Memories of War and Peace-building in Post-War Japan: Japanese Constitution as Peace System

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Abstract

The wars in Asia would seem to demand that certain European countries, the U.S., and Japan all re-examine the value systems that presumably provided the justification for those wars. Many situations of "instability" in this century were actually based on the preconceptions and deeds of the nations that applied that label. Now as ever, if a country has reason to be opposed to something, it will typically display a tendency to assume that other countries are engaged in strategic designs or acting from an adversarial position.

A number of countries are still enmeshed in a complex web of latent alliances, some of which have been rooted in mixed sentiments toward communist countries. In effect, the Cold War framework has not changed. As that reality illustrates, it is still a relatively simple matter for members of the international community, including those in Northeast Asia, to share a sense of crisis as a value. The values derived from the collective memories of World War II, in conjunction with the memories of inequality and colonial policy, essentially failed to create a set of common values that could be shared by all countries. Mutual ties have been fostered, albeit weakly, by a growing diversity of information, closer ties in the economic and cultural spheres, and heightened exchange at the grassroots level. However, the countries of Northeast Asia, like all countries, need a presence on the international stage, too. That stage must be a vehicle that is capable of helping each country maximize its future potential, not merely an elitist club that expects favors in return for membership.

Introduction

To achieve peace, we have to find out a way both to put a halt to actual hostilities and to institutionalize a peaceful system.

Peace means freedom from worry, by each and every person, about being bombarded and having capabilities or physical and mental possibilities damaged due to arms and violence. This also applies on the order of systemic violence, and the effort therefore must include problems such as poverty, unequal opportunities for education, food shortages, and wrongful discrimination. Our task consequently amounts to the creation of an institutionalized, built-in peace. This is fundamentally different from, and more difficult to accomplish than, mere maintenance of the state of not being at war dependent on the stability imposed by alliances or superpowers acting unilaterally. The reason is that the process of accomplishing it is one of institutionalization, and consequently carries the agenda of instilling a sense of duty and a sharing of the values of peace among the people living under the order based on the institution.

In disputes over resources and distribution of wealth, the opposing camps often characterize each other in terms of religion, nationality, and/or race. When two or more disputes overlap, the feelings of hostility and hate leave communities and the psyches of their members deeply traumatized. Viewed in a practical light, the existence of a gulf between the disputants implies that steps must be taken either to bridge or fill this gap or to keep the disputants apart from each other. It is true that, in several countries and territories, bombs are actually being dropped and many people are truly exposed to life-threatening danger due to the flare-up of hostilities. And yet, in certain countries and territories regarded as "developed," there exists a constant and serious threat to peace that is just as real.

Some institutes involved in peace-related research have accorded top priority in their studies to activities in trouble spots where matters are definitely at the life-or-death stage, and center their work around them. In so doing, however, they appear to be paying too little attention to factors with the potential to worsen the situation, and their power of influence, deriving from economic and political action on the part of developed countries. To be sure, developed countries possess certain means of mitigating troubles, such as massive financial assistance and the human resources to implement it. At the same time, however, they have always caused latent confrontations to surface. In East Asia, this is exemplified by developments in Japan in recent years.
1. Memories of conflicts

With the 21st century, plus the economic crises and the end of the 'Cold War,' we tend to be emphatic on the importance of coming new age. This assertiveness often produces an illusion in our minds, as if we can move into a totally different new world which we have never had before. However, current social systems, views of values, and various problems are deeply rooted in the past.

Memories of conflicts mean not only remembrances of many individuals but "memories of societies," when we consider the reality that the time does not just pass away, but instead overlaps with changes in societies and cultures. Because memories make and preserve individual values and social values as well, the extinction of generations does not always mean the extinction of the values and systems of that time. Hence, memories form, develop and extinguish "social values" or "social views of values." History leaves facts and memories support history as values.

The issue of memories in conflicts and peace-building have been treated lightly as something unlawful, unscientific, and unobjective because of the fact that different countries have different situations and, as for people, each has his or her own thought. Instead, occasional economic crises or military interventions, and power politics have been argued as the main themes of history. However, motives or manners of political behavior and political relations have been influenced by views of values, views of history, or views of the world.

Over the last 50 years, industrialization and social- and economic changes have gradually turned some traditional values into dying ways of thinking in Japan.

Asian countries, under the government pressure to realize military strength and economic development, adopted western military systems, science, and values. Western-style structures were built and the promotion of western economic style spread to social activities. Now these countries are trying to review and take a new look at Asia itself. They wish to re-examine images of nationality and economy and find a future direction. Deepening economic crises have forced people to re-examine their own lives. There is a strong movement for review, and it is no wonder that the economic crises have caused these activities because in most cases economic gloom including economic turbulence, have forced people to question current systems. These activities have turned into a swell of public opinion for making social changes. The point is, therefore, that the essential character of Asian social science lies in memories of conflicts as social values.

Identities: history and economy

The East Asian region is characterized by the following factors:
1. A variety of characteristics and mixed identities depending on each nation.
2. Economic power as the main factor for relationships, followed by military force.
3. In the global system after World War II and during the 'Cold War,' the region played a balancing and/or cooperative role in the East-West and South-North confrontation.
4. Countries in the region have experienced more or less a historic turnabout after World War II.
5. Modernization amid competition among nations has improved national strength in East Asia, as well as in other countries in Asia in the 20th century. Strengthened national power was a urgent task behind the introduction of western technology or values.

It is characteristic in Japan that not a small number of standards were strongly influenced mainly by economic values. The postwar framework in Japan shows a conflict between people who regard the past mistake as a source of problems for postwar society and spare no efforts to turn negative inheritances into enriched soil for the future, and people who want to separate the past mistakes from the present and future after 1945. The two parties have conflicted with each other either openly or secretly and have insisted on their values. We can see the conflict at every turn in political, judicial, and economic circles.

In Japan, historically speaking, now as ever reform movement has not started until unavoidable economic turmoil, extreme poverty, or terrible corruption has come to light. On this point, economic turmoil in Asia gave opportunity to review current politics, systems, and personal values. The sense of growing crisis and direct damages stirred up public opinion for reform. Hence it is true that the economic crisis is one of the driving forces of reform.

Even if we underestimate the memories of wartime and the postwar relations of nations concerned, in any case, Japan, as a Northeast Asian country, was not able to cope with values other than economic relations and economic views of values because it was impossible for it to understand and/or think out ways for understanding those values.
The essential question, however, is what can generations do to solve security problems through history and regain identity lost by economic turmoil. World War II, the Sino-Japanese conflict, the Cold War, the Korean War, --some of these wars were mired down because of the lack of faithful friendship or judicious mediators. Consequently, after the outbreak of these wars, mediators were needed for saving difficult situations. This reality can be seen in the recent conflict and war in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Fortunately, nowadays Northeast Asian countries have no western direct occupation or other explicit demand for colonial rule as in former decades. Nevertheless, past memories are still alive, and those memories still affect the current defense system and strategic relations. Therefore, both factors damaged and improved by the change in generations are essential for the solution of conflicts. Have we proven successful in raising the next generation for future solutions? Don't we see opponents only from aspects in the former strategic framework of the Cold War? As to this point, it can be questioned whether our generation has improved the system of peace. As generations with past memories are fading out, the systems formed by those declining generations (or systems never formed) have not always been effective. It is necessary to create identities supported by values other than just economics.

Japan's responses to the first war in the Persian Gulf, to civil war in the states of the former Yugoslavia, and to recent acts of terrorism have been shaped and influenced by a complex mixture of perceptions toward "conquering nations" that can be traced back to the days following its defeat in 1945. (The "Pacific War" has often been explained as a war of liberation in which Japan fought as the "white night" against the Asian colonization policies of the Western Alliance.) On this point, and in light of the fact that Japan's policy fabric plainly led to atrocities committed in the name of the state, we need to consider several realities that have become entangled with fatal identity flaws: namely, that Japan has no awareness of its crimes, or does not know the policy measures that should be implemented to deal with that fact, or willfully obfuscates such measures. It is interesting to note that Japan has tied its freedom from subjugation to the U.S. to such notions as increased military power, independent security frameworks, and international contributions to the fight against 'common threats.' Given recent military affairs and slumping economic trends, little attention has been devoted to the "forward-looking" relationship Japan has sought with neighboring countries it invaded in the past. However, Japan is constantly reflecting on an identity that glorifies its former military might and places more power and autonomy: notions it was supposed to have abandoned along the path to resuming its position as a responsible member of the international community of nations.

Actually, this trend has been spawned through the synchronized actions of the mass media and certain political factions within the current administration. Over the past decade, and the past three years in particular, the newspapers, films, and magazine media have sent a consistent message that demonstrates how readily people can be moved by the hype of such past values in a typically clear-cut way, even though it can be taken into account that such a tendency has been made as a result of their focus on audience ratings, circulations or ordinary profits. The "threat" posed by North Korea has been harnessed as nothing other than a tool to that end.

Of those elements of the recent past that some may struggle to recall, one observes an attempt to resurrect -- as values -- an assortment of themes, including world-leading technologies acquired as the fruits of human labor, or the quaint family bonds engendered by a patriarchal society. However, the reality is that many people who never had a sense of justice but do have plenty of newfound pride are trying to resurrect the ills inherent in the old systems to have been reformed, as well as many of the tyrannical and undemocratic elements of those systems that oppressed people until Japan finally tasted defeat. Proposed revisions to provisions renouncing war in Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution are the central goal behind this movement.

Economic reconstruction from the aftermath and ashes of war was achieved precisely because Japan no longer had the ability to actively wage war itself. Budget resources that until that point had been earmarked for military ends were instead re-funneled into the advancement of the private-sector economy. However, today, many people under the burden of economic hardship, without the benefits formerly afforded by the Cold War, and facing with the impoverishment of their existing political value system to stand on are literally striving once again to wallow in the shame of a past defeat and recover their national pride. Rebirth in one sense always marshals people to act from a foundation of defeat or misfortune.

However, the real question is not whether Japan suffered a defeat in war or in some other enterprise. Rather, a key problem seems to be that an already-defeated Japanese society and its
state apparatus placed so much value in win-or-lose dualities: i.e., what had to be done to win, what would have been assured through victory, and what was learned through defeat. Added to this was the problem that victors and vanquished had failed, in the course of reconstruction, to respect the actions of a populace that had gained its independence, and had failed to establish a political system, either domestically or internationally, that assimilated the lessons of defeat.

A past that one has to struggle to remember is an historical chronicle delivered only in fragments. For people living today, that chronicle serves as nothing more than an excuse, trimmed to shape as necessary, to evade domestic and international issues with links to the past. This convenient revisionism in turn permits the assertion that all problems will be solved by abandoning the constitution "imposed" on Japan by the Allies.

Under this revisionism, the Diet on July 26, 2003 enacted controversial legislation to dispatch the Self-Defense Forces to Iraq. Under the legislation, the SDF will provide logistic support for U.S.-led forces. Despite approval of the bill, the Japanese government struggles with exactly where and when the SDF should be sent to maintain security, provide humanitarian assistance and rebuild the infrastructure in Iraq. However, rebuilding the social systems is not the job of military force, but the civil governance or NGOs. At the same time, the government cut off economic aid for action of Japanese NGOs in Iraq. The emergency defense legislation approved on June 6 is also controversial because it's great secrecy has unconstitutional nature which may limit human rights and rural autonomy and commit the U.S.-led collective defense action. While only four countries dispatch the forces for maintaining public peace and order in Iraq (16 countries dispatch the forces), the Japanese government wrestles with the legislation to get a power or influence by using military force. Obviously, the government's aim is not rebuilding peace, but getting "status" in international society by using force. It is not a realism, but a imprudent opportunism which may undermine the effectiveness of collective security by international organization.

Accordingly, we must ask whether, in the course of striving to bring newly acquired democratic values closer to their pragmatic peace ideals, the mass media and a parliament and administration supported by the voting public through the democratic election process have actually been making efforts to deal with matters deserving "rebirth," as has been the case with reconstruction and the creation of new social systems to date in the postwar era?

To be sure, during the Cold War, many nations aligned themselves with either the Eastern or Western camp and accordingly saw their domestic and foreign relations heavily influenced and their domestic social systems significantly altered. Even so, this did not provide a clear and definitive basis for cause and effect. At its core, the Cold War was a massive, meticulously designed and implemented system for the transmitted memory of hate.

Security Alliances --a structural Defect Characterizing Strategic Relationships and the Formation of Political Camps: Hate and Instability

Why do Japan and the United States of America hate North Korea so much? Why don't they work for the reunification of North and South Korea? What is the significance of the constitution promulgated in Japan after the war? These are questions that are at the very core of security in East Asia.

The fundamental political stances of the U.S., South Korea, and Japan also seem to be unchanged. As shown in the improved Japan-South Korea relationship, Japan has so far failed to build real confidence, because regarding Russia, Japan saw the return of northern islands as a condition for improvement of the Japan-Russia relationship, and concerning China, it failed to recognize its "aggressor identity as regards wrong doing in China in wartime" and it never gained genuine trust. As for North Korea, it reacted emotionally, parlaying that into armament reinforcement. Waiting for oblivion, concessions, or gifts from other parties, Japan has never turned its shadowy past in modern history into true friendships.

The abhorrence of communism is still strong among many members of the U.S. Republican Party, and thus has a notable influence on U.S. policymaking affairs. At times, like some sort of allergic reaction, it has been known to arouse emotional outbursts even among conservative elements in Japan. In his remark on bilateral ties, Taiwanese ex-President Lee Teng-hui declared that he would like to see change on the mainland. Japanese conservatives also expressed extreme hate against North Korea and China. No doubt, this is because the mainland and North Korea are perceived as a communist state above all else.

The "strategic alliances" of the Cold War era, together with the use of force by the North
Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the first half of 1999, effectively demonstrate that the world has yet to make a clean break with the old Cold War geopolitical order. Though the formation of political camps that appeal to nations with similar interests and values may not be as clear-cut as it once was during the Cold War, explicitly declared alliances are fundamentally capable of keeping international relationships contained within alliance boundaries. In this respect, the global geopolitical structure that took shape during the two great world wars of this century has not changed at all. Albeit expressive of a declared interest in forms of 'stability,' the principal feature of this geopolitical structure is that it desires to counter threat and establish a variety of responses to outside power.

This structure is also reflected by the view that the end of the Cold War was a victory for America and democracy, or capitalism, as it were. Within the context of the global order, the tactic of putting something to an end by means of "victory" essentially echoes a political mindset rooted in militaristic systems and the notion of dominance and being dominated. The Cold War came to an end because of a political transition within those countries that the Western alliance had considered to be its potential adversaries. However, in reality, one fundamental buzzword symbolizes why the adversarial relationships existed in the first place: "communism."

Stability and instability were the concepts that most heavily influenced geopolitical strategy during and after World War II. In the process, communism and the forces of communism became major focal points of concern. Instability was identified with the threat of nuclear war, the U.S.-Soviet standoff, and military intrusions upon other countries. The threat of spreading communism and the struggle to contain it together provided the adversarial atmosphere a sense of legitimacy. The notion of protecting one's own country or other countries from the threat of communism (the inside and outside of the countries) was accepted as a justifiable basis for going to war.

That war is something to be won or lost is a proposition that even today overshadows the notion that war will always come to an end. Now instability is identified with the spreading terrorism. The threat of terrorism was perceived as a bases for going to war.

Yes, it is true that the long-partitioned Korean peninsula faces some extremely serious problems now, and China is burdened by various problems as well. However, the U.S. and Japan also have plenty problems of their own in respect to peace-building. In any event, as one people, Koreans are unquestionably not going to relinquish their desire to see their country physically and spiritually reunited. China in the meantime can be expected to continue with its drive in nation-building and pursue its own independent reform path despite the increasingly diversified nature of its modern society. Japan and the U.S. together still face the necessity of reaffirming the values derived from the lessons of their past mistakes. In history, a new and precious value is like a photo-negative, for it can always be reproduced, redeveloped, and re-assimilated in different forms. Having values with many different forms is a beneficial thing.

To be sure, positions differ in relations between the United States and Asia, giving rise to conflicts of interests and few shared values, a situation that breeds tension. If, however, "stability" encompasses an alliance and interrelationship (most of which are based on economic ties) and calls for sharing the same views and values, then "instability" would naturally mean conflict with those who are not involved in an alliance and who do not share the same views and values.

Although the culture and history of East Asia is diverse in nature, not much importance is attached to systematically analyzing the relationship between society and people in this region. As such, when some conflict occurs, there is a tendency to explain this situation by means of some conventional concept -- nationalism, power politics, or imitation of methods adopted by advanced countries in dealing with crises. But if the Asian system is one of memory of conflicts, it is impossible to understand and realize systemic changes and reforms unless they are viewed from a historic standpoint. Just as nationalism differs from sincerity, memory in the form of a system determines what is right and what to place at the center of politics. In this sense, it is crucial to understand "communism" (and now "terrorism") in a new light.

Northeast Asia has the potential to become the first case where the relationships between each country and the "stability" of the entire region are created by memories of the war and by a value system based on such memories, without relying on latent force and threat.

2. The Self-Defence Forces and the Legislation

After their birth under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the Self-Defence Forces have made the transition from the Reserve Police Corps to the Self-Defence Forces during the Korean
War. The organization was full of inconsistencies with the Constitution prescribed that any forces should not be obtained.

In June 1954, the Japanese House of Councilors unanimously passed a resolution against the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces outside Japan. Since 1990, nevertheless, we have seen the passage of bills aimed at providing assistance for military actions (and especially those initiated by the United States), and the manufacture of "fait accompli" precedents even as Japan's international responsibility remains undefined. In the process, Japan is moving away from a strictly defensive stance to dispatch of troops to other countries.

The following operations were implemented under the Japanese Act for Cooperation with U.N. Peace-Keeping Operations.8
- Mine-sweeping in the Persian Gulf, 1991 6(vessels)
- Participation in the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), 1992-1993 1,216 (personnel)
- Participation in U.N. operations in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), 1993-1995 154 (personnel)
- Relief operations for Rwanda refugees in Rwanda, 1994 378 (personnel)
- Participation in the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan Heights, 1996 661(personnel)

The following operations were implemented upon the effectuation of Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) in accordance with the 1996 Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security.
- Relief operations in East Timor, 1999, 113(personnel)

The following operations were implemented upon the agreement on the revised Guideline for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation.
- Relief operations for Afghan refugees, 2001n138(personnel), 2(vessels)
- Dispatch of troops (to the Indian Ocean and Guam) under the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, 2001- 27(vessels)
- Participation in construction of the U.N. provisional administrative organization for East Timor,
- Participation in the U.N. team of support for East Timor, 2002 1892(personnel)
- Relief operations for Iraqi refugees, March-April 2003 56(personnel)
- Relief operations for victims of wartime destruction in Iraq, July 2003- 144(personnel)

For some years now, tensions on the Korean peninsula, questions about Taiwan, pressures to relocate U.S. bases in Japan, and other issues have spawned a variety of scenarios for future relations between Japan, China, and the U.S. Examples include a new adversarial relationship prompted by a switch in partnerships; relationships with improved transparency; and trilateral frameworks with more elasticity or freedom.9 Some scenarios also add Russia or the Korean peninsula to the equation.10 Needless to say, most of the frameworks for security in Northeast Asia have been conditioned on Northeast Asian contingencies. However, it should be emphasized that the U.S.-led security policy including preemptive attack as one of the strategic alternatives may not meet Asian Security. Without military forces, decisions to place East Asia within the scope of new multinational security pacts based on the Japanese Constitution seem fundamentally change the structural frameworks applied in decades past.

We should separate the international activity and the civilian control based on the Constitution. Because of the Constitution and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, the SDF act has been strictly controlled and limited to supplementary task (Art. 100, SDF Law), including international rescue work. The Emergency Legislation (6 June 2003) modified the current SDF Law to enable to act strongly and enhance authority of the prime minister. Furthermore, the lack of transparency may undermine the human rights and freedom. The SDF should not be used as the international security corps or forces. Peacebuilding needs police and civilian officer. Military forces may not create a peace systems.

The Self-Defense Forces should evolve into a corps for providing assistance within the framework of collective security under the United Nations. These forces should be accorded national public employee status and should observe the principle of political neutrality. Such a
transition should first begin under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and continue through the abolition of the treaty.

3. The Japanese Constitution as Institutionalized Peace-systems, and the Ongoing tug-of-war over its Value

As a covenant with its people, Japan in the interim was preparing to lay the groundwork for a new social structure through the promulgation of its Constitution. The Constitution of Japan was promulgated on November 3, 1946 and put into force on May 3, 1947. The Four Point Principles drafted by the State Minister Matsumoto Joji for tentative Constitutional amendments (December 8, 1945), the Outline of Constitutional Amendments (drafted by Japanese side and submitted to the General Headquarters on February 8, 1946), the Outline of Constitutional Amendments by the Japan Liberal Party (January 21, 1946), and Constitutional Amendment Issues by the Japan Progressive Party (February 14, 1946) all placed sovereign authority in the hands of the emperor. The Socialist Party of Japan submitted an Outline of the New Constitution (February 24, 1946) that drastically curtailed the powers of the emperor and placed sovereign authority in the state (the national community, including the emperor).

The draft constitution (March 5, 1946) proposed by the Constitutional Commission declared that sovereign authority rested with the general public, including the emperor. The Outline of the new Constitution issued (on November 11, 1945) by the Japanese Communist Party, the outline of the draft constitution proposed (on December 27, 1945) by the Research Commission on the Constitution, and the outline of the revised Constitution proposed by Takano Iwasaburo (December 28, 1945) all placed sovereign authority in the Japanese people. The Constitution of the People's Republic of Japan, as drafted by the Japanese Communist Party (June 29, 1946) would have abolished the imperial system, dismantled the corporate zaibatsu, and renounced Japanese involvement in or support for wars of aggression. As against these proposals from Japanese side, the constitution drafted by General Headquarters underwent several revisions following issuance of the MacArthur notes (February 3, 1946), and then faced a lengthy revision process in the Imperial Diet at the hands of the Lower House and House of Lords.

For the first time, Japan had a Constitution that called for democratic values and systems as well as disarmament. In particular, as would also be declared at the signing of the peace treaty, the Constitution in its preamble explicitly states and pledges that Japan will assume a new stance in its future relations with the other countries of Asia. Japan was allowed to resume its position as a member of the international community of nations after resolving never to use force again. The Constitution clearly articulated the objectives of joint cooperation by Japan and the United States, and deserved status as a foundation for expected future undertakings in bilateral cooperation by Japan and its Asian neighbors.

However, after the turning point to the Cold War in the 1950s, the United States itself, as well as certain groups within Japan that rejected the values espoused by the Constitution and considered it to have been imposed on their country, began to see the Constitution as a form of long-term impediment to the functions of the state and to Japan's actions in the realm of Asian geopolitics. A rift had developed between those who, on the one hand, together realized that the values of the Constitution had been obtained through Japan's wartime defeat and provided clear benefits, and those who, on the other hand, denounced these values as unjust and an obstacle to the independence and decision-making powers of the state. This antagonistic rift would surface over and over again within the chambers of the Diet, on the pages of the mass media, and in the undercurrent of public opinion.

The forces that occupied Japan after its wartime defeat unseated everyone who had held the reins of government power to that point, and a new set of systems and values were allowed to take root under occupation force supervision. This was one of the expected political outcomes of Japan's defeat. I would like to argue, therefore, that the old morals and "autonomy," which Japan's conservatives asserted had been lost under the new systems imposed from the outside but could be reinstated by abolishing such systems and reverting to the old systems, in fact do not spell the end. Wartime defeat effectively brought liberation and democratic values for the first time to a Japanese population whose country had been unable to bring about any changes on its own. However, several problems remained. Namely, Japan was inexperienced in upholding these values; its people were not familiar with political systems; and it had in fact spontaneously abandoned its
own traditional morals and autonomy in the process of reaping unprecedented growth and prosperity through industrial production aimed at meeting the military procurement demand that arose with the Korean War and Vietnam War. The fundamental values, moral systems, and autonomy of a country cannot be readily altered through the imposition of something else from the outside. Such change comes about through popular acceptance and the exercise of affirmative choice. And indeed, it was the old, prewar value system -- dormant on the fringes of public awareness -- that could not be readily changed. That system was characterized by the stigma and constraints of a vast societal hierarchy, belligerence, discrimination against the weak and underprivileged, a poor spirit of cooperation and tolerance, contempt for diversity, and an indifference to the past. All of these values were rejected by the new Constitution, and were rooted at their foundation in the dualities of victory versus defeat, strong versus the weak.

People who espouse such values will try to restore the past -- namely, in the form of their defunct value system and a return to militarization -- in order to defend something. However, it is not to defend the nation, as they typically assert. Their assertions are riddled with the same logic that prevailed during the bygone era of military aggression, when "defense" was the ambiguous yet easily understood operative word of the day and the notion of seeking solutions through actual dialogue was ignored. What they have in common is their reliance on violence as the "means of first resort" to desired solutions.

This is a common denominator with serious implications.

Logic of this kind is intrinsically for the defense not of organizations or states, but rather, of the people who wield power over those organizations or states. Acting in the nation's name, the government sent fathers and grandfathers off to the battlefield, subjected mothers and grandmothers to unspeakable discrimination and bombardment, deployed troops to foreign countries, and through violence, deprived foreign citizens of their rights and lives. The question is, who among us -- including the state -- was willing to listen to those who were fortunate enough to survive -- albeit with injuries -- this vast machinery of violence? The state applied its yardsticks of discrimination to measure the value of life for these victims, and "silenced" them with affluence and historical obscurity. A value system that expects soldiers to die (all the more so if those deaths are from a war that is won), expects women to be in the service of men and the state, and glorifies the sacrifice of citizens' lives for the emperor, is a system that imposes a hierarchy on the value of human life. It was precisely this hierarchy that supported militarism, a rigid value system, corrupt organizations, and a vast system of discrimination. The vestiges of this value system are still manifest in human rights violations against foreigners in Japan, gender discrimination in the corporate workplace, remarks by Cabinet members that seem to approve of gang-rape, as well as comments by government officials opposing the payment of pensions to women who do not have children.

The support and praise of politicians and others who repeatedly resort to simplistic, demagogic, belligerent, and discriminatory remarks may be termed a manifestation of the blind devotion to power and force desired by long-victimized people who have been told there is no value in allowing the weak to live, or that one should fight back when oppressed. People who believe that power and force equate with autonomy in fact have an immeasurable weakness despite the rejection of weakness that they give voice. Those who above all else fear being told it is shameful or a sign of weakness to acknowledge this weakness will strive to demonstrate their strength through violence in a variety of forms.

Their strength was violence: violence consistently aimed at the weak, and as part of a system that sought to legitimize that violence. The reaction to "weakness" by people who lived by and believed in the strength of this system was a reaction to "defeat," was it not? However, it must be emphasized that what we gained after the war, the Constitution was a system that, at least by current measures, is based on the strongest values on Earth.

An important point is that this value system was a covenant with the past, gained in exchange not only for the stark fact that Japan had lost the war, but also the fact that it had committed atrocities. After it had been placed into force, the Constitution was utilized to demonstrate, both domestically and internationally, the values that would form the foundation for Japan's future as a nation-state. However, many have disregarded the aspect that actively applying the values of the Constitution in a more universal manner can be a fundamentally effective way of stemming modern conflict. The promulgation of the Japanese Constitution in 1946 was significant in two ways. First, in that it was promulgated the year after World War II,
its provisions were not seriously influenced by the Cold War that intensified some years later, and as a result, it was drafted for improving Japan's stature within the international community, based on atoning for past crimes and supporting the well-being of the Japanese people. The other implication had to do with the essential role that this Constitution -- established as it was prior to the peace treaty, the treaties with individual countries, and the agreements concerning reparations -- would serve in re-establishing ties with the countries victimized by the war. In essence, the Constitution signified a pledge to renounce war, uphold the rights of the people, and, by extension, meet related ideals. It was a pledge not only to the Japanese public, but also a pledge to the countries that Japan victimized, yet it predated other bilateral and international treaties. In light of the intrinsic qualities of this pledge, the stance Japan adopted toward the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, as well as the political posture it displayed thereafter, cannot be described as having been based on keen political judgment or objectivity. By contrast, at that point in time, the U.S. and its allies clearly shared the ideals on which this Constitution had been founded. However, having since established its own history of interference and aggression in Asia, the U.S. still does not appear to comprehend its problems in that region of the world.

In 1949, West Germany established its Basic Law (Grundgesetz), the provisions of which were heavily influenced by the intensifying Cold War. German economic prosperity had an influence on economic stability throughout Europe. Although the military forces of the rearmed Germanys had been placed under decentralized systems of command and control, they gave significant impact on security issues with France and other former victims of German aggression. In addition, the issue of reunifying the divided Germanys had an impact on the stability and order of Europe at large. All in all, the German problem was a European problem.

For a long time, Japan's problems has not been problems for Asia at large even if one discounts the fact that Japan developed into a bastion of anti-communism as the Cold War intensified. Japan's problems were, rather, the same as those the U.S. faced in Asia. Or perhaps they were problems with market impact, as is the case for today's financial markets, or as referred solely to the context of tight economic problems. The establishment of the People's Republic of China and the Korean War made the advanced industrial nations take notice of postwar Asia's circumstances. In that respect, it was the presence of China, not of Japan, that seemed deeply interrelated with Asia's problems.

Hence, in terms of the obligation to uphold postwar international stability and order, the problem for Japan was precisely whether it could meet its obligations to other countries, including the protection of its own autonomy, within the framework of its Constitution as institutionalized memories.

**Conclusion**

Various protocols are needed if countries are to make any headway toward the resolution of pending differences or rebuilding relations damaged by war or other incidents. Those protocols may range from explicit and sincere words of apology or reparations based on swiftly established legislation to political decisions based on mutual understanding and backed by improved economic ties and exchange. In terms of relations with its Asian neighbors, Japan would have several choices for future. They included the possibility -- outside the peace-treaty framework -- of pursuing diplomacy aimed at establishing long-term ties with nations other than treaty signatories; declarations -- as a former war-waging state -- aimed at fostering better ties with other nations; and the building of ties with Asian nations that were treated poorly by Japan in the course of pursuing its politically immature and hasty wartime expansionist policies. The textbook issue in Japan -- smoldering as it has like a glowing cinder ready to burst into flame with the slightest breeze, the Yasukuni Shrine visits by the prime minister and other Cabinet members, the endless stream of foot-in-mouth gaffes by leading government officials, reductions in Official Development Assistance funding, and the movement to revise the Constitution are all problems that stem from the immaturity of Japanese relations with these nations.

For example, should the reactions of South Korea, North Korea and China to the textbook issue be perceived as outside pressure or interference in Japan's internal affairs? They should rather be interpreted as friendly assistance or the expressions of a check-and-balance function
that points out Japan's failures to live up to its promises at home and abroad and that
courages a return to desired bilateral relations? Should the actions of countries that forfeit
their claims to reparations be perceived as signs of intimidation aimed at winning long-term
economic aid? They should be understood as signs of good faith and future hope? These have
been issues not for other countries, but for Japan whenever it has received messages of trust
and forgiveness through diplomatic channels.

Whenever issues of this kind arise, reaction in Japan typically includes assertions to the
following effect: e.g., that acts of war by Japan were provoked by other countries, that certain
surprise attacks by the Japanese in the course of the war were caused from conspiracies, or
that the orientation of Japanese educational system has been skewed by having been taught
based on each country's own perspective on history. Then again, Japanese tend to become
impatient with any perceived lack of forgiveness from other countries in response to a formal
apology, and rush to the conclusion that Japan should puts its "autonomy" into shape in the
name of stronger, easier-to-comprehend terms.

However, this attitude is not a reaction to a perceived lack of forgiveness. Rather, it can
be said to be another reaction to international society with a stance that insists on articulating
the autonomy and superiority of one's own country, as a result of its determination based on
the dualistic perception of bilateral relations: friend or foe; dominance or subordination. The
reason is that individuals or states that are sincere in seeking forgiveness, that is, individuals or
states that objectively and sincerely recognize their mistakes, are fundamentally not so
interested in reacting in the above-described ways or in being forgiven. Rather, they are purely
interested in apologizing for their transgressions. Accordingly, the question in this case is
whether, on the condition of peace, a nation that has been forgiven in some way for
aggressions against another nation will live up to the obligations it accepted in return for that
forgiveness. What is unforgivable is the untiring effort to overturn those obligations by the
former value system of a state that collapsed because it committed past crimes. Pledges
articulated in the interest of moving relations forward must be fulfilled in principle whether they
contain shortcomings or not. Consequently, the pressing challenge for Japan is how it will live
up to its own obligations. This should never lead to a diplomatic problem and is something
Japan should have dealt with long before it developed into such proportions. Nonetheless, we
arguably must point out the lack of shared values that allowed this problem to escape
discussion even at a fundamental level inside Japan.

This absence of fundamental discussion allows the problem to deteriorate into a question
of, for example, whether relations would have improved had reparations been paid at a given
point in time. To be sure, the situation conceivably would have been different had Japan's own
economic reconstruction been hampered by the payment of reparations, or had the Japanese
government and mass media made an effort to explain the significance of Japan's obligation to
pay those reparations in terms of their grounds, causes, and results. Besides, states victimized
by Japanese aggression had the justifiable right to seek reparations. However, as a realistic
issue, it is essentially impossible to offset human losses and the memory of atrocities committed
against survivors with monetary compensation alone. One must also address the legal issues
and take the political step of offering explicit apologies for acts committed in the name of the
state. This is because these are the steps that have the power to link together memories and
protocols, thereby enabling to change both parties concerned (i.e. a nation offering apologies
and nation(s) being given such apologies).

East Asia has reached the threshold to yet another new phase with China's acceptance
into the World Trade Organization. Developments of this kind tend to rekindle the almost-
sarcastic debate over whether Asia should pursue economic or political unions comparable to
the EU in Europe. Additionally, there is a constant tendency to unfairly subject Asian stability to
the same kind of comparisons. However, aside from the issue of whether these comparisons of
European and Asian unification are appropriate or not, it would appear that debate within
individual countries has been focused solely on the dimensions of stability and individual
competitive advantage within their respective communities. Things of substance eventually
perish. Stability and order, however, are built upon successive promises, and nations sustain
their ties with one another by meeting their obligations under those promises. It is the people
of a nation who ensure that their nation lives up to its promises and who infuse human sincerity
into their nation's words. It is the reciprocal fulfillment of promises in principle -- be they with
the citizens of countries outside one's borders or with citizens within -- that will define the future of regional communities.

Resembling triplets in terms of their entrenched Cold War mindsets and structures of discrimination, Japan, North Korea, and the U.S. all have the potential to function as destabilizing forces in Northeast Asia.

If you turn the map upside down, you will likely understand why North Korea views Japan and America as such threats. Countries that lack imagination in the arena of foreign relations are more likely to provoke the urgency of military threats and thus ignore other threats to human existence, such as poverty, discrimination, or environmental degradation. Consequently, their relations with other countries are deteriorated into crisis situations.

Notes
1. Although the actual practice of Peace-building may call the validity and ability into question, peace-building activities including democratic, socio-economic, security, and political transition, are attempts of nation-building.
   F.O.Hampson, Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail, United States Institute of Peace, 1996.
2. See Arif Dirlik, "Trapped in History" on the Way to Utopia: East Asia's "Great War" Fifty Years Later, in; Fujitani, Takashi Geoffrey M. White, and Yoneyama, Lisa ed., Perilous Memories : The Asia-Pacific War(s)
Furthermore, about the 'memory' and nation, see below.
   Abe Yasunari, Koseki Takashi, Miichi Masatoshi, Mitsunaga Masaaki, Morimura Toshimi ed., The Shape of Memories, Cultural History of Commemorations, Kashiwa-shobo, Tokyo, 1999.
   5. The data as of July 17, 2003, Foreign Policy and Defense Commission.
   6. Economic Planning Agency, National Economic Calculation Yearbook, 1991. The GDP growth rate reached 10-12 percent. Through the two wars, in Japan, 134 U.S. military bases were provided(two bases were provided in 1985)for the U.S. forces.
10. Dingli Shen, Engaging the DPRK in a Verifiable Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone: addressing nuclear issues involving the Korean Peninsula, pp. 419-422.

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