Reconciling the Universal and the Territorial The Concept and the Practice of Human Security

Josuke IKEDA

Tohoku University

Received January 5, 2007; final version accepted January 29, 2007

Human security has been gaining considerable attentions both from academic and policy audiences, yet there remains one question on how to reconcile its two different types of nature: universal tenet of the concept and territorial character of its implementation. This paper purports to give a positive answer to this poser by presenting three conditions. They are namely: (1) providing a universal moral foundation of human security, based on the view about human being and harm; (2) actualising the concept by combining international and global efforts, or through the mutual embedment between international policy and global governance; and (3) nevertheless always acknowledging its possible “failures” and thus preparing remedies for them.


Contents
1. Introduction
2. Human Security in Practice: Current Efforts and Problems
4. Actualising Human Security: Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions and Japan’s Attempts
5. Possible Failures of Actualising Human Security
6. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The term “human security” has been gaining considerable attention in contemporary world politics. Originally coined in 1994 in the *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the concept has attracted a wide range of audience both in academic and policy fields (UNDP 1994). Major international efforts have developed both theoretical and practical aspect of human security, and some states, mainly Canada and Japan, have made their own efforts to actualise the idea.

One poser for the theory and practice of human security is its contradictory nature between the universal tenet of the concept and territorial character of the policy. For example, Hiroyuki Tosa, a Japanese International Relations (IR) scholar, criticises human security precisely because of this contradiction (Tosa 2003). Invoking Hannah Arendt’s “Humanism’s Aporia,” he points out it is impossible to pursue the ideal of human security through state’s policy.

Having taken Tosa’s criticism seriously, however, this paper will attempt to give a positive answer to this question that it is possible to reconcile two different types of nature. To do so, I will argue that it would be necessary to meet three criteria: developing a comprehensive moral foundation of the concept, actualising the idea of human security through combining both international and global measures, and nevertheless always acknowledging its expected failures and preparing remedies for them.

The paper begins by reviewing current practices for human security briefly, focusing mainly on Japan’s situation. After glancing the country’s policy activities, together with some posers of human security, especially focusing on the criticism provided by Tosa. The rest of the paper considers proposed three conditions respectively. While the second section propounds a defendable case for the “thin-essentialist” moral foundation for human security, the third part seeks a way to actualize the idea of human security. Here the paper firstly identifies human security as what Andrew Linklater calls “Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions (CHCs),” then points out that the realization of human security can be made my “mutual embedment” of CHCs two different origins of formation, namely contractian and non-contractian.

Having mentioned these two conditions, the final part maintains that such realisation of human security would have some failures, and therefore it would be necessary to prepare remedial measures for them. Recognising that any policies would have both positive and negative outcomes, the paper firstly regards “failure” as intolerance of accepting negative results. Then such failure would be classified as “procedural” and “consequential” with which accompanies specific situations. The article finally considers such needs of remedies for the failure of human security.
2. Human Security in Practice: Current Efforts and Problems

2.1 A Quick Look of Japan’s Policy for Human Security

Before considering three conditions for linking the universal tenet of human security and the territorial character of its pursuasion, it is worth reviewing major practices related to human security, both overall and in Japan.

Japan’s action for promoting human security is traced back to 1998. Although Japan firstly saw human security in the context of Asian financial crisis, such Asian-centric view had gradually changed, and the first comprehensive view of Japanese policy on human security was presented at the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000. The same year, Japanese government proposed the establishment of the Commission on Human Security (CHS), under the co-chairmanship by Ms. Sadako Ogata of the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees (now the President of Japan International Cooperation Agency), and Professor Amartya Sen of the Trinity College, Cambridge (now Harvard University). There is also an interesting story that Prime Minister (PM) Yoshiro Mori, the successor of the PM Obuchi, expressed his support of human security during his visit among African states, the first trip by the Japanese prime minister to Africa.

There were mainly two activities that Japanese government made special efforts, namely the establishment of the UN Trust Fund and of the CHS. Regarding the former, Japan had consistently raised its contribution up to some 297 million USD (equivalent to approximately 33.5 billion JPY). The money has been distributed to 109 projects aiming for “protecting” and “empowering” people in need. The CHS was created as a response from the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Its primary objective is to “develop the concept of human security and make recommendations that would serve as guidelines for concrete actions to be taken by international community” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MOFA, 2006). The final report was submitted to PM Junichiro Koizumi in February 2003, as well as to the Secreatary-General Annan in May, the same year (CHS 2003).

Apart from these international activities, Japan re-organized her policy through the Official Development Assistance (ODA). By revising its charter, Japan incorporated the idea of human security as one of basic policies of the ODA, including the creation of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project (GGPs).

2.2 Problems

The discourse surrounding human security has become more controversial, as some IR theorists give acute criticisms. Crudely speaking, there are two types of comments, mainly from realists and critical IR theorists. The former seems quite familiar, claiming that human security is useless as the world still relies heavily on traditional concept of state security. In one sense, it is persuasive especially when one sees interstates situations in East Asia, where many concerns are explained in the language of conventional security. Yet one fact which is crucial is that we are now living in the world where human security plays some, if not major, role in world politics. It becomes more difficult for any international theorists to speak security affairs only with realists terms. One striking inclination for recent realist account is to talk human security in the context of state security, claiming that it is necessary to protect human needs because it positively affects to world stability.

Second and more critical comment comes from critical IR theorists, namely Neo-marxism and poststructuralism. This paper especially concentrates on Tosa’s criticism that reveals “the paradox of human security” (Tosa 2003).

His points are two-fold. First, Tosa contends that it is impossible to pursue the universal idea of human security through states’ foreign policy. Here he finds “apparent contradiction” between these two. That is, while the scope of human security goes beyond states boundaries, the essence of foreign policy is, as David Campbell argues, to create and recreate state’s integrity and identity through demarcating boundaries (Tosa 2003: 119; Campbell 1992). Such claim reflects a fundamental change in IR itself. As poststructural IR theorists frequently maintain, the very basic ideas about international politics has recently been put into questions. The concepts of security and foreign policy are no exception, both of which have been “deconstructed.” From this vantage point, pursuing human security through states’ policy is in a sense an illusion: which relies on the concepts of security or foreign policy, but both of them have been nearly losing their explanatory power.

Second, Tosa also argues that the basis of human security, humanism, is highly problematic because of its “universalist” character. He claims that current discourse of humanism is the product of the developed world, and there exists power asymmetry with the developing world. As most of theories and practices are constructed in the former sphere, the notion of humanism, which reflects from western and modern notion of humanity, becomes fixed and absolute. In this context, it is this consolidation which turns into violence to those who do not share the same view.

2.3 Towards the Reconstruction of Human Security

Having browsed these critical comments, the first to note is that the criticisms mentioned indeed make a point. They are not just the negation of human security based on academic relativism. Rather, they are fundamental critics not only of conventional IR theories, but also of mainstream philosophy, metaphysics. Tosa’s invocation of both Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida tells this. Both are the philosophers who tried to reveal the process of how certain idea once supposed concrete are actually the product of social construction. While Heidegger called such attempt as

The first condition to reconcile the universal and the territorial aspect of human security concerns the idea of human security itself. That is, to insert the moral foundation of what I would call a “thin-essentialist” account about human being and harm. As mentioned later, this is a universalist moral account in the first place, in a sense that the foundation of human security can and should be applied all around the world. Also, this is based on the characters which are the widest possible common ground of being human, namely the mortality, the fragility, and the uniqueness, as well as on what impairs these common characters (which is called harm). In other words, the “thin-essentialist” moral foundation is differentiated from “thicker” version of essentialist conception, and the paper defends the former view of essentialism, not the latter one.

Immediately, there would be mounting criticisms from poststructuralists, feminists, and postcolonialists that such attempt would merely fix certain character of human being and harm as “the nature,” and make them universal, exactly what Tosa has mentioned as the “paradox” of human security. Their lines of criticism are reasonable, nevertheless it could still be defendable to provide moral foundation of human security which is both universal and essentialist. The first reason can be derived from some challenges occurred in contemporary Security Studies. As mentioned before, conventional view of realist-statist security has gradually become outdated in a globalized world. As works by Barry Buzan and Ole Waever show, some Security Studies thinkers now recognise the expansion and extension of, and the interdependence between, security issues (Buzan 1991; Buzan et al. 1998). Also, the basic assumptions for security has been fundamentally questioned (Kaldor 1999; Tosa 2003). What these instances reveal is the fact that traditional view of realist-statist security is too parochial to understand some radical changes in global politics. In this context, introducing non-statist perspective of security helps to grasp post Cold War environment. A good example can be found in Critical Security Studies or “the Welsh School,” which regards human emancipation as the core of security (Booth, 1991; Wyn-Johns, 1999). The universalist-essentialist idea of human security shares with the Welsh School literatures in its emphasis of post-Westphalian aspect of security as well as human-centered view.

Secondly, inserting essentialist elements into the universalist conception of human security would make the idea free from arbitrariness and inclusive. It seems odd, since it is at this point that many critics identify the hidden bias of universality. However, the point here is my account introduces an essentialist view but at the same time “thin.” It is a different argument from that of “thick.” The difference between these two positions relates to the views of the subject of security, human. While thick-essentialist concept of human security focuses on the essence of human in their intellectual capability, a thinner view does in the biological limits and the uniqueness of individuals, which may be found virtually in all. As long as every individual is mortal, fragile and unique, they are in common to be called as human, and any other sorts of “difference” can be based on this minimum common ground. Therefore, by meeting this first condition, the notion of human security can be equipped with enhanced quality of universality that is both non-arbitrary and inclusive.

3.1 A “Thin-essentialist” Account of Human Being

A “thin-essentialist” view of human being maintains that there exists the minimum common ground which unite every individual as human. So the question is what such “minimum common ground” is. In this regard, this paper argues that it is both the imperfection and the uniqueness which exists among all individuals. More specifically, they are: the mortality, the fragility, and the uniqueness, of human being. The first indicates that all individuals will certainly die in the future, while the second means every person can be hurt both physically and mentally. Seeing human as mortal and fragile is not very much focused on by many contemporary cosmopolitan IR theorists. Few notable exceptions are both Catherine Lu’s article of cosmopolitanism (Lu 2000), and Linklater’s argument on harm principle (Linklater 2006).

In addition, what distinguishes human from other creatures is its uniqueness. Here being unique means being
irreplaceable. As easily noticed, none of persons can be replaced by precisely the same person. Being irreplaceable also means that none of us who was exactly the same had never existed before and will not exist in the future.7 These three are relationship between the mortality, the fragility, and the uniqueness is complicated. This complexity is not only because of its seemingly opposite characters of the former two (related to commonality of every individual) and the latter (related to uniqueness), but also of the interdependence between them.

3.2 Harm, Cruelty, and Suffering

One important implication from this account is that a thin-essentialist view of human being is closely linked with the notion of what kills, hurts, destroys and ruins them, and thereby accompanies the hatred feeling against that. This paper would call such human bad as “harm.” Here it would be tantamount to define harm as “evil as done to or suffer by some person or thing: hurt injury, damage, mischief (Oxford English Dictionary).” When talking about harm, there would arise two questions immediately: why focusing on harm and not other concepts, and what, then, it is.

First of all, why are we looking into harm? In the 1994 UNDP report, what impairs human quality is called by human insecurity, and the term is still used (Mushakoji 2003, for example). A simple reason for not to use this term here is because the notion of security itself remains still ambiguous. It is well known that the meaning of security is clearly differentiated from that of safety. While the latter sees more objective condition the former contains subjective nuance. As later mentioned, human insecurity does have a merit, which it contains both types of insecurity with and without clear wrongdoers of threats. However, in order to develop a universal foundation of human security, the notion of insecurity is still inadequate.

Apart from human insecurity, there are many other possible concepts referring to what kills, hurts, and destroys human being both physically and mentally. Contemporary social and political thinkers have paid their attentions to other types of human bad except harm, namely cruelty and suffering. Thus the paper gives a quick review for these arguments, but still contain that it is better to take harm seriously than other notions.

Developing her account of cosmopolitanism, Lu invokes Judith Shklar’s idea of cruelty, since all moral goods for human can be ruined by it and therefore different “ethical perspectives may be united in their condemnation of cruelty” (Lu 2000: 255). In her book Ordinary Vices, Shklar recognises cruelty as the worst sort of vices in our ordinary life. She even contends that “[l]iberal and humane people (...) would (...) put cruelty first” (Shklar 1984: 44). Such liberal attitudes have two implications. First, it regards cruelty as a moral attribute to be condemned in the course of human interaction. This means cruelty is a measure set not by the divine but by human, and thus that this is a modern liberal standpoint. Secondly, Shklar argues that cruelty consists of three elements; the feeling of pity, of injustice, and the “sheer absence of courage” (Ibid: 25). In particular, she weighs the third element over the first two, which leads not to see cruelty from the point of “victim-victimizer” dichotomy.

Yet one problem with the notion of cruelty still exists, which it cannot answer the question how we know cruelty if there is one. The meaning of being cruel differs greatly in various contexts. Different people regard cruelty differently. Such contextuality and subjectivity of cruelty are inappropriate not only because we cannot establish any kind of standards, but also because it is easily justified, controlled, and even diminished. If a person put under cruelty for a long time, such as serious malnutrition, he/she would see the situation unchangeable, and not regard it cruel any more.8 Unlike cruelty, the idea of harm can escape such changeable nature, by presenting more objective list of the human bad as later mentioned.

Then let us have a next look, suffering. Here, Iain Wilkinson’s recent publication on social suffering deserves attention (Wilkinson 2005). He starts his identification of suffering from the fact that suffering is a “deeply personal experience” (Ibid: 16), and therefore inshareable (Ibid: 16). In addition, he says that suffering is ubiquitous: it occurs “in such a wide variety of forms” (Ibid: 16). Yet despite these characters of suffering, he argues it is possible to grasp the idea of it through the lens of critical scope of sociology. Here, the notion of suffering can be understood as follows. First, he points out the deficiency of existing literatures focused on suffering. They all identify it as either objective, subjective, or socially-constructed, but the real problem with them is that these expertises do not successfully understand its nature. Second, he argues that the point is to ask what suffering does to people. According to him, suffering is seen as pure negation. It does not only hurting and destroying people, but also ruining “the complex thought and emotion” as well as “the most elemental modes of perception and human interaction” (Ibid: 38). Finally, he maintains that to answer what suffering is, is not to describe the notion as precisely as possible, as conventional accounts had attempted, but to expose its sheer difficulty to convey the meaning of meaningless.

Wilkinson’s argument certainly has some important implications. His contention to shift the focus to look more on socio-cultural environment is striking since it shows a fact that suffering is socially constructed. Also, his criticism towards conventional methodology to see the nature of suffering presents a fact that what is required is far more to delineate what suffering is. Accordingly, both two points request us a radical revision of our methodology, which may be a useful recall.

They are all significant, but without no problems in the context of world politics. Wilkinson’s argument does tell us what suffering does to people, but it does not who brings suffering itself. It is true that there are many types of human bad which is anonymous, but some of which should clearly suppose the existence of wrongdoers. Focusing on two types of wrongdoers, either identified or anonymous, corresponds to two aspects of human bads in world politics: one in
the society of states and another in a globalised world. A typical example of the former is state’s violence to its citizen, while one instance of the latter can be the severe disparity triggered by excessive advanced capitalism. Wilkinson’s notion of suffering is very helpful, but it mentions structural causes only. Without identifying the wrongdoer, it would still be difficult to provide “more effective forms of pain care, the protection of human rights, justice for the oppressed, and the end of cruelty and hardship” (Wilkinson 2005: 43). What is required is an account both telling about what suffering brings about, and who does so. And it is the idea of harm that focuses on.

3.3 The Idea of Harm

So what is harm? The immediate problem about the notion of harm may be that it is as vague as other ideas like cruelty or suffering, but let us begin the argument with Joel Feinberg’s study on the harm principle (Feinberg 1984). In his book Harm to Others, Feinberg sets a general account of harm, defining it as the “setting back of an interest” (Ibid: 33). Together with the notion of interest, this definition keeps the concept of harm still hard to grasp precisely. Another difficulty with his clarification is that his understanding of harm is a matter of degree. For instance, he mentions difference between harmful and non-harmful acts, such as what he calls “hurt” or “offence.” But he also admits that even the act of hurt becomes that of harm if it brings serious impediment to our interests. In short, there is “a convenient criterion for determining whether a hurt is sufficiently serious to qualify as a harm suggests itself” (Ibid: 48).

Because of these hardships, there seems to be little reason to use Feinberg’s idea of harm to construct a thin-essentialist account of human being. Nevertheless, his argument has one particular strength, comparing with cruelty or suffering. That is, harm is an idea which combines the aspects of wrongdoers and victims. Unlike the notion of cruelty and suffering, harm is a word consisting both acts and results of wrongdoing. Whether the action is harmful is evaluated not by if such deeds are cruel or not, but by if it brings negative results for fulfilling interests. Such result is not the same as suffering, since harm is the idea in the contexts of actualising “interests.” The difference between harm and suffering is the one between the human bad based on teleology and that on ontology. Therefore, harm is recognised as such not because of its very existence, but of its function to thwart future accomplishments.

Yet Feinberg’s notion of harm is not perfect in the context of world politics, and human security as well, because his account is aimed primarily for domestic society. The biggest difference between domestic criminal law and world politics is the notion of subject. Both subjects, whichever individuals or “actors” of international society, do have interests, but while an individual can literally be hurt, killed and ruined, the primary actor of world politics, states, cannot be. States are much more enduring than individuals. In other words, states in world politics are primary social facts, and it is thus difficult to apply Feinberg’s arguments straightforward. Despite such deficiency, Feinberg’s idea is not useless, for some actors in world politics is indeed hurt, such as refugees, women, or certain minority groups. Thus the question is not whether his argument of harm is relevant to world politics or not, but how one can modify the concept in order to suit it.

Andrew Linklater attempts an answer to this question, and he shows it by categorising five possible types of harm expected in world politics (Linklater 2001; 2002a; 2006). According to him, there are at least five types of harm: (1) harm between independent political communities (namely states), (2) harm brought from governments to their citizens, (3) harm by non-state actors, (4) unintended harm such as the growth of market or environmental degradation, and (5) negligence, or “the failure to take reasonable precautions to prevent the risk of harm to others” (Linklater 2002a: 330). The strength with his attempt is that he succeeds to show both what harm does to people (impeding people’s interests to be fulfilled), and who does it. In addition, his typology can grasp harms provoked by both clear and anonymous wrongdoers.

The “thin-essentialist” account of human being and of harm has some strength for establishing moral foundation of human security. First of all, by focusing on human vulnerability, it enables to prepare wider basis for agreement on what human security itself is. This point can be cleared by comparing Martha Nussbaum’s project of human capability (Nussbaum 1995; 2000; 2006). One crucial tenet for her capability theory is it always prioritise intellectual ability of human over any other types of character. This tendency is a reflection of Nussbaum’s Aristotelian background (Nussbaum, 1988; 1992). It is arguable that her Aristotelian essentialism gives powerful theoretical background. Yet this is also the precise point where the Western world had used in order to demarcate between those who qualifies the condition and those who are not, and thereby a source of violence for “non-human,” as what conquistadors did toward the Indians in 15th century. As long as her tradition is rest on the Greek philosophical origin, regarding person’s intellectual ability as a threshold of humanness would only be an effective within the sphere of the Greco-Roman culture. On the contrary, extending the limit of humanness by shifting to the biological tenet will provide much inclusive character to the notion of human security, which may be sufficient to cover every individuals. In addition, focusing on what impairs human quality rather than what makes human as truly human further supports the “thin-essentialist” account. Providing a universalist basis of human security is a part of practical project in order to make the idea available as an effective policy principles. Thus ensuring the feasibility of human security strongly depends on wide participation of states or other relevant actors. Here, focusing on “bads” for human rather “goods,” as this paper argues, may create greater possibility for reaching agreements among them.
4. Actualising Human Security: Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions and Japan’s Attempts

In previous section, the paper has detailed the moral basis for human security, based on a “thin-essentialist” view of human being and harm. The next condition concerns ways to actualise the concept of human security in actual public policy. In this section, it will be firstly hold that human security can be regarded as a variation of “Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions” (hereafter CHCs), and that the process of actualisation can be made by combining international policy and global governance, or the mutual embedment of both measures.

4.1 Human Security as Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions (CHCs)

Linklater’s argument on harm principles is suggestive for human security not only because of his ethical account, but also of his idea of “Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions” (CHCs). For Linklater, CHCs are universalised version of harm conventions, and harm conventions are human arrangements to define “what is permissible in relations with other human beings, what is obligatory, and what is officially proscribed” (Linklater 2001: 264). Linklater explains that every society has some sort of harm conventions, and that different types of harm conventions corresponds to different scales of societies (Linklater and Saganami 2006). The CHCs are, as the name implies, an cosmopolitan attempt to expand such arrangement.

The basic principle of CHCs is not to treat the outsiders of certain territory less well than the insiders. Additional two characters further distinguish CHCs from other conventions. First, CHCs set standards to reduce as much harm as possible. Secondly, they include some positive duties of citizens beyond state’s boundaries. These two tenets reflect from Linklater’s two questions about international systems respectively: whether there had existed any agreements of negative duties to minimise suffering, and whether actors had set further standard with positive duties to end transnational harm (Linklater 2001: 269). Here he introduces international humanitarian law as its typical example. It provides a set of clauses which prohibits states from using “unnecessary harm” to people. Also, it prescribes humane treatment towards particular groups of people, such as Prisoners of Wars, non-combatants, and the injured.

One point here is that CHCs have two different types of nature. On the one hand, CHCs are primarily “conventions” or “agreements” between independent political communities. On the other hand, they also entail a general account of human being and human harm has cosmopolitan contents. Theoretically speaking, the former reflects the rationalist’s position in the English School, while the latter do the revolutionalist’s standpoint. Despite Linklater’s mention on global political community based on communicative ethics (Linklater 2002b: 264–266), he seems to put more weight on the rationalist stance, as he argues that states easier to agree on what should be counted as harm rather “universalizable conception of the good life” (Linklater 2001: 267). A similar case is made by Lu (Lu 2000: 255).

Nevertheless, one should still note is that the idea of human being as well as human harm are not wholly utilised as catalyst for smooth agreements. As both two scholars mention, the idea of human fragility and harm can be presumed before agreements are made (Lu 2000: 253–256; Linklater 2006). One thing to emphasise is that such dual aspects of CHCs subsume two different origins of their formation. As long as one focuses more on their conventional aspect of nature, CHCs can be understood more as agreements. On the contrary, if one puts more weight on their cosmopolitan contents, CHCs can be understood more as natural-law-like norm: principles to prohibit to harm, or to minimise harm have already been decided before they are embodied as CHCs. In short, two aspects of CHCs corresponds to two different ways to actualise them, either contractian or non-contractian.

Having said that, human security can be seen as a variation of CHCs. Regarding its form, human security comprises both legally binding and non-binding instruments, which corresponds to rationalist style of agreements and cosmopolitan way of norm formation. Regarding its substance, documents related to human security comprises of provisions to indicate what is permissible, obligatory, and proscribed. For instance, it is widely accepted that international human rights law, humanitarian law, and criminal law are vital to realise human security. They are all ratified conventions. However, provisions related to human security are also given in various reports, such as Human security Now by the Commission on Human Security (CHS 2003), as well as A More Secure World and In Larger Freedom, both of which was published as a Report of UN Secretary-General (UN 2004; 2005). Detailed conditions for humanitarian intervention are provided in the Responsibility To Protect of the International Commission on Sovereignty and State Responsibility (ICISS 2001), while 10 non-legal principles which prescribe or proscribe certain behaviours by businesses have been set in recently launched UN Global Compact. They are all reports or guidelines made by international commissions or international organizations mainly the UN, and not formally agreed as conventions. Thus, human security is not a distinctive form of international law, rather a complex of international norms and treaties, or what Kurusu Kaoru named as “norm complex” (Kurusu 2005: 78).

4.2 Actualising Human Security: the Mutual Embedment of Two Policies

One lack with Linktater’s argument is that he does not clearly show how CHCs can be formed. However, on this question, his argument implies some. As mentioned, CHCs have two different aspects. It also means that CHCs have two different ways of formation, which are corresponding to each types of nature. As long as human security can be regarded as a variation of CHCs, the same logic can be applied there.
In the context of human security, there are two phenomena which are particularly striking. One is that some countries, especially Japan, has introduced the idea of “international policy” instead of, or supplementary to, each state’s foreign policy. The term “international policy” refers to “the ones to form and maintain international order with the vision of international society as a whole” (Watanabe 1997: 12). Both international and foreign policy have some character through which countries constitute and reconstitute their integrity, autonomy, and identity, as David Campbell once argued (Campbell 1998). Yet one crucial difference is that the former purports to actualise interests of international society, through shifting the focus from state’s specific interests to more general ones (Watanabe 1997: 13).

Another is the fact that most of relevant documents have been formed not by agreements, or contracts among states. It does not mean to dismiss the importance of conventional aspect of human security, like various international treaties. Yet it is mostly non-conventional reports, documents, guidelines or “soft-laws” which constitute a real substantial part of the process. It does not mean to dismiss the importance of conventional aspect of human security, like various international treaties. Yet it is mostly non-conventional reports, documents, guidelines or “soft-laws” which constitute a real substantial body. And the point here is that one may find a sort of shift from human security norms by agreements to those by “framing” and “diffusing” (Barnett and Finnemore 2004: 33). This move in international norm formation partially overlaps with what Hedley Bull and Richard Falk once observed as the shift from the agreement to consensus in international law (Bull 1977: Ch.4; Falk 1970)\(^1\). One major difference between these two is that while the consensus of international law meant the consensus among sovereign states, contemporary form of framing and diffusion of international norm do not often see state’s role important. Rather, non-states actors such as “norm entrepreneurs” or international organizations become much more influential (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Alvarez 2005).

The two phenomena mentioned above shows the mutual embedment of international and global efforts to actualise security for human, which seems necessary to bridge universal and territorial natures of human security. On the one hand, embedding international efforts into the context of global governance can be seen in some countries’ international policies. The establishment of independent commissions like the ICISS (Canada), and the CHS (Japan) are typical examples. On the other hand, embedding global attempts in international circumstance can be seen in international society’s continuous emphasis that it is states that are the primary responsible agent for ensuring human security. Most of relevant documents, epitomised by the Responsibility to Protect, as well as international law confirms this.

Above all are theoretical arguments, but Japan’s recent experience may also fit well into this case. In the context of human security, hosting an international commission was an epoch-making project for the country’s international policy. It is true that Japan had presented her international policy in 1990s. Yet it was the first case that Japan created a body which develop norms to pursue both state’s and international interests. Chairing a commission on human security has brought various merits. In particular one of the biggest may be that the country finally found own way of contribution, which does not necessarily rely on money or military, but on knowledge (Ikeda 2006).

Creating a path with knowledge widens and enriches Japan’s policies for human security. Knowledge construction itself constitutes a valuable contribution. Indeed, Japan-set commission did the almost first attempt to give a comprehensive overview of human security, and its result was positive impacts to successive development. Moreover, such intellectual expertises influenced other national policies in particular related to financial assistance. The revision of the ODA Charter has made Japan’s aid more relevant to human security, as Government has created the “Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project (GGPs)” which was formerly known as the Small Scale Grant Assistance and the Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Projects. Together with another financial resource, the Trust Fund for Human Security, Japan has strengthened her effort for pursuing human protection and empowerment.

One interesting and persistent issue is whether these efforts have been after all the ones for country’s own interests: namely to gain a seat as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. One should avoid quick judgement by criticising it is the case, though the latest situation shows some stuffs to suspect this. Yet it may still not be denied that Japan has had some good intentions to contribute for the human-centered security approach. And of course, being succeeded to identify its way to contribute for global peace is even a bigger advantage for the country. It is well known that Japan, whose Constitution prohibits to have any war and even military force, has long been eager to find its unique way to contribute international peace and security. The Preamble of the Constitution provides a backbend for this attitude. In addition, since Japan experienced the limit of “checkbook diplomacy” just after the Gulf War ended, the aspiration for “international contribution” has been redoubled. Now the country seemed to find own way to engage with global affairs, with human security as one central pillar of international policy.

In summary, the notion of CHCs has two aspects to be actualised. As human security can belong to a variation of CHCs, there also exist two ways to actualise human security. Important trends for its actualisation can be seen in the introduction of international policy, and in the shift of international norm formation from through agreements among states to the framing and the diffusion. While some countries have applied their policies to global governance, international society still stresses the primacy of states as the responsive agent to realise human security. It is in such mutual embodiment that is currently occuring, and that the paper sees as one crucial condition to reconcile two different types of nature about human security.
5. Possible Failures of Actualising Human Security

What have been argued so far are twofold, both of which are the conditions to reconcile different types of nature about human security. Concerning its concept itself, the paper has contended that it may still be defensible, and appropriate as well, to develop a universal character of human security. There, the paper have prepared a “thin-essentialist” account as the basis for the idea. Regarding its actualisation, the paper has regarded human security as one type of “Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions,” which may be actualised through combining international and global efforts. Having argued that, this final section deals with the third condition. That is (a) it is nevertheless crucial for any international actors, including Japan, to acknowledge possible failures for realising human security, and (b) therefore that it would be necessary to prepare appropriate measures to remedy it.

This is a complementary condition compared with other two, which means the reconciliation between universal nature of the idea of human security and territorial nature of foreign policy can be made even without meeting this third. Yet the final requirement still plays an important role, since it concerns the failure of human security. As mentioned soon later, the actualisation of human security may bring some negative results. Yet such possible failures are not the reasons to reject human security itself. To refuse human security means to withdraw from the attempt to reconcile different natures of it, and consequently to step back to the traditional realist camp. As long as the world is in the radical change about security, keeping conventional and statist view as authoritative would not be appropriate. Rather, admitting both positive and negative results of actualising human security, and considering how to deal with the latter would be more productive.

5.1 The Meaning of Failure

The first immediate question is what it means if one says “failure.” In the realm of world politics, evaluating policies, such as actualising human security, as either “success” or “failure” seems both labourious and meaningless because of full of uncertainty and the lack of standards to judge. Moreover, power politics and each state’s calculations for maximising their interest makes the task further daunting. However, as long as human security may exist not only in power politics or in strategic interactions among states but also in the global process of realising certain ethical values, it may still be helpful to review whether there has been any progress or not. Yet “failure” remains a big word, and thus one should evaluate certain measures or policies with care. Clarifying the meaning of failure is the first step to proceed this process.

Considering the meaning of failure, it may be safe to start from the fact that any policies have both positive and negative outcomes. When one assesses particular policies, one often do so by balancing these two results. However, such “cost-benefit” comparison has one fundamental flaw: it assumes that policy outcomes can be compared and offset, but positive and negative results are qualitatively different, and therefore it would not be suitable for comparison and offsetting. This contention may become controversal, but still correct as well, when one evaluate policies which have saved 10,000 people in need at the cost of 100 local casualties (and not including that of the rescuer). In such situation, it may be easy to appreciate the policy as “success” exactly because 10,000 people had saved. Nevertheless, a real poser here is that each human lives cannot be reduced to the number. It may indeed be expressed like “10,000 people had saved at the cost of 100 casualties.” But the point is casualties’ 100 lives are no less significant than other 10,000 people. Their lives are qualitatively equal, and therefore irreplaceable, and should still have been deserved to be protected. The “cost-benefit” evaluation does not dismiss these 100 lives. Yet they do undervalue the fact that the casualties’ lives are equally unique and thus respectable. The cause of such comparative error may be the misrelation between the success of the failure of human deliberation (in this context the actualisation of human security), and the balance between the number of saved and lost people.

What these arguments suggest is that all possible negative results have their own uniqueness which should still be respected and not lost, and that therefore it would be inappropriate to offset with positive outcomes. Yet does this mean any situations with negative effects can be count as failure? The answer is no. Both positive and negative results are inevitable, and the point is not the balance between these two. Rather, this is a matter of acknowledgement and toleration of both outcomes. After admitting both merits and disadvantages, then there may still emerges certain situation that is intolerable. It is this sense of intoleration that finally evaluates certain measures as failure.

5.2 Possible Failures: Four Situations Intolerable

Thus the next question to consider is what sort of situations one can count as intolerable, and thereby be qualified as failure. Considering this, it may be useful to categorise the failure as “procedural” or “consequential.” The former refers to the intolerable situations because of inappropriate or unethical handling with the actualisation of certain values, while the latter refers to the ones because of its qualitatively detrimental outcomes.

At least two phenomena can be counted as the procedural failure. One is the lack or loss of legitimate and transparent policy process. A typical example can be shown as what Barnett and Finnemore called “pathology” of international organizations (Barnett and Finnemore 2004: Ch.2). Another is the excessive use of power for pursuing policy aims. A good instance may be again in Barnett and Finnemore’s observation about the “social construction power” of
international organizations (Ibid: 7). One point to note here is that both two situations are the ones particularly apparent in international or global bureaucracy. It may be true that the same would happen within polical interactions among states. Yet when taking particular character for actualising human security, namely the increasing singnificance of international organizations and other non-states actors, it is more suitable to apply these phenomena to such bureaucratic process.

Consequential failure, like procedural, also includes two types of situations: the instrumentalisation of policy recipients for the sake of other purposes, and the creation of new negative conditions to the recipients. The typical case for the former is the one when international actors pursue human security in order to secure state stability in fact. Such realist incorporation of human security is often rebutted by claiming that both human and state security are mutually supplementary. However, what happens in fact are, in most of the cases, rather the subordination of human enrichment over state security. This inclination is also found in the slight, but important difference of nuances mentioning terrorism and human security. The latter situation is the one when the process of actualisation creates new negative outcomes that would make negative impacts to policy recipients. Here new outcomes would be made both intentionally or unintentionally. Instances for the latter situation include the misuse of humanitarian resources to continue civil wars, the creation of “humanitarian market,” and the misdeeds taken by aid workers like the sexual exploitation case in Western Africa. Those two situations are both failures related to policy outcomes, but different from the one which evaluate as failure by merely counting the number of casualties or cost.

Why are these situations, either procedural or consequential, qualified as intolerable? From traditional point of view, the threshold of evaluation has been purely the criterion whether the world could pursue its policy aims with minimum loss or damages of personal, material and financial resources. Unlike this, however, the situations explained above are common in a sense that all have disadvantages which would seriously impair both ethical appropriateness and practical efficiency of policy realisation, apart from quantitative criteria. It is certainly the case that numerical scales may contribute to evaluate the whole process of policies of human security, but this does not mean such measure is the only standard.

5.3 Remedies for Failures

What previous arguments shows so far is that there needs measures to remedy for both procedural and consequential failures. Yet this does not mean no efforts have been made to redress negative situations. Increasing number of policy agents have become aware of better legitimacy and transparency, and some of which has accomplished to a considerable extent. Also, more policy agents began to face their past misdeeds and scandals and to reveal what was happened, mainly by publishing reports. In the sexual exploitation case, for example, detailed reports were published with recommendations (UN 2002). Also, the UN secretary-general promulgated a document titled “Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse” (UN 2003).

Despite these progress, however, there still exist some deficiencies. Regarding the measures for procedural failure, no agencies or mechanisms are there to check the excessive use of bureaucratic power. Also, local involvement to policy actualisation has been insufficient. As Barnett and Finnemore argue, international bureaucracy is ever-more expanding and “often use undemocratic procedures in the pursuit of liberal values, thus creating ‘undemocratic liberalism’ in global governance” (Barnett and Finnemore 2004: 172). Regarding the efforts for consequential failure, truth-finding activities taken by policy agents are sometimes criticised as they do not reflect local people’s experience. More serious problem is that organizations or agencies are much less equipped with adequate financial, material, or personnel resources to compensate past wrongdoings. In the instance of sexual exploitation, the UN did recommend relevant agencies in West African states, to ensure the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse, report exploitation with confidentiality, conduct a comprehensive review for their activities, and to develop a “preventive and curative programme,” but not to have any schemes to compensate past wrongdoings, except criminal investigations (UN 2003: para.55, Recommendations 1–17).

Thus the question here turns to what sort of remedies can be desirable, and the paper will propose two measures for each types of failure. For procedural failure, it may be recommended to establish an independent board to monitor administrative activities for actualising human security. Perhaps the closest ongoing mechanism is the UN’s Office of Internal Overview Services (OIOS), but the OIOS is designed primarily for the UN system only, and thus has limited effect. Unlike the OIOS, this first proposition purports to establish an independent network of governance-monitoring by both international organizations, NGOs, states and local authorities. The variety of participants and the independence of monitoring system itself would be far significant, as current global governance, including the realisation of human security, becomes multi-layered.

For consequential failure of policy actualisation, a comprehensive system for amending past misdeed would redress negative outcomes. It is comprehensive because this proposition assumes three different but collaborative functions; namely financial compensation, penal procedure, and forum for sharing experiences.

Firstly, setting up a foundation would be a response to the lack of financial resource to amend. A good example can be seen in the realm of global protection of environment, with the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IPOC Funds). Secondly, developing penal procedures would assure that misdeeds in actualising policy would be formally punished. There may be two roads to realise, one is making links with local courts, another is to utilise
international legal authority, such as the International Criminal Court. The former way of penalising can now be found in current practice, as shown in the UN recommendations to address sexual exploitation by aid workers, but a number of poses are still there in the latter choice. Finally, creating a “forum” or “conference” to share past misconduct between the policy agents and its recipients would also be an effective treatment because it aims to care the sufferer without relying on material or financial method. Publishing reports focused on the past misconducts, like the case of sexual exploitation or failures such as the fall of Srebrenica, would partially be included in this kind, despite its insufficiency to reflect local experience. Yet the primary purpose of forums and conferences is to share experiences, and not making an authoritative view to the past failures. One thing to note is while the former two is based on the idea of retributive justice, the latter one is done on restorative justice. While the latter concentrates on prosecuting wrongdoer’s misconducts, the former way of restorative justice ultimately aims to achieve justice without criminal procedures (Strang 2002).

Last but not the least, it would be helpful to mention what Japan can do for these propositions. Externally, one of the most feasible contribution can be to create a separate portion exclusively for amendment, within the scheme of the UN Trust Fund for Human Security. Providing legal experts would also be effective in both developing retributive procedures and restorative forums. Internally, the Government may have enhanced transparency by increasing the opportunities and sites for civilian monitoring, for example. Importantly, such possible actions can be pursued by the mutual embedment of international and global efforts as well. While Japan may realise these propositions as country’s international policy which is embedded in the context of global development of remedial measures, international organizations and non-states actors can improve their legitimacy and transparency by inviting states, as the proposition of monitoring network, to check their administrative activities.

6. Conclusion

This paper attempts to reconcile the universal tenet of human security and territorial character of foreign policy, by presenting three conditions. As long as current world witnesses both interdependence of security issues and the radical shift on the idea of security itself, holding only the traditional view of national security is not a good starting point for reconciliation. Rather, it is still defendable to begin the argument with a universal notion of human security, but it is also necessary to insert a moral foundation based on “thin-essentialist” accounts of human being and harm. Such post-Westphalian perspective of human security thus needs a different type of actualisation. In this context, the mutual embedment between international and global efforts would be necessary. In fact, ongoing practices to realise human security experience both the introduction of international policy and the expansion of global bureaucracy with increasing role of policy experts. However, the actualisation of human security is not perfect. There are two kinds of possible failures, procedural and consequential. These two requires remedies, and the paper has proposed two corresponding measures to amend the negative situation.

Reconciling the universal nature of human security and the territorial nature of foreign policy may easily be fail, when either power politics or excessive global bureaucracy dominates over another. What is important is the striking balance between these two, which the idea of mutual embedment would be one way to achieve. Moreover, such reconciliation becomes possible only if one recognises the whole activity of policy realisation itself is indeed worth pursuing. From this vantage point, current efforts for human security still lack remedial measures, which the final proposition would ameliorate.

Notes

1 This is a revised paper based on the presentation at the International Political Science Association 20th Conference, held in Fukuoka, July 2006. The author would like to express his gratitude to Professor Futoshi Shibayama (Aichi Gakuin University), Ms. Kaoru Kurusu (Osaka University), and Ms. Ikuko Togo (Kanazawa Institute of Technology) for their helpful comments, as well as Professor Andrew Linklater (The University of Wales, Aberystwyth) for answering the author’s question related to Cosmopolitan Harm Conventions.

2 Gender Law and Policy Centre, Tohoku University.

3 A detailed chronology for Japan’s policy on human security can be seen at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Website. (http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human_secu/chronology.html).

4 From MOFA Website, as of January 2007. However, the number of project concerned does vary between the one of the UN OCHA (136) and that of the MOFA (109), as well as within the MOFA itself (160, from the Press Release of 29/1/2007).

5 Major examples include Rihard Ashley (1989), James Der Derian (1987); (1992), and David Campbell (199ba); (1998b).

6 One typical example is Martha C. Nussbaum’s “capability approach.” See Nussbaum (1995); (2000).

7 This understanding is based on Arendt’s arguments of “plurality” of men (Arendt 1958/1998: 8).

8 This idea is from Amartya Sen’s argument of “adaptive preference formation”, though different context.

9 Recent argument related to “soft laws” are shown in Shelton (2000) and Goldstein et al. (2001).
It may be pointed out that these two forms of creating international law or norms also correspond to two academic views towards these instruments. The former camp, emphasising agreements, is a view mainly held by British IR scholars whilst the consensual orientation of international law and norms can be found in the expertise of the US IR (and International Law) students. What is interesting with the latter is that the favour of consensus and settlement in international law and norms may be traced back to the Yale school of International Law that was later differently re-organised by social constructivists. An overall review between these two positions is given in Bull (1977), chapter 6. On the Yale school, See Mcdougal and the Associates (1960); and on social constructivist’s scholarship with international law, see Finnemore (1996), especially its final chapter.

Compare UN reports reflecting pre-9/11 environment and (UNDP 1994); (The Commission on Human security, 2003) and post 9/11 atmosphere. (UN 2004; 2005)


**References**


246.


