

World Order and Foreign Policy

By Ito Ken'ichi

In this article I would like to take up certain aspects of Japanese international involvement leading up to the 21st century, not in terms of responses to immediate, short-term problems, but from the standpoint of Japan's long-term, fundamental foreign policy posture. To that end, I would first like to hypothesize what the 21st century's global order will look like and the form that Japan's contributions should take as premises to the discussion.

The world order at the end of the 20th century has reached a turning point. This is not simply in reference to the end of half a century of Cold War. The absolute dominance of Western civilization, which has reigned over the world politically, economically, militarily, and culturally over the past five centuries, is also coming to a close. With this in mind, the world order that is shaping up for the 21st century will doubtlessly connote tremendous differences compared with the global regime as we have known it.

First, the mutual, worldwide confrontation between the two superpowers—the U.S. and USSR, in command of their respective camps—has ended along with the Cold War. The 21st century's global order, therefore, will be multilateral in structure. Put another way, while "Pax Americana" is collapsing, no great power with the will and ability to bear the responsibility for resolving international disputes and preserving the global economic order—shouldering global hegemony in America's place—appears likely to emerge. Along with five great powers, the U.S., China, Japan, the EU, and Russia, it is expected that the world order will be characterized by mutual struggles for influence among India, ASEAN, Brazil, Egypt, and other regional powers.

The forms that the relationships among these various powers take will be the problem. Human history has been a record of disputes and struggles

for supremacy between various nations in pursuit of their own agenda and in the 20th century this has twice resulted in the cataclysm of world war. Even in times of peace, the unstable calm was temporary and provisional, with the incentives to make war held in check by balances of power.

Of course, deliberate efforts to maintain and perpetuate a balance of power were made and these were important endeavors, but if the relationship among the nations of the 21st century must inevitably consist of a multilateral structure then it must go beyond a mere balance of power; a structure that will yield the most secure peace must be sought.

This type of structure must be distinguished from a balance of power, and I will refer to it as a "concert of power." Together with the advent of the age of the information revolution, a trans-border structure that is mutually pervasive and interdependent has mantled every aspect of politics, economics, military affairs, and culture, making the world an even smaller place.

In this 21st century environment, nations will be unable to exist as self-contained communities within closed borders and will find themselves in positions in which they are obliged to seek and ensure the conditions of their own existence and prosperity as members of a borderless, worldwide community. This will create the foundations for the feasibility of a concert of power.

Halting the global warming process, maintaining the system of free trade, stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons—these are important issues for all nations and no country can resolve them on its own. Nations pursue their national interests, but those interests are steadily evolving from traditional, zero sum interests considered valid only if they benefit a country itself, to non-zero sum, enlightened interests, allowing a country's own prosperity only when this is linked to

the benefit of the global community (Ito, *State and Strategy*, 1985, pp. 273-4). Naturally, this is not the case for every national interest and it must be recognized that a substantial percentage of relations with other nations are still composed of zero sum aspects. Nonetheless, postures of self-restraint and compromise have been yielded by increasing aspects of interdependence for resolution of non-zero sum facets.

Bridging universalism and multiculturalism

Before probing the possibilities of an international concert of power structure, let's look at the extent to which this has been achieved in domestic politics. Let us grant the assertion that recognition of membership in a common community where destiny and profits are shared is a fundamental prerequisite for concert. In this community, a "common culture" (shared values, for example) takes root and dialogue grows out of the common culture, leading to the provision of "forums for dialogue" (parliaments and so on) and "rules for dialogue," such as elections (ibid. p. 203). When this falls apart, that nation will inevitably disintegrate into conditions of anarchy or civil war even if there is a government and police force in place.

This demonstrates the importance of a consciousness of shared community that will yield a "common culture," "forums for dialogue," and "rules for dialogue" in the global order of the 21st century. There is no doubt that an awareness of shared community is steadily being formulated regarding the halting of the global warming process, maintaining the system of free trade, and stopping nuclear proliferation, but the question of the extent to which a "common culture," "forums for dialogue," and "rules for dialogue" can be developed and refined remains.

Speaking of a "common culture," it will be important to disseminate univer-

sal values around the world and expand the foundations for their shared ownership. The possession of a shared analytical framework and normative recognition regarding global or regional questions will be essential.

Speaking of "forums for dialogue," it will be vital to systematize international society and develop infrastructures to produce shared awareness and actions, whether by issue, such as halting global warming, maintaining the free trade system, or stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons, or by region, such as Europe, the Asia-Pacific area, and so on.

In the case of "rules for dialogue," rules for the resolution of international disputes without resorting to the use of force are a minimum requirement and as a prerequisite there must be conformity with international laws and respect for the rights of others as well as tolerance and consideration for cultures and civilizations alien to one's own.

Developing 'forums for dialogue'

Let's first take a look at the possibility of developing "forums for dialogue." A 19th century "forum for dialogue," known as the Concert of Europe, produced an equilibrium among the European powers in a five-nation alliance consisting of Britain, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France.

What type of analogous 21st century "forum for dialogue" will there be to execute the concert of power? The systematization of international society has proceeded at a rapid pace following World War I, and since the end of World War II covers every imaginable problem sector and region. The organization of "forums for dialogue" by issue or region is proceeding in international society.

By issue, the G-7 (Group of Seven developed nations) deals with economics, and the P-5 (five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council) handles political aspects. The G-7 oversees the dialogues of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ministerial coun-

cil and other subordinate multilateral deliberative bodies, and by writing the scripts for the U.N. Security Council decisions, the P-5 takes the lead in setting consensus regarding political and military issues in international society. By region systematization is proceeding on various levels, from organizations with broad memberships such as the European Union and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum to more limited groupings such as ASEAN in Southeast Asia and NAFTA in North America.

Formulation of a 'common culture'

In this fashion it can be said that a significant degree of development has already been exhibited in the systematization of "forums for dialogue," but throughout the Cold War era ideological confrontations were pushed to the fore and tremendous barriers were encountered in the formulation of a "common culture."

The ideological confrontation between the Eastern and Western camps over the definition of democracy was a case in point. Because the legitimacy of the East Bloc's assertions regarding democracy was overturned at a stroke with the end of the Cold War, the universality of the West's interpretation of democracy was established (or at least is so perceived in the West) and its worldwide propagation has come to be a pillar of the new global order.

Behind this assertion is the conviction that democracy is the best political doctrine and system for humanity as well as the thinking (typified by theorist Bruce Russett) regarding "democratic peace" that "democratic states do not make war on one another."

The "epistemic community," international intellectual networks being formed in specific problem areas (Peter M. Haas was the first to point out the importance of this trend), is also expected to play an important part in the creation of a "common culture." This is an international network of knowledgeable people who can contribute expertise from normative perspectives that extend

beyond narrow national interests in the areas of global environmental protection, halting the spread of nuclear weapons, debt relief, maintenance of the trading regime, population, food supply, energy issues and so forth.

Establishment of 'rules for dialogue'

Bearing these basic trends in the formation of the world order in mind, we will need to consider the course that Japan's foreign policy should take as the 21st century approaches and the form of the participation in, as well as the contributions to, the creation of this world order.

In this instance I would particularly like to stress contributions to the establishment of "rules for dialogue" over and above contributions to the establishment of "forums for dialogue" and the creation of a "common culture."

This ties in with the point that I made at the beginning regarding the huge changes which the international community is now experiencing. Even granting that modernization is a natural historical process in and of itself, this is synonymous with "Westernization" in the eyes of many non-Western countries and an economic, political, and military, as well as cultural, subordination to the West has occurred through that process.

As symbolized by East Asia's economic ascendance and as the challenge from non-Western civilizations steadily takes definite shape, today it is important to note that the excesses (excessive individualism, nuclear weapons, and global environmental destruction, for example) of modernization (not strictly equal to Western civilization, however, having the West as its source for the most part) are cornered.

This is the meaning of the statement that "the absolute dominance of Western civilization is coming to an end." And it has vital significance regarding its link to the "common culture" that the 21st century ought to and, further, must have.

The global "epistemic community" that is being formed by problem area should not be used for the purpose of



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As the 21st century approaches, there is a growing need for forums that will produce common perceptions and actions.

legitimizing, in effect, Western values and, moreover, must not be used as a tool for their dissemination.

There is a need to delve into and employ the sources of wisdom of non-Western, traditional cultures (for example, "circulation" as opposed to "progress" and "symbiosis" as opposed to "competition"). This is because a mere dependence on modern civilization's wisdom will not solve many future issues of the 21st century (worldwide environmental issues, for example).

There is also a similar problem regarding democratization. A distinction must be made between "doctrinal

democracy" and "existing democracy" as seen in the countries of the West (and Japan). This is an issue similar to the disparity formerly pointed out between "socialism as a doctrine" and "socialism as it existed" in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. To avoid falling into the same despotic rut of self-righteous "missionary diplomacy" by the colonial West or the holy-war "export of revolution" typified by communist Russia, the West must be more guarded in its propagation of democracy. At the very least, a modest awareness of the disparity between doctrine and reality is necessary.

The issue for Japanese diplomacy in

the 21st century is to build a bridge between Western and non-Western cultures and between universalism and multiculturalism. "Rules for dialogue" must be rooted in tolerance and consideration for cultures and civilizations alien to one's own. Through that role a contribution can be made to the formation and stability of a 21st century world order that consists of a multilateral concert of powers.

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