

Japan in the Global Age

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グローバ時代の日本

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The development of communication system and transportation system, especially airplanes playing a leading role in it, has accelerated psychological internationalization of "borderless" and the interchange of personnel and culture among nations, in quality and quantity.¹ This has had a great impact not only on Japan's relations with other nations but also even on our lives.

The economic development centering on high technology and an affluent material life symbolized by dumping anything after using it briefly couldn't be talked about without referring to internationalization and Japan's dependence on other nations. This, in reality, was evidenced by the Oil Panic caused by the Fourth Middle East War in October, 1973. No people in any countries can live only in interdependence among countries more than we, the Japanese.²

From such a point of view, it is important that we examine the way Japan chose and how she has made her way in the changes in the international economic situation during the forty-eight years since World War II, since our prospects for the future must be based on understanding the present situation.

Her ambition to make the nation prosperous by military means being frustrated, Japan was defeated in the war on August 15, 1945. The country was in ruins, and the people fell into disorder, lost their hopes for the future, suffered from starvation and couldn't think of even "tomorrow". It was not only owing to the Japanese making efforts, but also greatly the change of international circumstances surrounding around Japan that in such a situation Japan, attaining the surprising prosperity, has come to be one of the most advanced industrialized countries.

After World War II, Japan had been reigned over by the Occupation Forces led by the U.S. Forces. The United States as the only atomic power in the world at first aimed at neutralizing Japan with democracy and without military forces to make her a Switzerland in Asia rather than at making her a member of the Western bloc, as the main objective of its policy toward Japan.

Japan adopted parliamentary democracy and the New Constitution based on fundamental human rights, pacifism and internationalism in accordance with the United States' occupation policy toward Japan.

The United States, however, could not help modifying widely its world strategy and Japan policy as a result of the intensification of the cold war between the Eastern and Western blocs arising from the expansion of the Soviet Union's influence in the world with the progress of communization of Eastern European countries; Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc. and the collapse of the power balance in Asia when the People's Republic of China was established on October 1, 1949. Under such circumstances, the United States, forming the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), attempted to contain communism by military strength to stem the expansion of communism according to the domino theory, while the Soviet Union, calling together the Eastern European countries, formed the Warsaw Treaty Organization. These two blocs confronted each other in all fields.

Unfortunately, furthermore, the Korean War broke out. The United States, realizing the threat of communism in Asia too, tried to develop a China containment policy, but Asian countries which had just become independent of their suzerain states were too small and weak to play a part in its China containment policy. It judged that it was impossible to call together Asian countries and contain Communist China by such a military alliance in Asia as NATO. As a result, it expected Japan to play a part in carrying out China containment and, changing its policy of neutralizing Japan, decided to make her an independency as a member of the Western bloc. It took the initiative in negotiating for a peace treaty with Japan and, encouraging the Eastern European countries including the Soviet Union to be absent from the peace conference, maneuvered the formulation of a so-called separate peace treaty.

Of course, early independence was a desire of the Japanese. The Yoshida Cabinet decided to conclude a separate peace treaty under the name of early independence realizing that it could leave some problems in the future. At the same time that Japan concluded the Peace Treaty, she concluded the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and the Japan-Nationalist China Treaty. This was nothing but the declaration of a new Japan's debut in international relations as a member of the Western bloc, and her playing the part of a fortress against communism.³ While Japan was incorporated in the cold war structure, she had been undergoing steadily her postwar rehabilitation by the special procurement boom in the Korean War and the United States' economic aid.

The 1950's was a political age; the 1960's and since then an economic age. The Ikeda Cabinet formed after the resignation of the Kishi Cabinet promulgated a policy of doubling one's income to ease the political opposition arising from the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, along with the development of peaceful coexistence between the Eastern and Western blocs after the first Russo-U.S. top level conference in the cold war structure. The policy gave expectation and hope to the people. The officials and the people, working

together, came to attain economic strength and material wealth exceeding that of the United States. This high economic growth, from the viewpoint of America, is a result of a limited expenditure of money on armaments under the Security Treaty, that is, “a free ride on the Security Treaty”, or “prosperity derived from the Security Treaty.” Surely that may be one of the reasons, but rather, the high economic growth was greatly owing to the world being comparatively in peace despite regional conflicts, the high level of Japanese education, the Japanese diligence and unceasing efforts for technical innovation.

Japanese-American relations, which have changed in quality from subordinative relations to partner relations and competitive relations for forty-eight years after the war, have consistently been one of the main principles of Japan's foreign policy, and so, for good or ill, the United States has had a great influence on Japan. Now Japanese-American conflict seems to have extended to other fields, not only the economic field.

According to the latest public opinion poll, the country which Americans conceive to be the greatest menace is Japan: the country disliked most by them is also Japan. This symbolizes the post-cold war Japanese-American relations. Though this American viewpoint of Japan is not due to reason or rational judgment, it cannot be ignored in considering Japanese-American relations. The assertion has even been made in America that the Japanese are such a mysterious race that it is impossible to expect them to deepen mutual understanding and mutual trust, in view of differences between their cultures including trade customs etc., as well as the American view of regarding the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor as a sneak attack and the logic that the long depression of American industry typified by the automobile industry is owing to the deeds of Japan. Moreover, there is seen in America, both in speech and action, the view that force or pressures interpreted as a sort of steam roller have a good effect on Japan rather than simply persuading her to do something. There exists Japan-U.S. economic friction including the problems of rice liberalization and so on in such a situation.

This is not seen only in America, but also in Asian countries. People there have a feeling toward Japan similar to that of Americans. They perceive Japan as a menace and a danger when overlapping the great economic power, Japan, with her past invasion. Leaving foreign countries' feeling toward, and evaluation of Japan as they are, isolating her, will jeopardize the existence of Japan without any nations supporting her once she is overtaken by an alarming situation. Taking into account such circumstances, I try to consider some prerequisites of her existence.

Japan, a trading nation, importing resources from other countries and exporting goods with high value added to them, has developed her economy and has enjoyed wealth. Therefore, her existence necessitates international circumstances being free to import resources and export goods smoothly.

Prerequisites for that purpose:

1. The world is to be in peace.⁴ Peace, securing an interchange of personnel and materials among countries and promoting the development of the economy, helps to create the soil for mutual understanding and mutual trust. While Japan has made pacifism one of the constitutional principles, her peace policy being opaque, she has not made a contribution to peace suitable for an economic great power. Acknowledging herself to be a peace loving nation, she must make efforts to: (1) take an omnidirectional diplomacy, (2) not become a menace to her neighboring countries, (3) control and reduce armaments, (4) not intervene militarily in international conflicts, (5) play positively a part to reinforce peace functions of the United Nations.
2. Many resources are produced in developing countries. Being in poverty, they are in political instability and so in a state of constant internal strife. Considering that only political stability there secures the stable supply of resources, Japan should positively give them economic aid to relieve them from poverty and build up their economic independence.
3. Japan has to make efforts to decrease or get rid of friction with other advanced industrialized countries, especially the United States. Making efforts, for that purpose, is required to establish and expand even little by little the common foundation for mutual understanding and mutual trust. Not the usual passive reactions, but an offensive attitude to make them understand Japan voluntarily is occasionally necessary for her. Countries, recognizing their differences, must cooperate with one another.

It is not strange to see foreigners in any towns and in the countryside. Moreover, over ten millions of Japanese per year go abroad. Internationalization in Japan seems to have progressed steadily around us.⁵

Each administrative agency of any level, publishing booklets with such titles as “Manual on Intercourse among Nations”, “Present State of Intercourse among Nations” and so on, keeps up with the stream of internationalization.

It is no exaggeration to say that now the whole nation, all one hundred and ten millions is involved in internationalization. The actual condition, however, may be self-conceited internationalization of leisure, that is to say, the mere internationalization of rich Japanese tours, rather than the one leading to mutual understanding and mutual trust.

People in foreign countries create a national character and an image of the Japanese through the speech and action of a Japanese whom they see. If he should make a bad impression on them, they might think us, the Japanese, to be “disgusting people”, what is worse, since they regard us as “a mysterious race”.⁶ Such an impression is handed down from person to person. As a result, it comes to be firmly established as not only a certain group's or local area's view of the Japanese but also that of the nation.

Sightseeing and shopping will do. Japanese tourists abroad, however, should abstain absolutely from their manners disgusting the people there. Rather each of them is expected to speak and act with the consciousness and attitude of a goodwill ambassador. This is the very thing that is called civil diplomacy, grass roots diplomacy. It is hardly possible that mutual understanding should not be deepened because over ten millions of Japanese private diplomats come in contact with people in foreign countries every year. In the age of interdependence and international information, diplomacy doesn't belong to the professional diplomats alone. A little intercourse by each person fosters mutual understanding and mutual trust, so that friendly relations between countries develop more.⁸ Each person, in this sense, plays an important part in internationalization both at home and abroad.⁹

To make it possible to play such a part, being fellow human beings with the same dignity, each is to have the idea that "Human beings are all brothers", "The earth is only one." He takes cognizance of the differences from others rather than insists on them and, finding out the common points, has to make efforts to extend them as much as possible.¹⁰ It is not all that difficult. Civilization, industrialization, internationalization and information have been extending the homogeneous aspects rather than heterogeneous ones, to take an example of the way of living. This is not limited to Japanese-American relations. In general, one's identity has been extending on a global scale. The United States and the Soviet Union who were potential enemies of each other for years, slipping out of the structure of cold war, have advanced toward reconciliation, cooperation and trust. That is why they were brought closer to each other with the key word of "peace" and found their identity in it. The wider the identity, the deeper the mutual understanding and trust.

Now would language be absolutely indispensable for mutual understanding and mutual trust? Certainly it would better exist as a means of communication. However, there are many occasions when even fellow Japanese cannot understand one another. In a sense, it is by no means essential to understand one another.¹¹ Considering that "Look at someone's eyes, and you can understand what he wants to talk about," "Look at things with one's mind's eye", etc., understanding one another may be ultimately with one's mind, not words. If one has the mind to convey to another, one ought to do so. Since even verbally handicapped persons have an intention to communicate with others, they can do so, though it is not an appropriate example. You may not be able to understand English or French. But if you have things to communicate to foreigners, you will surely make any efforts to do it. Yes, one's mind and intention to communicate to others are the most important in communication.

I hear that a man who could not speak foreign languages at all traveled around the world with only one word, "Thank you", some thirty years ago. Anyone with the mind to communicate with others could do so with gestures, a so-called body language, even without using words.¹² On the other hand, if one uses some words without putting one's heart into them, it will cause a misunderstanding rather than being effective communication. Such

words had better not be used. Language is not a purpose but a means of communication. Only one with the mind and intention to communicate with others can make full use of words.

Probably you have an opportunity to come into contact with foreigners. On that occasion, you don't have to flinch from meeting them because you cannot understand foreign languages. Since you don't know them, you should believe that you can convey your mind to them all the more. You would have them understand your mind to communicate with them through the whole body actions. What you say is just one word, "Thank you". Finding your goodwill in your heartfelt word, "Thank you", they also will try to communicate with you with the same mind. This mind of each other leads to mutual understanding.

One may feel that the man teaching English seems to remark that one can do without English in communication. It is seemingly contradictory but it is not really. I have not said to students, "If you know English a little, you can communicate with foreigners", etc.. It is very important that they have the power to understand and things to communicate as well as learn English.¹² This is not confined only to students but refers to anyone.

One closes one's heart to an unknown thing by protective instinct. However, open your heart having the mind and things to communicate, and one will surely open one's heart. Opening each heart is a starting point of communication.

It may be difficult, but it is important that you first approach someone as the proverb, "He who suggests it should be the first to do it." Also, "An attempt is sometimes easier than expected." You should venture to try it.

Any course taken by Japan is by no means free of problems even if taking up any issue; rice liberalization. Japan cannot cut open her own way of existence unless she acquires the habit of considering any matters synthetically, relatively, objectively, and reasonably from the global viewpoint, not playing to the gallery with success, in dealing with them. Her speech and action based on a narrow view of things and only for the benefit of some of the people is far from other nations' understanding and support; on the contrary, it would cause their more criticism and Japan bashing. Not flattering foreign pressure, she must insist on what to say, simultaneously give understanding of their contentions, construct a logic which is not self-complacent and is accepted internationally, and pursue the way of co-existence and mutual prosperity. Nowadays one-state nationalism is not accepted in doing anything. "Japan in the world!" Mutual understanding, mutual trust and cooperation will, in themselves, make sure of Japan's existence in the world.

1 Katura Kuno, 『国際感覚』日本経済新聞社, 1972, p. 1

2 Shuji Ozeki (ed.), 『国際化時代に生きる日本人』青木書店, 1992, p. 4

3 Yoshifusa Beppu, Development of Japan's Relations with China (Tokyo: Sano-shobo, 1991), pp. 15-21

4 Kuno, op. cit. p. 68

- 5 Ozeki, op. cit. p. iii; Katsunori Manto, 『国際化と英語科教育』大修館書店, 1992, p. 10
- 6 Kuno, op. cit. pp 47-51; Nobuo Kaneyama, 『国際適応学入門』サイマル出版会 1971, pp. 110-113
- 7 Kuno, ibid. pp. 24-25
- 8 Kaneyama, op. cit. pp. 32-34
- 9 Ozeki, op. cit. p.iv
- 10 Kuno, op. cit. p 35; 『朝日新聞』「論点」1987年 8 月23日
- 11 Kuno, ibid. p. 34
- 12 ibid. p. 146
- 13 Kaneyama, op. cit. pp. 171-174

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