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***Globalisation and Labour Struggle in Asia: A Neo-Gramscian Critique of South Korea's Political Economy***

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This book examines the relationship between globalization and labour struggle in Asia within the framework of international political economy. It specifically focuses on the neo-Gramscian and neo-Coxian approaches and re-conceptualization of hegemony, passive revolution and *trasformismo* in the case of South Korea. The book distinguishes itself from positivist and post-positivist orthodox theory of IR by looking at IR theory with neo-Coxian application of the structural characteristics of hegemonic forces, namely material capabilities, ideas and institutions as well as three levels of structures: social forces, forms of state and world orders. The main theme is the analysis of the South Korean case as a semi-peripheral nation with Gramscian theory and concepts. The book moves from the study of theoretical and analytical approaches to the case study of South Korea's political economy.

The book is basically looking into a specific international political economy, neo-Gramscian and neo-Coxian approach. It can be divided into two sections each of which focuses on four Gramscian concepts and a case study of South Korea's historical journey about globalization and labour relations. It also introduces new concepts and ideas into the BHNs such as gender, power and ethics. It mingles the past and present with future concepts, ideas and theories.

In the book, there are 6 chapters. In the introduction, the author explains why Gramsci is used for understanding Korean economic development and the historical restructuring of the production, and provides an analytical framework with an emphasis on Cox's framework of matrices that is derived from Gramsci's concept of hegemonic historic blocs. Also, this chapter highlights the research method of the study which uses a multi-method approach with historical analysis and semi-structured interviews.

In the first chapter of the book, orthodox IR theories such as realism, idealism and neo-Marxist dependencia and world system theories (WST) are critiqued in order to prepare the reader about why neo-Gramscian IPE provides necessary tools for the Korean case. Three important neo-Gramscian concepts, hegemony, class identity and solidarity what the author call the transnational capitalist class network (TCCN) and passive revolution which involves the practice of *trasformismo*. Chapter 2 basically studies historical periods of capitalist expansion or world orders within the framework of global hegemonic leadership struggles from the post-Mercantilist period to onwards. This chapter uses Cox's matrices of social forces, forms of state and relations of production by applying the matrix into four historical periods: Pax Britannica (1845-1875), Mixed Imperialism (1875-1945), Pax Americana (1945-1965) and Neo-Liberalism (1965-present).

Chapters 3 and 4 discuss Korea's history of passive revolution and *trasformismo* from the Japanese colonialist government to the recent democratization and the 1997 economic crisis and IMF restructuring. The elite-led production restructuring especially via education system reform and vocational education training (VET) is the main tool to re-design labour relations. Many different *trasformismos* have been explained in the book to keep workers from a complete revolution that destroys the capitalist system and Korean elites, namely government and *chaebols* management.



In the conclusion chapter, the author summarizes all the chapters of the book. Also, it gives the next research questions regarding South Korea in the global knowledge economy with the foresight analysis about the Korean workers future. This book is innovative because it looks at the experience of globalization and hegemony within Gramscian framework in the eye of a semi-peripheral nation: South Korea. Second, it presents a rare opportunity for application of hegemony, passive revolution and *trasformismo* in a case that covers a history from colonization to democratisation and from occupation to military ruling. Third, it exquisitely summarizes not only general IR theory but also the Gramscian understanding of hegemony, passive revolution, historical blocs, transnational capital network (TCN). One of the concepts, hegemony, is explained by realist, neo-liberal and neo-Marxist concepts and theories such as *dependencia* and world system theory (WST). Fourth, it is a valuable contribution to the historical period of capitalist expansion or four world orders, namely Pax-Britannica, Pax-Americana, Mixed Imperialisms and Neo-Liberalism with different levels of analysis from a Coxian matrix that forms state, relations of production and emerging social forces.

This book is interesting to read because some chapters can be used as theoretical and conceptual foundations for a course of international political economy. I have been intrigued by this book since I have read and written about the Neo-Gramscian and Coxian idea of hegemony. Also, this book is a good attempt to explain the neo-Gramscian and Coxian concepts and ideas to the 21st century audience using South Korea as a case study. In addition, the book is applicable to semi-peripheral nations such as the South Africa, Turkey, Brazil, India, etc. Another strength of the book is the use of interviews and data collection for labour relations in South Korea.

One of my critiques is that the book could include a chapter comparing of South Korea to another semi-peripheral state such as Turkey which may have followed similar historical footsteps of Gramscian ideas of hegemony, passive revolution, TCN, i.e. IMF and the World Bank bailout, etc. Another shortcoming of the book is the lack of analysis of the 2008 global crisis. Although the book covers the 1997 Asian economic crisis, it has not included the influence of the 2008 global economic crisis on South Korea. It may elaborate more on whether the passive revolution and *trasformismo* in South Korea may have positive effects to escape from the bad effects of the 2008 crisis.

This book helps to apply the neo-Gramscian and neo-Coxian theories of IPE more comprehensively and deeply on most international case studies especially for the economic crisis periods. The Neo-Gramscian and neo-Coxian theories still offer great opportunities for both theorists and practitioners of the IPE.

This book is strongly recommended for both current and past students of IPE as well as interdisciplinary students who study international relations, peace studies, conflict resolution and economics. It definitely is a major addition to the IPE literature and opens new doors for future scholars and case study method users.

To sum up, Korea is not a hegemonic nation and has never been a hegemonic nation but passive revolution and *trasformismo* are still relevant and useful concepts for the Korean case.

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