New Political Economy ›

Volume 13, 2008 - Issue 2

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Articles

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Pages 153-172 | Published online: 12 May 2008

Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1080/13563460802018224

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New Political Economy, Vol. 13, No. 2, June 2008

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Structural Reform of the Family and the Neoliberalisation of Everyday Life in Japan

TAKEDA HIROKO

In his most recent major publication, *The Culture of the New Capitalism*, Richard Sennett reminds us of the old Weberian thesis that the capitalist economy requires a particular 'culture' which provides a normative code and framework of behaviour to function, and that the globalised 'New Economy' is no exception. This new culture of capitalism, omnipresent in the workplace as well as across sites of consumption, is based on an ever-drifting temporal sense (a 'fresh page thesis', in Sennett's words) and flexible organisations, and thus does not function as a self-disciplinary principle by delaying gratification, as Weber described in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.[1] Zygmunt Bauman, however, turns our eyes to a different disciplinary element of contemporary 'culture' of advanced capitalist societies, which separates people into two groups of 'us' and 'them' with reference to economic productivity and fitness to consume. According to Bauman, today there are two types of 'big brother' that discipline people to get into line and include them, while simultaneously spotting the 'unfit' to exclude. The selection mechanism posited by Bauman is still as fatal as the Protestant Ethic was, as, once excluded, there are only slim chances of returning to the world of the included ('out; and once out, forever out').[2] In this sense, the normative drive remains crucial in the 'new' culture of contemporary capitalist society.

One question to be considered is, then, how different people make (or do not make) a shift from the old behaviour pattern to adopt the 'culture' of the New Capitalism in response to economic structural change. Using the term 'graduated sovereignty', Aihwa Ong has explored how the transition in the economic structure to the globalised New Economy has affected state–citizen relationships in the rapidly growing South-east Asian countries (Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore).[3] The Japanese state, although situated at a different stage of economic development, is no exception to these renegotiations of state–citizen relationships. The New Economy that promoted entrepreneurship and competition based on market principles was regarded as an external force in the 1990s, when Japan was caught up in a long-term economic setback. In searching for remedies to improve the condition of the national economy,

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ISSN 1356-3467 print; ISSN 1469-9923 online/08/020153-20 © 2008 Taylor & Francis
DOI: 10.1080/13563460802018224

I am grateful for support to the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee (JFEC) the White Rose East Asia Centre (WREAC), the Economic and Social Research Council

(ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Notes

1. Richard Sennett, The Culture of the New Capitalism (Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 76–81.

2. Zygmunt Bauman, Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts (Polity Press), p. 132.

3. Aihwa Ong, Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty (Duke University Press, 2007), ch. 3.

4. Jamie Peck & Adam Tickell, ‘Neoliberalizing Space’, Antipode, Vol. 34, No. 3 (2002), pp. 391–2.

5. For example, Koga Junichirō & Kondō Satoshi, Ikki ni wakaru koizumi kōzō kaikaku (Kō Shobō, 2001); Kusano Atsushi, Rekidai shushō no keizai seisaku zen dētā (Kadokawa Shoten, 2005).

6. The total fertility rate represents the number of children that a women is likely to bear. This was 1.57 in 1989, and since then it has been falling constantly. The figure in 2004 was 1.29, one of the lowest among the advanced industrialised countries.

7. See John Dunn, ‘Nihon no tadoru seijiteki mahi eno michi: okizarinisareta minshuteki kibō’, Shiso, No. 938 (2002), pp. 4–26.

8. For example, Robert Wade, ‘Japan, the World Bank, and the Art of Paradigm Maintenance: The East Asian Miracle in Political Perspective’, New Left Review, No. 217 (1996), pp. 3–36; Ronald Dore, Stock Market Capitalism, Welfare Capitalism: Japan and Germany versus Anglo-Saxons (Oxford University Press, 2000); Kanishka Jayasuriya & Andrew Rosser, ‘Economic Orthodoxy and the East Asian Crisis’, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 3 (2001), pp. 381–96.

9. For example, Martin Rhodes & Richard Higgott, ‘Asian Crises and the Myth of Capitalist “Convergence”’, Pacific Review, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2000), pp. 1–19; Linda Weiss, ‘Developmental States in Transition: Adapting, Dismantling, Innovating, not “normalizing”’, Pacific Review, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2000), pp. 21–55; Simon Reich,

‘Miraculous or Mired? Contrasting Japanese and American Perspectives on Japan's Economic Problems’, Pacific Review, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2000), pp. 163–93; Barry K. Gill, ‘The Crisis of Postwar East Asian Capitalism: American Power, Democracy and the Vicissitudes of Globalization’, Review of International Studies, Vol. 26, No. 3 (2000), pp. 381–403.

10. See Dominic Wilson, ‘Japan's Slow-Down: Monetary versus Real Explanations’, Oxford Review of Economic Policy, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2000), pp. 18–33; Noguchi Akira & Tanaka Hidetomi, Kōzō kaikaku ron no gokai (Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha, 2001), pp. 2–19.

11. For example, Yashiro Naohiro, Shōshi kōreika no keizaigaku: shijō jūshi no kōzō kaikaku (Tōyō Keizai Shinpōsha, 1999); Takenaka Heizō, Yasashi keizaigaku (Gentōsha, 2003).

12. Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, ‘Structural Reform of the Japanese Economy: Basic Policies for Macroeconomic Management’, http://www.keizai-shimon.go.jp/english/publication/010621.html (last accessed 18 June 2006).

13. The Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy was established in the Cabinet Office in January 2001. The organisation in which high-profile business leaders and academics join along with ministers is directly affiliated to the Prime Minister and provides policy recommendations and advice on economic matters. In so doing, it serves the strengthening of the prime minister's political leadership in the matter of economic and fiscal policies.

14. Yoshikawa Hiroshi, Kōzō kaikaku to nihon keizai (Iwanami Shoten, 2003), pp. 102–15.

15. Yashiro, Shōshi kōreika no keizaigaku, pp. 3–12; Noguchi & Tanaka, Kōzō kaikaku ron no gokai, pp. 12–21; Takenaka, Yasashi keizaigaku, pp. 35–74.

16. Paul Burkett & Martin Hart-Landsberg, ‘The Economic Crisis in Japan: Mainstream Perspectives and an Alternative View,’ Critical Asian Studies, Vol. 35, No. 3 (2003), p. 340.

17. For a detailed discussion of nihonjinron, see Yoshino Kosaku, Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan: A Sociological Enquiry (Routledge, 1992).

18. As a typical example of this kind of argument, see Karel van Wolferen, The Enigma of Japanese Power: People and Politics in a Stateless Nation (Macmillan, 1989).

19. Matsubara Satoshi, Naze nihon dake ga kawarenainoka: posuto-kōzō kaikaku no seijikeizaigaku (Daiyamondosha, 2002), pp. 207–19.

20. Naikakufu, Kurashi to kōzō kaikaku handobukku, http://www5.cao.go.jp/seikatsu/2002/0430hand-book/top.gif (last accessed on 16 June 2005).

21. David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism (Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 7.

22. See Wilson, ‘Japan's Slow-Down’.

23. The ‘maverick’ and strong leadership that characterised Koizumi's political style has been pointed out by many observers, placing this populist politician who pursued ‘reform’ in a distinctive position in the trajectory of post-war Japanese politics. See, for example, Alisa Gaunder, Political Reform in Japan: Leadership Looming Large (Routledge, 2007), pp. 121–2; Uchiyama Yū, Koizumi seikken: patosu no shushō wa nanio kaetanoka (Chūō Kōron, 2007), pp. iii–v; Takenaka Heizō, Kōzō kaikaku no shinjitsu (Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, 2006), pp. 14–21.

24. Koizumi Junichirō, ‘Shoshin hyōmei enzetsu’, Gekkan Jiyū Minshu, Vol. 579 (2001), p. 63.

25. Derek Hall, ‘Japanese Spirit, Western Economics: The Continuing Salience of Economic Nationalism in Japan’, New Political Economy, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2004), pp. 87–8.

26. Naikakufu, Kokumin seikatsu hakusho (Gyōsei, 2002).

27. Ibid., Preface.

28. For an alternative view, for example, Shirahase Sawako, Shōshi kōreika shakai no mienai kakusa: jendā, sedai, kaisō no yukue (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2005); Jinno Tadahiko & Miyamoto Tarō (eds), Datsu ‘kakusa shakai’ eno senryaku (Iwanami Shoten, 2006), in particular pp. 60–88.

29. Naikakufu, Kokumin seikatsu hakusho, pp. 146–7.

30. In administrative terms, child-care provisions for pre-school and elementary school children in Japan had been dealt with as a ‘welfare measure’, that is, a part of public assistance for children who are regarded as lacking ‘appropriate’ parental care. This effectively limited the scope of nursery provision, as well as causing stigma for nursery

children. The improvement of the national support scheme for working parents started in the 1990s, driven by the government's recognition of fertility decline as a political issue, and the structural reform policy certainly facilitated this process. For details of the government measures implemented before the period of structural reform policy, see Glenda S. Roberts, ‘Pinning Hopes on Angels: Reflections from an Ageing Japan's Urban Landscape’, in Roger Goodman (ed.), Family and Social Policy in Japan: Anthropological Approaches (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 54–91; Heidei Gottfried & Jacqueline O'Reilly, ‘Regulating Breadwinner Models in Socially conservative Welfare Systems: Comparing Germany and Japan’, Social Politics, Vol. 9 No. 1 (2002), pp. 29–59.

31. Naikakufu, Kokumin seikatsu hakusho, pp. 148–9.

32. Ibid., p. 149.

33. Ibid., p. 149.

34. A major think tank that has close links with the policy-making process in Japan.

35. Nomura Sōgō Kenkyūjo, Seikatsu kakumei: kokumin no ishiki henka to kōzō kaikaku (Nomura Sōgō Kenkyūjo, 2001), pp. 32–45.

36. Ibid., p. 40.

37. Shimada Haruo, Koyō o tsukuru kōzō kaikaku: nobiru seikatsu siengata sābisugyō (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, 2004), pp. 25–41.

38. Ibid., pp. 52–56.

39. Naikakufu, Kurashi to kōzō kaikaku handobukku.

40. For the situation surrounding young Japanese in irregular modes of employment, see Genda Yūji, Shigoto no naka no aimai na fuan (Kōdansha, 2001); Genda Yūji, A Nagging Sense of Job Insecurity: The New Reality Facing Japanese Youth (International House of Japan, 2005). Also, Glenn D. Hook & Takeda Hiroko, ‘“Self-responsibility” and the Nature of the Postwar Japanese State: Risk through the Looking Glass’, Journal of Japanese Studies, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2007), pp. 114–9. The number of young Japanese who are in an irregular mode of employment has rapidly increased since the mid 1990s, when many large corporations extended the scope of flexible employment practices based on a proposal by Nikkeiren, the largest business interest group in Japan. For the

Nikkeiren proposal, see Nikkeiren, Shinjidai no nihonteki keiei (Nikkeiren, 1995); also John Crump, Nikkeiren and Japanese Capitalism (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

41. Aera, 1 August 2005, pp. 26–7.

42. For contemporary attitudes towards marriage among young people, Ogura Chikako provides some insights based on her research conducted in corporation with the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Ogura Chikako, Kekkon no jōken (Asahi Shinbunsha, 2003), pp. 30–9.

43. Morotomi Yoshihiko, Kekkon kōzō kaikaku no susume (Jitsugyō no Nihon sha, 2003), pp. 12–8. Robertson and Suzuki suggest that the idea of hegemonic masculinity in post-war Japan was overwhelmingly represented by the image of the ‘salary man’, a male white-collar worker of large corporations until the economic downturn of the 1990s. See James E. Robertson & Nobue Suzuki (eds), Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

44. See Shindō Muneyuki, ‘Nihon ni okeru shakai fukushi gyōsei no ronri kōzō’, in Nihon Seiji Gakkai (ed.), Nenpō Seijigaku 1988: tenkanki no fukushi kokka to seijigaku (Iwanami Shoten, 1988), pp. 74–6; Deborah J. Milly, Poverty, Equality, and Growth: The Politics of Economic Need in Postwar Japan (Harvard University Press, 1999).

45. Harada Sumitaka, ‘“Nihongata fukushi shakai”-ron no kazokuzō: kazoku o meguru seisaku to hō tono kanrende’, in Tokyo Daigaku Shakaikagaku Kenkyūjo (ed.), Tenkanki no fukushi kokka: ge (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1988), pp. 305–8.

46. Ochiai Emiko, Nijū isseiki kazoku e: shinban (Yūhikaku, 1997); Ōsawa Mari, ‘Twelve Million Full-Time Housewives: The Gender Consequence of Japan's Postwar Social Contract’, in Oliver Zunz, Leonard J. Schoppa & Nobuhiro Hiwatari (eds), Social Contracts under Stress: The Middle Classes of America, Europe and Japan at the Turn of the Century (Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), p. 259.

47. For lone motherhood in Japan see, for example, Yuzawa Naomi, ‘Hitori-oya setai no seikatsu mondai to shotoku hoshō’, Shakai Fukushi Kenkyū, No. 90 (2004), pp. 52–62. It is noteworthy that Japan's record of childbirth out of wedlock (2.03 per cent in 2005) appears significantly low in comparison with other industrially advanced countries (Kokuritsu Shakaihoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo, Ippan Jinkō Tōkei 2007, online available at http://www.ipss.go.jp/syoushika/tohkei/Popular/Popular2007.asp?chap = 0 (last accessed 20 August 2007).

48. Ōsawa Mari, Kigyō chūshin shakai o koete: gendai nihon o jendā de yomu (Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1993), in particular, pp. 39–42, 198–204; Leonard J. Schoppa, Race for the Exits: The Unraveling of Japan's System of Social Protection (Cornell University Press, 2006), ch. 3; for a more ideological analysis of ‘symbiosis relationship’ between the enterprise society and housewife, Tomiko Yoda, ‘The Rise and Fall of Maternal Society: Gender, Labor, and Capital in Contemporary Japan, The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol. 99, No. 4 (2000), pp. 865–902.

49. There are some more detailed discussions available for the New Life Movement: Sheldon Garon, Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life (Princeton University Press, 1997), ch. 5; Andrew Gordon, ‘Managing the Japanese Household: The New Life Movement in Postwar Japan’, Social Politics, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1997), pp. 245–83. I have also examined the New Life Movement as a case study of the biopolitical arrangement of governing in post-war Japan in Takeda Hiroko, The Political Economy of Reproduction: Between Nation-State and Everyday Life (RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), ch. 5.

50. For biopolitics, see Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: Introduction (Penguin Books, 1978); Michel Foucault, ‘Governmentality’, in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds), The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 87–104. For governmentality in post-war Japan, Takeda, The Political Economy of Reproduction.

51. Takeda, The Political Economy of Reproduction, pp. 127–52. For dealing with risk and governmentality, see Deborah Lupton, Risk (Routledge, 1990), ch. 5.

52. For women's civil movements in post-war Japan see, for example, Robin LeBlanc, Bicycle Citizens: The Political World of the Japanese Housewife (University of California Press, 1999); Ueno Chizuko, ‘Sengo josei undō no chiseigaku: “heiwa” to “josei” no aida’, in Nishikawa Yūko (ed.), Sengo to iu chisei gaku (Tokyo Daigkau Shuppankai, 2007), pp. 137–80; also Takeda Hiroko, ‘Gendering the Japanese Political System: the Gender-Specific Pattern of Political Activity and Women's Political Participation’, Japanese Studies, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2006), pp. 185–98.

53. For the saving promotion in Japan, see Garon, Molding Japanese Minds, pp. 153–7; Sheldon Garon, ‘Saving for “My Own Good and the Good for Nation”: Economic Nationalism in Modern Japan’, in Sandra Wilson (ed.), Nation and Nationalism in Japan (RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 97–114; also Takeda Hiroko, ‘Governance through the

Family: The Political Function of the Domestic in Japan', in Glenn D. Hook (ed.), Contested Governance in Japan: Sites and Issues (RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), pp. 235–40.

54. Takeda, 'Governance through the Family', pp. 240–5.

55. For the 'adult worker model', see Jane Lewis, 'Work and Care', Social Policy Review, No. 12 (2000), pp. 48–67; Jane Lewis & Susanna Giullari, 'The Adult Worker Model Family, Gender Equality and Care: The Search for New Policy Principles and the Possibilities and Problems of a Capabilities Approach', Economy and Society, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2005), pp. 76–104.

56. Higuchi Yoshio & Ōta Kiyoshi, Josei tachi no heisei fukyō (Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, 2004), p. 249.

57. The politics of gender equality was carried out in conjunction with the 'structural reform' policy implemented by Koizumi's predecessor, Hashimoto Ryūtarō, from 1996. The structural reform policy pursued by the Hashimoto government centred around the streamlining of the national bureaucracy and fiscal structure. See Koga & Kondō, Ikki ni wakaru koizumi kōzō kaikaku, pp. 198–9; Ōsawa Mari, Danjo kyōdō shakai o tsukuru (Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 2002), ch. 4.

58. Ōsawa, Danjo kyōdō shakai o tsukuru, pp. 11–8.

59. Ueno Chizuko & Ōsawa Mari, 'Danjo kyōdō sankaku shakai kihon hō no mezasumono: sakutei made no ura omote', in Ueno Chizuko (ed.), Radikaru ni katareba (Heibonsha, 2001), p. 69.

60. Nikolas Rose, Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self, 2nd edn (Free Association Books, 1999), pp. 103–4.

61. Among many examples, see Senda Yuki, 'Neo riberarizumu to feminizumu', in Takemura Kazuko (ed.), Posuto Feminizumu (Sakuhinsha, 2003), pp. 137–9; Itō Kimio, 'Danjo kyōdō sankaku' ga toikakerumono (Inpakuto Shuppankai, 2003), pp. 93–5. For the positioning of the state feminists, see Ōsawa Mari, Ōno Teruko, Kōno Kiyomi & Takenaka Kazuko, 'Tōron: danjo kyōdō sankaku no kōbō', in Takemura, Posuto Feminizumu, pp. 142–56.

62. As one of the early discussions on the topic in Japan, see Ehara Yumiko, Feminizumu to kenryoku sayō (Keisō Shobō, 1988), in particular pp. 15–7.

63. Ueno Chizuko, ‘The Japanese Women's Movement: The Counter-Values to Industrialism’, in Gavan McCormack & Yoshio Sugimoto (eds), The Japanese Trajectory: Modernisation and Beyond (Cambridge Uiversity Press, 1988), pp. 167–85.

64. For an influential feminist critique of neoliberal economic rationality, see Nancy Folbre, Invisible Hearts: Economics and Family Values (The New Press, 2001).

65. See Yamada Masahiro, Parasaito shakai no yukue: deta de yomitoku nihon no kazoku (Chikuma Shobō, 2004), pp. 48–59. The idea of dekichatta-kon may require some explanation to non-Japanese readers as, statistically, marriage is no longer a prerequisite for child-bearing in many European and North American countries. As mentioned earlier, Japan's birth rate out of wedlock is extremely low in comparison with other industrially advanced countries and in this sense unplanned pregnancy often triggers marriage between couples.

66. Schoppa, Race for the Exits, pp. 162–70. Schoppa calls for further deregulation of the labour market to facilitate the process of reforming the support system for dual-income families.

67. Ōsawa Mari, ‘Nihongata fukushi kokka to jendā: koizumi kaikaku wa “shufu no kōzā kaikaku” ka’, Gendai Shisō, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2003), pp. 84–5; also, Ōsawa Mari, Gendai nihon no seikatsu hoshō shisutemu: zahyō to yukue (Iwanami Shoten, 2007).

68. Miura Atsushi, Karyū Shakai (Kōbunsha, 2005), p. 7.

69. Ibid., p. 54.

70. By comparing the case of the USA with that of France, Kimberly Morgan has pointed out that the quality of child care as well as staff tend to suffer when care work is commercialised in a deregulated and market-oriented economic system. See Kimberly J. Morgan, ‘The “Production” of Child Care: How Labour Markets Shape Social Policy and Vice Versa’, Social Politics, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2005), pp. 246–52.

71. Ohayō Okusan, August 2005, p. 32.

72. Nikolas Rose, ‘The Politics of Life Itself’, Theory, Culture & Society, Vol. 18, No. 1 (2001), p. 6.

73. Andrew Gamble, Politics and Fate (Polity Press, 2000).

74. The discussions on the rediscovery of ‘poverty’ and problems in terms of social inclusion are just re-appearing in Japan. For example, Iwata Masami, Gendai no hinkon: wākingu pua, home-resu, seikatsu hogo (Chikuma Shobō, 2007); Ōsawa, Gendai nihon no seikatsu hoshō shisutemu.

75.Sylvia Walby argues that many women still remain in the pre-modern world, being tied solely to domestic responsibilities. See Sylvia Walby, ‘Feminism in a Global Era’, Economy and Society, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2002), pp. 533–57.

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