

THE AGE OF 'JAPAMERICA'— TAKING JAPANESE DEVELOPMENT SERIOUSLY

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I. *The Rise of "Japamerica"*

The "Japan Problem" has been the subject of considerable debate in recent years, both in the press and in academic circles. Japanese development has appeared to many to have defied conventional wisdom. With almost every passing day we find someone new purporting to explain the "secret" of Japanese success.

A *Business Week* Journalist once reported, "Foreigners see the Japanese as economic superstars. Incomes in Japan are now about the same as in the U.S., and the evidence of Japan's extraordinary economic success is writ large across the globe. Foreign friends want the country to become a better member of the international club, less inclined to assault markets and more willing to share its wealth. But Japan lacks a vision for itself and its role in the world. It's a financial superstar that's also a reluctant leader. That's because the nation's impression of itself doesn't fit with what it has become. From schoolchildren to pensioners, the Japanese still repeat in creed-like fashion: 'We are a small island nation with few natural resources.' . . . Many Japanese pay lip service to internationalization, but they are just as determined to remain distinct. Foreigners call it xenophobia and racism; the Japanese call it identity" (Barbara Buell, "Japan Just Can't Believe It's a Superstar," *Business Week*, July 13, 1987).

A Japanese woman in a letter to the editor of *Time* magazine wrote: "In our country, few families can afford a modern house with a clothes dryer and a dishwasher. We don't have to line up for food, but the prices are terribly high. Most wives spend hours trying to find cheaper food or take low-paying part-time jobs to be able to buy groceries. Can ordinary Westerners imagine paying \$2 for three small tomatoes or \$8 for a pound of the cheapest meat? Japanese husbands are usually too busy to help their wives. Because they cannot get houses or apartments near their offices, men leave home at 6 or 7 in the morning and return at 9 or 10 at night. For most Japanese, the dream of having a bigger house or an apartment with one room for each family member will never come true" (Tokiko Iwamoto Sakurai, *Time*, June 27, 1988).

Ezra Vogel of Harvard University has argued, "Future historians may well mark the mid-1980s as the time when Japan surpassed the United States to become the world's dominant economic power. American's GNP may remain larger than Japan's well into the 1990s, but there are many reasons to believe that Japan will extend its lead as the world's dominant economic power in the years ahead. . . . The Japanese have gained far more improvements

in living standards in recent years than the citizens of any Western country. Although not yet caught up with the most advanced Western countries in housing space, indoor plumbing and car ownership per capita, Japan's general consumption levels have already surpassed West European levels." He called this new age "Pax Nipponica" (Ezra F. Vogel, "Pax Nipponica?," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 64, No. 4, Spring 1986).

Immanuel Wallerstein has suggested, based on an historical observation of the cyclical rhythms of the capitalist world system, a scenario in which Japan might become a new hegemonic superpower with the decline of American hegemony. He also indicated that this hegemonic shift is uncertain because the system itself is facing an historical crisis and structural transformation. What this may engender, he noted, is an alliance between the old hegemonic power and its successor, namely, a middle-run alliance between the U.S. and Japan, but this may entail some "cultural" problems. His conclusion on this point was, "I must say however that I do not consider this [the existence of cultural problems between the U.S. and Japan] a fundamental obstacle to the fulfillment of expectations [of the alliance]. Culture has a marvelous plasticity when necessity requires it" (Immanuel Wallerstein, *Japan and the Future Trajectory of the World-System: Lessons From History?*, Occasional Papers of the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economies, Historical Systems, and Civilizations, SUNY at Binghamton, 1986).

The concern of this paper revolves around the above point concerning the U.S.-Japan alliance discussed by Wallerstein and the status of Japan within the capitalist world system. I would like to suggest, firstly, that an historical alliance between the U.S. and Japan, which I call "Japamerica," has already been established. Secondly, the basis of "Japamerica" is the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and the common regimes of capital accumulation, or "Fordism." Thirdly, "Japamerica" is now at the core of the capitalist world system, but its future is uncertain. Finally, through the process of making "Japamerica," Japanese mass culture has experienced both an "Americanization" and a "De-Americanization." I will assert, however, that, on the basis of characteristics of the so-called "Japanese management" system and some public opinion polls, "De-Americanization" has inherited the essence of "Americanism."

II. *The Meaning of "Japamerica"*

On the cover of Paul Kennedy's recent best-seller book in the U.S., *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (Random House, New York, 1987), we find a cartoon which suggests the fall of British hegemony in the 19th century, the sunset of the U.S. in the 20th century, and the rise of Japan as a candidate for world hegemony in the 21st century. There are, of course, many other predictions for the future of the world system. Below I will comment on 6 models currently being discussed:

(1) The continuous dominance of "Pax-Russo-Americana" or "Pax-Americana-Sovietica." This focuses mainly on the military superiority of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, in particular their nuclear monopolies. I believe, however, that military power is deeply rooted in economic power, and both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. have many difficulties

in the latter area. In addition, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have been incorporated into the mechanisms of the capitalist world system.

(2) The reconstruction of "Pax Americana" or "Pax Americana Mark II." This is an earnest dream for many Americans. The decline of U.S. power, however, could not be checked by such short-term domestic economic policies as the devaluation of the dollar or the manipulation of the official bank rate. Because American decline is deeply rooted in losing her international competitiveness in world markets, the rebuilding of her hegemony needs assistance from foreign countries. Even if the U.S. economy should recover from its triple imbalances of trade, national budget, and household consumption, the level of recovery might never again reach that of the golden age of the 1950s and 1960s.

(3) The "Tripartite model" or the "Capitalist Summit" system. After the collapse of the IMF-GATT system in 1971, the centers of the contemporary capitalist world, the U.S., Japan, and the European Community, have pursued multilateral cooperation for the stability of economic and military world order. This has taken the form of the yearly summit conference of seven advanced countries and the G2, G3, G5, or G7 meetings attended by their finance ministers and presidents of national banks. There are also unofficial connections between leading politicians, executive leaders, and intellectuals, as with the Trilateral Commission.

This tripartite model may best fit present conditions in the core of the world system. But tripartite cooperation or the summit system has a very limited effect in the short run. Multinational enterprises and banks can easily maneuver deals in world financial markets, often acting contrary to summit announcements or G7 agreements. Countries of the European Community are often cool to U.S. proposals for joint military, diplomatic and economic actions under the banner of the "free world," and they frequently pursue their own economic and political settlements independently of U.S. global policies.

Two secondary variants of this tripartite model may be noted. One optimistic scenario is a "Pax Consortis" model in which there is a multi-consociational network where major countries concerned deliberate on important issues without the intermeditation of a superpower. Such an "after hegemony" system might be desirable for a transitional period, if it were to work. We know, however, that there have been many attempts to stabilize world order by consociational ideals, as with the United Nations, IMF, GATT, OECD, ILO, World Bank, etc., but these world-wide institutions always faced operational difficulties due to blockage by a hegemonic power or internal conflicts between powers, all intrinsic to the nature of the capitalist world system.

A more pessimistic scenario is a "Three Blocs" model of the world economy. This model presupposes the dissolution of the core into three poles, each built around protectionist barriers: the U.S. with Canada and Latin America, Japan with East and Southeastern Asia (including China), and the E.C. with Africa (and the U.S.S.R.). This closely resembles the world order before World War II, but there are insufficient grounds to assume that the core will divide in this manner. The world economy is far more interdependent than the 1930s and multinational enterprises are now central driving forces of capitalist production.

(4) The "U.S.-Japan complex" or "Japamerica," derived from Zbigniew Brzezinski's "Amerippon" and the U.S.-Japan "Bigemony" articulated by C. Fred Bergsten. Both Brzezinski and Bergsten stress the crucial importance of the U.S.-Japan partnership for

the new world order. Brzezinski, however, stresses the division of labor between a militarily strong America and an economically vibrant Japan, and Bergsten sees reciprocal coordination on various levels by the two superpowers. In my opinion, "Amerippon" or U.S.-Japan "Bigemony" has already been established, what I call "Japamerica," both in the military and economic areas. The postwar U.S. Occupation of Japan and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty created the basic institutional conditions for this alliance. I will trace its historical development further in the paper.

(5) "Pax Nipponica" or "Pax Japonica." Some scholars in the U.S. see the possibility of Japan becoming a new hegemonic power in the 21st Century. Ezra Vogel is one representative of this stream. They see this based on not only the contemporary financial power of Japan but also on her adaptability and flexibility required for this transformation. Although the GNP of the U.S. is now double that of Japan, they say that, in consideration of the rapidity of its overseas investments and growth, Japan could catch up to the U.S. But, as Vogel noted, Japan seems to lack some crucial prerequisites for becoming a hegemonic power. One is Japan's military dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, and the other is the lack of a vision and will to see herself in such a role. I do not believe that Japan can easily transform herself into a military superpower with nuclear weapons, or that she has a mission to become a political and diplomatic superpower. I do not contend, however, that Japanese language or oriental culture is the main obstacle for becoming a hegemonic power, as proponents of a cultural approach would assert.

(6) The "Pax Japonica" or the "Pax Pacifica" Model. Some scholars and journalists include not only Japan but also the Asian New Industrializing Countries (ANICs or NIES) and the greater Pacific region (China, ASEAN countries, Australia, New Zealand, and the west coast of the U.S.) as a possible new center of the world economy. Their hypothesis asserts that there will be a decline in Western civilization and the advent of an Eastern or a Pacific century. Some argued that there will be a shift from "Protestant Capitalism" to "Confucian Capitalism" (Michio Morishima), and others from "Western Capitalism" to "East Asian Capitalism" (Peter L. Berger). I do not agree with the "Confucian Capitalism" model because it places too much emphasis on cultural differences between the West and the East. But at the same time I believe that we must take the "East Asian Development Model" more seriously. There are some important institutional differences between market-oriented capitalist development accompanied by liberal democracy and state-led development under authoritarian regimes in East Asia. I will discuss this again further on in reference to the "Fordism" and "Post-Fordism" (or "Flexible capitalism") models proposed by Antonio Gramsci, the French "Regulation" school, and others.

Each of these models may appear at different points in time. The present "Tripartite Model," for example, can be compatible with the "Pax Japonica" model in the long term, and the medium-range "Japamerica" model can be transformed into the "Pax Pacifica" model in the 21st century.

To measure the reliability of such predictions, we have to consider some historical and theoretical preconditions: first, the meaning of decline of "Pax-Americana-Soviética" and "Pax Americana"; second, the relationship between military and economic powers; third, the balance of power between the U.S. and Japan; and fourth, the transition of the capitalist center from the West to the East, in particular the role of cultural differences between them.

It is impossible for me to discuss all of the above points within the confines of this essay.

Instead, I will concentrate on the U.S.-Japan historical relationship, including cultural ties. This, I believe, is in varying degrees related to all of the above points.

III. *The Cultural "Americanization" of Postwar Japan*

After World War II the Allied Forces occupied the defeated nations of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial-Military Japan, and remade their political and economic systems. Japan was occupied by U.S. Forces and the old Emperor system collapsed. At the beginning of the Occupation, U.S. policies stressed the demilitarization and democratization of Japan. Their major goals were to dismantle the Imperial Army, break up the zaibatsu, eliminate rural landlords, guarantee rights for women, labor unions, socialists and communists, and to draft a new constitution.

Because of the advent of the Cold War and the Chinese revolution, however, in 1948–49 U.S. policy shifted. It now sought the reconstruction of Japanese capitalism and to make Japan into an anti-communist fortress. The vigorous political struggles of socialists, communists, and trade unions were easily suppressed by the absolute power of the Occupation forces.

At the time, the United States provided a dream and a model of a new Japanese society. Although in prewar schools the Japanese people had been taught that Americans were "demons," their encounter with actual Americans during the Occupation changed this impression. Many American soldiers and personnel were cheerful and were often quick to befriend young Japanese children with tasty chocolate bars. Many Japanese quickly turned to yearn for the "free and rich" American life and culture, and they readily obeyed U.S. occupational policies.

"Pocket American English Conversation" was a bestseller book in 1945, popular Japanese songs had such titles as "Chinatown in San Francisco" and "Yearning for the Hawaiian Route," and the newspaper comics "Blondy" brought forth images of a "modern and Americanized" family life, complete with TV sets, washers, refrigerators, double beds, cars, and so on. Reality at the time for everyday Japanese, however, was quite different. Finding staple foods, clothes, and housing was often a difficult or impossible task. In 1949 a public opinion poll showed that the great majority of Japanese thought that the United States was "the best country in the world." The basic values of the prewar rural community, however, still set the underlying tone for basic attitudes and beliefs in this period. Strong family bonds and discrimination against women, for example, still remained quite strong.

When Japan was given her independence under the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951 after seven years of Occupation by U.S. Forces, it was stipulated in the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty that Japan must provide the U.S. with military bases as a deterrent to "communist threats." This was of course intricately tied to postwar U.S. world strategy against the Soviet bloc participants of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, and was linked to similar strategies in other parts of the world, such as NATO in Europe, OAS in Latin America, ANZUS, SEATO, and the U.S.-Korea and U.S.-Philippines Security Treaties in Asia. Despite the renunciation of war in the constitution imposed by the American occupying authorities, Japan had to build a self-defence force under the control of the U.S. Army.

Also, economic reconstructoin in the 1950s owed much to American procurements

in Japan during the Korean War and U.S. economic aid. The "Pax Americana-Sovietica" and "Pax Americana" of the capitalist world system thus created the starting points for the rebuilding of postwar Japan.

When Japan in 1955 began what was later to be called the "economic miracle," her GNP was only under one tenth that of the U.S. She was clearly dependent on the U.S. both militarily and economically. Japanese public opinion polls at the beginning of the 1950s revealed that 60 percent of the Japanese at the time said that they "like" the U.S. and about 50 percent "feel it impossible" for the Japanese economy to rebuild itself without American aid.

American culture deeply penetrated the minds of Japanese. Watching Hollywood movies or professional wrestling games were some of the most popular pastimes for Japanese during these years. "American Democracy" was a model of an ideal political system, but this model had difficulty in being transplanted to Japan. A Western-like two party system based on competition between the Liberal Democratic Party and the Socialist Party of Japan, both established in 1955, never came to pass. Instead it soon transformed into a "one and a half" party system, with the LDP holding a political monopoly. At the same time, democratic education and peace movements inspired by American occupational reforms and the new constitution spread across the country. Some people believed, based on the principle of "American Democracy," that Japanese independence could only be achieved with the removal of American military bases. Others found a new governmental draft of the Police Duties Law in 1958 a dangerous intervention into people's private lives. Movements against it used the slogan, "The New Police Duties Law Disturbs Our Happy Date." People began to seek more open ties of friendship between men and women and to prefer small nuclear families over the old traditional extended families.

In 1960, despite nationwide protest movements against the renewed and extended military partnership and the government's heavy-handed measures in neglecting Diet consultation, the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was revised into a mutual defence treaty. Article 2 of the Treaty reads, "The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between them." This sentence is a duplicate of Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty, and it has been the basis of the contemporary economic alliance between the U.S. and Japan, or "Japan-america."

Because the U.S. and Japan agreed to become not only military partners against the communist bloc but also reciprocal beneficiaries within the free trade system, Japan could gain much more from the U.S. than the U.S. could get from Japan. Although Japan in the 1960s was a junior partner of the alliance and extremely dependent on the U.S. for oil, food, and security, Japanese economic growth from 1955 through 1973 was far greater than that achieved by the U.S. or the EEC countries. Japanese products were internationally competitive because of their low prices and high quality. The fixed exchange rate of 360 yen to the dollar until 1971 was undoubtedly an advantage for the Japanese side. Also, the Vietnam War gave another chance for the Japanese economy to profit by military procurements.

But the main reason for the "Japanese miracle" lay in its rapid and high increases in productivity and its stable labor relations. Traditional Japanese culture, such as the so-called Japanese collectivism or Confucian conformism, might have played some role in this, but the driving force behind Japanese working hard was not "harmony" but "competitiveness." For the state and enterprises catching up with Western industry and for ordinary Japanese to obtain the "free and rich" American-type consumer life were national and personal goals that spurred this on. The government's "Income-Doubling Plan" of 1960, just after the Security Treaty crisis, symbolized both of these goals simultaneously. In cultural terms, Japanese success in postwar industrialization mainly occurred not as a result of a mysterious oriental "nationality," but because of "Americanization" or "De-Japanization" based on "capitalist rationality." By "capitalist rationality," I mean a system of strong exploitation and the effective subordination of the labor force to production. "Traditional conformity" and "Japanese management," combining lifetime employment, a wage-system based on seniority, and enterprise unions in the major companies, were subordinated to meritocratic competition in order to make more profits for the company and to increase the salaries of individual workers. The question now becomes why the Japanese people easily conjoin such "harmonious labor relations" despite long work hours and low wages, flexible job classifications, periodic technological changes, the speed-up of production lines, and so on.

Satoshi Kamata's *Japan in the Passing Lane* (originally in Japanese, 1973; Pantheon Books, 1982) provides us with important information for understanding this system. His experience in a Toyota factory clearly showed that there was very strong control over workers' labor time and their private lives. There were also organized competitions based around small groups, flexible subsidiary and part-time job systems, and no effective union regulation of shop-floor level labor deployment and work norms.

There are numerous debates about the nature of Japanese management. A recent controversy in the journal *Politics & Society* is a good example. One research group found in "Toyotism" a "strengthened Fordism" or "Ultra-Fordism," with weak workers' control over production. One commentator called this the "super-exploitation thesis" or a kind of "despotic factory regime" theory (K. Dohse/ U. Jürgens/ T. Malsch, "From 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism'?" *The Social Organization of the Labor Process in the Japanese Automobile Industry*, *Politics & Society*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1985).

Another group argued that "Fujitsuism" has a more flexible social organization of the "Post-Fordism" variety, with overlapping work roles, job rotation, team based work units, and relatively flexible production lines. This differs from "Fordism," which entails functional specialization, task fragmentation, and assembly-line production (M. Kenney/R. Florida, "Beyond Mass Production: Production and Labor Process in Japan," *Politics & Society*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1988).

I prefer the "Ultra-Fordism" or "super-exploitation" thesis over the "Post-Fordism" explanation, because I share the central point of argument in Dohse et al., e.g., "Why do Japanese workers accept such a management system?" Also, although I do not concur with the "Post-Fordism" thesis, both are good institutional analyses of Japanese factories, unencumbered by mysterious cultural explanations.

As Dohse et al. insisted, "Cultures are reproduced under changing conditions. In our view a particular system of industrial relations and management control also play a central

role in reproducing cultural traits." And as Wallerstein argued, "Culture has a marvelous plasticity when necessity requires it" I believe that Japanese mass culture has been greatly transformed by "Americanization" or, more exactly, by capitalist rationalization in the postwar period of high-speed economic growth.

Public opinion polls in the 1960s indicated that the Japanese people had a feeling of emancipation from the state and an increasing "individualistic" attitude. But their consciousness of "individualism" or, more appropriately, "privatism" was strongly subordinated to their workplace, the enterprise. This privatism came as a result of the structural social changes brought about by rapid industrialization and urbanization. From 1945 through 1970 the urban population grew from 28 percent to 72 percent of the total population; what in Japan had occurred in just 25 years had taken one century in the U.S. The average household size decreased from 4.95 in 1955 to 3.45 in 1975. The agricultural population fell drastically, from 17 million in 1950 to 7 million in 1975. The traditional rural and patriarchal culture was now a thing of the past.

The above process was so rapid that the people who moved from the countryside to the cities were unable to create a stable European type of "civil society" with a public consciousness based on individualism. They searched for new identities in their companies and their families. In the workplace, Japanese companies "imported" American management techniques and adapted to the privatized consciousness of new workers. This was the basis of the so-called "Japanese management" system, and was preconditioned on the collapse of leftist trade unions by the early 1950s. Small familial-type working groups were made the basis of American-type meritocratic competition. Workers could get better salaries if they obeyed their managers and enterprise union leaders.

On the other hand, workers' desires for a happy family life manifested itself in the realization of their former dream of enjoying American consumer life. Japanese capitalism not only produced a high rate of surplus value but also reproduced a demand for durable consumer goods. The guidance of state economic plans and the desire for American consumer culture were two important mediators in this. To gain the American-like comfortable private life, people had to conform to the company.

But in comparison with European and American growth Japanese economic growth was orientated too heavily toward entrepreneurial profits and too little toward workers' welfare and public infrastructures. This brought on not only changes in mass culture and family life but also high inflation, ecological pollution, and lack of elemental civic functions. Although in their companies workers could do little more than struggle for higher wages, they could seek changes in the environment or work for political arrangements with opposition parties in order to ensure peace and democracy (I argued this in my paper, "A Preliminary Note on the State in Contemporary Japan," *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1984).

I call this trend of the late 1960s and early 1970s "private reformism" or "consumer progressivism." Reformism manifested itself in the decline of support for the LDP, the rise of reformist local governments, movements against environmental pollution, student protests, and anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. Uneasy feelings of subordination in the company were compensated by such aspirations as getting a better Americanized life and political reformism.

Paradoxically, the process of getting an Americanized consumer life went coterminous

with worsening images of America by the Japanese people. On the one hand, the Japanese people realized their dream of an American way of life in terms of consumer items, such as TV sets, private cars, and Western-style housing. On the other hand, the United States revealed weaknesses as a result of the Vietnam War. In 1971, people were polled concerning "images of America." 31 percent answered that the U.S. was a country "interfering with and threatening the independence of other countries," as opposed to 26 percent who replied that she was "stabilizing world order for the free world." Only 17 percent saw the U.S. as "a vigorous country respecting freedom and equality" and 40 percent felt that it was "a disorderly country with racist discrimination and a great gap between the rich and the poor." Although 41 percent still saw the U.S. as "a rich country with economic power," 31 percent found an "unhealthy economy with a business recession and high unemployment."

At the same time, another poll showed that 60 percent of the Japanese felt the Japanese economy had already caught up to European countries and 40 percent boasted that Japan surpassed them. Only 18 percent in another poll said that he or she "likes" America, while 13 percent responded "doesn't like." The Vietnam War also taught Japanese that U.S. bases in Japan under the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty were dangerous for Japan in the event of retaliation by a third country which the U.S. attacked. Japanese confidence in the security provided by the U.S. thus considerably weakened.

The "Pax Americana" thus appeared to be adversely affected by the war and the crisis of dollar. But the contradictions exposed in the actually existing socialist countries, such as with the Sino-Soviet conflict, the Chinese "Cultural Revolution," and the suppression of "Prague Spring" by the Soviet Army, concomitantly prevented a "Pax Sovietica" from gaining in influence.

Japan began to rebuild her own prosperity sphere in Asia when the U.S. began to cut back on military and economic aid. South Korea and Taiwan were good example of this; each introduced Japanese capital and technology and pursued export-led growth under a "bureaucratic-authoritarian industrializing regime" (Bruce Cumings, "The Origins and Development of the Northeast Asian Political Economy: Industrial Sectors, Product Cycles, and Political Consequences," *International Organization*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1984).

American Culture continued to penetrate Japanese society, but now the imported elements seemed more selective and rational. The time lag required for this importation also considerably narrowed; along with the Beach Boys and Coca Cola, counter-cultures in the U.S., as with the hippies, anti-war folksongs, and the new feminism, were introduced shortly after they became popular in the U.S. Cultural "Americanization" now came to mean not the total identification or incorporation of Japanese culture with that of the U.S., but the maintenance of a private and a better material life, like Americans. This was particularly true for the young generation.

IV. *Cultural "De-Americanization"?*

After the American defeat in the Vietnam War and the first Oil Shock, the Japanese economy momentarily experienced difficulties. But she soon recovered and surged into American and other worldwide markets, benefitting greatly in the trade and financial markets.

At least in economic terms, the status of Japan within the alliance changed from that of a junior partner to a more or less equal competitor. It also implied that Japan had become a world superpower. The Soviet bloc, lacking democracy, at the time was unable to show the advantages of socialist ownership and central planning. China also began to actively introduce market mechanisms.

In 1985 the U.S. became the world's greatest debtor nation, in contrast to Japan, which became the major creditor in the world. The revalued yen pushed the Japanese GNP per capita in 1988 up to \$23,358, above the American level of \$19,760. Even Japanese military expenditures, which were limited to 1 percent of the GNP from 1976 until 1986, became the third largest in the world after the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The "Pax-Americana-Sovietica" was limited solely to the area of nuclear monopolies. The military overload of the two superpowers eroded the basis of both the "Pax Americana" and the "Pax Sovietica." The Soviet Union found itself embroiled in "the second Vietnam War" in Afghanistan in the 1980s, adding to the problems she faced.

The world economy in this period strengthened its interdependence and mutual penetration. But it was unsymmetrical. Although the Asian NICs achieved a successful transition from the periphery to the semi-periphery (which Wallerstein has called "development by invitation"), the Latin American NICs increasingly slid into bankruptcy as a result of major debts. Multinational enterprises and banks from the U.S., Japan, and the EC began to construct a borderless network of production and circulation.

James O'Conner referred to Japan as a "Foucaultian" society, in which there is maximization of production, in contrast to the "Freudian" society of the U.S., based on overconsumption (Preface to the Japanese edition of *Accumulation Crisis* by James O'Conner, Tokyo, 1988). This has led to the productive center of the world system shifting from the West to the East as a result of low costs, educated laborers, high incentives to production, flexible work assignments, and scant workers' resistance. The golden triangle of the U.S. market, Japanese management and knowledge-intensive technology, and the high production levels of the Asian NICs suggests the coming of the "Pacific century." This process, I believe, signalled the advent of "Japamerica," with the uncertain possibility for its transformation into a "Pax Pacifica."

Some American and European scholars argue that what we see here is the rise of "Confucian Capitalism" or the "East Asian Development Model." But the secret of the rapid recovery of the Japanese economy from the Oil Shock and the world recession of 1974-75 was once again "harmonized labor relations," not mysterious cultural variables. The systematization of "Fujitsium," as discussed by Kenney/Florida, actually took root during this period of "overall cost reduction" (*genryou keiei*) and "industrial restructuring."

Ronald Dore has vividly shown this transformative process in his recent book, *Flexible Rigidities: Industrial Policy and Structural Adjustment in the Japanese Economy 1970-80* (Stanford U. P., 1986). The key to this successful restructuring and globalization was the lack of workers' resistance to wage-cuts, temporary lay-offs, "voluntary" retirements, the reassignment and transfer of workers, and cuts in temporary and seasonal workers and subsidiary companies. All of this was predicated on the active cooperation of enterprise trade unions. We must again ask, "Why have Japanese workers so easily obeyed such inhumane changes in their working conditions?"

As I stated earlier, Japanese workers had a strong identity with their companies, although

privatism was the norm in the home. When economic growth continued, "My Companyism" and "My Homeism" could harmoniously coexist, because hard work led to better incomes and thus a happy life. It was a non zero-sum game. The end of rapid economic growth implied entry into a zero-sum game, both for the company and the worker. Companies of course opted to survive in the market by increasing productivity and paying less. Workers, with no shop-floor solidarity and no expectations of the enterprise union, had to secure their employment on their own as a precondition for maintaining comfortable lives at home. This entailed deeper conformity to the company.

Even in 1974, when political reformism was still a potent call in national and local elections and over one third of the population lived under progressive governors and mayors, 35 percent of electrical union workers introduced themselves by "the name of their company," 7 percent by their "job," and only 1 percent as "worker." In 1978, 53 percent agreed that the company and laborers should cooperate with each other, and only 1 percent believed in an antagonistic relationship between capital and labor.

Because "My companyism" is too ingrained in the Japanese mentality for its nature to be understood, foreigners can often better grasp the nature of Japanese management than Japanese, particularly in an overseas Japanese factory. To cite an example, a British scholar was surprised to find a sensational advertisement for Nissan in the September 14, 1986 issue of the newspaper *Observer*, when the British Nissan factory in Sunderland opened. It read, "With Nissan, motor manufacturing enters a new world. The relationship between management and labor is transformed. The Nissan worker is a new worker, so new that he is no longer a worker. He is a staffer. They don't have 'workers' at Sunderland" (John Holloway, "The Red Rose of Nissan," *Capital & Class*, No. 32, 1987). Also, an American journalist interviewed some Nissan-Tennessee workers and found the secret of Nissan's high productivity. "Inovative Japanese management had little to do with this success, however. It was achieved the old-fashioned way—through the speed-up. 'Eight-hour aerobics' is how one employee describes work on the production line" (John Junkerman, "Nissan, Tennessee," *The Progressive*, June 1987).

The active or reluctant acceptance of company dictates by Japanese workers has enabled the recovery and further expansion of the Japanese economy since 1975.

The privatism born in the 1960s could not penetrate into the company in the form of labor activism. Instead it was incorporated into the competition of watching each other and surveillance aimed at productivity. Furthermore, privatism soon lost its political reformism and transformed into political conservatism. Previously, there had been strong political hopes to build a European-like welfare state based on a coalition government of opposition parties to take the place of too rapid economic growth with all of the environmental hazards that this entailed. A majority of the Japanese gave up this course, however, when they saw that the end of worldwide growth had come and that the so-called "British disease" in Europe had been brought on by governmental welfare burdens. They dreamed once more of having a happy family life, but this time through further growth in the economy and not through the welfare-oriented opposition parties. They turned to the LDP, which had been responsible for Japan's economic growth to date. Support for the LDP at the polls recovered markedly from 1977. The more desire there was to see the economy grow, the less people sought welfare policies by the government. I call this a transformation from "private reformism" into "private conservatism."

Cutbacks, savings, efficiency, and competition were the key words for recovery both in the company and at home. Because the Japanese educational system is closely linked to the job market, with graduates of a few elite universities getting better and higher status, competition in education became the focus of the survival games of privatism. The notorious "Examination Hell" in Japanese high-schools extended in junior-high and elementary schools after 1975.

The political and economic stabilization of the center of society, however, engendered numerous peripheral social problems, such as school violence, the collapse of families, increasing divorce, mental illness, and difficulties for the aged. The escalation of land prices made it impossible for ordinary people to buy private housing, at least in the Tokyo area. The second generation of company executives and politicians, who inherited their parent's economic and political resources, have dominated business circles and the Diet.

There is a new feeling that the gap between the rich and the poor has spread, but it has been offset by economic nationalism, the sense that Japan has become a richer and freer country than almost any other country in the world. Pride in Japanese nationality and culture is on the rise. In polls taken in 1973, 1978, and 1983 those believing in the "excellence of Japanese talents in comparison with other nations" accounted for 60 percent, 65 percent, and 71 percent, respectively.

Some Japanese scholars have called the resurgence of conservative conformism and the rise of nationalism in opinion polls after 1975 a "revival of the Japanese tradition" or "Re-Japanization." American journalists feared it was a rebirth of the old "Yamatoism" or "Japanism." In my view, however, this more closely resembles a strengthened "Americanism," or a new Japanese culture more conforming to contemporary capitalist rationality.

It is interesting to note in this regard that some international public opinion polls in the 1980s showed that the degree of Japanese pride in nationality was not very high, in fact lower than Americans or Europeans. A characteristic of Japanese mass values was its strong materialistic orientation, quite unlike Ronald Inglehart's "Post-Materialism" or "Silent Revolution" thesis which was actively discussed in the U.S. and Europe. As an example, as the primary necessity for a happy family life, Westerners mentioned "religion" or "sexual conformity," but only Japanese put "enough income" and "comfortable housing" at the top.

This materialistic or economy-oriented consciousness is at the core of contemporary Japanese mass culture. This was first introduced with the cultural "Americanization" that permeated Japanese society from 1945 through 1973. After the Vietnam War and the end of rapid economic growth, there came about a "De-Americanization" or "Neo-Japanization." But the strong privatism which sought materialistic affluence for the family remained. It was so strong, in fact, that many urban workers changed their political support from the welfare-oriented opposition parties to the highly skilled economic-growth conductor, the LDP. Factory conformism by workers was originally a fundamental element of "Americanism" or, more exactly, native "Fordism."

Japanese "De-Americanization" was thus more of an "Americanization" or a making of "improved Americanism."

V. "Fordism" as the Basis of "Japamerica"

The terms "Americanism" and "Fordism" are borrowed from Antonio Gramsci. In America in the 1920s, he stated, "Rationalisation has determined the need to elaborate a new type of man suited to the new type of work and productive process." With regard to "Fordism," the core of "Americanism," he noted, "Hegemony here is born in the factory and requires for exercise only a minute quantity of professional political and ideological intermediators" (Antonio Gramsci, "Americanism and Fordism," *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).

Postwar Japan, I firmly believe, has created "a new type of man suited to the new type of work and productive process." The Japanese factory was where this took place and dominant hegemony was born by the "Americanization" process. Why, then, did "De-Americanization" come after 1975? This cultural "De-Americanization" or "Neo-Japanization" has inherited the core of "Americanism," i.e., "Fordism." While the U.S. had lost many of the advantages achieved under "Fordism" as a result of Vietnam War, growing overseas production by multinationals, and resistance by workers, unions, blacks, minorities, women, students, and so on, Japan could draw on the essence of "Fordism" and improve it. It has now reached the stage of "Ultra-Fordism."

One might ask why this is not "Post-Fordism" but "Ultra-Fordism." "Fordism" is one historical regime of capital accumulation (mass production and mass consumption with a specific mode of regulation) and I do not believe at this point that contemporary Japanese capitalism is *the* representative of a new accumulation regime after "Fordism." The French "regulation" school found an "extensive regime of accumulation" in the 19th century and an "intensive regime of accumulation" under "Fordism" in the 20th century. After the 1970s, one could find clear indications of the "Crisis of Fordism," and many argued for a "Neo-" or "Post-Fordism."

Scholars such as Kenney/Florida equated Japanese "Flexible Capitalism" with archetypal "Post-Fordism" (on "Flexibility" see Anna Pollert, "Dismantling Flexibility," *Capital & Class*, No. 34, 1988). But it is doubtful if Japanese capitalism constitutes a qualitatively new regime rather than a "Fordist" one, in which there is a predominance of relative surplus value extraction. Rather, because Japanese "Fordism" (or "Peripheral Fordism" in the East Asian NICs, according to Alain Lipietz's terminology) strongly depends on management techniques to bring about workers' subordination, enabled primarily by the youthfulness of the working force and the weakness of shop-floor labor resistance, working class struggle, and democratic movements, it is in a sense a combination of both "Fordism" and "Pre-Fordism." Examples of "exported" Japanese management, such as in Nissan-Tennessee or Nissan-Sunderland, suggest that this "flexibility" could not be achieved with strong union regulation of working conditions.

Also, if "Fordism" is accompanied by particular "social norms," the contemporary Japanese privatism, which I observed above, with strong materialism and weak "post-materialistic" values, fits pure "Fordist norms."

And if "Post-Fordism" should have the same global generality as U.S. "Fordism"

had from 1945 through the 1960s, then the universality of the Japanese system is questionable.

If "Fordism" was closely connected to a qualitatively new industrial technology of automatic machinery as Gramsci noted, it is difficult to conclude that Japanese advances in robotization or micro-electronics matched this qualitative change in industrial technology.

Although there may be a possibility for the Japanese to find their way out of the "Fordist" age, it will depend on the many uncertain factors mentioned above (on "Fordism," please refer to Michel Aglietta, *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation*, Verso, 1979; Alain Lipiets, *Mirages and Miracles*, NLB, 1986; Robert Boyer, ed., *Capitalismes fin de siècle*, Presses universitaires de France, 1986; Joachim Hirsh/Roland Roth, *Das neue Gesicht des Kapitalismus, Vom Fordismus zum Post-Fordismus*, VSA, 1986; Mike Davis, "'Fordism' in Crisis," *Review*, 11-2, 1978; Bob Jessop, "Regulation Theory, Post Fordism and the State," *Capital & Class*, No. 34, 1988).

Interesting data is provided in polls relating to Japanese attitudes to "capitalism." In 1958 only 12 percent of Japanese felt that "capitalism is good," whereas 48 percent believed that it was "not good." In 1963, 19 percent responded "good" vs. 16 percent "not good." In 1973 "good" declined to 17 percent, but then increased to 35 percent in 1977 ("Socialism is good" in 1958, 1963, 1973, 1977 accounted for 34 percent, 15 percent, 14 percent, 26 percent, respectively). Another poll of Japanese youth (see table below) also showed that there was a growing agreement toward and acceptance of the contemporary capitalist system and a decline in reformist or socialist orientations since 1975.

PUBLIC OPINION POLL: "WHAT TYPE OF SOCIETY DO YOU HOPE FOR?" (%)

	"Contemporary system"	"Reformed system"	"Socialism"
1970	24	51	7
1973	18	55	10
1976	24	48	6
1980	37	35	4
1983	47	29	2
1986	52	22	2

I thus call contemporary Japanese capitalism "Ultra-Fordism," or a "pure" and "condensed" capitalist society based on "Fordism." This is the most important basis of "Japamerica," the U.S.-Japan economic complex. Just as an American analyst referred to "a U.S.-Japan economy" (not "economies"), two giant economies have now mutually penetrated the other and incorporated into one major economic unit. For the Japanese, the U.S. has become an indispensable market, and for the U.S., the reconstruction of her economy depends on Japanese money and cooperation.

VI. *The Future of "Japamerica"*

The popularity of the U.S. in Japan drastically improved after the Vietnam War. Although the U.S. fell in the 1970-75 polls to the third "preferable country in the world" for Japanese, behind Switzerland and France, she moved up to second place in 1976, and re-

covered to the top position in 1980. Other polls since 1978 also showed a renewed preference of the Japanese people for the U.S. About 70 percent of the Japanese respondents consistently displayed a "preference for the U.S."

But the primary reason for this is now economic. 34 percent said that their preference for the U.S. was because the U.S. has a "close economic connection" with Japan. 25 percent mentioned the common "liberal democratic system." "The security connection" followed with 18 percent (1986 research by the government). Another poll in 1987 showed that 77 percent of the Japanese associate "Americans and Europeans" with the word "foreigner" ("Asians" accounted for only 4 percent!). But the Japanese no longer bear any feelings of inferiority to the U.S. or Europe, because a majority now believe that Japan has already caught up to or overtaken the U.S. in education (69 percent), technology (60 percent), the overall economy (58 percent), and even in democracy (50 percent . . . the reason being a 30 year-long "stable" government by only one dominant party!). Only in the areas of living standards and social welfare do Japanese feel that more efforts must be made to catch up to the U.S. They see the U.S. as the most important economic partner, the best customer, and the most appropriate country to emulate or surpass in all fields except the military.

Popular support for the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty also increased after 1975. But lack of military confidence in the U.S. remained and hardened in the post-Vietnam period. For example, in a 1981 opinion poll 60 percent of the Japanese replied that "the U.S. will not defend Japan when it comes time to do so." As for the reasons for 40 years of peacetime in Japan, Japanese people in 1986 mentioned first "our own efforts" (31 percent), secondly the "miserable experiences during the Pacific War" (25 percent), and only 10 percent cited the "U.S.-Japan Security Treaty," trailing behind the 22 percent which chose the "Japanese Peace Constitution." Governmental efforts in Japan to increase military expenditures for the "Free World" must constantly face also the negative attitude of Japanese people in this regard. The Japanese people do not see the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty as an indispensable military shield. They agree that the Treaty should be maintained, but feel that it is the price to be paid for an indissoluble economic relationship. The restabilized LDP government, on the other hand, promises to keep multi-level cooperation with the U.S. government.

"Japamerica" now has some internal frictions and conflicts. "Trade Wars" and "For Sale: America" are the frequent subjects of debate in the press. Both in Japan and in the U.S., recent polls show an increasing lack of confidence in the other. In 1986 about 60 percent of the Japanese said that "the U.S.-Japan relationship is basically good but has some troubles," but "preference for the U.S." went down slightly to 67 percent. In 1987 48 percent of Americans said that they had "confidence in Japan," but "lack of confidence" increased to 30 percent. 41 percent of Americans believe that the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty is more advantageous to Japan than the U.S., but a majority of the Japanese feel it militarily undependable for the defence of Japan.

Such psychological conflicts based on economic and political points of contention might further accentuate within "Japamerica." But Japanese globalization in the military area is unlikely, in particular in regards to having an independent nuclear arsenal. The Japanese people have a relatively long history of anti-nuclear movements as a result of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and public opinion suggests a strong rejection of both militarization and nuclearization. Japan will remain in the "semi-core" of the military world system

at least through this century.

The multinationals in both countries are surely the engines of "Japamerica." But they sometimes act for their own profits at the expense of the "national interest." Generally speaking, however, the principle of "Fordism" or capitalism entails not "harmony" but "competition." Japanese have combined it with "effectiveness," and Americans have done it with "efficiency." Japan might continue to cooperate with the U.S., as long as it can be considered "effective" for long-term economic competition. This is one more reason why I do not accept the "Pax Nipponica" model.

More fundamentally, the coming shift in hegemony depends on the capability of creating "Post-Fordism" in an historical sense. As I have discussed earlier, I do not believe that there is an imminent prospect for a new capitalist regime after "Fordism." Before such a transformation is achieved, Japanese privatism may mature into a Western-like individualism and civil culture which may erode the basis of "Ultra-Fordism." Recent attitudes of youth to the company show symptoms of a "sturdy privatism," such as in rejecting overtime to pursue their own pleasures.

I also believe, like Wallerstein, that the capitalist system itself is facing structural transitional difficulties and anti-system or post-system movements.

If "Pax Pacifica" entails the shift of the center from the West to the East with the continuance of the "Fordist" system of production, then I must reject the inevitability of such a development. The Asian NICs have even more effective and inhumane "Ultra-Fordist" systems of exploitation than Japan, and the contemporary development and success of the "U.S.-Japan-ANICs Triangle" or "Japamerinics" is still based and dependent on it.

VII. *Conclusion*

I share Wallerstein's contention that "There is but a single historical science integrally linked to politics. . . . Truth becomes an interpretation, meaningful for our times, of the social world as it was, as it is, as it will be" ("Some Reflections on History, the Social Sciences, and Politics," in *The Capitalist World-Economy*, Cambridge U. P., 1979).

In this sense, we must take Japanese development in the modern world system more seriously. Not only postwar Japan but also the whole process of the so-called "Japanese modernization" seems unique in appearance. If it can not fit conventional theories, the theories themselves have to be revised.

As I argued elsewhere, Japanese development since 1853, when the "Black Ships" of Commodore Perry visited Japan, has been a single major example of rapid moving-up from an external arena to the core within the world system. It can be periodized into the transition from an external arena to the periphery as a result of the Meiji Restoration, from the periphery to the semi-periphery during the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese Wars, and from the semi-periphery to the core as a result of postwar economic growth (Fukuji Taguchi/Tetsuro Kato, "Marxist Debates on the State in Postwar Japan," Paper presented to the 13th World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Paris 1985, in *Hosei Ronshu*, Nagoya University, No. 105, 1985).

In this process, what I can call the "hop-step and jump" in the world system, we find extreme rapidity of industrialization, the strong intervention of the state in the market,

the relatively late and weak introduction of democracy, the slow penetration of individualistic mass culture, the strong conformity of its people to such national goals as "rich country, strong military," "make industry flourish," or "catch up to the West," and to the authoritarian order of the community, family and enterprise.

I do not believe that this uniqueness originated from unchangeable cultural factors, As I have shown in this paper, and as Wallerstein argued in his paper, "Culture has a marvelous plasticity when necessity requires it." But "what necessity" or "how plastic" is also important for understanding the historical process. I have argued here that the "Fordist" regime of capitalism imported from the U.S. played a crucial role in post-war Japanese cultural changes.

Wallerstein has also stated, "The essence of the capitalist mode of production in the partial freedom of the factors of production" ("Modernization: Requiescat in Pace," in *The Capitalist World-Economy*). But "how partial" is a fundamental problem both for capitalist accumulation and for the lives of people in the various kinds of regions within the world system. Japanese development and the rise of the Asian NICs have suggested that minimized freedom can bring about maximization of capitalist profits. In the case of Japan, industrialization entailed an antagonistic relationship between capitalism and democracy. Imported "American Democracy" could not penetrate Japanese factories, and was counterbalanced by "American Affluence" at home in the form of materialistic belongings. This relationship has made Japan into a global superstar in the contemporary world system.

The Age of "Pax Americana" has already passed. "Fordism" in the West lost its magical power and entered into a crisis. But we are not yet in the age of the "Post-Fordism."

"Fordism" survives in the East. In Japan it has created a "new man" and a "new culture," just as it did in the U.S. in the 1920s, and is expanding into Korea, Taiwan, and even into socialist China. But this "Ultra-Fordism" depends on the passive and subordinated mentality of the "new man." Japanese development was a "Passive Revolution" in the Gramscian sense.

European and American "Fordism" lost their advantages due to resistance from various elements which arose from internal contradictions. As a result of this, the shift of hegemony has become a focus of considerable scholarly attention all over the world. Japan has frequently been suggested as a candidate for this, but whether or not she is willing or capable of assuming this role is still a very open question.

But the question is not simply one of who will become the next hegemonic power. Through increasing class consciousness and demands for freedom and democracy, counter-hegemonic movements will be reinvigorated. The factory will again be the battleground for this confrontation, and it is there that we must look for possible trajectories of the world system.

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