

Constructing the Society of Justice under the Cuban-style Market Economy: Cuban New Constitution of 2019

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The new constitution of Cuba, which was promulgated in April 2019, can be regarded as an epoch-making one with the guarantee of far-reaching liberties and human rights, including the freedom of political creeds, the equality of people without any exception, a participation of broad range of people in the political decision making and the right to claim a disclosure of accurate information to the government. Moreover, there is a clause declaring that the government must promote the integral development of women. It can be said that the Cuban constitution of 2019 embodies what is desired worldwide in the 21st century.

The reason why such an epoch-making constitution has materialized is, above all, the ideological base of the Cuban revolution, which is not the socialist ideologies but the social ideas of José Martí, the father of Cuban independence, and this philosophy has been maintained consistently. Immediately after the Revolution, Cuba adopted a socialist system of its own, that is to say, the system of egalitarianism. However in the 1980s, the limitation of the egalitarianism had been revealed and the argument of “What is the true socialism?” had begun at the same time. The new constitution is the fruit of more than two decades of trials and modifications. Cuba continuously proclaims “a socialist country”, however, the concept of the Cuban socialism is different from a “generalized” or a “traditional” one. This is what is seen in the new Cuban constitution.

For half a century, Cuban economy has been stagnant, mainly because of the U.S. blockade, and Cuba continues to move toward the partial economic liberalization from the 1990s. In these days, in spite of the enormous efforts of the government, “the Conquers of the Revolution” has been weakened, and the increase of the poverty and the re-emerging of the racial and sexual discriminations occur countrywide. Is the vision of the new Cuban constitution feasible under the condition of economy recovering? Or, is constructing the society of justice incompatible with the market economy?

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Kin Bay and the Precariat

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This paper examines the anti-development struggle of the precariat against the construction of oil stockpiling tanks and the reclamation of ocean in eastern coast of Okinawa during the 1970s. Under the U.S. occupation, forceful appropriation of the land for expansion of U.S. military bases divided local communities and shifted Okinawa's economy towards a military dependent economy, and distorted its structure towards service industries rather than production. This dependency on military revenue would ultimately lead to economic disorder in Okinawa around the time of its reversion to Japan. In this economic context, the establishment of the oil stockpiling camps in Okinawa seemed a possible solution to the structure of economic dependence created by the U.S. military occupation, the unmanageable economic instability caused by the political changes accompanying the occupation and the reversion, and the lack of infrastructure in neighboring island communities.

Popular opposition against corporate land enclosure and ocean landfill for the oil stockpiling camp not only constituted a local residents' struggle against capitalist power but also an attempt to create radically democratic autonomous space, self-activities, and alternatives to the dominant structure of power. The Kin Bay activists pursued community-based farming and fishing subsistence economy, but many of the younger protesters of the Kin Bay struggle, faced difficulty in sustaining their lives due to unemployment or precarious working condition. How did precarity impact the Kin Bay struggle and what lessons can be drawn from the activists' experience in understanding the neoliberal transformation of island political economy?

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Making Supporters from Residents of the Local Government: The Gyeonggi-do Model of Basic Income Movement

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Based on field research in Suwon and Seoul, South Korea, during 14-18 November, 2019, this article proposes to formulate the Gyeonggi-do Model of Basic Income Movement, in order to understand the present move towards a Basic Income Guaranteed society in South Korea.

The Gyeonggi-do Model of Basic Income Movement is a strategy of local government making supporters of basic income policy from its residents by introducing a cash transfer policy, which is unconditional but targeted to the most vulnerable age-group, and which is affordable for a local government's limited budget, along with a campaign to the central government of the nation-state, seeking for a new taxation policy to the very few rich minorities or winners in the globalized competitive economy in order to afford basic income policy at national level.

In the case of Gyeonggi-do Youth Basic Income, the direct targeted vulnerable group is the youth, aged 24 years old, who is suffering from the change of labor market caused by globalization. At the same time, the local small merchants and small-scale industrialists who are also suffering from the change of local market by globalization, are also chosen as indirect targeted vulnerable group, and the youth basic income distributed in the form of local currency which can be used only for small local shops and restaurants, is functioning as a subsidy for promoting the local small industry and commerce. The demanded new taxation policy is a higher land tax, which can make a state-level basic income affordable, and which will increase 95% people's individual net income after taxation instead of 5 % big landowners.

Consequences of the case of Gyeonggi-do are yet to see. However, the case suggests the same kind of strategy for global basic income movement in a wider scale, i.e. making the basic income policy supporters at national level by introducing a limited cash transfer policy, along with demanding international innovative funding policy, which is effective to distribute the concentrated global wealth under very few people's hands to all individuals globally. In this sense, the Gyeonggi-do case can be said as epoch making for the basic income movement in human history.

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