This is a good writing, with critical questions posed upfront and followed up later.

The question of why late industrialization leaders tend to be nationalistic is an important one.

The three factors are good but the weight of each of the three may vary, the last one being most comprehensive and encompassing, perhaps the results of the former two. Overall I like your review very much.

Adam Khan

10/15/15

**Critical Review**

This critical review endeavors to answer a question implicitly posed by the writings of Mary Mattossian, Byron K. Marshall, and Joseph Stalin: that is, why do leaders for late industrialization tend to lean on nationalism? Russia, Japan, Korea, and China each serve as prime examples of countries that industrialized at a rate exponentially superior to the salient powers of the Western world. As such, sundry parallels exist between the industrial processes of each nation – each expedited through the use of nationalism as an ideology – that are liable to yield telling results concerning not only the changing contours of political and social power perpetuated by the use of nationalism, but also the foundational infrastructure required for nationalism to function as an operational concept that expedites industrialization in “backward” countries. In this critical review, I hope to achieve three goals. **First, I hope to establish the basic reasons that leaders do lean on nationalism for rapid industrialization. Second, I seek to contrast Mattossian, Marshall, and Stalin’s conceptualizations of nationalism in state-building efforts. Finally, I hope to explore the relative shortcomings of each theorist. Good!**

*Nationalism: An Operational Construct*

Although they do not state it explicitly, Mattossian, Marshall, and Stalin all allude to a recurrent theme, that being the use of nationalism as an operational concept. As a means to an end in each author’s (or statesman’s) piece, nationalism is a functional ideology that fulfills the urgent needs of nations deemed “backward” by their own leaders. To answer the review question, leaders for late industrialization lean on nationalism because it encourages (1) state control over the economy, (2) a race for economic power, and (3) a solution to the inferiority complex that leaders of backward countries experience because of exposure to the West.**How about nationalism as a means for imposing or extracting sacrifices?**

*State control over the economy.* Chief among the reasons that leaders turn to nationalism includes the exigent need to let the state take control over the economy. In a developmental economy, state control can yield some positive outcomes. Japan, for instance, relied on the state to undertake an entrepreneurial role in the developing economy, where the state’s ability to lend out significant sums of capital with virtually no return on investment proved vital for short-term growth. Consequently, when the state sets the interest rates (as opposed to a market economy, where the interest rates are established by factors beyond any individual’s control), commercial successes are thus contingent on personal connections that entrepreneurs (specifically those seeking low-interest, long-term loans) share within the governing body. Arguably, I think this faith in government – inspired by nationalistic fervor among citizens who rely on the government to further their own, and consequently the country’s economic development – enables the state to be selective in its economic development practices.

Although selective economic development policies may be advantageous to a developing country in the short-term, I personally struggle with the idea that the state can maximize gains from trade in the long-term. While citizens that subscribe to the nationalist ideology are likely to place their confidence in nationalinstitutions that regulate their trade, some institutions yield dubious results. Consider, for example, the State-Owned-Enterprises (SOEs) run by the Chinese, which are managed to regulate domestic economic growth. With stringent regulations, however, SOEs are just as reputable for their ability to discourage foreign investors. However, if one views the leader of a developing country as a rational actor, then the reliance on the state that nationalism creates (thereby creating dependency on that leader) should outweigh any concerns about long-term economic growth, thus encouraging leaders to pursue short-term economic gains to acquire the political capital necessary to stay in power. It is for this reason that I conclude that nationalism as an ideology offers leaders the consent of their people to take shortcuts around the market economy. More specifically, I would say that nationalism as is a shortcut for short-term economic gains that privilege smaller groups of people.

*A race for economic power.*The race for economic power, rendered cognizable through the meanderings of the “assaulted” intellectual, is also a significant reason that leaders lean on nationalism. Accordingly, nationalism becomes appealing as an operational construct to the assaulted intellectual, who according toMattosian, must “reorient himself in the relationship to the masses of his own people”. As such, the subsequent re-alignment of interests – whereby rapid leaps forward are tempered by a return to the use of tradition – are simply the product of a leader marrying the self-interests of citizens with the desire to beat the West through superior economic prowess.

*A solution to an inferiority complex.* Arriving at the conclusion that one’s own nation is a failure does leave an indelible impact, yet few leaders who are rational actors will readily accept that reality. According to Marshall’s account of Japan, he writes “even the able Okubo Toshimichi came home from Europe in 1873 with an inferiority complex.” Read logically, there are few alternatives to seeing the nation as a failure. In fact, continuing with the status quo, or otherwise taking a stance that is equidistant between a developed and underdeveloped country is unappealing to any leader with grand ambitions. Hence, the temporal element that underlies the use ofnationalism comes to the fore, bringing the sense of urgency to “catch up” to the West. Marshall evidenced this through his claim that “Okubo and others like him were determined to bring ‘civilization’ and ‘enlightenment’ to Japan.”

*Mattosian, Marshall, and Stalin*

As aforementioned, Mattosiandescribes the leader of the developing country, beleaguered with the inferiority of his country’s prowess, as the “assaulted individual.” However, I think Mattosian’s thought alludes to greater meaning about the reliance of the state on nationalism, that being that nationalism itself is a catalyst. Out ofall of the reasons I have stated that leaders lean on nationalism, I think its supreme purpose is to serve as its own ideology – one that privileges pride over actual economic gains. In a sense, Mattosian speaks about this at length, going further in her claim —“thus, all ideologies of delayed industrialization are essentially revolutionary. They direct activity toward changing a social order, which is already changing.” Rapid development, then, relies on revolutionary thought and ideas, easily catalyzed through nationalistic ideology. Marshall makes a similar case in his assessment of Japan’s industrialization process, which names its nationalistic process “reactive nationalism”, and describes industrialization principally as “a means of avoiding humiliation at the hands of Western powers”, implying that industrialization was not done for the sake of socio-economic gains, but rather out of a deep-seated fear that the nation’s pride was at stake. Ultimately, both scholars implicitly consider pride to be the underlying motive behind industrial development. As such, pride is the strongest component of nationalism.

On a similar note, Stalin shares similar thoughts about nationalism, as evidenced in his unapologetic writings about the five-year plan. In his heavily vaunted plan, he describes the purpose of the plan as one to “convert the USSR from an agrarian and weak country, dependent on the caprices of the capitalist countries, into an industrial and powerful country, fully self-reliant and independent of the caprices of world capitalism.” With the element of nationalistic pride running rampant in this rhetoric, Stalin is also heavily reliant on nationalism to further industrial goals. Where Stalin failed, however, is his failure to direct activity towards a changing social order, as Mattosian says. In fact, Stalin’s ruthless changes to society – which annihilated entire social classes like the kulaks – blatantly disregarded the role of tradition in industrialization. In his haste to industrialize, Stalin alienated his people from the unfamiliar system they were joining. Simply put, nationalistic fervor cannot work when people are unfamiliar with the object of their pride. Contrast this with Japan, where the businesses operated under the traditional family structure, and it becomes obvious why Stalin’s society was doomed to fail.

That said, I feel there are some aspects to the question that remain unaddressed in all three readings. For example, in each author’s rationalization of nationalism as the principal cause of industrialization, I think the place-based (geographic) notion of industrialization goes wholly unnoticed. The most instructive example of this is Japan. As a rugged, archipelagic nation with scant natural resources, Japan’s industrial process relied on the development of business and human capital by necessity. It is difficult to argue, then, that their development was the result of apolitical motives, such the desire to avoid humiliation at the hands of the West, when it is equally tenable to argue that Japan had no other options but to industrialize. Contrast this with Russia, which has a volatile economy dependent on hydrocarbons and possesses a land mass that stretches out over eleven time zones, and the current disparity in the two countries’ modern GDP would seem puzzling. In other words, the USSR failed to industrialize properly despite the lack of geographic problems, whereas Japan’s geographical problems paradoxically appear to underlie its industrial success.

Finally, the next critique I have is that the readings do notreally address the psychological aspect of nationalism. Marshall only briefly alludes to it in his account of Japan, where he states “it was only the backwardness of the economy and the immaturity of the people that compelled the government to take action”, essentially implying that while leaders look to galvanize the population to compete against the West, it is done so in a condescending way. Mattosian briefly mentions this with the use of the term assaulted intellectual, which implicitly suggests that only the leader of the industrial country can feel discouraged over the economic inferiority of their own country, and that those living in their own country lack the intellectual ability to be assaulted by the progress of the West. As such, both authors seem to suggest that nationalism is a tool that requires condescending leaders, particularly those who are disgusted with the lack of entrepreneurial and industrial acumen among their constituents. I would like to know more about how each author would respond to that characterization, and as a follow-up question, I would also like to know what their thoughts are on the other dimensions of nationalism that they did not discuss.

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