

## Colonialism, Revolution, Development: A Historical Perspective on Citizenship in Political Struggles in Eastern Asia\*

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*Intensified blending of populations through migrations, and the problem of citizenship in different national contexts, in recent years have foregrounded questions of culture and cultural difference in citizenship studies. These questions have been compounded by a pervasive suspicion of a universalistic understanding of citizenship for its possible Eurocentric implications. Citizenship studies in Eastern Asia partake of this general problematic of culture. The complication of citizenship through recognition of its cultural dimension is a salutary development, but one that also presents a new predicament: loss of coherence of the concept, as well as a bias to culturalism that disguises the radical challenge the idea of citizenship has presented to inherited notions of political belonging, most importantly, the remaking of subjects into citizens that has accompanied the globalization of the nation-form from the late 19th century. Struggles for citizenship also bear upon questions of democracy and human rights, which also disappear from sight in culturalist readings. This is the problem that is addressed in the essay. I argue that the preoccupation with culture, if unchecked, threatens to erase a century long history of struggles for citizenship, democracy and human rights in Eastern Asian societies. Discussions of citizenship need to be sensitive to these struggles which are still very much issues of Eastern Asian politics.*

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## Introduction

Accompanying the rise to global hegemony of the nation-state as the political form the state assumed under the regimes of capitalism and inter-state competition, more often than not by force of arms, citizenship has become a nearly universal marker of political subjecthood. The Euro/American re-invention in the 18th century of an idea that had originated in the city-states of ancient Greece relocated citizenship from the “city” (or an Empire extending out of a city, as in Rome) in the nation-state, with contradictory consequences. It gave the “citizen” a say in the organization and functions of the state, opening the promise of democratic government to an ever-widening range of constituencies. It also inaugurated an unprecedented penetration of everyday life by the state, and the expansion of the space of the political, that would culminate in the ascendancy of what Michel Foucault described as “biopolitics,” understood broadly as the regulation of human life and behavior at the everyday level (Foucault, 2008). Foucault perceived “biopolitics” as a characteristic of Euromodernity, regardless of the form the state took in different nations in response to particular social and ideological circumstances. We might suggest, likewise, that the contradictory consequences of the remaking of “subjects” as “citizens” are equally universal, and have played an important part in shaping the politics of societies worldwide over the last two centuries or so. Varied as paths of nation-building and practices of citizenship may be across regional and national divides, this fundamental contradiction is integral to the variation, rendering the problematic of citizenship universal despite these differences.

Eastern Asian societies (including East and much of Southeast Asia) are no exception. The contradictory demands of nation-building and citizenship have propelled the political course of these societies for over a century, a considerable part of that period in collisions with one another, including war and colonialism. The resolution of the contradiction would take different forms in the different societies, from Fascism in Japan to a totalistic left Party-State in China, to authoritarian states in Korea, Vietnam, and others in the aftermath of experiences with colonialism from without and within the region. Nevertheless, the image of a generalized authoritarian state in keeping with the cultural legacies of the region should not disguise the simultaneous presence of struggles for democratic rights and citizenship. That these struggles seem to be overtaken across the region by a more economically inflected state-society relationship does not render continued struggle for

democratic rights any the less relevant. How we bring together these struggles with the state's version of the nation has discursive political implications. No discussion of citizenship is politically innocent. This may be all the more the case in discussions of Eastern Asian societies where struggles for citizenship remained unfinished when the political context was transformed rapidly by incorporation in a globalizing neoliberal economy.

My argument runs counter to the search for an East Asian difference that is based on the assumption of difference in cultural legacies, not because I think that cultural propensities and practices are unimportant, but because culture itself has very much been an issue in struggles over citizenship in the societies of the region, and therefore does not serve well in the explanation of difference when it needs itself to be explained. In other words, the question of culture needs to be historicized: if past legacies play a part in the meaning and function attached to citizenship in different societies, struggles over citizenship are important to understanding the production of new cultural meanings that reshape the political terrain. The "cultural turn" since the 1980s has deflected scholarly attention away from the entanglement of citizenship and nation-building in societies of this region in the experience of colonialism, hegemony, revolution and development, erasing citizenship as a historical problem in a culturalist leveling of history, and with it the political struggles that have shaped the trajectories of these societies. Insistence on cultural difference as the criterion for differences in practices of citizenship, whatever the reasoning underlying it, is hardly free of political consequences, as it wittingly or unwittingly favors some notions of citizenship over others—more often than not conservative against more democratic ideas of citizenship, based on one or another version of national characteristics.

This qualification has significant implications for spatializations informed by culture, in this case, an "east Asian culture," more often than not associated with a common Confucian legacy. It suggests that if Eastern Asian societies may constitute a region, it is not because they share one or more cultural traditions in common, but because their interactions over the last century have endowed them with certain commonalities—no less as antagonists as political and cultural models. These interactions have been crucial in the production of national self-images, as well as in shaping state-society relations that lie at the crux of the citizenship problematic.

Finally, we need to guard against the reification of regions and their differences that often accompanies regional comparisons. Comparison of Eastern Asia with European and North American practices of citizenship

needs to remain mindful of significant differences internal to both of these areas. Above all, it needs to be cognizant that, despite differences in culture, social formations and political legacies, there may be significant commonalities between Eastern Asian societies and societies in other regions of the world than the European or American, that may be due to parallel historical trajectories of nation-building and practices of citizenship under Euro/American hegemony. The perspective of the world is also indispensable in avoiding entrapment in an East-West abridgement of the world which does not stand up to even minimal critical inquiry, but which refuses to go away nevertheless as it seems to satisfy urges to civilizational preeminence (on both sides). The juxtaposition constitutes a gross misrepresentation of global spaces, and impoverishes the possibilities of historical explanation.

### A Note on Citizenship and the Nation-state

Citizenship has come under a great deal of critical scrutiny in recent years, accompanying increased awareness of the apparent inability of the nation-state to control its borders against flows of capital and people, the withdrawal of the state from the provision of social rights with neo-liberal privatization, and increased state suspicion and surveillance of its population with the pervasive anxiety about terror, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the proliferation of claims on citizenship. Demands on the state have proliferated with the diffusion from Europe and North America of a sense of rights that are no longer containable within earlier categories of civil, political and economic rights. In its putative rejection of state intervention in the economy, neoliberalism has created problems that have made state intervention more important than ever. Different notions of citizenship are in the process of evolving out of the practices of migrant populations.

Rather than make the state irrelevant, these developments invite the state even deeper into the social veins of everyday life. They nevertheless have raised serious questions concerning both citizenship and the nation-state. The inside/outside distinction that lies at the core of citizenship as its defining feature has come under criticism for the abuses it has generated, as well as introducing parochially-informed divisions into human society. On the other hand, proliferating demands for civil and social rights have revealed how citizenship throughout its history has failed to live up to its promise of equal treatment for all citizens. Seeming loss of faith in citizenship has been expressed in calls for “unthinking citizenship” for its complicity in curtailing

the rights of significant groups in society by casting a veneer of formal equality over the reality of a diverse set of inequalities in society (Gouws, 2005; Stevenson, 2001). Much of this discussion, we may add, is framed with an acute awareness of issues raised by globalization and transnationalism, most importantly the weakening, irrelevance, and possibly the demise of the nation-state.

Citizenship has taken another hit with questions concerning the nation as a source of identity and a unit of solidarity from the recognition of national “cultural complexity” (Hannerz, 1992) that transnational migrant cultures have forced on national consciousness across the globe. “Cultural citizenship” that earlier denoted the right to partake of a commonly shared hegemonic national culture refers presently to the right of ethnic groups to their own cultures (and languages), undermining assumptions about national cultural homogeneity, and expectations of cultural assimilation as a condition of citizenship (Turner, 1997: 12; Faist, 2000: 211-217; Rosaldo, 1997; Benhabib, 2002: Ch. 6; Kymlicka, 2001). Cultural complexity enjoys legal or quasi-legal codification in the recognition given to “dual citizenship” in an increasing number of states, the extension of citizenship status of one kind or another to “nationals” residing outside of the boundaries of the nation-state, and the formal or informal adoption of multiculturalist policies (Ibid.; Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Levitt, 2001; Pries, 1999). The superimposition of transnational on national spaces deterritorializes the nation, and “de-couples” identity from citizenship (Delanty, 2000: 131). The result, ironically, is to further enhance the role of the state in the dispensation of national belonging.

Critiques of citizenship fall short to the extent that they ignore their own context within a legally codified national belonging that is also their condition. While the politics of citizenship require that analysis look beyond legal formalities, the legal definition of citizenship “as a collection of rights and obligations which give individuals a formal legal identity” (Turner, 1997a: 5) is equally a requisite as a point of departure for any analysis grounded in political reality. No matter how varied the meaning and definition of citizenship, its legal codification in the constitution of the nation-state is a pervasive, if not universal, condition of modern citizenship (Faist, 2000: 207-208). While codification privileges those who belong against outsiders who do not, it does not make up for internal inequalities, and may even end up adding the legitimation of law to inequality (Bueker, 2009: 423). Still, the legal affirmation of belonging, even where it does not bring any recognizable advantages, has served as a powerful adhesive in securing

identification with the nation and its state.<sup>1</sup>

The privilege that comes with citizenship, if only legally, is also empowering in authorizing those who qualify as citizens or potential citizens to challenge both the boundaries of belonging, and unequal distribution of economic, political, social and cultural rights. Indeed, in those societies where the rule of law has not been subjected to political restrictions, citizenship historically has acquired new dimensions and new meanings as a result of such challenges, which make possible a politics of citizenship as distinct from its legal definitions, although the one is intimately bound with the other: if political struggles have secured citizenship for those excluded from it or marginalized by it, those struggles have drawn legitimacy from the promise of equality that is implicit in the very notion of citizenship (Isin, 2002). Citizenship may not guarantee democracy, but democracy as we have known it may have been impossible without it. Indeed, it is possible to suggest, I think, that most critiques of citizenship either on the basis of its exclusions or the inequalities it disguises, are struggles for inclusion and greater equality of rights-in other words, struggles over and for citizenship (Calhoun, 2007).

This automatically raises the question of the nation-state, the organizational and cultural context of modern citizenship. Citizenship means above all citizenship in the nation, "national citizenship," which may be the reason that an earlier generation of scholars such as T.H. Marshall, less concerned with globality, did not even bother to specify that the citizenship they discussed took the nation-state for granted (Marshall, 1992: 9; Crowley, 1998: 168). This indeed has been the case until recently, when there have been tendencies to disjoin citizenship and the nation-state. In his contribution to the conference on which this volume is based, Brian Turner reflects self-critically that in his preoccupation with social citizenship, he did not in the past attend closely to issues of national citizenship (Turner, 2009). We might go further and observe that the suggestion of parity between the social and the national is also misleading, as national citizenship is not just one more form of citizenship but historically has provided the context that enabled the expansion of the scope of citizenship to civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. It is within the same context that understanding of these categories has expanded as the equality promised by national citizenship-the entitlements of citizenship-has encouraged struggles for full

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<sup>1</sup> For the epochal change of the concept represented in the writing of the American constitution, see Kaufman (2010).

citizenship rights of excluded and marginalized groups in society (such as social citizenship, for instance, which has gone beyond issues of class to issues of identity politics). Rather than independent forms of citizenship, in other words, the various guises in which citizenship rights have been framed have represented so many dimensions of national citizenship.

If they are to serve as alternatives to “national citizenship,” the rephrasing of these rights as forms of citizenship requires specification of the organizational configuration other than the nation that would be attendant upon the reconstitution of the space of citizenship (what would be the organizational context, in other words, that would guarantee the priority of social citizenship-or any other form of citizenship?). This might range from the local community, at one extreme, to a global human community, at the other, with many possibilities in between (Turner, 1997a). Any consideration of alternatives to the nation-state needs to be aware of the limitations placed on choice by its own context in historical circumstances shaped by the nation-state, which may be a historical invention but is not, therefore, any the less significant in shaping history. We may also note that while the nation-state inflicted much damage on the local community in the process of colonizing it, it also corrected much abuse within it. At the other extreme, Craig Calhoun has argued following Hannah Arendt that human rights were most effectively protected where they have a firm basis in citizenship (Calhoun, 2007: 4). It is also necessary to add that citizenship itself has been most democratic and egalitarian when it has made human rights its own. The one need not exclude the other, even if such exclusion were possible.

The nation-state is important for another reason: as a platform for participating in global issues. Stateless societies such as those that are the subject of James Scott’s recent work, or parts of national societies that renounce the state, serve best to drop out of world politics, more often than not at great peril to their constituencies who for better or worse are deprived of the protective umbrella of the state (Scott, 2009; NTS Alert, 2010). Participation requires access to institutions beyond the local. There are many channels for this kind of activity, social possibilities in global movements as well as technological possibilities, such as the internet, but given the decision-making powers of the state, it still provides the most effective institutional means for popular access to global politics. As in the case of human rights, a sense of globality is necessary for national citizenship to reach out to global politics, or even global citizenship, at least in a symbolic sense. The point is, however, that the national and the global are not mutually exclusive, but play out their dialectic under the force of a variety of constituencies. The one

might even contribute to strengthening the demands of the other.

Much of the criticism of citizenship in recent years has been driven by a sense of the impending demise of the nation-state under the assault of irresistible forces of globalization, primarily economic, but also political, social and cultural. Regionalization of sovereignty in a supra-national organization such as the European Union, where seen as a pervasive tendency, has lent an aura of historical inevitability to the ultimate replacement of the nation-state by a higher form of organization. Indeed, there has been talk even in policy quarters since the 1990s that world society is in the process of reconfiguration, most importantly in a “network society” consisting of networks of cities that cut across national boundaries, in a manner reminiscent of the pre-national commercial configuration of cities such as the Hanseatic League in Europe and the less formal network of cities that extended from Eastern to Southwestern Asia until their disruption of European imperial expansion (Dirlik, 1993: 50). It is arguable that at least as a tendency of the present, networks are replacing surfaces (identified with the nation) as the loci of economic, political and cultural power. The disappearance of the countryside looms ever closer as the countryside pours into the slums of megacities. And what could be a nation without the countryside?

Whether or not this makes the “state” of the nation-state irrelevant is an entirely different matter. Fashionable clichés that privilege motion and mobility over stable identities and stationary existence do not do away with either the state or the nation. By far the vast majority of the global population, including the academic purveyors of such clichés, continue to live in nations governed by nation-states that are as jealous of their prerogatives as they have ever been (Bloemraad, 2004). Most also enjoy the privileges that come with national belonging, if in a hierarchy of rights and obligations (Butcher, 2010).

Predictions of the demise of the nation-state rarely distinguish the “state” and the “nation-state,” often using them interchangeably, possibly because of the ease with which it is possible to mistake the disarticulation of state and the nation for the decline of one and the weakening of the other. But all the evidence points to a prevalent tendency presently that while the ties that bind the citizen to the state may be dissolving, the state is also enjoying unprecedented concentration of power over the citizenry. Indeed, it may be suggested that both internally and externally, the state has had to add an expanding scope of managerial activity to its other functions: from managing capital flows to the management of people flow, externally, and the



management of social and cultural relations internally, down to the level of the family. The apparent intensification of citizenship in the embrace of the state only serves to disguise the alienation at work of the state from the citizenry as its very centrality in the management of global relations more than ever distances it from the population of which it is the putative representative. Indeed, citizenship itself has become an object of management in response to corporate economic needs and popular pressures (Ong, 2003). Nationalism these days is as much against as it is for the state, which may express the ambiguity of the state as the mediator of the global and the national. But it by no means offers evidence of decline in the power of the state per se.

This being the case, there is as much reason presently to struggle for citizenship in the nation-state as to struggle against it, and, depending on circumstances, to recover or establish the rights of citizenship that are usurped, denied, or abridged by the state. Needless to say, these struggles come in many political colorings. Right-wing movements that primordialize relations between the state and the citizen, even where they wish “to drown the state in a bathtub,” as in the case of primitivist libertarians in the United States, have drawn the most attention for their propensity to advocate oppressive measures against those they perceive as threats to national unity and homogeneity. But the struggle for citizenship is by no means restricted to the political and cultural right. Movements for rights that are distinguished by a more-open ended understanding of citizenship, despite their criticism of existing codifications and practices of citizenship, do not seek to abolish citizenship, but to make it more democratic, egalitarian and inclusive.. These movements recognize, in most cases anyway, that if what is required is to reconfigure citizenship to overcome its exclusivist limitations under the nation-state, and disperse citizens’ sovereignties among multiple belongings, that, too, needs to confront the political topography that is the legacy of the nation-state system. Articulating these struggles to one another is the challenge facing citizenship as a political project. If they are to accomplish their goals, and overcome the drift to the right, progressive struggles for citizenship need to answer the anxieties of populations facing a reconfiguration of citizenship that threatens the security provided earlier by the assumption of intimate ties between citizen, nation and the state, however problematic or illusory they may have been.

As this analysis suggests, the citizenry is not a unified or a homogeneous entity. Indeed, it is inequalities in the rights and obligations that define the relationship of citizens to the state that motivate struggles for full citizenship

on the part of those who feel that they have been denied in practice the rights that are theirs, or should be theirs, by virtue of being citizens. The struggle for citizenship is at one and the same time also a struggle for economic, political, social and, more recently, cultural citizenship-among the citizenry itself. This itself contributes to the power of the state as the ultimate arbiter of such struggles. On the other hand, if the citizenry is not unified or homogeneous, neither is the state, even where that term refers in a narrow sense to the structure of government, let alone the complex of institutions that are devoted to the sustenance of the existing political order that constitute the state in a broader sense. Even those states that seek to establish themselves over and above the citizenry are riddled with contradictions on the disposition of citizenship as they are caught between the demands of a globalizing political economy and those of national sovereignty which would be meaningless without a nation to ground it. The seeming inability of states in our day to find solutions of any promise of permanence to problems thrown up by citizenship offers *prima facie* evidence of a critical uncertainty over inherited practices of both sovereignty and citizenship.

### Culture and Citizenship: A Historical Perspective on Problems of Citizenship in Eastern Asia

These issues of citizenship appear also in the struggles for citizenship in Eastern Asian societies, albeit with local variations and nuances. In a review of a volume of essays devoted to analysis of the contemporary relevance of T. H. Marshall's "paradigm" of citizenship, Brian Turner wrote that,

...social and economic rights need not be co-joined with juridical and political rights in an evolutionary framework...successful development of Marshall's original paradigm will require specific attention to the question of the globalization of the economy and secondly to the resulting cultural ambiguities of identity. It is for this reason that cultural citizenship in the global economy is the most pressing issue for those concerned with the enhancement of Marshall's theoretical legacy in citizenship studies (Turner, 1997b: 178-179).

In his contribution to the present volume, Turner himself stresses the importance of the Confucian legacy in East Asian societies as a "structural constraint" on citizenship (Turner, 2009).

The teleological ordering of Marshall's three dimensions in the expansion of citizenship rights and practices (civil, political, and social) is one more instance of a misleading theoretical universalization of a particular instance of historical development (Great Britain); much the same as the universalization of Marx's account of the progressive unfolding of social formations in European history. In both cases, the problem lies in the sociologization of historical categories, for which the original accounts are partially responsible in their failure to specify the historicity and historical context of their categories. Recent scholarship, including Turner's, acknowledges that there is no inevitability to these various dimensions of citizenship, or to a necessary order in the conception and juridical recognition of citizenship rights. Neither are they sufficient, from a contemporary perspective, to cover the realm of citizenship, which has acquired additional dimensions over the years. Recognition of historical particularity is a necessity of addressing both issues.

Similar considerations apply to the issue of culture, which has acquired analytical prominence in the humanities and the social sciences with the "cultural turn" of the last three decades. itself a response to a renewed insistence on cultural persistence and particularity that, ironically, has accompanied the globalization of capitalist modernity economically as well as culturally with the disappearance of revolutionary spaces (Dirlik, 2007: Ch. 3). I referred above to the recognition of "cultural complexity" domestically that has provoked the recent interest in culture, nation and citizenship. The implications of cultural difference between societies for citizenship (as constraint, as Turner suggests, or as the still further expansion of its realm, that a global perspective raises as a possibility) are equally important.

How to bring culture into the analysis of citizenship, however, is easier said than done as culture itself is one of the most abused concepts in scholarship or politics in its vulnerability to ahistorical — de-temporalized, de-spatialized, and de-socialized — reification. One aspect of the problem that is particularly pertinent to the discussion here is the part that agency (including the nation-state) plays in foregrounding the culture question; in other words, whether culture is an attribute of a society that is reproduced from generation to generation without conscious design, is consciously promulgated by agents who have an ideological, social and political stake in its persistence, or both, depending on what aspect of culture we might have in mind. The distinction is crucial to sorting out the different and conflicting ideas of citizenship, as well as the political struggles they generate, products both of contemporary structural contradictions that are every bit as significant

as the historical legacies that may inform the particularities of those contradictions. This is not to deny the importance of cultural practices. Rather the question is the deployment of culture in historical explanation as if it were an immutable “thing” immune to history; to transformation itself in the process of assimilating new ideas and practices.

It has become commonplace since the 1980s to identify an East Asian culture sphere defined by a shared legacy of Confucianism, which is more a product of efforts to explain the economic success of societies within the region than of their cultural realities. These societies were culturally complex before their incorporation in a Euro/American capitalist order. While they shared in common the textual traditions of Confucianism, they were also distinguished from one another by additional cultural affiliations that ranged from Daoism, Shinto, and Shamanism, to varieties of Buddhism, not to speak of more localized cultural practices (Dirlik, 1995, 2008). On the other hand, to point to something vague like the prevalence of family values is reductionist both of complex kinship organizations or of Confucianism as political theory and practise. Family values are hardly a monopoly of East Asian Confucianism. Besides, stress on the family in and of itself does not automatically yield clues to kinship organization, which took different forms in different societies (and different regions of the same society), especially in their incorporation into political order.

It is equally plausible to ascribe East Asian modernities to particular modes of incorporation in regional and global modernities, to shared legacies of colonialism or, as in the case of China, to new values generated by revolutionary social transformation (Cumings, 1984). Why Confucianism should be singled out as an explanation of success, or a formative moment of regional modernity, when it had been under attack for a hundred years (even longer in Japan) as an impediment to modernity, is a problem, not an explanation. It points to the possibility that, rather than a legacy that defines the nature of citizenship in East Asia, Confucianism as the source of a culturally defined citizenship represents only one alternative among others, congenial to some social and political interests, but not to others, as is suggested by the Confucian revival that accompanied the retreat from revolution in China from the late 1970s. Historically, struggles over culture in Eastern Asian societies have been part and parcel of the struggles for citizenship.

As I suggested above in the introductory section, there are good historical reasons for thinking of Eastern Asia as a region, albeit with shifting boundaries, and structural forces internal and external to the region. The

states that constitute the region nevertheless have their own particular histories despite the common legacies they may claim (or may be ascribed to them), shaped as much by their relationship to the world outside the region as by their mutual interactions, especially with the disintegration of regional coherence from the late 19th century with the forced incorporation of the region in worldwide political developments. Imperialism, justified as the enforcement of a new international order based on legally equal sovereign states, put an end to the hierarchical tributary practices that had defined an earlier Eastern Asian world, replacing them with a new hierarchy of power that included the colonization of those deemed unqualified for national sovereignty. Meiji Japan was the only one to escape colonization, even though the threat of it served as a powerful stimulus for political transformation. It rapidly became a colonizer itself in Korea and Taiwan. Qing China came under the domination of a concert of powers. The British, the French, the Dutch, and the United States colonized Southeast Asia (the Malay Peninsula, Vietnam Indonesia and the Philippines, respectively).

Nationalist movements that arose in response, inspired by the new idea of the sovereign nation-state, would contribute further to the disintegration of existing regional relationships, and to their replacement by a new set of relationships now conceived around the nation-state, which included intra-regional imperialism and colonialism. More significantly, nationalist reconceptualization of politics had radical consequences across the region. Euro/American colonialism, or the threat it presented, was instrumental in provoking efforts to remake the monarchical states of the region into nation-states, which required as a fundamental condition the transformation of the relationship between rulers and the ruled, which now found a new resolution in the concept of citizenship, imported from Euro/America along with the nation-form.

The assimilation of citizenship was a crucial moment in the transformation of East Asian polities from the late 19th century. The circumstances of these societies lent particular urgency to the speedy creation of a modern nation and a strong state. Chang Kyung-sup has used the term “compressed modernity” to describe the compression of modernization into a short temporality in an environment of Euro/American colonialism and domination (Chang, 2010). The urgent problems “compressed modernization” presented brought into sharp relief the ambivalent relationship between state and citizenship discussed above. Chief among those problems was the role the state was expected to play in the cause of development, a widely desired goal that nevertheless was also problematic, as it would strengthen the state over the

citizens, which conflicted with simultaneous demands for citizens' rights, and even the assumption that loyal citizens were necessary to the building of a strong state. Nation-building and citizenship were each the condition for the other. But they also presented a fundamental contradiction in the demands each made on the other: ranging from the incorporation of citizens within the body politic represented by the state, at one extreme, to the total (if theoretical) rejection of the state at the other, as was the case with anarchism, which called for community citizenship based on voluntary association, free from the structures of political or social authority.

The contradiction was common to all societies in the region, as it has been to nation-building processes everywhere, if not with equal intensity. It was exacerbated by a situation where neither nation nor nation-state existed, and each was responsible for the creation of the other. It took a nation to make a nation-state, while the nation-state bore the responsibility for creating the nation, making citizens out of a population that had no conception of what it took to be one (Wang, 1997: 267-269). The relationship between nation and citizen was not transparent either, as collective notions of citizenship that submerged the individual within larger collective wholes could coexist with more individualistic, liberal ideas. The ambiguity may be visible in disagreements over terminology. Unlike the terms nation and citizen, with their different referents, the term *guomin* (or its Japanese and Korean equivalents, *kokumin* or *gukmin*) were used to refer at once to citizen and national (literally, "people of the nation/state") (Shen, 2006), suggesting a more collective notion of citizenship than in liberal theory. A kinship coloring was cast on the idea of nation almost from the beginning as it assumed an ethnic mantle (*minzu*, *minzoku*, or *minjok*). The ethnic conception of the nation conflicted with the more political conception around the term *guojia* (*kokka/gukga*). While family metaphors persisted in defining the relationship between state and society, moreover, the new politics demanded that the public obligations of the citizen overcome particularistic loyalties to the family in the name of higher loyalties to the nation (Doak, 1997; Fogel and Zarrow, 1997; Gluck, 1985; Hirai, 1987; Kim, 2007; Pyle, 1969; Shen, 2006).

Such complexities made citizenship into a site of contention and experimentation, with different outcomes in different societies. The priority the state assumed in the initial phase of this transformation has persisted over the years, but with important variations over time. The transformation occurred with the greatest speed in Japan, which subsequently served as a model of development for other societies in the region. Japanese political

discourse bequeathed a new vocabulary (neologisms of ancient Chinese characters) for the nationalist reconceptualization of politics. A new international generation of Eastern Asian radicals gathering in Tokyo played no little part in spreading these ideas even as Japan engaged in colonialist activities in the region (Karl, 2002).

The instrumentalization of citizenship in the cause of national “wealth and power” was a conspicuous feature of late 19th century politics in all of the societies of the region, and not just among those who spoke for the state. The incorporation of the citizen in the body politic of the nation represented by the Emperor in Meiji Japan was a project of nationalist reformers, but also found enthusiastic acquiescence among the population at large. In response to popular unrest in the 1880s, the government imposed a familial metaphor over the nation, rendering the already divine emperor also into the father of the nation (Lo and Bettinger, 2001). The state also assumed the responsibility for civilizing subjects into citizens (Brown, 2009). The fetishization of the state would reach its peak with the fascist turn in Japanese politics in the 1930s.

In Korea, already in the 1890s the government undertook reforms with an eye on the creation of an egalitarian society of citizens (or *inmin*, people-replaced, since then, by *simin*, closer in meaning to the bourgeoisie and, by extension, civil society, urban in its connotations) (Hwang, 2004). Following annexation by Japan by 1910, citizenship would assume an anti-colonial orientation, which also favored the collective national goal over the individual. Since the Korean War, when the country was split, North Korea has been ruled by an authoritarian Communist Party. Despite “democratization” under US tutelage, South Korea, too, for four decades would remain under authoritarian military rule.

In the case of China, the articulation of citizenship rights in the early twentieth century was preceded by half a century of legal and diplomatic developments that insistently brought up the question of the mutual obligations and responsibilities of state and society, the fundamental premise of any idea or practice of citizenship. Prominent in these developments initially was the protection of and, to a lesser extent, demands for protection made by Chinese Overseas. In the new diplomatic situation defined by international law, the ability to protect Chinese abroad served as a test of Qing claims to sovereignty. Both Qing officials and the Chinese Overseas acted out, or exercised, some of the prerogatives associated with citizenship before the term itself entered the official language of politics around the turn of the twentieth century (Chen, 1984: 1-4).

The new nationalist politics in China emerging around this time signaled the beginnings of a long revolution that would culminate in another revolutionary transformation in 1949. Nationalism made intolerable the rule of the ethnic minority Qing government, opposition to which would end up putting an end to the monarchy as well. But the project that drove reformers and revolutionaries was to make public-minded citizens out of a population oriented to private, family goals. The intervention of the state, led by an elite, was necessary for the creation of a nation out of “a pan of loose sand,” as Sun Yat-sen famously put it. When the Guomindang (Nationalist or Citizens’ Party) came into power in the 1930s, it resisted constitutionalism on the grounds that the first order of business was “tutelage” of the people, built into Sun Yat-sen’s program of national development. Making good Communist citizens, first revolutionary and presently capitalist, has also been a priority of the Communist Party of China. In all cases, we may add, citizenship has also been conceived in ethnic terms. Both in Japan and China, especially the latter with a complex ethnic composition, citizenship has been prejudicial toward ethnic minorities who, in addition to learning to be citizens, also have had to cope with demands for assimilation to the ways of the majority (Friedman, 2004). Even then, citizens’ rights have not been guaranteed.

This authoritarian conception of the citizenship covers only part of the story. The conversion of subjects into citizens also had radical consequences in enabling a new politics that drew its legitimacy from belonging in the nation. People’s Rights movements in Japan in the 1880s were succeeded by strong labor and socialist movements that in the end could be overcome only through fascist suppression. The latter also should be noted for its advocacy of social citizenship, which to some extent had priority over political or civil citizenship. Struggles for citizenship have continued since World War II, now under a democratic society put in place through US intervention (Bowen, 1980; Gordon, 1988, 1992; Sasaki-Uemura, 2002).

Similarly with Chinese and Korean struggles for citizens’ rights. Under colonial circumstances, nationalism in Korea took a cultural turn, fostering a cultural citizenship that was also productive of social and civil concerns. In South Korea, struggles for citizenship turned after the Korean War to challenges to the rule of military dictators, pushing the boundaries of citizens’ participation in politics, and expanding the realm of democracy (Robinson, 1988; Cumings, 2005: Ch. 7). Most recent, and notable, was the *minjung* (literally, masses, or people, with all the positive connotations of the latter) movement of the 1980s, that played an important part in the turn from dictatorship to democracy. The spirit of struggle was visible once again in the



late 1990s protests against IMF imposed austerity measures in the wake of the Asian economic crisis. It has gradually receded, however, as the people themselves have been coopted into the development (or consumer) citizenship that is discussed by Chang Kyung-sup in his contribution to this volume.

But it was in China that the struggles for citizenship would have the most profound revolutionary consequences as they drew in ever larger constituencies until, by the 1930s, both urban and rural populations, men and women, Han and minorities, participated or were caught up in the revolutionary movement. While the revolutionary movement reads as a tale of two parties (the Guomindang and the Communist Party), social constituencies (intellectuals, urban business, women and workers) played a prominent part of their own in taking the initiative in the pursuit of citizens' rights which, consequently, acquired civic, cultural and social dimensions in addition to the demands for political participation (Edwards, 2008). The political significance of socialism also made class into a significant issue of citizenship. As might be expected from the twists and turns in the revolution over the course of the twentieth century, both the content and the boundaries of citizenship shifted over time. Successive Chinese constitutions following the founding of the Republic in 1911 lodged sovereignty in the people, and, under Guomindang rule in the 1930s, recognized the equality of all citizens before the law regardless of gender, religion or class. The promise of equality under conditions of glaring inequality nevertheless guaranteed challenges to the state under the revolutionary circumstances of Chinese society. The shifts in the meaning of citizenship are visible in the changing relationship between the terms *guomin* (citizen/national), *renmin* (people, with changing inclusions based on class), and *gongmin* (citizen/member of civil society), and the different meanings assigned to these terms in law and popular usage (Xin, 2004).

The case of Taiwan (The Republic of China) provides an additional, and interesting perspective on citizenship in the contrasts it offers to developments on the Mainland. Like Korea, Taiwan was a Japanese colony for half a century, and was "democratized" under US supervision after World War II, when the Guomindang government was forced to relocate on the island with Communist victory on the Mainland. Also similar was its experience with dictatorship and democracy, which was bound up with regional and extra-regional developments. The political division of the country served for three decades as the justification for Guomindang dictatorship. As in the case of South Korea, popular social movements would bring down the dictatorship

by the late 1980s. Unlike in South Korea, however, the social movements for citizenship were coupled with calls for an autonomous sovereign state, based on a local Taiwanese identity that was as much a product of the colonial past as it is of affinities with the Chinese Mainland. The issue of sovereignty has been a contentious one. But there is little question that the struggles of the 1980s for citizenship played a central role in placing it on the political agenda, possibly irretrievably—the first time in Chinese history that a citizens' struggle drawing legitimacy from constitutional rights has played a leading part in shaping the state (Chuang, 2010).

Attention to the part the idea of citizenship played in the expansion of popular rights in all three states also brings into relief the ends served by the invocation of traditions in all three societies — from the insertion of the familial metaphor in the Meiji constitution in response to the People's Rights movement of the 1880s, to the Confucian revival under the Guomindang in the 1930s and again in the PRC since the 1980s, to a similar revival in Korea under the Park Chung Hee regime in Korea in the 1970s. This is not to paint Confucianism with the brush of modern dictatorship, for there are other versions of Confucianism more in keeping with everyday kinship and social values, which are cherished by at least some parts of the populations, in which keeping the state at a distance is a primary goal. What the two have in common is a desire to restrain the more individualistic elements in liberal ideas of citizenship, or social citizenship that shifts kinship prerogatives to the state (Kim, 2007). Still, there is a big difference between the social desire to instill some native values into citizenship (which does not distinguish China from many other societies), and to deploy the past in binding citizens to the state, and making the dispensation of citizenship rights a state prerogative. The confusion of the two, intentional or otherwise, has played into the hands of the state, intensifying control of society by the state apparatus, including its corporate arms.

## The Present

Juridical citizenship is well-established in East Asian societies but citizenship remains an unfinished project. As in the past, citizenship faces problems similar to those of other societies, but under local conditions of which the century long history of citizenship is an integral part. Some problems are long-standing ones. Chief among these problems is the fulfillment of the promise of citizenship, evident in continued struggles.

While in the democratic societies of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan such struggles take the form of expansion of rights, in others such as the PRC and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea even political citizenship remains a distant goal. To make matters more difficult, some of these rights have become even more difficult to achieve under conditions of global neoliberalism, especially those rights associated with social citizenship. In the PRC, where the socialist regime gave priority to the social over other dimensions of citizenship, there has been a retreat from those rights as well as the national economy has been incorporated in global capitalism (Liu, 2007; Solinger, 1999; Yan, 2008). One author, critical of the regime, has gone so far as to attribute the rapid development of the past two decades to a "low human rights" regime that has lowered "transaction costs" by denial of civic and political rights (Qin, 2009).

Still other problems are products of the current global environment. Chang Kyung-sup (2010) points to the replacement of struggles for citizenship with a "developmental citizenship" that leads to popular acquiescence in state policies so long as the state delivers on the promise of economic development, however inimical that may be to long-term political and social welfare. What we might call "consumer citizenship" (Perry, 2006) has also contributed to the valorization of private consumption activities over public concerns — in the aftermath of the Tiananmen tragedy in 1989, steering people away from politics by encouraging consumption through rapid development was one of the stated aims of rapid incorporation in global capitalism in the PRC in the 1990s (Davis, 2000; Dirlík, 2001; Qin, 2009: 86).

Finally, East Asian societies, like societies around the world, have to contend with questions of national identity raised by increasing numbers of immigrants as well as emigrants (UN, 2003; Cornelius, 2004: Chs. 11-12; Kim, 2004). While immigrants are still relatively small in numbers, the insistence on ethnic purity in all of these societies gives the problem a particular urgency. And the problem is likely to gain in seriousness, as the needs for immigrant labor put increasing pressure on ethnically exclusive assumptions of nationality and citizenship. Even the highly controlled PRC has pockets of undocumented immigrant communities, reminiscent of trading communities in coastal cities like Guangzhou during imperial times (He, 2010). At the same time, in the PRC in particular, there is also a migrant population that is increasingly transnational in orientation. One study suggests that Chinese emigrants in Japan prefer resident permits to citizenship because while they would lose their Chinese citizenship if they became Japanese, a residency permit allows them to retain their Chinese

citizenship, while participating in local citizenship in Japan (Liu-Farber, 2009). While it seems that in an immediate sense only Japan needs to cope with the challenge such immigrants present, the PRC, too, will sooner or later have to face the problem of reconciling a transnational identity with the juridical requirements of citizenship.

These are but a few of the problems of a global nature that East Asian societies face. While some citizens of East Asian societies enjoy multiple citizenships if only symbolically (such as “Green Citizenship,” for instance), and have access to multiple dimensions of citizenship, others suffers from a multiplicity of inequalities, from ethnic, gender and class to urban-rural inequalities. Immigrants, documented or undocumented, suffer from the lack of juridical protections extended to citizens; in the case of the People’s Republic of China, this includes rural immigrants into the cities. The various societies of the region would seem to be experimenting with these global problems of citizenship in their own ways with varying degrees of commitment and effectiveness (Chia, 2006; Choe, 2006; He, 2005; Pak, 2000). Citizenship is in flux in East Asia as it would seem to be everywhere. It remains to be seen how it is reconfigured in response to these problems, and the complications they have introduced into those inherited from the past. State management and citizenship struggles continue to play out their contradictions, and to produce new definitions of citizenship. Incorporation in global capitalism would seem to favor a flexible state to go with flexible citizenship, or vice versa, but for some causes and some of the citizens but not for others (Ong, 1999, 2003). The distancing of the state from the nation is more likely also to favor management over representation in the relationship between the two — which makes the struggle for rights more urgent than ever.

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