sources of meaning and happiness that market relations cannot provide. As in so much else, China's success or failure in this quest will matter greatly for its own future and for the rest of the world" (Sandel 2018: 263).

NISHIDA Tsuneo



Ambassador Nishida, Former Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and Ambassador to the United Nations and Canada, pointed out the need to view history not as a collection of facts and events but as a movement that signified the progress of mankind.

YAMAMOTO Tadamichi



Ambassador Yamamoto emphasized that when Francis Fukuyama argued in his book that liberal democracy was the final stage in the evolution of human thinking about the paradigm by which societies should be governed, he presumably had the end state in mind, when all societies attained such a system. Argument such as "liberal democracies do not fight each other" seems to indicate this. This may be so, but the reality is that the West has failed to guide or help societies in transition or "needing" transition to attain such an end state. How to get to the goal without causing difficulties in the transition process was given little thought if any. Failures to respond to the aspirations of East European societies including Russia is an unfortunate testament to this. The dreams and hopes of those people immediately after the demise of the Cold War were dashed. West should have been more helpful and listened to the cries from those societies experiencing broken dreams and loss of pride and identities through the difficult process of transition. Another example is the world of Islam where the religious doctrine is not naturally compatible with rule of law as enacted by the humans or envisaged by the West. We also need to look at this theme in regard to China who seems to be aspiring to set up its own paradigm. Chinese are pragmatic people. It seems that the objective of attaining prosperity for the entire Chinese people take precedence over the ideal of liberal democracy. We need to have more in-depth analysis regarding this issue with consideration to the issue of how a rising state challenges the existing international order without too much disruption.

GUNGEN Korkut



Ambassador Gungen agreed that ideology stays with human societies and, in essence, does not disappear. They adapt to circumstances. They sometimes dominate and sometimes lose prominence. Ideological differences will remain within and between nation-states. The issue is if liberal democracy will survive, and that would require vigilance and readiness to protect. As it directly impacts the outcome, ideologies do matter.

KULNAZAROVA Aigul

During the discussion that followed the presentation of Dr. Sabri Kicmari's book, A. Kulnazarova raised thought-provoking questions about the book's framework. She was particularly interested in understanding how Fukuyama's concept of the "end of history" sheds light on contemporary ideological shifts and reactions to globalization and neoliberalism occurring today. It is apparent that history has not definitively concluded, given the multitude of global events and issues that have emerged since the end of the Cold War, challenging the notion of liberal democracy as the ultimate and inevitable form of governance. In this context, Dr. Kicmari has applied Fukuyama's thesis to his book on the rise of populism, ultranationalism, religious radicalism, and Marxism in the contemporary world. Whether the author intends to challenge or support Fukuyama's ideas through this analysis remains to be determined.

HADZIALIC Hideko



Ms. HADZIALIC Hideko noted that although different religions share many common values, religions are often abused by politicians or illegitimate leaders for the pursuance of their powers through a divide-and-conquer approach. The Bosnian war was a case in point. Furthermore, there is no such thing as perfect democracy. There were cases of democracy failure, but this does not mean we should stop pursuing democracy. Instead of taking democracy and autocracy as binary, it is important to dive into elements of governance and management, such as quality of participation and institutional capacity. These apply, for instance, whether or not states can provide effective social protections to vulnerable people, to what extent voters can make well-informed decision, or how we balance between freedom of expression and defamations, particularly in the era of social media.

JONGHANI Forough



Ms. Jonghhani (PhD candidate) emphasized her comments that Iran, China, and Russia have distinct differences in their relationships and interactions with each other and the international community. Iran and Russia have a long history of cooperation, particularly in the areas of economics, military, and nuclear strategic cooperation. Russia has played a significant role in Iran's nuclear program, providing technical expertise and support. On the other hand, China, Iran, and Russia form a strategic triangle that maintains balance and collaboration, with complementary interests that support their cooperation. How has the economic and political relationship between Iran, Russia and China evolved in recent years and what should the global community do to navigate their strategies towards a more peaceful future.

INOMATA Tadanori



Ambassador Inomata noted from Ambassador Kicmari's synopsis that "China will continue to challenge liberal democracy on all sides and by all means." This seems too sweeping a summary of Chinese ideology. Although "idealtypus" is necessary as a model for understanding the ideology, such an assertion does not match reality. China has never formally denied international law nor sovereign equality of States based on the Westphalia State system. Nor does it question a different political system chosen by the people of other countries in due respect for the principle of non-intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction. It has persistently argued, together with the Third World countries such as the Group of 77, for international democracy with equitable participation to decision-making on global issues based on the United Nations Charter.

SHENG Adam



Remarks by Dr H.Sheng, Professor of Law, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, China. Dr. Adam Sheng said that the most complicated thing is history. So we will run the risk of oversimplification if we try to conclude certain models to describe the history, or historical development in different areas. I appreciate Ambassador's book very much, but if we really say that there are only three models in history in the world, that could be very exclusive, not inclusive. So, even in Africa where I worked, or in Latin America, history developed quite differently. So as for democracy, it could not be the same in our common world. Just as it goes, people look at the same things, but with different views. When I was doing my second master in Britain, people discussed some issues in democracy. So one of my classmates from Greece said that democracy means that it was people to govern, not the sovereigns, but an American alumnus argued democracy means one man one vote. So it is very, very hard to conclude historical developments in world history. So I quite agree with Mister Fukuyama when he argues the end of history, however, history could be quite different in various areas with different perspectives.

HASEGAWA Sukehiro



In concluding the discussion, Professor Sukehiro Hasegawa noted that the central theme of Kicmari's *History Continues* is the continuation of historical progress. While Francis Fukuyama thought that history had ended with the triumph of liberal democracy, Kicmari wonders about the ultimate destination of historical progress. With reference to Hegel's dialectic development at work, we can consider liberal democracy as the thesis that has been challenged by three antitheses: Russian ultra-nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and Chinese socialism. The assertion that liberal democracy is not the final form of governance is plausible if the forms of governance other than liberal democracy are not only legitimate but also effective in achieving the ultimate form of governance and Kant's perpetual peace.

MEETING SECRETARIAT

SOPAJ Arbenita



Dr. Sopaj is an Executive Assistant at the Embassy of the Republic of Kosovo in Tokyo, Japan. She is a Researcher at Research Institute for Indo Pacific Affairs (RIIPA), a board member at GPAJ, External Relations Officer at KPC, Director of Administration ACUNS, Tokyo Office. She held a position as a lecturer at College Dardania in Kosovo, where she imparted her knowledge through graduate-level courses focused on International Conflicts.

TANIMOTO Masakuni



Mr. TANIMOTO Masakuni is the Secretary-General of the Kyoto Peacebuilding Center and the Global Peacebuilding Association of Japan. He is an Executive Director of the World Federalist Movement (WFM) of Japan as well as Deputy Director-General of the Parliamentary Committee of the National Diet of Japan for World Federalism.

IKEGAMI Keitoku



Mr. IKEGAMI Keitoku is a senior at the International Christian University at Mitaka C