The Erosion of Citizenship and Social Exclusion in Japan

Ochanomizu University KAMEYAMA Toshiro

1 Aim
This paper examines the erosion of citizenship and social exclusion in a risk society and clarifies the problems that Japanese political and social movements confront.

2 Methods
For this purpose, the paper examines citizenship theories and their criticisms.

3 The Erosion of Citizenship and Social Exclusion
B.S. Turner (2001) argues that the Marshallian paradigm of social citizenship (Marshall and Bottomore 1992) was eroded because the social and economic conditions of the welfare state have transformed in Britain. The erosion of citizenship implies the rise of social exclusion. R. Levitas (2005) argues that there are three discourses with regard to social exclusion: MUD (the moral underclass discourse), SID (the social integration discourse), and RED (the redistribution discourse). Theorists of citizenship criticize SID and MUD and insist on reconstructing redistribution and social citizenship (Lister 2003; Mouffe 2000). In contrast, U. Beck regards citizenship as a national privilege in this “world risk society,” and advocates a shift from “methodological nationalism” to “methodological cosmopolitanism” (Beck 2002, 2003). He claims that the answer to social exclusion is not the reconstruction of citizenship or national inclusion but the construction of transnational inclusion.

4 Contradictions in Japan
The problems of “freeter” (unemployment among the youth), “kakusa-shakai” (unequal society), and “shoushi-ka” (decline in the birth rate) act as important indicators of the erosion of citizenship in Japan (Tarohmaru and Kameyama 2006). MUD, SID, and RED can also be observed in Japan. Social rights in Japan have been very limited as compared to those in European welfare states. Therefore, enhancement of social citizenship or state redistribution is required to reduce poverty in Japan. In contrast, it is necessary to open up the Japanese citizenship boundary, which is presently rather closed. Japanese or transnational political and social movements confront this contradiction.

References