Summation

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“So it is said that if you know your enemies and know yourself, you will not be imperilled in a hundred battles.”

It comes as no surprise that this quote, which should come naturally to anyone who can hold a conversation about the Art of War by Sun Tzu, was on the mind of every one of us who participated in the discussions at the Council of Defense-Strategic Studies. We are not concerned here with of the narrow definition of strategy, in other words the “art of war” which is the plan of action on how to beat an opponent in battle by cleverly using people kept in reserve. However if we were to get into line with the definition of strategy that states “the art of the dialectic of two opposing wills using force to resolve their dispute” (Andre Beaufre), then it is self-evident that the most important thing is to have enough knowledge of your enemies and yourself. From that standpoint, it is fair to say that “know your enemies and know yourself” is the essence of strategy.

However I would venture to say, is it enough to just “know your enemies and know yourself?” Is there not a need for “know the time, and place?” Or rather, in order to “know your enemies and know yourself”, do you not also need to “know the time, and place”? Again if referring to Sun Tzu, he says “So it is said that when you know yourself and your enemies, victory is not in danger” and then went on to say “when you know sky and earth, victory is perfectly promised.” What we mean by it is important to “know the time, and place” in terms of strategy, is in no way contradicting with Sun Tzu’s theory. What we mean is that since our matter of concern is not the narrow definition of strategy, in other words how to beat the enemy in the battlefield, but more of a “grand strategy” (or the “national strategy”) concerning what type of actions should be conducted by a nation in the international arena, there is a need to understand the “time and place” from a comprehensive perspective.

This is to say, to know what kind of the flow of the times that surround enemies and yourself, and to know what characteristic the environment that dialectical interaction emerges from has, is inevitably linked to knowing enemies and knowing yourself. It is due to the awareness of this issue that we
chose “The international environment and Japan’s security in the 2010s” as the annual research theme for this fiscal year, and to aim to examine what position the current and near future (= “2010s”) holds within the long history of the international system, and to study the various features of the security environment (= place) surrounding Japan from the standpoint of the system variation of the “international society.” In that regard, the key word is “Power Shift.” This concept is thoughtfully explained in the first chapter written by Mr. Yoshinobu Yamamoto. The subsequent chapter by Mr. Hiroshi Nakanishi’s looks at the same theme from the viewpoint of history and the theory of civilization, and highlights the situation the countries in the Asia-Pacific Region are placed in. The purpose of these two chapters is to present the larger picture of the “time and place” that is necessary to “know enemies and know yourself.” The following chapters offer deep analysis of the countries that Japan is destined to cooperate and compete for various reasons. In the meantime, the characteristic of the “present day” is that, concerning the relationship formed based on whatever physical dimension between Japan and these countries in order to cooperate or compete for the purpose of “national interest” (= security), there is always on the background a significant change that is associated with the dramatic technological evolution. Countries are engaged in fierce competition not only in two-dimensional areas (land and sea), but also three-dimensional areas (so-called 3D space), such as the sky, space and even cyber space. In connection with what I mentioned earlier, the concept of “place” is in the process of changing beyond the confines of the traditional concept. From that point of view, a “place” is the function of technology and varies according to the “time.” The last three chapters are discussions based on this standpoint.

The best way to understand what is specifically discussed in these articles is for you to read each chapter compiled in this report; therefore I shall refrain from attempting to write a poor summary. Instead, hereinafter I will draw attention to a couple of the points I felt as the chairperson attending all the discussions at the Council throughout the year, and reading each article compiled in this report based on the discussions, and also note down my expectations towards the readers.

**China in focus**

Since the end of the twentieth century through to the beginning of the twenty first century, China is becoming the focus of attention when people discuss international affairs. The 2010s, which are the target era of this report, is no
exception. Nay, we can predict that the actions of China and the reaction of the various countries (in particular the U.S. and Japan) will increasingly become a central theme. There are several reasons why China is becoming the centre of people’s attention.

The end of the cold war
China’s presence has grown replacing the Soviet Union, which used to be the strategic focus of the “Western block” during the Cold War. It may be too simplistic to say the U.S-Sino relations have replaced the U.S.-Soviet relations to become the new axis. The tendency of human cognitive ability to pursue simple explanations may have resulted in the need for such an alternative. When I was living in Washington D.C. for one year during the early 1990s, when the threat of Soviet Union was evidently on the decline, I remember the comments of a U.S. State Department official that, up until then their actions were based on the “sun,” i.e. the Soviet Union, and with its sudden disappearance, they had lost their sense of direction and were at a loss of what to do. Setting aside of whether or not the metaphor of the “sun” was suitable in this situation, I understood what he was trying to say. China did not immediately emerge as an alternative to Soviet Union as a base line for formulating foreign policies and national defense policies. I remember as if it was yesterday, that at that time some people in the U.S. (including intellectuals) were arguing that Japan will be a threat in the future. Japan epitomized the non-U.S. presence, an existence that was alien to the Modern West. Since then, after several transitions, China has gradually emerged. We examine the reasons why China has become an issue in the following sections. What must suffice to note is that in connection with the structural changes of the international system, China’s trend has increasingly attracted attention. This is why the words “power shift” or “power transition” is used to describe China’s rise.

The present-day notable phenomenon is that there is a growing awareness that superiority of power, which the U.S. or other “advanced” nations had, is being undermined by the newly emerging countries (in particular the People’s Republic of China). An examination, while referring to historical precedents, action of catching up state, as well as responding strategy by states that are being caught up. An examination is required to determine, while referring to historical precedents, how catching up states should react, and how the leading states should strategically respond. Since there are not many examples one can refer to, and the specific circumstances vary, one cannot generalize easily, however, such discussions should be useful to some extent in understanding the actions of modern China. During the era of the confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, we can not predicate that there was
a total lack of a feeling of rivalry between the regimes, and that there was a
lack of contemporary perception that the world of “capitalism,” which was
becoming the thing of the past, was close to being overtaken by the world of
“socialism” that could open up the vision of future., However, the prevailing
image was that of the two regimes clashing within a more static framework.
In comparison, after the Cold War, the structure of the international system
itself is changing, in other words a “dynamic” image is taking over. To put
it simply, the characteristic of the perception of the time today is that the times
are changing rapidly.

What is the nature of the driving force behind such change, in other
words, what is the essence of the power? That has become an issue for further
consideration.

What is the source of national power, or national strength? In Post-war
Japan, we have long been used to answer that economic power or the GNP is
the ultimate determinants of the national power. Admitting that what deter-
mines a power is not that simple, it seems that it is not easy to part with the
concept that underlying factors beneath changing power configurations are
economic trends. With the traditional power transition theories, like the
classic theory by Organski, the cause of the power shifts was attributed to the
economic factor.

China’s “Modernization” and its source of power
When talking on China such as its relation with the U.S., it is almost seen as
self-evident that the recent economic condition is in the background. On one
hand, we have the remarkable modernization of the Chinese economy, and on
the other we have the U.S. economy that is plagued by various problems (in
particular after the “Lehman Shock”). The easiest way to see how this would
affect the security issues is to look at the contrast between rapid and contin-
uous expansion trend of China’s military spending, and the defense budget
reductions of the U.S. due to its financial difficulties. A similar analogy can
also be made about the Japan-China relation.

In this instance one should refrain from using the extrapolation method
that predicts the future by extending the trend within a certain period. As an
actual fact, there are experts who explain about the prospect of China’s
economy as “China will never overtake the United States” Toshiya Tsugami
(“Chugoku Taito no Shuen (The End of China’s Rise)”). If that should be
the case, the power transition theory that is based on the premise that China’s
high-level economic growth will continue should be considered in reserva-

However, it is a human tendency to think in an optimistic way, therefore
it should be justifiable to term our analysis and proposal reasonable, which are organized from the assumption that China’s economic power and the expansion of state power based on this will continue for another 10 years.

Situating a bigger tide of history, China’s emergence should be comprehended as a prominent example of the industrialization (= modernization) in developing countries. On the other hand in developed countries, advanced industrialized nations go to post-industrialization (post-modernization). As can be noted from the growing interest in BRICS or G20, people are witnessing the “modernization” led by the West undergoing a transformation.

Nonetheless, it seems that China’s emergence cannot be explained merely with such generalization. Here, we need to pay attention to the unique position China is placed in, in terms of history and geography.

**Chinese civilization and historical views**

In the words of Fernand Braudel, “What the Chinese culture is currently experiencing is the largest and most dramatic experiment of the humankind in the course of its exceptionally long history.” This experiment is “a wide ranging social, economical, political, intellectual and moral restructuring in diverse ways”, that is to say, “to bring things, humans, classes and if possible the rest of the world in line with the new situation created by China’s intentions” (Braudel [1995 : 234]). What we are particularly interested in is the current and future views of China regarding the last section of the aforementioned quoted passage, “to bring the rest of the world in line with the new situation created by China’s intentions.” According to the historian Wang Gungwu (former Vice Chancellor University of Hong Kong), who grew up in a Chinese culture and has publicized pellucid investigations on China from a broad international perspective, China has an accumulation of so many unsolved problems to establish good governance, such as the domestic income disparities. Additionally, the Chinese economy has a global presence and the country is prompted to act in accordance with the international rules at all levels, and “is well aware that the standards of conduct and dialogue in international relations was established by the West, and disseminated throughout the world by aggressive expansionism of the 19th Century Western civilization.” However, today’s China shows “there is enough evidence to suggest that overall it supports the international standards established by the modern states system, and showing determination to contribute to the enhancement and adaptation of the standards in accordance with the situation of neighboring districts” (Wang [2007 : 152]). Naturally, Professor Gungwu does not fail to carefully point out that this also depends on whether other countries, in particular the U.S. and Japan, reacts to China. “The self-esteem
in the cultural context,” “nationalism of culture” (Braudel [1995 : 242]), and “The desire of the Chinese to take revenge against the Western people” (Braudel [1995 : 246]) is a factor that cannot be ignored.

Geopolitical position
It is obvious to anyone that China occupies a large portion of the earth’s surface, and shares borders with Russia and Mongolia in the north, Central Asian countries and Southwest Asia in the west, the South China Sea and Southeast Asian countries in the south and the East China Sea and the countries in Northeast Asia (the Korean Peninsula, Japanese archipelago, and Taiwan) in the east. Among many countries and regions affected by China, the areas that are receiving the most attention in the 2010s are the East China Sea and the South China Sea. A detailed explanation, about the situation of why these areas have become a pivot of the world’s politics, has been given by Mr. Sakamoto in his article, so we will not repeat here. As explained by Gungwu, China, for the most part of its long history, concentrated on how to deal with the foreign enemies from the north and hesitated to launch strategy in the ocean, is now starting to turn its interest towards the east and the south. This also coincides with the globe becoming tightly connected by interdependent networks. In brief, this means the arrival of the age when the freedom of the seas and maritime security is of particular importance for all the countries in the international society.

Is China a “state”? 
There are still those who question whether China is a “state” (Hashizume et al. [2013]). This question is old and new. This not only implies that China does not fit easily into a modern nation-state concept due to its unique “race” composition, the majority of which is constituted by the Han Chinese, but also from the standpoint that its practice of governance is not “normal”. If you would allow us to boldly use the concept of stateness, which is somehow elusive, in the past it was the lack of it (for example the difficulty the League of Nations faced in dealing with the “Manchurian Problem” in the 1930s was due to the immaturity of China as sovereign state) and now its overabundance (dare we say for example “militarization”) is making the establishment of relation between normal states difficult. The future of the “shaping of the state” of China, including the problems involving Taiwan and Tibet, are unpredictable.
Summation

Japan as a “cluster of paradox”

Japan has a similar kind of dilemmas with China pertaining to its history and geography. According to Hiroshi Nakanishi, Japan is a center of clustered paradoxes that exist in this modern world. Of theory of civilization discussions concerning this theme, we won’t go into detail here. We will just mention that, we feel a sense of “déjà vu” at various difficulties associated with the “modernization” of China, and leave it at that. There are various examples, ranging from the familiar example of Beijing’s air pollution index of PM2.5 reminding us of the photochemical smog problems that hit Tokyo a short while ago, to a serious example of the mental toll on the intellectuals of modern Asia in that they are being pressed for confrontation with “Western Europe” at every opportunity. Present China is following in the footsteps of Japan. From that point of view, it is a huge tragedy for the citizens of both countries, that although China and Japan have a lot in common to justify having a heart-to-heart talks about, meaningful communications hardly ever takes place between the two countries. If that could happen that would probably be a true sharing of the “recognition of history.” In such instances one must bear in mind Wang Gungwu’s warning that “may it be from the intention of goodwill and idealism, for foreign governments and politicians to take an attitude of giving instructions or handing over judgments to a major nation like China will be extremely unproductive as a result.” (Wang [2007: 144])

“The Strategy Paradox” and strategic flexibility

As shown in the above consideration, how to correspond to China which is gaining power is a complex challenge, and one that cannot be answered easily. Conversely, on reflection, a strategic commitment is primarily paradoxical. In a competitive relationship, to form a strategy is to make certain predictions about the future, and then to make constant selections based on that. However, in principle, completeness through predictions is not easily achievable. Usually to some extent one has to choose actions based on imperfect predictions. In order to maintain the undesirable results that derive from mistakes in predictions to a minimum, the capability to continuously review and change strategies when necessary, i.e., a strategic flexibility is required. When the prediction is over a long period of time, the uncertainty is larger. The higher level of the organization (policy makers) is responsible of the long time axis and keeps an eye on the strategic uncertainty, while those at the
lower level (on site) is responsible for the shorter time axis and concentrates on the steady execution of the commitments that have already been made (Rayner [2008]). Based on its track record, setting aside the world of business, regarding national strategy, Japanese is strong in the latter but weak in the former, that is long term strategy.

As already indicated, our project which involves seeing what’s to come in the 2010s is based on the prediction that the Chinese economy will continue to expand at the same rate as it has been. Nevertheless, it is meaningless to blindly believe that this prediction is correct and fall prey to pessimism. But then, to have an optimistic view, eliminating scenarios that are inconvenient for Japan’s security would be even more dangerous.

**Foreign/security policy community**

Lastly we would like to comment on the relation between the people who are responsible for making policy decisions and our people. While keeping a certain distance from the nerve center for policy decisions, we are in a position to be able to observe the people inside and whenever there is an opportunity give advice to them. As mentioned by the experts in policy making process, scholars, researchers, and specialists are placed in a delicate position standing in between the officials inside the nerve center for policy decisions and the general public (external people) (‘outside of government, but not just looking in’ as referred in Kingdon [2011], Chapter 3). Which brings me to the point that people like us, who do not have responsibility for a strategic commitment, are writing this “report” as if communicating directly to those who are responsible for a strategic commitment (in particular the government officials or bureaucrats who support them, and are responsible for the long time axis). We are also envisaging as readers the media and the concerned citizens (attentive public). The counterpart for dialogue is security/foreign policy community, ranging from the decision makers at the top of the government to attentive public.

**Thinking in the context of the flow of history**

We would like to close this chapter by reiterating what we have been describing above in a slightly different way. we will quote from Ernest May and Richard Neustadt, *Thinking in Time* which tells us how decision-makers should use history.
“For the essence of thinking in time-streams is imagining the future as it may be when it becomes the past—with some intelligible continuity but richly complex and able to surprise. Someone who has acquired the habit is thereby made wary of problem-solving.” (Nerusdat and May [1986: 253-254])

“. . . .continuity is not all. Human experience also includes discontinuity, sudden, sharp, and hard to foresee, if foreseeable at all. The person who learns to watch the present for signs of either, or still better both, may well have learned to think in time-streams.” (Nerusdat and May [1986: 263])

It would be more than what we would have hoped for, if our report could be of some use to the very officials responsible for the policy decisions, who are trying to tackle Japan’s future security strategies and defense strategies while predicting the future that involves complicated and extremely difficult discontinuities.

References
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