

Historical Lessons in Asian-American Relations: Searching for Inter-Civilizational Dialogue

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I INTRODUCTION

Ironically enough, 2001, the year of the Sept. 11 incident, had been proclaimed “the year of dialogue among civilizations” by the U.N. in accordance with a proposal by then-Iranian President Mohammad Khatami. The Sept. 11 incident, however, had the effect of illustrating the existence of a serious gap between the Islamic world and the United States, making it all the more important to develop ways of carrying out dialogue among civilizations for the realization of world peace.

I think scholars of American studies in Asia have a particularly great responsibility at this juncture. For those of us born in Asia, Asian patterns of thought and behavior come as naturally as breathing. At the same time, however, by taking an interest in America, studying there, conducting research and making friends, we have learned about American ways of thinking and lifestyles. In other words, we have experienced contact and friction between the two civilizations of Asia and America within our own selves, so I think we are able to—and should—take the initiative to act as a bridge between Asia and America.

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I think it is particularly necessary for American studies scholars in Japan, which recklessly launched a war against the United States 65 years ago, ending in defeat, to draw lessons from the process leading to the outbreak of that war that can be applied in developing ways to carry out a dialogue among civilizations. It is necessary, of course, to keep in mind that there are major differences between the Japanese militarists of 65 years ago and today's Islamic fundamentalists. However, I think those on the attacking side share a feeling of being "spiritually encircled," while the Americans coming under attack reacted in both instances by labeling their attackers as "savage" and "outrageous." Accordingly, I would like to analyze, from the most neutral position possible, what kind of communication gap existed between Japan and the United States 65 years ago and, as a factor leading to that communication gap, what kind of bilateral perception gap arose from differences in social structure and nationalism.

II BETWEEN SEPT. 11 AND DEC. 7

As I have already mentioned, there are important differences between the Japanese-U.S. war that began on Dec. 7 (U.S. time), 1941, and the terrorist incident of Sept. 11, 2001. First, while the former was a war between states, the latter was an asymmetric conflict with terrorists on one side. There was an important difference in the scale of these conflicts as well, with the former attack taking place as part of World War II on a battlefield ranging from East Asia to the Pacific, while the September 11 incident has been more limited geographically, taking place primarily in the heart of America and in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Certain common features can be seen, however, in the American government's response to these two attacks. In his Fireside Chat on Dec. 8, immediately after the Pearl Harbor surprise attack, for example, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said that "the United States can accept no result save victory, final and complete. Not only must the shame of Japanese treachery be wiped out, but the sources of international brutality, wherever they exist, must be absolutely and finally broken,"¹ treating the Pearl Harbor attack in terms of "betrayal" and "savagery," and calling for the enemy's total defeat. This strong criticism is reflected in the later demand for "unconditional surrender," as well as in the occupation of Japan for a certain period following its defeat, a period that saw the car-

rying out of demilitarization and democratic reform intended to eradicate the seeds that gave birth to war. Roosevelt's reaction, it may be said, positioned Japan as "barbaric" and the United States as "civilized," and expressed the intention to carry out the "democratization" of the country that launched the war by means of a complete American victory.

On Sept. 20, in comparison, soon after the terrorist incident, President Bush described the terrorists as follows in an address to a joint session of Congress. "They hate . . . democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms: our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other." In other words, he depicted the problem as a clash between terrorism, on the one hand, and freedom and democracy on the other. That simple dichotomy between good and evil places all the blame on the shoulders of the terrorists, suggesting that the United States has nothing to answer for. Moreover, President Bush defined the fight against terrorism as "not . . . just America's fight" but "the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom." He declared that, "Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists."²

As we have seen, America's leaders reacted to both the outbreak of war with Japan and Sept. 11 by labeling the attackers as "barbaric" and "outrageous," and, by casting their own country as the height of civilization, sought to rally American public and world public opinion. In addition, they treated "democracy" as a universal concept, and expressed the idea that it was naturally America's mission to spread democracy to the opposing side by means of a military victory.

Positioning one's own country as the height of civilization, however, raises the risk that America will lose the chance to reflect on its own behavior, and that fundamental questions, such as whether American "democracy" is in fact universal and whether "democracy" can be exported by force of arms, will go unexamined. At this point, in an effort to identify ways to carry out a dialogue among civilizations, I would like to examine, from the most neutral standpoint possible, what kind of perception gaps arose along the concrete historical paths leading to the crises of Dec. 7 and Sept. 11.

III PERCEPTION GAPS ON THE EVE OF THE JAPANESE-U.S. WAR

Starting in April 1941, about half a year before the outbreak of war, intermittent negotiations were carried out between Japan and the United States in an effort to forestall the crisis. As Roosevelt's policy was to concentrate on the threat from Nazi Germany, America tried to postpone the outbreak of war with Japan. Japanese leaders also hoped to avoid full-scale war with the United States, provided they could ease the U.S. embargo on oil to Japan by offering the concession of partially withdrawing their forces in southern French Indochina. That was the main focus of U.S.-Japan negotiations just before hostilities began. In fact, the Roosevelt administration was considering a *modus vivendi* in November 1941 as a measure to head off war that would have involved a resumption of oil supplies to Japan on the condition that the Japanese military withdrew from southern French Indochina.

If this *modus vivendi* had actually been proposed to Japan, it would have at least raised the possibility that the outbreak of hostilities could have been delayed. However, it was not in fact proposed, and the so-called "Hull Note" that Secretary of State Hull proposed to Japan on November 26 was no more than a statement of America's basic position, calling for such things as a Japanese withdrawal from China and Indochina, non-recognition of any Chinese government other than the Chiang Kai-shek regime, and the promotion of free trade between Japan and the United States.³ It was after receiving this "Hull Note" that the Tojo Cabinet decided to go to war with the United States.

So why did the negotiations break down? Many historians today are focusing on precisely this question. Most of their answers emphasize the existence of a "perception gap" between the two sides.

Behind the breakdown in negotiations lay both short-term and long-term factors, as well as structural factors. To begin by examining short-term factors, the first was that Japan had been constrained by its membership in the Axis after it signed the Tripartite Alliance, which positioned America as its hypothetical enemy, with Germany and Italy in September 1940. America, meanwhile, began acting in support of the Allied powers even before getting involved in the war, enacting the Lend-Lease Act in March 1941, for example, beginning the supply of arms on a large scale to Britain, China, and the Soviet Union, and announcing the Atlantic Charter in August 1941 with Britain, setting forth a vision for the postwar world. America reported on its November 1941

negotiations with Japan in minute detail to the Chinese, British, and Australian governments, and abandoned the *modus vivendi* it had been considering as a practical compromise with Japan in response to opposition from those countries.⁴ To summarize, a structure of confrontation between the Axis and the Allied countries was already in place on the eve of the outbreak of the Japanese-U.S. war, and both countries faced limitations in their ability to negotiate independently.

Second, there was also a gap in the diplomatic posture adopted by the negotiators taking part in the Japanese-U.S. talks. This was a gap between Japan's "diplomacy of force" and America's "diplomacy of ideas." The Japanese foreign minister from July 1940 to July 1941, Yousuke Matsuoka, saw himself as well-versed in American ways, having lived there for eight years between the ages of 12 and 20, but he had acquired the belief during his time in the United States that the best way to win the respect of Americans was to confront them firmly.⁵ After returning to Japan, he became a diplomat, with expertise on China, and the president of the South Manchurian Railway, coming under international criticism at the time of the "Manchurian problem" for arguing that "Manchuria and Mongolia formed a lifeline for Japan." At the time of Japan's 1932 withdrawal from the League of Nations he became well known as plenipotentiary representative and, gaining a positive reputation among militarists and the right wing as a result, he became foreign minister from July 1940 in the second Fumimaro Konoe Cabinet. It was as Foreign Minister that Matsuoka promoted Japan's signing of the Tripartite Alliance with Germany and Italy in Sept. 1940, holding misplaced confidence that a "diplomacy of strength," with the alliance with Germany and Italy backing Japan, would make it easier to win concessions from America. As a result of his success in April 1941 in signing a neutrality pact with the Soviet Union, he took a passive stance toward negotiations with the United States, and was as a result dismissed in July by Prime Minister Konoe.

America's chief negotiator, meanwhile, Secretary of State Hull, was a man who consistently emphasized the "diplomacy of ideas." In April 1941, for example, when talks started on an understanding proposed by private citizens in the two countries calling for concessions on both sides, with America recognizing Manchukuo in return for Japan promising to withdraw its military from the Chinese mainland, Hull insisted on four principles as preconditions: the maintenance of Chinese territorial integrity, non-intervention in China's domestic affairs, equality in commerce,

and maintenance of the status quo in the Pacific Ocean.⁶ It seems clear, moreover, that this diplomatic posture of Hull's influenced the choice of the Hull Note outlining America's diplomatic principles over the proposed *modus vivendi*. This is linked to what George Kennan later criticized as the "legalistic, moralistic character" of American diplomacy.

Third, there was a perception gap between Japanese and American policymakers regarding the effect America's oil export embargo would have on Japan. For example, Stanley Hornbeck, a political adviser on Asian policy to the State Department, was strongly opposed to the proposal for a leadership summit because he believed that the Sino-Japanese War had exhausted the Japanese military, and that U.S. economic sanctions had brought Japan's national power to a low point; so if the United States continued its containment policy the chances of Japan embarking on a military adventure would decline. Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, on the other hand, who decided on war with the United States, recalled in a postwar affidavit that, watching Japan's oil reserves decline day by day, he thought that, rather than sitting quietly waiting for the end, it would be better to try to break free of the American, British and Dutch encirclement of Japan, even knowing that this might end in death.⁷ While this kind of short-sighted thinking was inappropriate for the supreme leader of a nation, it is a fact that the Japanese leadership in those times felt driven into a corner. Interestingly, both Hornbeck and the Japanese military shared the perception that Japan's national power was dwindling away, but they differed totally on how Japan would act in response. That is because, while the Japanese militarists argued that Japan must hasten the opening of hostilities before its strength ebbed any further, Hornbeck maintained that no nation had ever gone to war out of desperation and so thought the chances of Japan going to war were declining.⁸ Here we can see that the ultranationalism underlying the actions of the Japanese militarists was dismissed by Westerners on the grounds that it was irrational.

These three elements were short-term factors contributing to the failure of Japanese-U.S. negotiations, but at the same time there were also longer-term, structural factors that we must also take into account. First, Japan saw itself as a "have-not country," and, while seeing it as only natural that it should make East Asia an exclusive "sphere of influence," saw America's proposed "open-door policy" as a way for the "have countries" to maintain the status quo. Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe was a typical example of someone who took this approach. Konoe him-

self was a unique person: while he was born into a family of close associates to the emperor as the son of Prince Atsumaro Konoe, known as an Asianist, he came under the influence of the socialist Hajime Kawakami while a student at Kyoto Imperial University. He became widely known toward the end of World War I in December 1918 when, at the age of 27, he published a magazine article titled, "A Rejection of British-American-Style Pacifism." In this article, Konoe criticized the British and American advocacy of humanitarianism and democracy as taking place against a background of maintenance of the status quo, and argued that, if Japan were to take part in the League of Nations, the country should demand the abolition of economic imperialism and racial discrimination.⁹ In addition, as a result of seeing the Japanese government's proposal for a clause banning racial discrimination defeated by the opposition of Australia and other countries at the Versailles Peace Conference, where he served as a member of the Japanese delegation, Konoe felt that "power politics" continued to rule the world.

Konoe, who saw both the British and the Americans as forces working for the preservation of the status quo, and who had urged a reversal of that situation from early in his career, took the position as soon as the militarists recklessly occupied Manchuria during the Great Depression that, without freedom of commerce or migration, Japan had no choice under the conditions of the Depression but to advance into areas such as Manchuria and Mongolia. Moreover, in an article in 1935, he argued that, because the distribution of the world's territory and resources was unequal, "have-not" nations such as Japan should act to change the situation, winning him popularity among young officers in the military. As a result, he formed his first Cabinet in June 1937, taking the place of the party politicians who had lost influence due to the repeated coup attempts staged by young officers. War with China broke out soon after, but he served as prime minister until January 1939, when he resigned over the stalemate in negotiations to bring that conflict to an end.¹⁰

Konoe returned to government with the formation of his second Cabinet in July 1940, one month after German troops occupied France. He appointed Yousuke Matsuoka as foreign minister and Hideki Tojo as army minister, and sought to change the status quo against the background of an alliance with Germany. He put particular effort into freeing Japan of its dependency on British and American supplies of key natural resources and, in addition to signing the Tripartite Alliance with Germany and Italy in September, put pressure on the Vichy regime in

France, and stationed troops in northern French Indochina. Unlike Foreign Minister Matsuoka, however, who took a hard line toward the United States, Konoe and Tojo placed greater importance on negotiations with Washington for the resolution of the Sino-Japanese war, in which Japan was becoming bogged down. As a result, Konoe dismissed Foreign Minister Matsuoka in July 1941, and took the stand of promoting talks with the United States. He also increased the number of troops in southern French Indochina, however, taking advantage of the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union in June 1941. This led to a harsh reaction from the Roosevelt administration, which decided to freeze Japanese assets in the United States and place an embargo on oil exports to Japan.

The mysterious thing about this course of events is why Konoe, who placed such weight on negotiations with the United States, even going so far as to dismiss Foreign Minister Matsuoka in order to keep lines of communication open, pressed ahead with stationing troops in southern French Indochina in this period, when strong American opposition was predictable.

One reason for this was that, seeing the changing situation on the European front brought about by the June 22 opening of hostilities between Germany and the Soviet Union in 1941 as a chance for a “southern advance,” and, putting pressure on the Vichy regime, with its German collaborationist character, Konoe was optimistic that a military occupation that was carried out peacefully—at least on the surface—would give rise to little opposition. However, a more fundamental reason is that both Konoe and Tojo consistently viewed Japan as a “have-not” nation and saw the reallocation of markets and territory in Japan’s favor by force as justified. Moreover, they had hostile feelings toward America, which they saw as a “have nation” seeking to profit from maintenance of the status quo.

To be sure, America had introduced a steep protective tariff following the start of the Great Depression to protect its own markets, and the Roosevelt administration, taking the position that a managed currency system was more suited to reviving the American economy, opposed a return to the international gold standard at an international economic conference in London in 1933, in effect furthering the division of the world into economic blocks. However, following the enactment of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act of 1934, which transferred considerable authority for lowering tariffs to the president and made it possible to agree upon reciprocal lowering of tariffs with other countries by

mutual agreement, the administration began to shift toward an emphasis on liberalization of trade. Moreover, in an August 1941 agreement, American and British leaders agreed on the Atlantic Charter, which became the basic framework for a new postwar order. The charter renounced traditional imperialism to call for territorial non-expansion, ethnic self-determination, and the rebuilding of international institutions. The US leaders also overcame British opposition to make sure that it included a clear statement in favor of the principle of free trade. This was because the Roosevelt administration saw the division of the world economy into blocs as one factor leading to the outbreak of World War II, and regarded the global liberalization of trade as indispensable to the realization of postwar peace.

America in 1941, to put it another way, was seeking a major transformation of the world order rather than the preservation of the status quo, and the liberalized world trade of the postwar era was in fact of great help in the revival of the postwar Japanese economy. Accordingly, it can be said that a major factor in the Japanese government's hostile posture on the eve of war toward America, which it viewed as a "status quo power," was the constraining influence of "have-not nation" ideology, which Japan shared with Nazi Germany, under the spell of traditional imperialist doctrine, which sought the re-allocation of markets and territories by force.

In Japan in the 1930s, although leftists who opposed the war were thrown into prison or left with no choice but to renounce their beliefs, there were liberal journalists such as Kiyoshi Kiyosawa who argued for free trade. Kiyosawa went to the United States at the age of 12 shortly after the Russo-Japanese War, and spent 12 years there before returning to Japan in 1918 to begin wielding his pen as a journalist with a thorough knowledge of America. In particular, he criticized the narrow vision of those who saw Japan as a "have-not" nation, arguing that it was a "have" nation in terms of population, and also criticized the take-over of Manchuria as economically inefficient, arguing that free trade would be more in Japan's interest than owning colonies. Even Kiyosawa, however, was blacklisted in February 1941, leaving him without the freedom to express his views.¹¹

Behind Japan's reckless pursuit on the eve of war of the path of re-allocation of markets and territories by force, lay the formation of a dictatorial military regime in Japan, along with the influence of Nazi Germany's strong position in Europe.

Second, amid the long economic downturn following the outbreak of

the Great Depression, some Japanese leaders, noting that Germany had succeeded in quickly reviving its economy through militarization at a time when the New Deal had not been able to bring the United States out of its long recession, called for the “overcoming of modernity,” and more people began to proclaim the end of the age of liberalism and capitalism. Matsuoka, for example, who visited the United States in 1933, saw even more beggars on the streets than he had seen in Italy and concluded that fascism was better suited to economic growth. Upon his return to Japan, he called for the dissolution of political parties and the establishment of a unified national organization.¹² Moreover, participants in a roundtable among Kyoto School philosophers that appeared under the title “A Philosophy of Total War” in the January 1943 issue of the journal *Chuou Kouron* after the outbreak of war with the United States argued that America had little chance of victory because it was impossible for a liberal state to construct a total war structure, declared that the laissez-faire system was based on a dog-eat-dog ideology, and rejected the Atlantic Charter as representing “not the slightest departure from the ideology of the old order.”¹³

A third factor is that racial discrimination toward Japanese immigrants in American society worked to strengthen the feeling of “Asianism” among people in Japan. This was also what led the young Fumimaro Konoe to write his article titled, “A Rejection of British-American-Style Pacifism” and, when the U.S. Congress passed an immigration law denying the right of naturalization to first-generation Japanese immigrants and barring new arrivals, there was such a strong backlash in Japan that even an intellectual well-acquainted with America like Inazou Nitobe declared that he would not visit the United States until the law was abolished. Japanese resentment over discrimination against Japanese immigrants was all the stronger because people in Japan were rejoicing over having attained “first-class nation” status, having been victorious in World War I and having become a permanent member of the Council of the League of Nations. In addition, according to Bunzou Hashikawa, some of the Japanese Army soldiers who took part in the Siberian Expedition and saw the disheveled state of Russians felt that they had finally overcome the complex Japanese had felt toward Caucasians ever since the opening of Japan late in the Tokugawa period.¹⁴

A movement to expel foreigners arose in late Tokugawa Japan out of resentment of the Western powers’ colonialization of many parts of Asia but, overwhelmed by Western military power, “civilization and enlight-

enment” and “leaving Asia and entering Europe,” which sought to leave “backward Asia” behind and become part of the West, became mainstream thought in Japan after the opening of the country. As a result successive Japanese governments, as seen in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, sought territorial expansion in Asia at the same time that they emphasized harmony with the Western powers. While the earlier anti-foreigner feeling became primarily an undercurrent at the popular level, an exclusionary Asianism became mainstream thought at the governmental level as Japan was isolated from international society following its takeover of Manchuria.

As we have seen, there were thus many perception gaps between Japan and the United States on the eve of war between the two countries. As for America, in addition to the problem of racial discrimination there were doubtless also gaps in the country’s “diplomacy of ideas” and an underestimation of the impetus toward war in Japan. The fundamental cause of war, however, lay in the difference between political systems, between militarism and liberal democracy. Japan, under a military dictatorship, was constrained by a “have-not nation” ideology, and it cannot be denied that a key factor leading to war was the extremely “insular mentality” under which Japan attempted to acquire new markets and territories by force. Moreover, because war opponents and liberals in Japan had no choice but to stay silent under the country’s dictatorship, some argue that Japanese democratization would have been impossible without liberation at the hands of Allied military power. We must not forget, however, that Spain, which was under the same kind of fascist system, did not take part in World War II, but that the Spanish people nonetheless carried out democratization with their own hands in the mid-1970s.

IV SEPT. 11 AND THE GAP BETWEEN CIVILIZATIONS

Unlike the Pearl Harbor attack, in the case of Sept. 11 it remains vague exactly who the attackers were. But it seems likely that the 19 accused men, who underwent flight training in the United States, including Mohamed Atta and others who left behind objects suggesting their involvement, were in fact the hijackers. In addition, there is a high probability that Al Qaeda was also involved in the Sept. 11 incident.

Assuming those men were the terrorists, what were their motives? The first thing that stands out is that many of them, while sharing Arab birth, were highly educated men who had studied in or emigrated to the West.

They came to radical Islam not only through their experiences in the Arab world but also through their experiences in the West. Why, despite their acquisition of difficult skills such as Western languages, computer competence, and aircraft piloting, were they attracted to Islamic extremism? The answer to that must also rest on conjecture, but it seems highly likely that they were inspired by experiences, such as encountering prejudice in the West, or failing to find employment suited to their education when they returned to their home countries, that are different from the motives of terrorists who emerge solely within Arab society.¹⁵

In Osama Bin Laden's case, moreover, it is known that he is the 17th son of an extremely wealthy Saudi Arabian family that runs a construction company. He became devoted to Islam in 1973 during the fourth Middle East war and became radicalized further after joining other Islamic jihadis who gathered from all over the world to resist the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which began in 1979. It is said that Bin Laden began organizing anti-U.S. terrorism out of his strong anger over the U.S. military's continued presence in the Islamic Holy Land of Saudi Arabia, the land of his birth, from the time of the Gulf War.¹⁶

The rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Arab world started from the defeat of Egypt in the third Middle East war in 1967, which was considered to be the defeat of Arab nationalism as led by Gamal Abdul Nasser, the leader of the Egyptian Revolution. After the normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt in 1978, fundamentalists began staging terrorist attacks against moderate regimes in the region. The classic example of this was the 1981 assassination of Egypt's President Anwar Sadat, reportedly carried out by the Egyptian Islamic Jihad. The fundamentalists, failing in their attempts to bring about the formation of Islamic states combining politics and religion throughout the Arab world, turned instead to anti-American terrorism, centering their efforts around Bin Laden, who described his goals in highly moralistic terms.

In 1996, Bin Laden issued a "Declaration of War Against the Americans." Describing the U.S. military's presence in Saudi Arabia as the greatest aggression against the Islamic world since Mohammed's death (in the year 632), he declared that he would organize a struggle against the United States modeled after the actions of the Prophet Mohammed, who led an outnumbered force to the successful destruction of an empire. Bin Laden also criticized Western countries for allegedly blocking the development of religious states by promoting the secularization of the Islamic world and by supporting the "apostate" regimes of

countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In addition, in response to the Bush administration's attack on Afghanistan's Taliban regime launched on October 7, 2001, Bin Laden labeled the United States as Satan, and called for a battle to guard the Islamic umma, or world, from satanic attack.¹⁷

Bin Laden harshly criticized secular regimes in the Islamic world and the Western powers that supported them. His views also resonated with the strong dissatisfaction felt by the Arab masses living under "authoritarian" regimes over the ever-widening gap between rich and poor caused by the winds of globalization blowing from the West. They also shared Bin Laden's anger over the abandonment of efforts to resolve the Palestinian problem.

It can thus be said that today's Islamic fundamentalism involves an "insular mentality" of striving to overcome the strong inferiority complex toward the Western Powers through an appeal to the past glories of the Islamic world. It is said that one factor behind the unceasing wave of suicide terrorism by young people is the impact of the "end of the world" mood gaining strength in the Arab world since the 1990s.¹⁸

V CONCLUSION

There is a strong trend among today's Islamic fundamentalists, as we have seen, toward the rejection of secularism itself. That is because the fundamentalists, who seek to build a religious state uniting politics and faith, see Western-style democratization, with its separation of church and state, as fundamentally in conflict with their beliefs. They also see economic development by way of marketization as something to be shunned because in their view it brings increased crime and drug use as well as leading to social depravity through such things as pornography resulting from the relaxation of sexual mores. Moreover, because Arab governments favoring secularization and the promotion of a market economy have generally taken a pro-American viewpoint, recognized Israel, and allowed the stationing of U.S. troops, secularization has come to be rejected due to foreign policy considerations as well.

All this means that American attempts to export "democracy" by force of arms are likely to result in conflict with Islamic fundamentalists. It would be more advisable to coolly consider how the Islamic fundamentalists' extremely "insular mentality" could best be exposed to the fresh winds of new ideas. Islam was originally a faith with a spirit of tolerance

providing for the recognition of followers of other faiths, and the Koran contains teachings encouraging “consultations” between followers of disparate religions, so the development of a distinctly Islamic type of “democracy” is possible. The current unfortunate situation can be traced to the fact that, with secular trends having been imported as part of a package with America’s pro-Israeli foreign policy and policies against Arab extremism, it is difficult to independently consider “democratization.”

One thing to keep in mind in this connection is that, although it can be said that Islamic parties are enjoying increasing influence in the Islamic world, this is the result of the introduction of a multi-party system and the religious parties winning increasing numbers of votes in elections.

It is thus indisputably clear that there is a trend in the Islamic world toward the democratization and secularization of the political system, and it is entirely possible that the influence of secular parties will increase in the long run. With Islamic extremists frequently committing acts of terror there is a trend toward increased casualties among Muslims and, as the renowned French scholar of the Middle East Gilles Kepel points out, terrorism that targets Muslims can by no means be considered jihad but instead falls under the category of *fitona*, or internal conflict among Muslims, and as such is likely to face criticism from followers of Islam.¹⁹

Democracy, in any case, is something to be created and developed in any given region by the local people themselves. Just as the Soviet Union failed during the Cold War in its attempt to “export communism,” it is impossible for any power, no matter how great, to export “democracy” by the force of arms. What the present situation calls for, rather, is for America to strive to convey the appeal of “American democracy” through tenacious dialogue and cultural exchanges. The wisdom of this point has been illustrated by Sept. 11 and the ensuing “war on terror,” the pursuit of which unfortunately showed that the U.S. government is operating at cross purposes to this kind of “dialogue among civilizations.”

That is because the approach of condemning Islamic fundamentalism as evil and responding on the basis of a dualistic division of the world into good and evil costs America the opportunity to reconsider its own Middle Eastern policies, which are part of the cause of the conflict in that region. Immediately after Sept. 11, for example, many universities set up new courses on Islam to seek the causes of that incident, but the well-

known neo-conservative intellectual Norman Podhoretz criticized this trend as something that might lead to the legitimization of Islam.²⁰ This can only be considered a major step backward compared to America's eager pursuit of Japanese studies at the time of the war with Japan.

The first step toward making a dialogue of civilizations possible is to overcome ethnocentric attitudes and have the confidence to consider one's own civilization in a critical light. The next step is to recognize that there is a vast diversity of civilizations and cultures in the world, each with its own values. Both Christianity and American democracy have traditionally placed a high value on tolerance, and a "politics of recognition" took hold in the United States in the form of multiculturalism following the ethnic revival of the 1960s. I think it is now very important to extend this multiculturalism beyond America's borders.

Edward Said, a Palestinian-born scholar who has had a great impact on the world of American thought, wrote as follows in his article, "Backlash and Backtrack," immediately after Sept. 11. "How many of us have denounced all suicidal missions as immoral and wrong, even through we have suffered the ravages of colonial settlers and inhuman collective punishment? We can no longer hide behind the injustices done to us, any more than we can passively bewail the American support for our unpopular leaders. A new secular Arab politics must now make itself known, without for a moment condoning or supporting the militancy of people willing to kill indiscriminately. . . . Our purpose is coexistence and inclusion, not exclusivism and a return to some idyllic and mythical past."²¹

I hope that American studies scholars in Japan, which launched a reckless war on the United States 65 years ago as a result of its "insular mentality," can act as a bridge enabling dialogue among civilizations for the realization, on a global level, of the kind of "coexistence" and "inclusion" of which Said spoke.

NOTES

¹ Franklin D. Roosevelt, *The Public Papers of the President of the United States* (GPO, 1941), 528.

² George W. Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress, Sept. 20, 2001.

³ Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (Macmillan Co., 1948), 1072, 1083.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1082.

⁵ David J. Lu, *Matsuoka Yosuke to Sono Jidai, 1880-1946* [Matsuoka Yosuke and His Time, 1880-1946], translated by Shinichi Hasegawa, (TBS Buritanika, 1981), 32-34.

⁶ Hull, *The Memoir*, 995.

⁷ Tojo Yufuko, ed., *Daitoua Senso no Shinjitsu* [The Truth About the Great Asian War] (Watts-sha, 2005), 119–123.

⁸ Sudo Masashi, *Haru Note o Kaita Otoko* [The Man Who Wrote the Hull Note], (Bungeishunju, 1999), 60–66.

⁹ Konoe Fumimaro, *Konoe-ko Seidanroku* [The Collective Essays of Konoe Fumimaro] (Chikura-Shobo, 1937), 234, 240–241.

¹⁰ Oka Yoshitake, *Konoe Fumimaro* (Iwanami Publishers, 1972), 29–30, 42.

¹¹ Kitaoka Shinnichi, *Kiyosawa Retsu* (Enlarged Edition), (Chuo Kouronsha, 2004), 129–130, 184.

¹² Lu, *Matsuoka Yosuke*, 156, 164.

¹³ *Chuo Kouron*, January 1943, 70–71, 82.

¹⁴ Hashikawa Bunzo, *Koka Monogatari* [The Story of the Yellow Peril], (Chikuma Shobo, 1976), 135–137.

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²⁰ Norman Podhretz, “America at War,” February 13, 2002, <http://www.aei.org/boyer/podhretz.htm>.

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