Book Review

Society 5.0: A People-centric Super-smart Society

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The world society has been in face of four major changes in technology from the industrial revolution (IR-1.0) of electric power to IR-2.0 industrial revolution of mechanical and chemical entities, IR-3.0 industrial revolution of computers and internet, and IR 4.0 industrial revolution of digital transformation, internet, and blockchain. Meanwhile, human civilization has socially and economically transformed from a hunting society (1.0) to an agrarian society (2.0), industrial society (3.0), and information society (4.0). The world society is currently moving to a society with the newest civilization called society 5.0 along with the massive disruption of social order due to technology 4.0. The development of the new civilization will form a new model of competition among nations in the world that it is no longer a hard power, as what it has affected the world during the cold war, but a competition in the control of soft power, and in this case is the innovativeness of human beings. Such a war is win-win as long as everyone is willing to be adaptive to technological advances. If we, however, choose to be laggards, i.e. unwilling to be adaptive to innovation, whether we like it or not, we will be crushed by the cruelty of the changing times.

What is needed in the new era of world society 5.0 (society 5.0) is responsiveness to technological developments 4.0 and our capacity to create high convergence between virtual space and real space as well as the integration of scientific and technological progress with economic progress and the...
resolution of social problems. This is the key point of the book Society 5.0 with a subtitle that emphasizes the nature of this new society “A People-centric Super-smart Society”. The word “people centric” is reminiscent of the worldwide scientific article in the 1980s by David Korten titled “Strategic Organization for People Centered Development.” The development ideas are developed that are no longer oriented to economic growth, but to citizen participation in the democratic process, development of government accountability, access to information, and gender justice (Public Administration Review 44 (4): 341-352, 1984).

It is interesting to note that although the emphasis on society 5.0 relies on technological transformation, the end goal is the same as that initiated by David Korten, i.e., society 5.0 that relies on humanity (people centric). This technological leap should not lose its human character because in the development of this new society, it should emphasize the importance of citizen participation in the development of a new social order and their empowerment to adapt to technology 4.0. Society 5.0 is a human-centered society, which balances economic progress with solving social problems through a system that deeply integrates cyberspace and physical space.

The Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, at the 2019 World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland, explained that it is no longer about capital that becomes the main concern in the Society 50.0, but data that can connect and move everything, helping to fill the gap between the rich and the poor, the less fortunate. Medical and educational services from elementary to college level will be able to reach small villages in the worldwide. Let’s welcome the coming of this promising new era which requires us with hard efforts to continuously innovate in a new society that has made an innovation the world’s ideology.