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## Q & A

### **Fuminori Kawakubo:**

Okay, thank you very much for a fascinating special lecture, Prof. Janczak. Based on your special lecture, we can now discuss how COVID 19 and the global pandemic have affected the Northeast Asian community and the rest of international society. I believe that it is important to compare regional responses from an interdisciplinary perspective; we have a lot of scholars from different parts of the world today. We will now turn to our distinguished commentator, Prof. Suzuki. Prof. Suzuki, now you have the floor. Please could you give your comments in 10 minutes or so.

### **Kazuto Suzuki:**

Ten minutes, okay. Prof. Janczak, thank you very much. It was a very, very interesting discussion and very interesting paper. My name is Kazuto Suzuki. I've long been working on European affairs. I did my Ph.D. study in the Sussex European Institute at the University of Sussex, where I was working with Prof. Helen Wallace. So I have some basic understanding of what European integration means and how Schengen works.

A good paper always has a lot of interesting points to discuss. One of the issues I would like to discuss with you is whether it is really the borders of the sovereign state that matter? I think you mentioned that the border divides who is us and who is them, and I think that is true. But given the pandemic situation, there are a number of places, for example, currently certain states in the United States, like New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, which are demanding that visitors from other states, other states in United States, self-quarantine for 14 days. Cities in the UK like Leicester is now shutdown while other cities in the vicinity are not.

There are borders, which are not necessarily lines of separation based on political units, like sovereign states. They may be distinguished as cities, states, regions, you name it. You have the unit of community and you try to protect the community, which is not necessarily a state. So, should we understand this pandemic situation as the end of the sovereign borderless situation or is it just a temporary measure to distinguish communities, which are not necessarily sovereign states but which are political units. So, that's one of the questions.

The second question I'd like to ask is to what extent will the economy overcome the fear of spreading disease. For example, there are many countries, including Europe and United States as well as Japan, where there are always tensions between political demands for lockdown and shutting borders down, and the pressure to reopen the economy and reopen the border.

Currently, from yesterday, July 1st, the EU is now accepting visitors from 14 countries, and this is definitely because of the tourist industry. The industry is in dire straits, and they need foreign visitors to bring their cash into the European Union. How do you measure this pressure from the economy against the fear of spreading disease? This, of course, is the primary factor in making decisions on how

to close borders or who can cross borders. For example, currently visitors from 14 countries including Japan are allowed to go into the EU but not from Russia, not from United States, not from Brazil. So, there are a number of cases in which there is a distinction between who is allowed in and who is not. The EU makes a sovereign decision to reopen the border. It's a semi-transparent border as a figure of speech.

What is also interesting is that the EU regards, you know, the state as a unit, because you can only check a passport to identify where he or she comes from. Whether you are from the states of New York or Texas or California or Florida can't really be distinguished if you are coming from the United States and have a US passport. Yet, the different levels of infection mean that this matters. If you are from New York, you are fine. If you are coming from Florida, you are not. If that is the case, it is also a question of borders, not just separating you and them, but also how to identify who they are. There are borders outside. So, let's call these third-party borders, that it's not about you and others, but it's about distinguishing A and B from outside. It is very interesting that this COVID-19 case is creating this sort of situation where you distinguish the people from their affiliation to the state. That was also a very interesting point that can be made.

The third point is the crisis of democracy, and it is certainly true that we appear to be in the midst of a crisis of democracy, of populism, et cetera. However, I also think it is interesting that the definition of us and them is based on the democratic system. You are a person who has a vote in this territory, for the government of this territory. If you are Polish, you cannot vote in the German election. You can only vote in the Polish election, even if you are a cross-border resident and work in Germany. Of course, if you are talking about the regional municipal election or European Parliament election, that's a different story, but when it comes to the national politics, still nationality is closely tied with democracy. In that sense, when the state re-borders, that may have implications: a re-definition or reemphasis on who you are and which political community you belong to. Interestingly, it is the physical distancing of closing the border that will refresh your sense of belonging within the state system. In that sense, it is interesting to see that you mentioned about functionalism, or neo-functionalism. I think one of the key issues about the discussion of neo-functionalism was the shift of loyalty to a higher political entity but at the end of the day, this re-bordering will remind you that you are still defined by the national level. You have to live together through national level politics. So, that is the third point. I have plenty of other smaller points to make but I'll stop here for the moment.

**Fuminori Kawakubo:**

Okay, thank you very much for your comments, Prof. Suzuki. There will be questions from the floor, I think, so before Prof. Janczak replies to his comments, I'd like to collect a couple. Professor Chi?

**Naomi Chi:**

Dr. Janczak, hello, it's nice to see you. Thank you for joining us today. It was a really interesting presentation, thank you. I'd like you to expand a little because you went through the slides quite quickly.

I just wanted you to elaborate on one point. I was quite interested in the East-West divide, why is it that there are a lot more cases in the Western side of Europe, rather than the Eastern side of European. This of course coincides with the Iron Curtain, so if you could elaborate on that point, that would be great, thanks.

**Fuminori Kawakubo:**

Thank you, Naomi-san. So, just the one question from the floor? Okay. Prof. Janczak, please engage with those points from Prof. Suzuki and Prof. Chi.

**Jaroslav Janczak:**

Yes, thank you very much for all the questions and comments. First, let me try to answer or react to them in the sequence in which they were asked, with one small exception. Prof. Suzuki, the first question is about: is it only state borders, or are there other territorial units that are experiencing or contributing to this movement towards re-bordering?

Let me answer using two or three arguments. The first one is that when the pandemic started in East Asia, in China, and then spread to the region, the first reaction in the European public was that re-bordering or closing borders, of states limiting mobility to that extent, would be absolutely unacceptable in Europe. But a mere month later, seemingly to everyone's surprise, Europeans did the same or even more with regards to what tools were used and how they were employed. There are of course numerous actors involved in re-bordering processes. Indeed, there are cities that are no-go zones because of the pandemic and so on. But still my key argument here would be that usually it is the states who are deciding what borders are set. At the end of the day, except in states where the political system is a federal one, like Germany, where the Länder, the regions, have some competence to determine how to deal with borders with regard to permeability there is a central authority decides that a specific city or region will be the one that you cannot enter or you cannot leave.

However, we have at least two interesting developments within this logic. The first one was something I also mentioned as an aside in the paper which is that sometimes, it is other states that determine which territorial units in a given state are affected by restrictions. Political decisions taken within one state have serious consequences for who is entitled to do what in another state. Just as an example, the Polish-Czech border was closed for some weeks. Then both sides decided they would let the other's nationals circulate across the border. However, the Czech authorities said that Poles with permanent residence in the region of Upper Silesia, which was experiencing the most severe outbreak in Poland, were not allowed to enter Czech Republic. It is actually the Czech central authorities who grant specific freedoms to Polish citizens depending where their permanent residence is.

We also see the opposite. At the Polish-German border, the situation was very interesting, just maybe two sentences on that, because the border was initially closed by the central authorities. Generally, on the German side, the commuters are from Poland, there are about 150,000 Poles – also

some Germans, but mainly Poles - living on the Polish side of the border, and commuting every day to their workplaces on the German side of the border. The distances are short and so on. Both sides closed the border but the German side said, okay but cross-border commuters they can still circulate freely, but on the Polish side there is a 14 day quarantine obligation. So, you can go to work in Germany, you can go back to your home to Poland, but then you have to stay in Poland at your apartment for 14 days, so you cannot go back the next day. So what happened? People started to protest. The commuters began directing petitions to the Polish central authorities, but at the same time German entrepreneurs started to petition regional authorities in Germany, who were then petitioning the Polish central authorities. So we see suddenly a multilevel structure where, with regards the competence to decide, the border is closed or the border is open on the Polish side because of the central authorities, and the relations that exist between the people, the commuters, regional authorities in Germany, the Polish central authorities, and so on.

To make a long story short, I would still say that it is national and federal states and regional authorities that retain control over territory, executing exclusive competence in controlling human mobility. However, we are seeing signs that multilevel governance is in there. There are numerous actors who can at least try to influence the final decision. In the Polish-German border case, they were successful, because this quarantine obligation was ultimately abolished.

With regard to economic depression as a factor that overrides fear of the pandemic, yes, there is also a set of interesting developments. First of all, as you might know, what I presented is a general tendency in Europe, but there have been some exceptions, like the U.K. at the very beginning of the pandemic or Sweden until today. Swedes, or the Swedish government, basically said we are going to control pandemic, not to stop the pandemic. So almost no restrictions, especially related to economic activities, have been imposed on society. They call it a trust-based approach, where people are encouraged to behave themselves, but this resulted in an increase in the number of victims and then the neighboring states Finland and Denmark closed their borders with Sweden. So, at the end of the day, you don't need to close your own borders to be trapped. Sometimes, it is somebody else's decision but still the problem is that, I would say, we don't know if closing borders in order to suspend economic processes have been or are a good decision or a bad decision. How can you approach it methodologically, to calculate, for example, how many people died because of the pandemic per million inhabitants? But on the other hand, and this is the argument in many states, one could say, but how many will die because the economy is doing not as good as it did, and, consequently, the healthcare system is weaker, many businesses bankrupted, etc. Many people will no longer be offered social assistance and many, many other things. Indeed, there is a general tendency, most politicians say, we cannot afford a second lockdown, so even if there is a second wave, we cannot afford it.

Here, I would now like to somehow combine this question with what Prof. Chi asked about the East-West division. Because this is actually a question about the phantom border that appeared as a topic in the previous session as well. Definitely, the number of deaths is visibly much, much smaller in

what used to be the Eastern camp than what used to be the Western Europe.

Well, there are at least two explanations for how this no longer existing border between two systems is still influencing what is happening there? The first point, well, the eastern part of the European Union is still much less developed. If it is less developed, it means that its healthcare capacity is much more limited in comparison to what is the case in Western Europe. If this is the case, and both public opinion and political elites are aware of this fact, then they have reacted differently. So, instead of waiting for the number of people infected to grow and be sent to hospitals and so on, the decision was, well we cannot afford having hundreds of thousands of infected people because we simply do not have enough emergency units prepared to take care of them. As a result, the states of Eastern Europe almost immediately closed their borders, suspending university education, closing schools and so on, as soon as the first cases appeared within their borders. On the other hand, the Western European states, they waited, sometimes longer, sometimes shorter. In some cases, like in Germany, the number of victims is high but it is somehow under control, whereas for some like Italy or Spain, there were moments where it was a real national disaster.

There is also another hypothesis, very interesting but just a hypothesis, nobody can really confirm it yet. In the eastern camp, vaccination policy between 1945 and today was different than in Western Europe. In central and eastern parts of the continent, starting from the post-war time, and because of the communist system, vaccinations were obligatory. We have actually nowadays practically everyone immune to a wide spectrum of diseases. We are talking about three or four generations of people who were immune. Whereas in Western Europe, for different reasons, different climatic conditions, different perception of individual freedoms and so on, they usually were just recommended to people. This more medical hypothesis, well, this is actually the phantom border across the continent. East of the Berlin Wall medical healthcare or the vaccination policy resulted in different immunity levels than seen in the western part of the continent. Again, I'm not able to prove it or disprove it. I'm just putting it out there. You can easily see where the east-west border was located.

Then there are still two short remarks. About identifying who is them and who is us according to what criteria and so on; it is there in the paper, in the form of the concept of borders in motion. The concepts of liminality, permeability and durability of borders together with the general questions to which they give rise, who actually in Europe is negotiating borders, deciding borders? Where the borders are to be located, what is to be the border region and so on. I would still believe that it is nation states, after at least two, three decades of making borders more fuzzy that has decided to retake control and retake responsibility, but I would also insist on this occurring in competition with other actors, of multilevel governance being present there.

The question is especially with regard to the concept of liminality. If we do have a third space, you would have a space in between states, understood either literally or more figuratively. Remember, for example, the case of the cross-border commuters I noted at the Polish-German border, and then recognize that there are about 2 million of such people generally in Europe, so maybe they do form a sort

of third space. They are the ones who cannot afford to agree with re-bordering because it undermines the very basis of their everyday material existence.

If this is the case, this has another interesting set of consequences for the logic of European integration processes. What the European spirit is about is normative dimensions. It's about looking for similarities, looking for common identities, but at the end of the day there are groups, as again the Polish-German case proves, which do not feel a togetherness with people living on their side of the border because they have economic interests on the other side of the border. So those working across borders were protesting, were against re-bordering, not because of identity but because of money. This means that maybe we need to revise the whole logic of international integration where interests and a whole neo-functional logics are the key driving forces, despite the fact that many politicians and most scholars have been asserting for decades that it's about something more. I think that has been a long answer, thank you.

**Fuminori Kawakubo:**

Okay, thank you very much. We have 10 minutes more, so if anyone from the floor has any questions or comments?

**Kazuto Suzuki:**

Can I make a comment on what Prof. Janczak said?

**Fuminori Kawakubo:**

Sure.

**Kazuto Suzuki:**

Thank you very much for your comment and I think it was very useful, very fruitful. The points that you made about the cross-border workers, I think this is an interesting case, and that on the one hand people are working and living where they are for economic reasons. You are living in Poland and commuting to Germany because you are Polish and you have the attachment to the Poland. But, also you want to gain money by working in Germany. The European Union, or European integration, has been driven by not just identity, and not just neo-functional causes, but also a number of other factors, including prosperity or the creation the job opportunities. The whole idea of the single market is all about finding a new place to work. It happens to be cross-border, but at the end of the day, it is the objective of the single market. I think that is not surprising. I think the fact that as a result of their movement the Polish workers were exempted from the 14-day quarantine was very interesting.

I think one of the questions or thoughts coming to my mind is: "What would be the future of the European Union after this pandemic?" In some cases, you reestablish the concept of a trans-border single market logic, and people are going back to normal but in some cases, like Sweden, are very

interesting. For instance, Sweden opens its border but the countries around it close theirs. Even after the European Union allows free movement across its internal borders, Sweden remains an exception due to the surge of cases. What is interesting is that Denmark allows their people to go to Sweden and come back without any quarantine but those people who are living in Sweden are required to have a two-week quarantine if they enter in Denmark, so that's the double standard.

If these sorts of measures sporadically remain, differing from one place to another, and if there is no unified or uniform measures being introduced, how will this affect the future of European integration? It is hard to see because, on the one hand, the driving force of the single market and European integration is still there, despite the current anti-EU sentiments including BREXIT; still, there are reasons for reestablishing a single market, and there are reasons why people would want to go back to the single market. So, I think the European Union per se is not going to be dismantled because of this. But there are some spots, like Sweden, that can be identified as weakest links in the European Union as a whole. This is a sort of unevenness. In the past, there was unevenness, as well. For example, Denmark is not a member of the Euro, and Britain is now out of the EU but then was out of Schengen. This kind of unevenness existed, but it was largely due to the voluntary decisions of states. But I think in the case of Sweden, it is a consequence of the treatment of Sweden by other countries. So, it's a sort of reestablishment of de facto borders even though Sweden is voluntarily opening its border. I think this may be an interesting subject to discuss in the future. I will just raise it here.

**Fuminori Kawakubo:**

Okay, please make it short Prof. Janczak, time is running out. Just a short reply.

**Jarosław Janczak:**

Thank you very much for those remarks. Then I will just answer with three key arguments responding to those remarks. First of all, one of the concepts is, what is the internal dynamism of the European project. One idea says that the EU has been always developing because of various challenges and crisis. So, those who study the European Union, especially those closer to neo-functional logics, tend to think about development using the spillover model; the longer we integrate, the more integrated we are. It's a linear approach. But then if we take a look at the comments made by the neo-neo-functionalists, no it's not aligned; it's always a wave that is on average somehow a kind of line that is adding more and more to the integration project. Development problems regress, then progress again, and so on and so on.

The current situation including, for example, the case of Sweden, can be considered from this perspective. Maybe it is just another crisis, another spillback in the neo neo-functional logics. Sooner or later, as always happens, it will result in further acceleration. So from the perspective of this logic, borders will have to be reopened. There is no other solution, and maybe even we will then develop better solutions, more efficient mechanisms, on how to avoid similar problems in the future.

Second, I would say that we appreciate what we have before it turns into what we had. If we think about the very origins of the European project, it's actually about overcoming a conflictive past. It's that the tragedy of the Second World War must never again be repeated in Europe. This is what Europeans believed several decades ago. But now we have a third generation living in this Europe. A generation for whom conflict, war, victims and so on, is black magic, they have never experienced it. It is something that is observable on TV, but TV, on the other hand, provides you with pictures that well, maybe they are false, maybe they are true, what is the difference between news and soap opera and so on? Well, it is not the real, but then the pandemic or BREXIT happens. By the way, today, after finally realizing what BREXIT means for most of the Brits, the support level for leaving the Union is only 30 something percent. My argument is simply that sometimes, when living in comfortable conditions where the reality that surrounds you and you take advantage of, which you consider as something natural, when this world is somehow destroyed then you start appreciating what you had.

Then finally some of your remarks were touching on, I would say, another interesting problem, about the concept of flexible integration. This is a problem to every integration project, and which the European Union has been specifically discussing for a number of years. To have been a successful project, do we need everyone to follow the same rules, or can we achieve our aim with different solutions, styles, make different provisions and so on. Actually, again the European Union has always been a kind of compromise between the two. Formally, every new member state had to follow the act of complying—there is no other option. On the other hand, Britain has never been in the Schengen Zone, and you mentioned Denmark with it several provisions. So, this discussion is definitely an open one. There are states that opt for more integration as the answer to the pandemic crisis, especially Germany but recently also France. They think that only when they stay together, the borders are open and they collaborate closely—they can succeed. They can overcome difficulties. However, the question is how trustworthy these ideas are after the beginning of the pandemic and the early “selfish” policy of Germany? Later of course, Germany was accepting patients, in fact, patients from both Italy and France were in its hospitals, on German territory, just to demonstrate that it was just a temporary issue of mutual trust. But other states might say, no, maybe we need less integration, we need more exceptions, which might lead to more non-temporary limitations in specific integration areas.