

Comments on “From “Critical” Nationalism to “Asia as Method””

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Session 5, The India-Japan Bilateral Partnership in the Indo-Pacific

The Aim of the Session 5



- Analyze and debate core research questions on the culture and identity of India and Japan in the Indo-Pacific
 - The India-Japan bilateral partnership has grown significantly over the years and became the “special strategic and global” partnership in 2015. With New Delhi and Tokyo positioned at either end of the Indo-Pacific, this ‘like-minded’ and deepening partnership has often been championed as one that will take on the role of the region’s stabilizing anchors.
- Unlike other sessions, it provides different approaches like looking into underlying variables (including unobservable factors) in the relationships
 - What can we see about the India-Japan relationship from the spectrum of culture and identity?
 - How do culture and identity affect the relationship between India and Japan?

Significance of Tagore



- “Filtered through Buddhism, Indian culture has had a significant influence on Japanese culture. In modern times, the close interaction between... Rabindra Nath Tagore and... OKAKURA Tenshin.” (Japanese Ambassador to India, 2022)
 - Both by Japanese and Indian research, the role of the relationship of Tagore and Okakura was emphasized but lacked the deeper analysis (its meaning, impact, etc.) (Togawa, 2013)
 - Prof Shani’s paper contributed to show the role from the standpoint of post-Western IR and cosmology.

“Address by Ambassador SUZUKI Satoshi at the Opening Session of “Japan and India: 70 Years of Cooperation and the Way Forward” (February 24, 2022),” <https://www.in.emb-japan.go.jp/files/100307146.pdf>; 外川昌彦「シャンティニケトンの岡倉天心 —1902年の英領インドにおけるタゴールとの出会いについて—」『南アジア研究』25号（2013年）31-44頁。

Significance of Cosmology



- Cosmology
 - A set of “ontological and epistemological propositions about the origins and the evolution of the cosmos and our position in it”
 - Philosophy of science-based discussion: Criticizing modern scientific understanding (Newtonian cosmology) of IR
 - Socio-cultural-based discussion: Criticize Western-biased IR from cultural, societal, religious aspects
 - Arguments not limited to culture and identity
 - “[C]osmologies don’t *belong* to peoples but *constitute* peoples” (Shani 2021)
 - Culture and identity seem more likely to *belong* to peoples than *constituting* peoples

Claus Beisbart, “Philosophy and Cosmology,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Science* (Oxford University Press, 2015), 817-835;
Johan Galtung, “Social Cosmology and the Concept of Peace,” *Journal of Peace Research*, 18(2) (1981): 183-199; Giorgio Shani, “IR as Inter-Cosmological Relations?” *International Political Reviews*, 9 (2021): 306-312; 鵜野祐介 「「子どものコスモロジー」の理論」 『子ども社会研究』 4号（1998年6月） 3-17頁。

Like-Minded?



- Especially in the context of the Indo-Pacific region, Japan and India are considered to be “like-minded” partners.
 - “Like-minded” based on Western values: Democracy, capitalism, etc.
 - Shall we consider other aspects, such as Buddhism, Asian *minzoku*, etc.?
- Will reconsidering “like-minded-ness” with “Asia as method” provide us new insights toward the partnership and the formation of the regional order?
 - How should we apply “Asia as method”? How can we assess the relevance as a methodology?

Rethinking the Indo-Pacific Order



- Major understanding: Japan and India aim to sustain and enhance rule-based order (liberal order)
 - Rule-based/liberal norms = the Western and Eurocentric concept
 - Somehow require the US engagement? = Relying on the Western influence?

- By provincializing the West, what kind of relevant insights be gained about the Indo-Pacific regional order for Japan and India?
 - How can the role of the Western actors be understood with “pan-Asianism”?

More Focus on Japan?

- Tagore and Okakura influenced the development of pan-Asianism
 - Yukichi Fukuzawa's 脱亜論
 - Kyoto School and 大東亜共栄圏

- Kyoto School?
 - Kitaro Nishida was asked to write a paper to be used for 大東亜共栄圏
 - But it was too difficult to be applied by Kanji Ishihara
 - Further investigation maybe needed on this part?