

Be an internationalist with courage and warm heart!

By Keiji Nakatsuji

The people of Scotland have chosen to stay within the United Kingdom. This time economic rationality prevailed over ethnic emotion. As the referendum in the Scotland symbolizes a contemporary world, an important question is raised: whether we should be connected or independent?

When World War II, which was a fight between internationalism and super nationalistic fascism, was approaching to its end, Henry Luce, the owner of Time Life called for the birth of one world. Unfortunately this vision was soon replaced by the reality of Cold War dichotomy. When the Cold War ended, many once again dreamed of one amicable globalized world sustained by the United Nations. They were, however, soon disillusioned by the reality of continuing conflicts in former Yugoslavia, Chechnya and other areas. Needless to say, the current crisis over Ukraine also shares an ethnic aspect. Unfortunately for most of us, globalized world is too large to identify with.

9.11 was another signal of anti-globalism which brought us destructive warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq. The World Trade Center was attacked because it symbolized global capitalism which is seemingly destroying old life styles as well as long respected ethics. We do not want to lose nostalgic and beautiful old communities whether they are in Kyoto or in the Islamic world. We also do not want to lose airy old tranquility which was only possible with a clean environment. Globalization is quite often destructive for nostalgic past as well as the beautiful environment. We have also seen that global money can bring many nations such as Greece, Spain, Indonesia, and even South Korea to its knees.

On the other hand, it is a fact that the prosperity of OECD nations and also emerging economies could not have been realized without globalization. We can no longer imagine a world without internet and smart phones either. Whether you like it or not, globalization is an indispensable part of the contemporary world.

By completing all the requirements for Bachelor's or Master's degree of international relations, whether you realize it or not, you have made an important life-long decision. You have chosen to be an internationalist. But please be aware of the previously mentioned negative side of globalization. Bridge the gap between haves and have-nots of globalization. Do not concede to vested interests from the past, but do not forget those who are excluded from the benefits of globalization. Promote the desirable equilibrium between the nostalgic past and inevitable future. Deny violent nationalism as well as violent globalism. Oppose fragmentation, but do not hasten for unification. Be an internationalist with courage and warm heart! Congratulations on your graduation.