Nightlife on New York Subway

Abstract

The article reports on some societal observations conducted in 2019 on New York subways. With comparison to the subway management cases observed in Milan and mainland China, the article contends that the phenomenon in the New York public-funded transportation system reflects the spirit of equality in human with efficacy on the utility of the public-funded infrastructure. The message in the letter concludes that public & private fundings need to be drawn for the human development of the homeless population in the New York City subways. Considering the realpolitik issues arose from revisionist powers in economy, bottom-up state-building is the secure strategy with on-going regional conflicts & post-pandemic situations. The letter argues that putting human rights in the high values of politics is a positive sum game for the *status quo*.

*Keywords:* Human development, public security, private equity, developmental economy, social equality, four freedoms, international law

Introduction

The research took places in the Winter of 2019 at night on the **J** train and **L** train. It compared to the public transportation in mainland China and in Milan by prior experience and observations. The comparisons suggest that current phenomenon on the New York City (NYC) transit is a social equality with the public funded infrastructure. By the spirit of human development on the city and state basis, the researcher thinks that some structured outreaches in the night to such underground communities is necessary to lead them to community services. The rehabilitation of the displaced population may create better state social environment with less frictions in racial conflicts. The article concludes that some increase in the public & private fundings are needed to support the human development of the homeless population. The high political values of European parliamentary democracy in the universalization of human rights is salvageable to the detriment of derogatory dictatorship(s)1. The consequential reductions on the capabilities of such powers capitalizing human rights2 ensure the judicialization of law3 in the stead of political orders. The positive sum game for macro political economy is expected in a post-pandemic world.

The Concert of the Public Funded Infrastructure

Compared to the public transportation systems in Milan and mainland China, the New York City transit and subway system is an efficacious example on public funded infrastructure. In my experience of the subway in Milan in 2011, the vending machines in the subway were filled with Gypsies. I was warmly welcomed by a lady offering to help me with the ticket purchasing. I handed the Euro note to her in hesitancy, and she swiftly operated amongst conversations on my destination, note vending, and exchanges. It was not a comfortable experience because it felt more like a scam than service, and she asked me for fees with the exchanges & ticket in her custody. She seemed to have noticed my suspicions, and pointed at her bellies. She was a pregnant woman alone in the subway of Milan city. Even though I had limited budget with the artist team whereby we were traveling together after the 2011 Venice Biennial exhibition, with her situation taken into consideration and the refugee situations Europe had at that time, I gave her 5 or 10 Euros and continued with our tour.

The experiences in Milan was quite different from the Chinese practice, whereby since the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, the whole nation adopted strict body check in the public transportation systems. The over-management over-burdens governmental expenditures with the rhetoric goals of job-creation and counter-terrorism by limiting civil freedoms on a daily basis in a mass scale. Later on, the public transportation systems became places for nationalism propaganda distributions or their commercial values in advertising. The inequalities of wealth-gaps in the government-private political complex of vested interests gradually dominated the public transportation systems in mainland China. Such example reminds me that humanitarian values need to be constantly reminded of in the management of public welfare and societal interest.

The homeless on the NYC subways looked to have their own social network. They did not look deranged by their exchanges of conversations with each other, and the scene in the middle of the night looked peaceful. They looked to have some sort of material exchanges too. They traded with each other in some cases as I observed. The objects involved in such trades are basically some essentials that they may have gathered during the day, and rarely involved currencies. The currencies involved in some occasions were mainly one-dollar notes and coins. Such communities underground may have been largely neglected for their appearances in the night and scatterings during the day when the subways are peaked by the daily transportation of professionals and students.

Social Displacement in Equality

Social displacement is not a unique concern nor phenomenon with the homeless, and in fact, the researcher got homeless on the New York streets in 2019 due to the intergovernmental and transnational justice issues. Beijing adopted a mass scale population cleansing since around 2017 to 2018. I witnessed and intervened on a police force, without the usual body worn video for evidence gathering, violently and abusively chasing a woman of around 60 to 70 with a child around 10 in a motor tricycle. My report to the supervising organs only got the police force discharged from duty rather than genuinely getting to the source of the issues. This is consistent with the regime’s approach making human resources, most of the time with combat & military purposes, out of the compartmentalization of population. It is also signified by the deployment of military branches in higher education systems in Beijing and many places in the nation.

The secular approaches adopted by Europe and with the cases in NYC subways enlightened the equality approaches in social displacements. However, as exemplified by the incidental shootings, the underground populations are not to be forgotten.4 Rehabilitating the population may be a huge task on psychological transitions to the proper functioning of fundamental freedom. The freedom of speech for the voices to be heard is the preliminary rehabilitation of the basic needs of the population, and assessment on how to shed light on their human values with dignity. As what I have witnessed in front of the Consulate General of the P. R. China in New York, survivors of the Falungong members who took shelter in America protested in agony in front of the building. Such cases may be recent but not unique with the survivors from the 1989 Tian’anmen Square massacre, with many taking shelter in Canada and America. The rehabilitation process for such populations may also involve adverse reactions due to historic injustice, but neglecting such painful process may only increase the public burdens with the increase on racial segregations & conflicts.

The intellectual legacies of Eleanore Roosevelt on the four freedoms are still at the core on the issues of population social displacement. Albeit in the spirit of liberal internationalism, the United Nations organs located in New York are not in the New York State nor city, the efficiency of organizational feedbacks provided by the geological proximity would still be advantageous for the humanitarian works. The homeless people’s acquaintance to the ground situations of the city is also invaluable to the cosmopolitan population and can possibly lead to the shaping of viable mutually beneficial economy. Unlike the Chinese practices of privilege in the public sphere for conference & meetings that block roads & order the public and private sectors stopping productive activities, the city & state vibrance of New York shares with the public sphere with the United Nations offices. With the impressions to René Magritte’s *The Son of Man*, I would like to quote the poem on the issues of cyber security breaches:

“As you are enjoying the scenery on a bridge

Upstairs on a tower people are watching you

The bright moon adorns your window

But you adorn others' dream”

— *Bian Zhilin*

Conclusions: Human Security and Human Development

The thriving of the population is the fundamental reason for the thriving of a state. Even though human development causes might seem like a public welfare, the realization of human development is essential to economic development. A pool of public & private funding is thus reasonable for such causes based on the equality of fundamental human values instead of human capital. Many countries, especially developing countries, adopts the latter as governmental strategies for monetary gains.2 The human security approach5 risks of being utilized by revisionist powers with deep-rooted class consciousness and realpolitik contracts6. The macroeconomy defense7 determined the discrete monetary policy, especially for the post-pandemic circumstances & regional strategies of the United Nations bodies. Therefore, the realistic approach in bottom-up state building is the secure option amongst the alternatives.

The power political utilization of human rights to human capital in totalitarian approaches is still the issue for humanitarian degradations in developing countries. Putting human rights in subordinate status to regional development is causing security breach issues and increasingly accelerating the needs for defense budgets, especially in cyber defense.8 The universalization of fundamental human rights values exemplified the European parliamentary high politics is the single best solution to the repeated patterns of human rights breaches in some major developing countries. It approaches the security dilemmas with the simple good faith on humanity & equality in human values. It will reduce the burdens of intergovernmental organizations with judicialization and dualist approaches to international law9, and for the developing countries, the enhancement in legitimacy10 will in turn feed back to the civil economy.

With the judicialization of states in developing regions3, the prevention of power political utilization in the gendered domain11 is consistent with the high values set forth by the Roosevelt legacies.12 The decrease of governmental expenditure & deficit is expected with the fundamental freedoms ensured to the diversity of population13.

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