

The Kyoto School Philosophy and International Relations: Subject, Universality and War Involvement

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Abstract

Takashi Inoguchi once stated that Japan's IR theory is characterised by its exclusive orientation to constructivism. However, it is not similar to the Constructivism of International relations of our time which has been widely regarded as the next generation of mainstream IR theory. The Kyoto School philosophy, Nishida Kitaro's in particular, is indicative in this sense. This lecture contends that Nishida's philosophy contains fertile ground for development of new constructivist IR theory because of richness of his theory of nation-state as well as his personal experience as a prominent Japanese philosopher under the war time regime. To clarify my argument I start with explaining the contemporary Constructivist IR theory. This will be followed by an examination of Nishida's philosophy in order to make clear the similarities and differences of them. I will also analyse theories of "World History" of Nishida's disciples in order to understand the reason why the Kyoto School was, whether actively or passively, involved in the cooperation with Japanese Imperial power.



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If you wish to receive the paper Dr. Shimizu prepared for his lecture (PDF, 27 pages), please contact MEARC at: info@mearc.eu.

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