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Japanese Reception of American and Soviet Culture during the Cold War, 1945-1963*

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In this paper I would like to explain the meaning of the Cold War to the Japanese mind and how the Japanese reacted to and coped with the relentless political and cultural pressure from both sides of the international confrontation that occurred between 1945 and 1963. How, I shall ask, did this experience transform their future and their perception of the world?

In Japan the early stages of the Cold War coincided with the occupation by the Allied forces after World War II. US occupation policy changed dramatically fluctuated as the Cold War developed. The Japanese reaction to the Cold War thus became *inextricably entangled with its attitude toward the occupying Allied Powers*, led by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) and his General Headquarters (GHQ). It is thus not so easy to distinguish the impact of the early Cold War on Japanese life between 1945 and 1963 from the aftereffects of WWII.

Because of the shortage of space, I do not want to get bogged down so much in the historiographical argument about the periodization of postwar Japanese history. But in order to clarify the general context of my talk, I would like first to call attention to a few important, rather commonly known, turning points during the period.

Although I think that there is little necessity to explain about the beginning of my periodization, some influential interpretations emphasize the continuity between the governance of pre-1945 Japan and that under the occupation after the war. One school of Marxists, for example, has argued that both the prewar and postwar economy belonged to the same stage of state monopoly capitalism. Other historians also illustrate the continuity by pointing out that the wartime planned economy rather paved the way for the postwar “top-down” economic reforms. These influential economic structural expositions notwithstanding, I still believe that Japan crossed a great divide in 1945, particularly in terms of the constitutional and political framework, and the social and cultural life of the ordinary Japanese citizen, and thus the general national

sentiment.

My selection of the year of 1963 as the end of the period seems to need a little more explanation, to which I shall return in a moment. In any case, the period from 1945 to 1963 can be further divided into several stages. The first stage between 1945 and 1950 is generally characterized by devastation, reconstruction, and reform. The US occupation policy aimed at demilitarizing and democratizing Japan and restraining it from becoming a future military threat to the “free world”.

Although there were early indications of reactionary change during the latter years of the first stage, 1950 was a clear turning point in postwar Japanese history with the eruption of the Korean War and also, on the home front, with the intensification of “red purge” and the so-called “reverse course” against postwar reformism. In the second stage, beginning around 1950, US planners radically altered the central purpose of the occupation policy. It now became important to rebuild Japan’s economic strength and making it a solid American ally in the Cold War in East Asia. Because the Soviet Union (together with Czechoslovakia and Poland) refused to sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan in 1951, the US succeeded in securing Japan within the anticommunist camp. The military alliance between the US and Japan was further solidified by concluding the Security Treaty together with the peace treaty. Even thereafter, however, a harsh controversy continued in Japanese politics about the nation’s diplomatic stance toward the Western and Eastern camps. The central issue in the controversy involved the revision of the Constitution, which had been originally established under the strong influence of the American forces and stipulated that “the Japanese people renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation.” The second stage was punctuated with the establishment of a highly stable party system in 1955. By that year Japanese politics had undergone fundamental realignment over the constitutional issue and had given rise to a semi-two party system: on one side, the predominant Liberal Democratic Party; on the other, the much weaker Socialist Party. This system would last for the next generation.

In the third stage, falling between 1955 and 1960, Japan suffered from the intensification of industrial dispute and also from political strife accompanying readjustment to a newly acquired international status. Powerful mass peace movement against nuclear weapons and US military bases grew up around the Socialist and the Communist party and labor unions. Unlike the United States, Japan never achieved bipartisanship in forming its foreign policy. The reaction of the Japanese to the bifurcation of the early Cold War years can be classified into four organizational strategies: 1) to join the Western camp as an ally of the US, 2) to seek neutrality based on the article IX of the new constitution, 3) to join the so-called “third forces”

represented by India, Egypt, and other Asian and Arab states, and 4) to take a pro-Soviet and anti-American stance under the banner of “peaceful forces.” Contention among these opinions culminated in a major mass uprising that was triggered by the revision of the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960. After the ratification of the new treaty, however, the mass political movement quickly subsided.

In the meantime the Japanese government turned its energies to the achievement of internal economic prosperity and sought recognition from the outer world. Japan had joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1952 and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1955. It had been admitted to the United Nations in 1956. By this time the Japanese national economy had already begun a steep ascent thanks to the windfall from the Korean War. The Japanese Economic White Paper of 1956 thus declared that the postwar period had ended, because it was the time for the country to shake itself free from an economy linked chiefly to reconstruction. In the late 1950s the cultural life also changed dramatically. Electrification was proceeding rapidly and TV was spreading all over the country. With the rise of advertising, industrial consumer society was on the rise.

The fourth stage, following the wake of the political turmoil of 1960, saw Japan unabashedly absorbed in economic undertakings. Late in that year the newly installed Ikeda cabinet declared the start of an income-doubling program. As I suggested earlier I believe the years 1963-64 marked a watershed in Japan’s international status. In 1963 Japan declared that it would accept the status of the article VIII of the IMF and article XI of the GATT, which prohibited member countries respectively from restricting foreign exchange and from controlling international trade because of deficits of international payments. In 1964 Japan officially attained the status of an industrially advanced country by joining the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Within a few years the nation recorded trade surplus and recovered its prewar share of world exports. All these incidents were conducive to the restoration of Japan’s international status. Nothing, however, more strongly impressed ordinary Japanese citizens than the Tokyo Olympic Games. By 1963, therefore, as the tensions of the Cold War relaxed after the Cuban missile crisis, Japan began to feel fully secured and optimistic about its future in the world.

Between the defeat of WWII and the Olympics, Japan succeeded in establishing the basic public and private institutional structure to achieve prosperity through industrial expansion and exports to foreign markets. National security was provided by a cozy arrangement under the nuclear umbrella of the US. All these arrangements basically worked well until the 1980s, perhaps so well as to make it hard for the

country to adjust itself to the new trend of globalization particularly after the end of the Cold War.

As I suggested above, Japan by no means developed smoothly, down a straight path, during the early Cold War years. On the contrary, the nation's destiny at that time was caught up in the swirl of various contradictory currents. The Cold War was just one, if extremely important, factor in the history of Japan during the period. It is not easy to discern the effect of the Cold War in isolation on the Japanese mind and culture of those years.

To understand the meaning of the Cold War in Japan, it is first of all necessary to grasp what the end of WWII meant to Japanese people. The defeat was of course a disastrous blow to the Japanese people. Prior to the end of the war the US, Britain, and China issued the Potsdam Declaration, stipulating the unconditional surrender of Japan's armed forces. The declaration was afterwards also signed by the Soviet Union, which declared war on Japan after the US dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and just before it dropped another on Nagasaki. The realization of the Potsdam Declaration totally shattered Japan's military ambition to dominate the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. It also crushed Japan's national pride by denying both the notion of an ancient national polity (*kokutai*) structured by the Emperor system (*Tennosei*) and its capacity for modernizing state organs, national economy, and society.

The total defeat was of course hardest for the top war leaders and true believers in ultra-nationalist purposes. Some of them committed suicide before the Allied Forces arrived to occupy the country. The famous Tokyo trial (International Military Tribunal for the Far East) involved 28 top ranked military and political leaders, 7 of whom were sentenced to death. But many ordinary soldiers were also convicted for alleged atrocities. The Allies tried some 6,000 Japanese in several thousand "minor" trials during and after the war. Of them more than 900 were sentenced to death and executed.

The defeat also meant severe distress for the war-stricken people. Particularly because of a poor crop in the fall of 1945, food shortages were very serious in the spring of the following year. In the Tokyo-Yokohama area alone, more than 1,000 people starved to death.

One should not forget, however, that there was the reverse side of this agonizing national experience of accepting the defeat. Except for fanatic war-leaders, extreme right wingers, or ultra-nationalists, most Japanese people perceive the defeat as also liberating. The end of war relieved the Japanese from their own police state

and an extremely austere wartime economic, social, and cultural life. This national sentiment in turn immeasurably eased the burden of the occupation forces.

From this point of view it was fortunate for the Japanese to be occupied almost only by the US forces. Initial encounters with American soldiers were relatively comforting to most Japanese citizens. Of course the rule by the occupation troops was as strict as that under the ultra-nationalist regime. And the number of crimes committed by GI's was never negligible particularly in the early days of the occupation. But far fewer incidents occurred than the Japanese had feared. This was somewhat comforting to most Japanese, who had been brainwashed with the wartime propaganda about the "demonic Anglo-Americans." Japanese soldiers who had participated in Japan's occupying operations in China and other Asian countries during the war knew only too well from their own and fellow soldiers' conducts that occupation could be brutal. Some civilians who had repatriated from Manchuria in the last stage of the war foresaw the future of their occupied country by looking at the viciousness of Russian soldiers they had encountered. Even when compared to Japan's own military forces, the occupying American soldiers looked open, friendly, frank, and businesslike.

Second of all the United States came as a great benefactor to impoverished Japan. The postsurrender policy of the US naturally focused on restoring and stabilizing national life by providing the Japanese people with indispensable resources to survive these critical times. The US appropriated a part of military expenditure to fund the Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) program, which aimed at coping with starvation, preventing diseases, and quashing social unrest. The program provided Japan with daily necessities including food, medical supplies, and chemical fertilizer. The US implemented another legislative program, the Economic Rehabilitation in Occupied Areas (EROA), also funded by military budget, mainly for economic reconstruction. For this purpose the Japanese government appropriated the fund for importing industrial raw materials such as cotton and wool. Aid to Japan under both of these programs amounted to about \$2.1 billion from 1947 to 1951.

Third, the early occupation policy provided a substitute for democratic revolution and gave the Japanese the taste of freedom in democratic society. As mentioned above the SCAP and his GHQ originally pursued two main lines, demilitarization and democratization. Among the major reforms during the early years of occupation were the complete destruction of the military organization, the dissolution of the zaibatsu (financial conglomerates), the disbandment of ultra-nationalist and paramilitary societies, and the purge of about 200,000 persons active in the war period. It also included educational reforms, fundamental agrarian land

reform, the encouragement of a labor movement, and the flat denial of the emperor's divinity together with the disestablishment of Shinto as a state-supported national religion. All these reforms culminated into the new constitution.

In sum, the early occupation policy tried to ensure the Japanese people Franklin Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms": freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. All these "essential human freedoms" had been denied to the ordinary people in prewar Japan. This is why the occupation was a not only humiliating but also liberating experience.

The initial encounter with American power thus decided the Japanese perception toward Americans and laid the foundation of an amicable relationship between the US and Japan throughout the postwar years. On the eve of the Cold War the US had already obtained a head start over the Soviets in the race for grasping the Japanese mind.

When one looks back at the effects of the development of the Cold War in East Asia as well as on Japanese domestic politics, it seems ironic that even the newly reconstituted Japanese Communist party (JCP) shared with the people the initial impression that the US occupation army had been a liberating force. But the Communists had enough reasons to hold that view, for their prewar party had most adamantly resisted to and thus been most harshly repressed by the ultra-nationalist regime. The GHQ literally liberated those prewar Communists when it included them among 3,000 convicted political criminals whom it released from prison in October of 1945.

Moreover the JCP understood (or misunderstood) that the initial occupation policies for demilitarization and democratization were in substantial agreement with the party line against the prewar Emperor system. This seeming agreement between the occupation policy and the JCP's strategic position worked favorably for the party at least temporarily. By concentrating their activities on the popular issue such as food shortage and portraying themselves as most constant peace-loving group, the JCP succeeded in obtaining 2.1 million votes and 5 seats in the House of Representatives in the 1946 election. In spite of the mounting displeasure of the SCAP, the JCP increased its electoral power until the 1949 election, when the party won 3 million votes and 35 seats.

But this success augured ill for the future of the party. In the following year the party split over Cominform criticism of its line for peaceful revolution and its attitudes toward the occupation reforms. While some top leaders of the party accepted criticism from the international communist camp, the SCAP launched the Red Purge and banned the party's top leaders from political activities. The weakened JCP then

adopted a line of violent revolution. The party would suffer long from the damage of this melee. In the 1952 election it lost all 35 seats in the House of Representatives and most popular support that it had enjoyed during the early occupation years. In the domestic scene, at least, the communist camp was almost irreparably damaged by even the first stage of the Cold War.

Politics aside, however, communism as an ideology and a social scientific theory remained viable among Japanese intellectuals, for it provided them with a perspective to see relativistically and analytically modern Japanese history, capitalist world, and American power. In that sense communism as Cold War culture had not entirely lost its influence with the JCP in 1950.

Next we must consider the effect of the beginning of the Cold War on the Japanese mind in the context of both the defeat of war and the subsequent occupation. First of all, the Japanese people including even the most diehard Communists welcomed the American occupation forces not only as a new ruler but also a liberator. In the first year of the occupation the US disposed 400,000 troops. The number was decreased to about 120,000 in 1949 and again jumped to 260,000 after the beginning of the Korean War. Although the deployment of those troops all over Japan served as a display of American might, to most Japanese the military bases also served as showcases of American culture and way of life. In a sense GI's were stationed at the end of a conveyor of American mores and values. Their openness about sexuality shocked many Japanese, who came to understand another side of American freedom. Everywhere starved men and women pestering them for cigarettes, chewing gum and chocolate crowded around them. For such Japanese, American GI's symbolized the material abundance of the American way of life.

The actions and ways of American soldiers, along with the torrent of imported Hollywood movies and American TV shows that followed, supplied a new model of life for the Japanese and helped the incipient consumer society produce new trends in fashion and other consumer products. American ways also affected Japanese family life. In 1951 an electric company launched a plan to lure housewives to buy its products with the catch phrase "Laundry, washing dishes, and everything is done by electricity in America. Shall we be content with our present life?" Within a few years, the first boom in electrification began when electric washing machines, television sets, and electric refrigerators were bought by everyone who could afford them. These three items were nicknamed the "Three Sacred Treasures," a parody on the three imperial symbols used by the emperor. This was just a small first step for Japanese society in its emulation of the American example. Japan thereafter continued to equip itself with

cars, color TVs, air-conditioners, personal computers, and other industrial products originating in America. "Americanization" thus has been a keynote for the process of modernization of the Japanese society.

As a matter of fact this was already the second wave of "Americanization" in Japanese history. During the 1920s, Japan, like Western Europe, received its first baptism in American culture. It imported American trends in business, movies, music, motorization, dress and hair styles, baseball, youth culture. A large number of English words were imported into the Japanese vocabulary, even when perfectly adequate words already existed in Japanese. In many cases, however, Americanization during the 1920s reached only the surface of Japanese society. Although it was the American fleet that in 1853 forced Japan to renounce its long seclusion policy, America exerted much less influence than Europeans on Japan's subsequent project to modernize its industrial and military system. Thanks largely to policies instigated as early as the 1860s, as well as the mentality of the nation that had been cultivated over hundreds of years of military rule, individualistic and republican America was not seen as a proper model for a rising power under the emperor system as it dragged along remnants from its feudalistic past.

Only the experience of WWII succeeded in shattering many of these internal barriers for the penetration of American values. This was in no small measure a result of the havoc that war had wreaked on European countries, which now could no longer serve as models for the modernization of Japan. The Cold War then further narrowed the alternatives for Japan at the inception of reconstruction. Although General Douglas MacArthur in the initial stage of the occupation hinted that the Japanese might make their country into a Switzerland of the Pacific, Japan actually became rather the Greece of Asia.

The effect of bountiful American economic aid also assured that after the Cold War Japan would have few models for restoring its modernization project other than American style of liberal capitalism. Just as it had in the 1920s, America again supplied the Japanese people (particularly young Japanese) with examples of fashion, sports, movies, TV shows, pop and rock music. But unlike the previous vogue of American culture in the twenties, postwar Americanization and mass culture was able to anchor itself far more firmly as part of Japanese youth culture.

When it came to politics, however, America had much difficulty in influencing the Japanese mind during the development of the Cold War. America did not succeed in persuading the Japanese people, particularly the Japanese intellectual elite, of the

correctness of its interpretation of the world situation.

One of the main reasons why America was not so popular in political and intellectual life as in economic and material life of the Japanese had to do with the Japanese view of their own recent national history. The experience of WWII (in which 3 million Japanese were killed) was so devastating to most Japanese that except for a few right-wing extremists they now almost reflexively abhorred war and any hawkish conduct. This was illustrated by the unfavorable Japanese reaction to the so-called reverse course, in which SCAP slowed down demilitarization and democratization, amnestied thousands of war criminals, and sought to set up Japan as a military, economic, and political bastion in East Asia.

Particularly concerning America's nuclear policy, Japanese people were highly sensitive and tended to be suspicious of American intentions. This of course stemmed from their traumatic experience in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in which the death toll reached about 200,000 and 100,000 respectively by the end of 1950. During the occupation years, the SCAP was so nervous about those incidents that it rigorously censored any information about them. Nonetheless, by the time when the Cold War reached to the stage of nuclear confrontation, the suppressed memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had coalesced into a symbol of the heavy price the nation paid for its folly. Nothing, therefore, was so scathing to this national sentiment as President Truman's hint that atomic bombs might be used in the Korean War. Any Japanese criticism of US policy concerning the war easily sound hypocritical, however, if one considers that, as Walter Lippmann argued, America's involvement in the war was at least partly motivated to protect the national interests of utterly disarmed Japan.

But when the US first tested its new hydrogen bomb in the Pacific in 1954, a small Japanese fishing boat called Dai-go Fukuryu maru (the Lucky Dragon V) was accidentally exposed to the radioactive fallout from the test. Because one of the crewmembers died several months later, the incident became another symbol of the Japanese nation as a martyr of the nuclear age.

Conservatives in both Japan and America have often ridiculed the Japanese sensitivity to nuclear matters as a kind of allergy. Nevertheless, like some other kinds of allergy, the cause of this so-called "nuclear allergy" also lay deep in the mechanism of body (of body politic in this case). The symptom of allergy could be seen even in ridiculous monster movies like *Godzilla* (1954) and *Mothlla* (1961), in which those prehistoric monsters were revived by H-bomb tests and eventually, annihilated Tokyo and other big cities in Japan. Although such American movies as *On the Beach* (1959) and *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) well grasped to the apocalyptic meaning of the nuclear age, many Japanese thought that they could appreciate those movies better than any other

nation.

In the late 1950s, both those who sought neutrality and those who took a pro-Soviet stance in the Cold War thought this widespread antinuclear sentiment propitious for their purposes. In 1955 the Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Gensuikyo) was established. This was an umbrella organization, embracing various citizen groups, including political, religious, intellectual, and labor leaders and the victims of the atomic bombings themselves. Although the original movement to ban atomic weapons started as a non-partisan endeavor, this new organization was gradually involved in a political movement opposing to the revision of the US-Japan Security Treaty.

After the ratification of the new treaty in 1960, however, politicized Gensuikyo was split into a few opposing groups allying themselves with different political parties. Nonetheless, the national sentiment against nuclear weapons has long presented serious difficulties to the military alliance between the US and Japan. As a result, even the conservative governing LDP and also the Diet had to adopt “Three Nonnuclear Principles” in late 1960s. The principles were as follows, “Japan will not produce, possess, or let others bring in nuclear weapons.” Because the third principle was obviously contradictory to the US nuclear strategy in the Cold War and also to the requirements for Japan’s national defense under the US-Japan Security Treaty, the truthfulness and validity of the nonnuclear principles has been repeatedly argued in Japanese politics.

By 1960 the Communist party as an oppositional force in Japanese politics had revived significantly from the devastation caused by its adoption of violent revolutionary tactics since 1950. In 1955 the party renounced far-leftist adventurism it had adopted in the previous few years and began to advocate again the line of a peaceful transition to socialism. After the beginning of de-Stalinization, initiated by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956 and the brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolution by the Soviets in the same year, the JCP at last declared its autonomy and independence from international communist forces, though it remained the most anti-American group in Japanese politics. It then again took active part in labor movement, peace movement, anti-military-base movement, student movement, and particularly the movement against the revision of the US Japan Security Treaty.

These oppositional activities notwithstanding, the JCP never succeeded in creating, or even importing, viable mass culture in Japanese society. Among radical students affiliated with the party’s youth organizations, Russian, if not Soviet, folk songs and dancing obtained a modest vogue. There appeared in Tokyo and other big cities some popular Russian restaurants. They were, however, almost nothing

compared with the popularity of American pop music and Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's. As to marriage and family life, young radicals often indulged in self-praise for being free from feudalistic conventions. In this regard too, the old way of family life in Japan was much more damaged by the permeation of American-style individualism in the young Japanese on the one hand, and by the general trend of urbanization that industrial capitalism promoted on the other. The general impact of Soviet culture on the Japanese mass and youth was no match for that of American culture.

Perhaps communism as a system of thought, or Marxism, was the most influential cultural factor closely linked to the Eastern camp of the Cold War. In the postwar years Marxism wielded considerable influence on leftist and left liberal intellectuals. In this regard Communists had as long a tradition as the influence of American mass culture on Japanese society. Marxism in prewar Japan had supplied many radicals in and around the party with a holistic theory including social science to analyze socio-economic phenomena, political ideology to cope with the repressive regime, and Weltanschauung (world view). In the lack of Christian tradition, only Marxism could become the powerful weapon to resist the equally holistic Emperor system. Then due to the collapse of the system in 1945, the party and its ideology achieved instant fame among intellectuals particularly in the left wing. Marxism as a scientific as well as practice-oriented theory took a strong hold on the minds of many writers, intellectuals, and academicians in natural and social sciences and humanities. Marxism provided a critical edge in analysis of prewar and postwar Japanese political economy and also a comparative framework for understanding current international situation. This authority Marxism exerted on postwar Japanese intellectuals began to decline in the late 1950s, for Marxism as a unitary thought system had become disturbed by the difficulties of the international communist forces by that time.

There, however, had not yet appeared as powerful an alternating social scientific theory for analyzing Japan's past and present as Marxism. The so-called value-free modernization theory proposed by American Japanologists at that time was not so convincing to most liberal and leftist Japanese historians, who were still more concerned with realizing and preserving the postwar democracy than just with explaining empirically the modernization process of Japan.

Around 1963, therefore, the Japanese intellectual circle did not have a persuasive theory to view and analyze the emerging industrial society with high growth economy. This situation reflected the identity crisis of the Japanese nation. Japan between 1945 and 1963 underwent cross pressures from various, sometimes contradictory, endeavors such as the occupation, restoration and reconstruction,

demilitarization, democratization, anti-nuclear peace movement, and modernization. It was highly difficult to disentangle the complication of those influences without any powerful analytical tool and a penetrating historical insight.

Between 1945 and 1963 the Cold War thus left Japanese society a strange cultural legacy. As I mentioned, it may have been lucky that Japan was under the occupation by the US during the early years of the Cold War. The country weathered through the hardest time mainly thanks to the aid of the US. Because Japan decided to entrust its security to the presence of the US military within its territory, it could channel its material and human resources mainly to economic recovery. The GHQ in turn utilized the existing Japanese bureaucracy for the sake of governing, once the Japanese government proved to be cooperative with the occupying forces. This made it possible for Japan to achieve swift economic growth on its own initiative after the occupation ended.

Nonetheless this situation ironically undermined the prospects of Japanese democracy, for it restrained Japan's own political initiatives based on a solid national identity. At first conservative nationalism was suppressed by the occupation forces. The democratization and demilitarization of Japan through the early occupation policies substituted for indigenous democratic revolution. Then the coming of the Cold War snuffed out the chances of political reform from within and from the bottom up. Accordingly, after the San Francisco Peace Treaty, conservatives found their role as obedient followers of American military strategy in Far East. On the other hand, both liberals seeking neutrality and leftists supportive of the Soviet cause failed in implanting their position deeply in the nation's mind. The occupation and the early Cold War thus robbed Japan of the chance and the will to democratize its society and politics through independent efforts. The mass upheaval against the revision of the US Japan Security Treaty was the last cry for democratization through popular initiatives, and for a more neutral national stance in the Cold War. After this mass movement failed, however, there was left political cynicism and economic privatism, which was instrumental in the long one-party rule of the Liberal Democratic Party. Under the American nuclear umbrella, the Japanese government led by the LDP successfully concentrated its organized efforts on economic growth. Because of widespread anticommunism among Japanese populace there was little possibility of a socialist or communist alternative to the LDP line.

The economic success continuing for a generation, however, has cost Japanese

politics dearly, for it paralyzed the democratic impulses of the populace and turned the electoral system into a process through which people bought various privileges and concessions by votes. When this internal system proved ineffective to cope with the new economic trends of globalization, Japan's famed "miracle" ended. From then on it had to begin reforming its socio-political system built one generation ago. The prospects for reform are not necessarily bright, for the existing system has been plagued by a sort of immobilism that originated from the particular context of the internal Cold War in Japan. This is the reason why Japan among big economic powers has had perhaps the greatest difficulty in readjusting itself to the new situation after the end of the Cold War.

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