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Muslims in the Globalizing World

Some Reflections on Japan

Edited by
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Introduction

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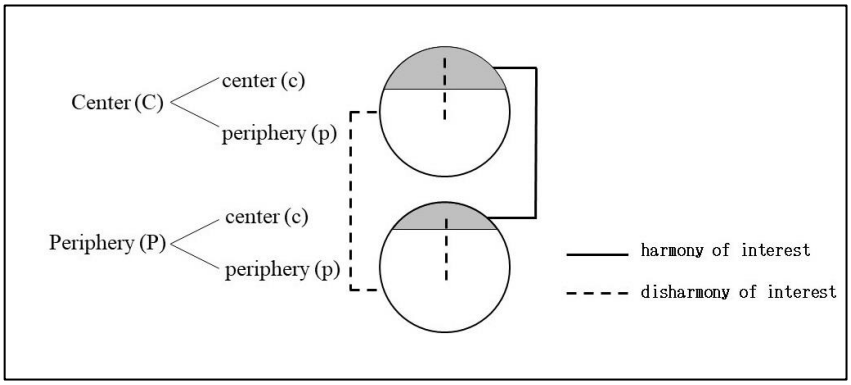
Modern globalization has entailed the incorporation of societies outside the West into a Western-centric global hierarchy—a hierarchy not just economic and political, but one that touches on everything from culture and values to knowledge and beyond. This hierarchy has its roots in Western imperialism and colonialism, the power relations associated with which continue, even after official decolonization, to affect the non-Western world in the form of structural continuities with the previous era. To describe the ongoing force of these continuities, scholars have coined the terms "neocolonialism" and "postcolonialism."

The mechanism whereby the Western-centric hierarchy is perpetuated was deftly captured by J. Galtung half a century ago in an article on the global power relations of imperialism (Figure 1). Galtung defined imperialistic international relations as consisting of "center countries" (C) that hold power over "periphery countries" (P), with both groups further divided into their own center (c) and the periphery (p). The conflict of interest between Pc and Pp is larger than that between Cc and Cp; and while the interests of Cc and Pc (the solid line in the figure) closely align, the interests of Cp and Pp (the dotted line in the figure) do not. Therefore,

Figure 1: The structure of imperialism as illustrated by Galtung



(Galtung [1971: 84])

there is no momentum for the two p's to jointly break the imperialistic structure. This is because Pc enjoys a privileged position as mediator of the transfer of benefits from P to C, and it gains benefits and authority by being a partner of Cc rather than a partner of Pp. Similarly, Cp prefers to be subordinate to Cc because it is more profitable to rely on the trickledown of benefits transferred from P than it is to stand in solidarity with Pp [Galtung 1971: 83-84].

In the context of the mass media and the scholarly field, Galtung explains the imperialistic power structure as follows:

> Periphery nations do not write or read much about each other, especially not across bloc borders, and they read more about "their" Center than about other Centers—because the press is written and read by the center in the Periphery, who want to know more about that most "relevant" part of the world—for them.
>
> … Just as the Periphery produces raw material that the Center turns into processed goods, *the Periphery also produces events that the Center turns into news*. This is done by training journalists to see events with Center eyes, and by setting up a chain of communications that filters and processes events so that they fit the general pattern.
>
> … If the Center always provides the teachers and the definition of that worthy of being taught (from the gospels of Christianity to the gospels of Technology), and the Periphery always provides the learners, then there is a pattern which smacks of imperialism [Galtung 1971: 93; italics in the original].

> In science we find a particular version of vertical division of labor, very similar to economic division of labor: the pattern of scientific teams from the Center who go to Periphery nations to collect data (raw material) in the form of deposits, sediments, flora, fauna, archeological findings, attitudes, behavioral patterns, and so on for data processing, data analysis, and theory formation (processing, in general) in the Center universities (factories), so as to send the finished product, a journal, a book (manufactured goods) back for consumption in the center of the Periphery [Galtung 1971: 93].

Treating C as the West and P as the non-West precisely captures the structure of Western-centrism in the production and distribution of information and knowledge and the mechanism by which that structure is reproduced.

Integration into modern, Western-centered international society introduces Western ideologies and institutions to non-Western countries, along with the various political, economic, social, and cultural devices that support them. These structures all serve, in one way or another, as channels whereby modern Western culture, values, and imperatives slip into these societies, whether intentional or not.

But globalization is not a one-way street [Robertson 1995]: "time-space compression" [Harvey 1989] brings people, goods, capital, information, ideas, and values together across religious and ethnic boundaries, where they travel, mix, and influence all societies embedded in the globalized world. In other words, colonialist Western-centrism does not end in simple Westernization, but in hybridity. However, it is a hybridity in which existing asymmetrical power relations and hegemony are reproduced [Pieterse 2006: 26; Dhawan and Randeria 2013: 562]. Therefore, the hybridization that has occurred in modern globalization remains steeped in the logic of the hegemony of Western-centrism and the power relations that maintain it.

This volume explores the impact of these Western-centric global power relations and responses to Western-centric hybridity in both Muslim-majority countries and Muslim-minority nations like Germany and Japan across a wide range of areas, including law, thought, knowledge, politics, discourse, and attitudes toward intercultural symbiosis.

In the first chapter, Yagi focuses on the field of law in post-independence Egypt. She discusses how Egypt's Personal Status Law, which the state represented as a continuation of Islamic family law, was used to entrench in society a Western conception of the modern family that fit the needs of the new state. After independence, Egypt adopted non-Islamic legal systems from the West in many areas of law; its Personal Status Law stood out as one of the few apparent exceptions, and was thus a major symbol of Islamic legitimacy for the new state. As Yagi shows, however, this law departed significantly from the traditional understanding of Islamic law, which based society on extended families; instead, it artfully adopted the modern Western ideal of the nuclear family consisting of a husband and wife

united by love and compassion, and their children. In this way, the state sought to weaken the hold of extended families, which could be rivals to the state in terms of social influence and mobilizing power, and to replace them with nuclear families as the basic unit of a new Egyptian society.

The Egyptian state positioned itself as an intermediary for nuclear families cut off from the network of protection traditionally provided by extended families, placing the rights and obligations of members of the nuclear family under the protection of state-enacted Personal Status Law. In doing so, Yagi shows, the state also embraced a new term for "family." The traditional term, *'ā'ilah*, a term appearing in the Quran, was avoided in the supplements and explanations that were written for the implementation of the law. These instead used the term *usrah*, which never appears in the Quran, and referred to Quranic verses on the family in which the word *'ā'ilah* does not appear. In this way, in the allegedly Islamic Personal Status Law, which was expected to shore up the state's Islamic character, was embedded in a new family ideology derived from the modern West.

According to S. Sayyid's definition, Islamism is an ideology and movement that aims to resist the imposition of Western-centrism in the context of imperialism and colonialism, and to eliminate its dominance and hegemony at both the global and the local level [Sayyid 2017: 80]. It is a postcolonial struggle, and on the local level, it takes the form of a struggle against Western-centric Pc, according to Galtung's diagram. Postcolonialism consists of diverse approaches which criticize that "five centuries of modern European colonialism continue to shape political ideas and practices, including those concerning the production of knowledge" [Chandra 2012: 480]. However, as various commentators have argued, postcolonialism does not aim to invert the existing colonialist hierarchy, merely replacing the logic of Western-centrism with a non-Western alternative; instead, it aims to deconstruct the hierarchy itself [Santos 2018: 7]. A postcolonial society, therefore, is one whose members more or less internalize Western modernity as an inseparable part of life, even as they embrace a postcolonial political and social project to dismantle Western-centered power relations. Postcolonialism is an attempt to transpose the Western-centric axis of hybridization into another axis of logic rather than simply inverting it.

Al-Attas, whom Kushimoto discusses in Chapter 2, is a Malaysian Islamist thinker who has attempted such an act of transposition in his effort to decolonize knowledge in the Pc of his country.[1] As a member of his country's elite educated in the West, al-Attas seeks to overcome Western-centrism, even though he belongs to the same social class as the Western-centric local elite. His approach is not to invert the Western-centric hierarchy by denigrating the Western intellectual tradition as inferior while elevating the Islamic intellectual tradition as superior. Instead, he pursues a sweeping approach that tackles the essence of the problem, seeking to clarify the commonalities and differences between the Western and the Islamic intellectual traditions and then to build up a contemporary Islamic framework for knowledge. The tradition of Islamic knowledge constitutes his main scholarly focus—how the fruits of historical exchanges with various civilizations were incorporated through a form of hybridization that preserved the integrity of the Islamic system of knowledge as a whole.

Al-Attas makes little effort to be understood and noticed in the Western-centric world. He does not employ the modern postcolonial ideas that are actively discussed in contemporary Western academia. Nor does he disseminate his work through "authoritative" Western universities and publishers. Furthermore, his criticism of Western-centrism focuses not on the West itself, but on the intellectual class responsible for the production of knowledge in Malaysia and the Islamic world. As a result, the importance of al-Attas's postcolonial challenge remains unappreciated not only by the West but also by the producers of knowledge elsewhere in the Islamic world, which, permeated as it is by Western-centrism, fails to recognize al-Attas's work as valuable because it lacks the stamp of Western intellectual authority. Al-

[1] The term "Islamism" is often rejected as a label by those who take part in religiously infused ideological activities and political and social movements in the Islamic world. To respect this, scholars of Islam in Japan often use the term "Islamic revivalism," in line with a general trend in the humanities and social sciences to respect the way people self-identify. Against this backdrop, according to Kushimoto, the use of "Islamic revivalism" has taken root among scholars of Southeast Asian Islamic affairs. But in Turkey, which is the subject of the editor's research, the term "Islamism" remains popular, and has grown more so in recent years. This may be due to differences in the degree of geopolitical proximity to and penetration of the West, but an exploration of these differences within the Islamic world is another topic. Despite the discursive situation in Malaysia, the editor refers to al-Attas as an "Islamist" here to capture his intellectual enterprise as a postcolonial challenge to Western-centrism, based on the definition of the concept by S. Sayyid, who himself is engaging such Islamism. See Chapter 4 for a discussion of S. Sayyid's definition of Islamism and its connection to postcolonialism.

Attas exemplifies how difficult it is to bypass the West and overcome Western-centrism under Western hegemony. But once such a moment comes, his work could serve as a rich source in the enterprise to construct post-Western-centric knowledge.

Chapter 3, by Shiozaki, suggests a new perspective that can be brought about by schematizing the whole picture of the networking of Islamic knowledge. In Islam, there is a tradition of *ijazah*, authorization or permission to transmit Islamic knowledge based on the relationship between master and disciple; through this tradition, it is possible to trace the relationship between master and disciple back to the earliest days of Islamic history. By mining the *ijazah* tradition for the vast amount of information it contains, complemented by information from historical documents such as ulama letters and travel records, a large-scale quantitative research project could reveal much about the evolution of knowledge networks and the contours and genealogy of innovation in the Islamic intellectual tradition. To that end, Shiozaki proposes the use of modern digital-analysis techniques, such as geographic information systems (GIS) and text analysis software, and illustrates this methodology using historical data drawn from the observations of a nineteenth-century Dutch researcher. As is clear from Shiozaki's analysis, it is also possible, by adding data on intellectual exchanges with non-Muslims, to gain insights into the nature and direction of intellectual innovation driven by knowledge exchange between civilizations. Additionally, although Shiozaki does not go this far, this type of quantitative analysis could also be used to position each civilization's internal network in a global, multicentric picture. It is thus a promising approach that could contribute much to the project of developing a postcolonial history of knowledge, especially in strongly Western-centric fields like political science and international relations.

In the fourth chapter, Sawae discusses the Islamist political movement in Turkey. While, like al-Attas, Turkish Islamism has emerged as a challenger to both global and local Western-centrism and Orientalism, its major object of confrontation was the military-led state institutions espousing internal Orientalism. Despite its initial anti-Western stance, it reversed course and came to embrace an accommodationist attitude toward the West. This enabled it to rise as a major regional actor, both economically and geopolitically, and to increase its domestic support and ultimately

win political power. However, since attaining power, the Erdoğan government has become increasingly authoritarian, to such an extent that now even its former allies have begun to defect. The same is also true of its former ally, the Islamic Gülen movement, which has embraced unethical and illegal means in its power struggle with Erdoğan.

As a result, the raison d'être of Islamism in particular and of Islamic movements in general has been under public scrutiny for the past decade in Turkey. Sawae attributes this situation to the Islamist movement's inability to define a specifically Islamist politics since taking power. Yet because of the dual structure of Orientalism, it remains structurally possible to secure the legitimacy of Islamism as a challenger as long as global Western-centrism continues to exist. That is what Erdoğan has been trying to do, both domestically, through Islamic policies such as mosque building and the expansion of Islamic education, and internationally, by presenting himself as a leader in the Islamic world in the fight against Islamophobia. The Gülen movement, in contrast, continues the pro-Western strategy in order to win the hearts and minds of liberal Islamophiles in the West. Yet in adopting these strategies, both parties rely on global Western-centrism, Orientalism, and Islamophobia/Islamophilia in their mutual struggle for power. And while Erdoğan is protracting the row, the gap between the interests of his government and those of the masses continues to grow, and the discrepancy between the government's desire for power and the public's demand for good governance is becoming increasingly stark. Authoritarianism can dampen the tensions that ensue to a point, but in the long run will only stoke them further. Sawae argues that once achieving the mission of toppling domestic Western-centrism, Islamist governments need to develop a self-sustainable policy platform and project for governance that do not require further domestic use of strategic Occidentalism. On this point, Erdoğan's regime appears to have failed, and it remains to be seen whether Turkish Islamism will find a way to continue the Islamist project without depending for its raison d'être on its positioning against global Western-centric hegemony.

In Chapter 5, Kokaki reports on the recent experience of the Gülen movement since being driven out of Turkey because of its opposition to Erdoğan. The Gülen movement is known for the multifaceted and international organizational activities

it carries out under its charismatic religious leader, Fethullah Gülen. In the movement's early years, it built on the nationwide reach of its Islamic study circles in Turkey to become an important player in the humanitarian NGO sector, the education industry, the banking sector, the mass media, and intellectual forums dedicated to interreligious dialogue and the revitalization of civil society. By managing schools, organizing cultural activities, and cultivating business opportunities, the movement expanded its network around the world, particularly in Africa, Central Asia, and the West. In each country its members went, they established connections to the political and business worlds. Gülen himself lives in the United States in self-imposed exile, safe from persecution at the hands of Turkey's local Western-centric Kemalist elite and, now, from the efforts of the Erdoğan regime to try him for his alleged part in the failed coup of 2016.

The uniqueness of the Gülen movement lies in its positive view of and cooperative attitude toward the Western-centric West. In this sense, the Gülen movement does not correspond to Sayyid's definition of an Islamist movement. While seemingly anti-authoritarian because of its local confrontation with Kemalism and its global cooperation with Western-centrism, this stance cannot be interpreted simply as a defense of liberal democracy, because for many years, the movement has itself employed a number of illegal and unethical methods that contradict democratic norms in its attempts to oust Kemalists and in its conflict with the Erdoğan regime. In the wake of the failed 2016 coup attempt, Western countries, increasingly averse to the Erdoğan regime's growing authoritarianism, have granted asylum to Gülen activists and allowed them to continue their work in their countries. Kokaki states that since the movement's human and financial networks were cut off after the coup, the former harmonious unity in the discourse and feelings within the movement has been undermined, and muted criticism has begun to be voiced by intellectuals and grassroots activists within the movement about Gülen's deep involvement in politics and the opacity of the movement's organizational activities. It has only been a few years since it lost its center of activity in Turkey and was forced to focus on the West. How will its new circumstances transform the Gülen movement in the years to come? Future studies on the movement's activities in Western countries will show whether its pursuit of an assimilationist hybridization strategy there will pay off, and

perhaps whether other Muslim civic movements in the Western-centrist West might do the same, or whether it will ultimately abandon that approach in favor of a different one.

Chapter 6, by Ishikawa, introduces Germany as a case study in which a Western country seeks to become more inclusive in its relationship with its Muslim immigrant community by shifting from a policy of Western-centric chauvinism toward one of multiethnic coexistence. Germany has long been a highly ethnically stratified society that is hostile to immigrants—especially Muslims, who are at once ethnic as well as religious and cultural others. According to Ishikawa, in the past, people in Germany were viewed as occupying one of two camps: Germans, around whose cultural homogeneity the entire society was structured, and "foreigners," who were supposed to remain separate and distinct and not assimilate into German culture.

In recent years, however, two important changes have shaken this dichotomy. The first came from the legal system, with the enactment of new immigration laws and a shift to a new nationality regime that recognizes the possibility of citizenship for children of "foreigners" born in the country. This means that the concept of the nation now includes a new, and more heterogeneous, third category: "citizens with a migrant background." It also means that the state has declared a multicultural society through the legal system.

At around the same time as these shifts were taking place, a second change further rocked the stability of the German-foreigner dichotomy. Concerns spread that if Muslim immigrant communities perpetuated themselves not only culturally but also as the lowest class economically and socially, this would lead to the entrenchment of a "parallel society" that would undermine Germany's national power. To avoid this, the integration of minority communities into German society, once shunned, came to be embraced as an ideal. To this end, committees of religiously diverse local residents have been formed and a project has been launched to make mosques function as community-exchange centers.

These developments have given rise to the idea of a German "immigrant culture," a hybrid mixture of the German culture of the host society and the immigrant culture of the homeland inherited from the country of origin. Although Ishikawa

acknowledges that this recognition of hybridity is an important first step toward integration, he argues that for full integration to be possible, Germany must further acknowledge that "German culture" itself is a mix of various elements of ethnic-German and immigrant culture. Only by recognizing that immigrant culture is an integral part of a hybrid German culture can a new social cohesion be achieved. These two hybridities—that of a hybrid German-immigrant culture and of German culture itself—are of different kinds. The first is a product of a German-centric imagination, the expectation that immigrants alone must "Germanize"; while the other, the hybridization of German culture, is the end result of the transformation of the whole of German society into hybrids. If decolonization can only be achieved through the hybridization of the latter, we can see how far-reaching the struggle for postcolonialism is in the Western-centric West.

This volume concludes with a chapter on Japan. The exclusivism of Japanese national identity has often been compared to that of Germany. And like Germany today, Japan, too, is confronting the necessity of accepting itself as an immigrant society if it is to maintain the sustainability of its national society. Japan lags far behind Germany in this regard, and it is doubtful whether the recognition of immigrants as constituent parts of Japanese society will come so easily, despite how essential they are to the country. Although Japan is an inferior other from the perspective of Western-centrism, it has tried to secure a dominant position by assuming the position of the West in Western-centrism as opposed to "Asia" (which is recognized in Japan as a geographical and cultural area apart from Japan). This is not merely a perception; it was a fundamental part of the guiding rationale that led Japan to invade and colonize its neighbors in the first half of the twentieth century. Although Japan was forced to decolonize after its defeat in the Second World War, its perception of and attitude toward "Asia" remain locked in the dichotomy of Orientalist/colonialist power relations. That this continues to be the case even today is clear from, for example, the abuse and exploitation of foreign workers in the country, and the recently exposed inhuman treatment of asylum seekers by Japan's immigration bureau.

An empire is a governing system that shackles diversity to the power dichotomy between ruler and ruled. In postcolonial Western countries, many citizens and

immigrants from former colonies continue to fight for legal systems and cognitive reforms to overcome the discrimination against them. Could Japan today, as a former colonialist empire, be discussed in the same light as Western countries? Western nations have been making efforts to correct the colonialist power relations with their racial and cultural others, both externally and internally, not only by recognizing the independence of their former colonies—in most cases a process long since accomplished—but also by taking steps to realize the equality of citizens of diverse backgrounds within their own countries, even if steps toward this end are insufficient and steeped in the logic of Western-centric hybridization. However, from Chapter 7, by Kwon, one can only conclude that Japan has not made endogenous efforts that are comparable to those of Western countries.

As a defeated country, modern Japan has never had to seek its own ethical standards. Externally, decolonization was achieved as an automatic result of its defeat, a defeat not at the hands of the nations it had colonized, but by the United States; and the correction of Japan's colonialist inter-state relations was realized as a formality without a concomitant process of reflection on the legacy of Japan's colonial past. Moreover, even though Japan was tried in the Tokyo Tribunal, it was given "consideration" in the Cold War strategy of the United States in exchange for being an obedient ally, meaning that Japan has never taken the initiative to seek reconciliation with the neighbors it once colonized. In sum, Japan has been spoiled by its international environment. As a result, Japan still retains a colonialist epistemological power relationship with the people of "Asia." This is probably why Japan has repeatedly been criticized by neighboring countries for never having reckoned with its own past.

The context of the Cold War was partly to blame for allowing Japan to escape the difficult path faced by the postcolonial societies of all former colonialist empires: In the imperial period, Japan proclaimed itself to be a multiethnic nation; but after its defeat in the Second World War, all of Japan's former colonial subjects, regardless of where they lived or what they desired, were automatically stripped of their Japanese nationality and forced to become "foreigners." America's Cold War foreign policy toward East Asia played an important role here, too. Kwon points out that the United States, which prioritized, during the occupation period, Japan's sociopolitical

unity and stability, preferred not to give Japan's former colonial subjects the option of becoming democratic citizens of Japan, fearing that doing so would cause political and social disorder over the postwar Japanese state system (such as the question of the status of the emperor). Since then, the integration of former colonial subjects who continued to live in post-imperial Japan, the so-called "Zainichi" (literally meaning "residing in Japan"), as equal and diverse citizens of Japanese society, has never been part of Japan's democratic imagination.

Zainichi have been the target of violence as scapegoats whenever tensions with neighboring countries escalate. It is feared that the xenophobia in Japan against not only Zainichi people but also especially non-Western-looking foreigners could further increase if Japan's economic stagnation continues and drops the country below China and Korea, its former colonies, in the international hierarchy. How can Japan face up to the fact that it has been a postcolonial hybrid society since the post-war period? How can it begin its own process of reconciliation, both with its neighboring nations and within its own society? And how can it mount its own endogenous postcolonialist struggle to undo the colonialist hierarchy in which it remains trapped?

Although the hegemony of Western-centrism is still strong, globalization is entering a phase where the struggle for postcolonialism is taking hold in the Western-centrist West, as evidenced by the recent Black Lives Matter movement and the growing trend among former colonial states to demand reparations from their erstwhile colonizers. In Galtung's figure, there will be more and more subversive postcolonial movements not only within P nations but also within C nations, as well as in the relationship between C and P. What kinds of insights and inspirations will emerge from the political movements and knowledge-production activities of Islamism in an age like this? How will the process of German hybridization fare? Will Japan be able to undertake an epistemic transformation that could help it maintain its reputation in the international community? The experiences of Muslim societies, Germany, and Japan in this era of globalization suggest that the dual lenses of globalization and postcolonialism afford us a unique perspective on socio-political affairs both past and present, one that has the potential even to shine some light on the future, not only of former colonial-subject societies but also of the

postcolonial metropolitan centers that continue to be bound up with the colonial hierarchy.

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