EPC in World Society : The Picture from Japan

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Introduction

We are now in the post-Cold War era. However, we have not yet found a new international order. All states seemed to have welcomed the end of the Cold War and have thought to live in a more safe and more prosperous world. But the expectation has not yet been fulfilled. All major countries and groups of countries are making serious efforts to search for a new order and their roles in the post-Cold War international society, but without success so far. Even the United States nor the emerging European Union alone will not be able to build a new global order. Closer cooperation among the developed countries is indispensable. The conclusion of the GATT world trade talks in December 1993 can be seen as another step in this direction. However, the process of compromise also showed how difficult it was to reach agreement in the 'enemy-less' world.

The European Union, born from the Maastricht Treaty, has 'set itself objectives ……to assert its identity on the international scene, in particular through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time leads to a common defence' (article B). The European Union and its member-states have now embarked on the CFSP which can be regarded as a further step forward from EPC (European Political Cooperation). Although its twenty years experience shows how it was and how it will be difficult to reach a common position and take a common action, Europeans are making further attempts to concentrate their strength and the weight of twelve member-states in international society. Moreover, the European Union is expanding her geographical domain and power by the fourth enlargement.

On the other hand, Japan is increasing her political role in international society comparable to her economic strength although it has lost some of its attractiveness with the recent recession. She is eager to play a global role contributing to build more a stable and more prosperous world. Her proposal to reform the UN system, notably her request to become a permanent member of the Security Council is one of the signs, although her Consitutuion prohibits her to take military actions. At the same time, Japan believes that there are three poles which share a common belief in democracy and market economy, namely the United States, the EC/EU (including member-states) and Japan.

No one can deny the role and importance of trans-Atlantic relations and US-Japanese relations respectively. However, the third side of the trilateral relationship, namely the Euro-Japanese connection is less developed, not least because the problem of 'what is Europe or who is Mr. Europe[1]?' still remains. In general, political, diplomatic and cultural affairs has been handled through bilateral relations with the member-states (Japan-UK, Japan-France etc.), while economic relations have been conducted with the European Community through the EC Commission. Trade and economic issues have dominated EC/EU-Japanese relations.

Although the Japanese have paid more attention to development in Europe, Europeans have been less concerned with the political development in Asia once they had withdrawn from their former colonies. Even Japan has not

attracted attention in Europe, as Brian Bridges writes: 'Until the past decade or so, Japan was of little political importance to European policy-makers and, seen as too much of a surrogate of the United States, it was given fairly marginal attention[2]'. Although Japan was one of the original members of the first global Economic Summit in 1975, and has continued to be important in the G-7, it took another ten years for the strength of both the Japanese economy and the Yen to be really felt and recognized in the Western world. The political dialogue between Europe and Japan began about that time, but it took another several years to develop.

This article attempts to analyse current state of Euro-Japanese political relations and of moves to stregthen the relationship. It also tries to clarify how EPC and the CFSP is perceived, including both expectations and doubts on the Japanese side.

Japan in the EPC literature and EPC in Japanese EC studies

First of all, it is interesting to look at how Japan is perceived in the eyes of Europeans who are specialists on EPC and are not specialists on Japan or Japanese foreign policy. A very simple survey has been conducted on how many times Japan appears in the EPC literature using an index with the comparative figures for the United States. Although only six books have been chosen, they are the leading examples of English language literature in this field. They are taken in chronological order from the early 1980's, when systematic studies of EPC first began to appear.

Allen et. al. (1982)	Japan:1 ; USA:29+
Hill ed. (1983)	Japan:2 ; USA:39+
Ifestos (1987)	Japan:0 ; USA:74+
Pijpers et. al. eds. (1988)	Japan/Tokyo:8 ; America(USA):42+
Holland ed. (1991)	Japan:23 ; USA:48+
Nuttall (1992)	Japan:2 ; US:22+

In David Allen et. al.(1982)[3], Japan appears only once in a postscript as seeking association with EEC states whereas the US appears more than 29 times. Similarly in Christopher Hill ed.(1983)[4], Japan was referred to only twice but the US appears more than 39 times. Four years later Panayiotis Ifestos (1987)[5] refers more than 74 times to the US but hardly mentions Japan at all. In the following year, the most comprehesive treatment so far, Alfred Pijpers et. al.(1988)[6], refers 8 times to Japan and more than 42 times on the US. In the 1990's we find one example of change with Martin Holland ed. (1991)[7], referring not only 12 times to Japan but also another 11 occasions to Japanese relations with various countries although the US has been mentioned more than 48 references. Simon Nuttall's historical treatment of 1970-1990 (1992)[8] refers to Japan only twice (the dialogue with Japan and Tokyo's sanction against Iran) but 22 or more occasions to the US.

The result clearly indicates that Japan appears far less than the United States, but has begun to appear more in recent years in some of the literature. This low attention is not the faults of academics, but it reflects the reality of the relations themselves. As mentioned earlier, we often talk of the trilateral relations beween Japan, the United States and the EC/EU(including the member-states), especially in Japan. But the result shows that there seems to be hardly any substantial political relationship between Japan and Europe noticeable. The United States has been far more important to Europe in the perception of European commentators.

On the other hand, how do Japanese academics treat EPC in their EC studies? Another brief survey shows that there are numerous books on the European Communities and European integration especially since 1988 and some books on Japan-EC relations by Japanese authors. But many are on economic aspects, and almost all describe economic relations and their economic impacts on Japan. There is no book exclusively on EPC by a Japanese author so far and the only book which qualifies is the traslation of Phillip Taylor's book, *When Europe Speaks in One Voice*[9]. There are eight articles in academic journals and four have dealt with EPC and the CFSP as chapters in books, viz : Tanaka, T. (1981)[10], Tanaka, T.(1982)[11], Tanaka, T.(1984)[12], Takase(1985)[13], Tatsumi(1985/86)[14], Tatsumi (1988)[15], Tatsumi(1990)[16],

Kamo(1990)[17], Tatsumi(1993)[18], Matsukuma, J.(1993)[19]; Tanaka, S.(1982)[20], Tatsumi(1987)[21], Tanaka, T. (1992)[22], Hiwaki(1992)[23]. There are only 7 academics in Japan who have written articles on the subject and only two articles, Tanaka, T(1984) and Hiwaki(1992), deal directly with Euro-Japanese political dialogue.

This low level of attention also indicates the reality of the relations and recognition in Japan. EPC and the CFSP seem to be regarded as topic for future although EPC has the history of more than two decades already.

Historical development

In the Japanese government's eye EPC did not come to be seen as an important framework at least until the time of the Iranian and Afghanistan incidents of the late 1970's. Especially, the case of the US hostages in Iran and the subsequent sanctions were a Japanese experiment going with Europeans.

In April 1980, Saburo Okita, then Foreign Minister, even flew to Luxembourg, where the Foreign Ministers of the Nine were to discuss the measures against Iran. He conducted a series of bilateral talks with the Foreign Ministers of five member-states and with the President of the EC Commission, Sir Roy Jenkins, before the Government of Japan decided to strenghten its sanctions against Iran[24].

But, even this did not lay a concreate foundation for institutionalization of dialogue. Ambassador Yukio Sato, the former Director-General of the North American Bureau in the Foreign Ministry of Japan and currently the Ambassador to the Hague, wrote more than ten years ago: 'Throughout the period consultations on specific issues such as the Iranian sanction, the Olympics boycott(Moscow), etc. were intense. The result, however, failed to establish a really encouraging precedent of future co-operation between Western Europe and Japan[25]'.

During his visit to Brussels in January 1983, Sintaro Abe, then Foreign Minister, proposed a political dialogue. Subsequently bi-annual consultations between the Foreign Ministers of the Community(Troika) and Japanese Foreign Minister were instituted in March 1983[26]. Behind these development

was the growing interest in taking on a political role in international politics among the Japanese, especially once Yasuhiro Nakasone became Prime Minister in November 1982. At the 1983 Economic Summit, held at Williamsburg on 28-30 May, Nakasone made it clear that 'Japan is a member of the West' and 'the security of our countries is indivisible and must be approached on a global basis[27]'. It is also interesting to note that the first annual meeting between the EC Commission and the Japanese government at ministerial level was held in one year later in May 1984.

In 1988 Ambassador Ryohei Murata, then Japan's Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Ambassador to Bonn until August 1994, summarized the problem: 'There is some question whether Western Europe is really a single political unit. In my view, it is not……at present member nations do not address international political issues with a unified voice, and political cooperation within the EC is still limited. The tone of the language used by the EC in Brussels when commenting on Japan in regard to economic issues often differs, at present, from the tone used by individual European countries. In bilateral discussions of economic issues with Japan, too, the French tone is different from the German's[28]'.

The observation that Western Europe was not a single political unit remains correct even after the Maastricht Treaty came in force in November 1993. But it is also true that the EC has been regarded as a power in its own right. The success of '1992' has not only attracted the attention but has also acquired the respect of outside partners, and there were moves to upgrade relations with the EC.

William Wallace writes: 'American and Japanese observers, overcoming their earlier scepticism about the policy-making capacities of West European insititutions, were persuaded at the end of the 1980s that they were watching the construction of a stronger Europe[29]'.

The United States moved swiftly. On December 12, 1989 at Berlin, James Baker, then the Secretary of State, suggested 'a deepening of the existing dialogue structures between the EC and Washington, an offer to which the EC sent a positive response in February 1990[30]'. This initiative resulted in the Joint Declarations between the EC and USA/Canada respectively in Novem-

ber 1990.

The Japanese government then published the "International situation and Japanese diplomacy" on December 23, 1989, in which it proposed the basic principles of a new Japanese diplomacy. 'With dramatic changes in East-West relations, Japan, as a major actor with its economic and technological power, will positively participate in international cooperation in order to build a new international order[31]'. Prime Minister Kaifu's visit to Western and Central Europe in January 1990 was regarded as the first concreate step of new diplomacy[32]. Moreover, also in Berlin on January 9, in addition to the package proposal to assist economic restrucuring in Poland and Hungary, Toshiki Kaifu proposed to strengthen the relations between Tokyo and the EC in a broad range of areas, including politics and culture. This proposal was clearly based on a new recognition that the EC was gaining in importance as an international actor. With the prospects of the deepening and widening of the Community, the EC had been regarded as a more important actor not only in economic issues but also in political and even in security issues. Unfortunately, however, this initiative did not produce immediate results.

Japan again moved to take the initiative, known in Brussels as 'Owada Initiative[33]' in December 1990 to conclude a similar Joint Declaration between the EC and the US so as to improve and expand relations between the EC and Japan. The exchanges of drafts took place. At first, Mr. Jacques Delors's official visit to Japan in May 1991 emerged as a suitable occasion for the signing ceremony. But, the wording of the Joint Declaration proved not to be easy. Some member-states of the EC, notably France, insisted that the commercial BOB (Balance of Benefit) should be written in. Then, Kaifu's visit for Europe in connection with the London Economic Summit had been chosen. But, even right up to the last days of the Summit, there were reports in the Japanese press that it was proving impossible to reach agreement, bacause of the commercial conflicts of interest. With hard negotiation behind the scene, a compromise was finally reached only a few hours before the meeting between Kaifu and Ruud Lubbers, the Dutch Prime Minister and then the President of the European Council.

Finally, on July 18, 1992, the Joint Declaration on relations between the EC

and its member states and Japan was signed. In the preamble, both sides' concerns were written in, viz: 'conscious of their common attachment to freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, affirmed their common attachment to market principle, the promotion of free trade……; affirming their common interest in security, peace and stability of the world……[34]'. As for the sensitive compromise, the words, 'co-operation in a fair and harmonious way' and 'equitable access to their respective markets……on the basis of comparable opportunities' were chosen instead of the BOB.

Institutional aspects

By the Joint Declaration, Japan and the EC and its member-states agreed on institutional framework for consultation such as :

1. Annual consultations between the President of the European Council and the President of the Commission on the one side, and the Prime Minister of Japan on the other side.
2. An annual meeting between the EC Commission and the Japanese government at ministerial level.
3. Bi-annual consultations between the Foreign Ministers of the Community (Troika), together with the member of the EC Commission responsible for external relations, and the Japanese Foreign Minister.
4. Briefings by the Presidency to Japanese representatives on EPC meeting at the ministerial level, and Japanese briefings to the EC representatives on Japanese foreign policy.

The Euro-Japanese annual summit is a new invention, and got off to a smooth start, at least so far as the timetable was concerned. After July 1991 in the Hague and July 1992 in London, the third meeting was held on July 6 1993 in Tokyo. But, the meeting between Jean-Luc Dehane, Prime Minister of Belgium and then the President of the European Council, Henning Christophersen, Vice-President of the EC Commission and Kiichi Miyazawa was no more than cautesy call. Because President Jacques Delors could not travel to Tokyo (he had health problems), the meeting between his proxy and the lameduck Japanese Prime Minister was an unfortunate anti-climax. Then even

the timetable began to shake. The Japanese officials failed to establish the 4th Euro-Japanese annual summit with Chancellor Hermut Kohl, the President of European Council, and President Delors on the occasion of the Naples Summit in July 1994. Although there was confusion caused by the unexpected change of goverments in Japan, the German government was also not so enthusiastic to hold annual summit.

Japan-EC ministerial meetings, which had already begun in May 1984, also had some unfortunate experiences. It was supposed to be held at approximately one year intervals alternately in Brussels and Tokyo, but after December 1986, it took more than three years to hold the next in May 1990. Of course, there had been attempts to hold meeting: once was cancelled in December 1987, because Japanese ministers were tied up with the Budget Committee in the Diet. Another was also cancelled in June 1989, because Sosuke Uno, then the Foreign Minister, was recalled from Paris to form a Cabinet[35]. The 4th Japan-EC ministerial meeting was finally held on May 29, 1990 but for only three and half hours due to the delay of the flight of the Japanese Foreign Minister. The story seems to indicate how little Japan has valued the channel with the EC and its counterparts. However, the fact that the 5th meeting in January 1993 was attended by seven Japanese ministers, may be a sign of change, at least on the Japanese side.

On the EPC side, the bi-annual meeetings of the EC troika and Japanese Foreign Minister have been taking place since June 1983. The occasions of the meeting of the Council of the OECD in Paris in May/June and the preliminary session of the UN Assembly in New York in September are often used[36]. There have been some doubts cast on these meetings, in respect of their quality and effectiveness, given the shortness of time available.

As for the briefings by the Presidency to Japanese representatives on EPC meetings at the Ministerial level, they have been conducted in three places. Typically, under the British presidency in the latter half of 1992, they were held in London, Tokyo and Brussels. However, as Jacques Delors reminded both sides in January 1990[37], the mere existence of the channel itself cannot guarantee stable relations, without a real dialogue being created through it. Pressure of business is a real problem for both parties.

The rule and practice which tie Japanese ministers and many of high ranking officials to the Diet when it is in session, is one significant obstacle on the Japanese side. Similar problems for the President of the Council. Elfriede Regelsberger has pointed out that 'those representing the larger EC States face the problem of how to reconcile their duties as EPC President with the ever increasing travel and consultation activities they have to undertake in the name of their own country[38]". Therefore, the most important thing on both sides are daily contacts between officials in the capitals of the Presidency, in Brussels, and in Tokyo.

As far as contact points are concerned, then the EPC Secretariat had become important. The briefings by the head or the members of the EPC Secretariat to the diplomats of the Japanese Mission to the EC in Brussels became a routine operation. Then the declaration on practical arrangements in the field of the CFSP attached to the Maastricht Treaty provided for the merging the Political Cooperation Secretariat with the General Secretariat of the Council, and this process has already far advanced, having begun before the acutual ratification of the Treaty. The Political Cooperation Secretariat is now called the CFSP Unit in the DG-E of the General Secretariat of the Council and contacts with this Unit is becoming even more important for the third countries like Japan.

With the appointment of Hans van den Broek as a Commissioner responsible for external political relations along with Sir Leon Brittan as a Commissioner responsible for external economic relations in January 1993 by President Delors, the EC Commission was also putting in place the CFSP reforms envisaged in the Maastrich Treaty. The establishment of the DG-IA is part of the same preparation. However, these institutional changes will create even more complications for the outsiders trying to identify where power lies in the European Union.

There has been a small but interesting change in the allocation of competences in Japanese overseas missions after the signiture of the Joint Declaration. It used to be the case that the Japanese Embassy to the Kingdom of Belgium was responsible for EPC, and that it reported back to West European Division I in the European and Oceanic Bureau in Tokyo. The Japanese Mission to the EC is responsible for the EC matters and reports back to

International Economic Division I in the Economic Bureau. The separation of labour between the area division and the functional division reflected the division of competences between the EC and EPC. Since the middle of 1991, however, the Mission to the EC has acquired EPC from the Embassy and is now responsible for reporting the EPC matters back to West European Division I. The change reflects the recognition by Japanese Foreign Ministry that the external relations of the Community and EPC should be looked together at least in Brussels. The arrangement in Tokyo has remained the same. West European Division I is regarded as superior division to International Economic Division I and looks after overarching policy towards Western Europe.

In practice: results and problems

By using these channels, the EC/EU and its member-states and Japan will certainly endeavour to inform and consult each other on major international issues, which are of common interest to both parties, whether political, economic, scientific, cultural or other. They will strive, whenever appropriate, to coordinate their positions.

One of the first outcomes of the Joint Declaration has been the Japan-EC joint-proposal on the registration system of arm sales, which was successfully instituted in the UN in January 1992. Japan would like to extend this formula to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles as well as chemical weapons, but without success to date due to the sensitivy of the issues. Japan also would like to sit in the Security Council as a permanent member, possibly with Germany, but on this issue was again faced with the reluctant attitudes of France and the UK at least in the initial stage.

The regular dialogue on the issues of development policy has become established, and the possibilities for joint action in the domain of tropical forest protection are being examined in Malaysia and Brazil[39]. The Japan-EC High Level Meeting on the Environment, begun in January 1992, identified three specific areas for cooperation, namely, protection of the tropical forest, joint research on acid rain, and joint research on global warming.

Up till now, Japan has associated herself with the G-24 to assist Central and East European countries, and has become a member of the EBRD. It has also been taking part in the group to assist the republics of the former Soviet Union. For its part, the EC has joined Japan in international conferences to assist Mongolia and Cambodia.

How, then how has the new dialogue been evaluated by both sides? The Council of the EC which met in Luxembourg on June 15, 1992 adopted the conclusions based on the draft prepared by the EC Commission. The Council reversed the order of the Commission's draft and put the section on political dialogue in the forefront, with economic items to follow. The Council added the following sentences at the beginning of the conlusions:

> 'The Council welcomed the political and economic dialogue established by the EC/Japan Joint Declaration as the basic framework for future development of EC/Japan relations. The Council emphasized the need to explore fully the Declaration in order that both parties should give substance to the goals it sets. The EC/Japan relationship should be marked by a long-term political commitment to a joint partnership[40]'.

On the other hand, the Japanese government's basic policy towards the EC, published in July 15, 1992, states:

> 'After the Joint Declaration, positive cooperation in various fields has been promoted in spirit of sound competition and constructive cooperation. Between the Government on Japan and the EC Commission, for example, we have witnessed increased cooperation not only in trade and industry but also in many other fields including politics, the environment, science and technology, development assistance and social issues. Through the EC Presidency country, political dialogue and policy coordination between Japan and the EC has been furthered ……[41]'.
>
> A Good start; but this is only the beginning. Here again, it is interesting to note that EPC and the EC are now treated as a single area by the Japanese side.
>
> At the same time, Japan wasted no time in arranging cooperation with other European/ Euro-Atlantic institutions. Japan had sounded out the possibilities of having an observer status in the Conference on Security

and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Although it was turned down once on the basis of a French objection, the CSCE Summit held in Helsinki in July 1992 accepted the Japanese request. Japan now has a special status 'to be invited to various meetings of the CSCE with the right to a contribution, though not able to join its decision-making in a direct way[41]'. Since August 1992, Japanese delegates have participated in the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) of the CSCE. Furthermore, on December 10, 1992, Japan envoyed a Foreign Ministery official, who is a Serbian language expert, to the CSCE mission of long duration in Vojvodina and then provided 800, 000 Austrian Shillings to set up satellite telephones for the mission to support the CSCE activities[42].

With NATO, there are no formal links. The Japanese government does not think that there should be military cooperation beween Japan and NATO and there is no need for that[43]. But since the visit of the Japanese Foreign Minister to NATO Headquarters in Brussels in July 1985, there have been a wide range of exchanges, from ministerial and high ranking officials (including NATO's Secretary General) to academics. The Japan-NATO High Level Seminar on Global Security, the second of which was held on Novemver 12-13 1992 in Tokyo, has been one of the forum for both parties to exchange views. As for the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and the West European Union (WEU), there have been no attempts to establish formal relations although informal contacts have been increasing[44].

Japan also established a Consulate-General in Strasbourg in 1993 to follow developments in the European Parliament, whose power has been increased first by the SEA and further by the Maastricht Treaty, and in the Council of Europe, which has been a guardian of human rights in Europe.

On the whole, dialogue and cooperation beween Japan and Europe are increasing. But, the problems of the quality of information and level of representation[45] are still to be solved. As for the daily contacts in the capital of the member-state holding the Presidency, there are problems. Diplomats sent from Japan (for instance to London) are expected to

concentrate their efforts on bilateral relations and their regular contact point is the Far Eastern Department in the Foreign Office. They may have established contacts with the Political Director or European Correspondent, but with the end of the term of Troika, the relationships will not remain on a regular basis. In addition there are differences between the countries holding the Presidency. The causes may be attributed to the differences in manpower in the member-states and to the degree of daily contact between Japan and the member-states concerned. The experience with Britain in the Presidency in the latter half of 1992 (in which contacts were extensive) may be exceptional due to the longstanding relations between the two countries. Complaints on the briefings given by the EPC Secretariat are also heard from Japanese diplomats in Brussels. Conversely, the same may apply for Japan's information to EC representatives on Japanese government's foreign policy.

How to strengthen the political dialogue

Günther Burghardt, then Director of the DG-I and currently Director General of the DG-IA in the European Commission, commented that 'the Community's relations with Japan are different from those with the US in that they center almost exclusively on trade issues. The EC-Japan Declaration thus focuses more on this area than is the case with the Transatlantic Declaration. The Community, however, is keen that Japan should play a role in the world commensurate with its economic power[46]'. It is indeed hitherto relations between the EC and Japan have been mainly on trade/economic issues. However, recently their relationship has expanded even to the point of including security matters, largely as a result of the changes which have occurred in Europe since 1989[47]. Therefore, we have to consider our relations in a wider context than that of trade and economic issues. This is the prime importance of the Joint Declaration.

The Study Group on Japan-European Community Economic Relations, which was established under the Director-General of the Economic Bureau in the Foreign Ministry in April 1992, published a final report

(The Mano Report), which was presented to Vice-Minister Owada, in December 1992. Although the members of the Study Groups were businessmen, academics and journalists, the report strongly reflected the opinion of the Foreign Ministry. The Mano Report proposed the following measures to strengthen Japan-European Community relations from a global perspective among many other measures[48]:

(1) Promotion of Political Dialogue
in the regular Japan-EC Summit, the United Nations, the CSCE etc. on regional problems including the Middle East.
(2) The Environment
① A Continuation of environmental dialogue, especially at the Japan/EC High-Level Environment Meetings.
② Japan-EC coordination on the UNCED follow-up.
(3) Expanding Japan-EC Aid Policy Consultation
① Strengthening Japan-EC consultation on aid policies.
② Joint dispatch of project evaluation missions.
③ Joint dispatch of technical experts and young people.
④ Sponsorship of ODA seminars.
(4) Cooperation for Asian development
(5) Aid for the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe
① Intensified dialogue and investment cooperation between Japan and the EC.
② EC's institutional support.

Moreover, the Japan Forum on International Relations, Inc., a policy-oriented private research institute, published a pamphlet on policy recommendations for *Political Cooperation with Europe: Japan's Agenda for 21st Century*[49], which was presented to Prime Minister Hosokawa in November 1993. These included, among the fourteen points in the recommendations, Japan's closer relations with the EC and the WEU, Japan's greater access to the CSCE, strenghthening ties with the NATO, with the G-7 framework, the promotion of Japan-Europe dialogue in the UN, cooperation in the non-

proliferation of nuclear and conventional weapons and coordination in policies towards Russia, cooperation in regional issues in the Middle East and Africa.

The strengthening of the Euro-Japanese relations has also been proposed by Europeans. Brian Bridges[50], an expert in East Asian affairs and a consultant, and Glyn Ford[51], the MEP, are prominent examples. But in general, the most serious problem in European side is a low or even absent interest in the Asia and Pacific region, including Japan. However, in addition to the Tokyo Summit in July 1993, the recent visits in 1993 by President François Mitterrand of France to Vietnam in February and to South Korea in September and by Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany to India, Singapore, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea in February and China in November, by Prime Minister John Major of Britain to Japan in September are all welcoming signs.

The idea of inviting the EC Commission to the Asia-Pacific Economic Council(APEC) as an observer and to involve the EC Commission and the member-states in development and environmental protection projects, initiated by Japan in addition to strenghen dialogues between the EC and Asian countries(including EC-ASEAN Dialogue) have been recommended in Japan, for example by the Policy Council of the Japan Forum on International Relations[52]. Unfortunately, however, the EC Commission's request for an observer status in the APEC was turned down by the US, the host country of the Seattle Summit of the APEC in November 1993.

On the Japanese side, the essential problem is the extreme variety of the interpretations of European integration. It is true that the development of European integration has been closely observed by Japanese diplomats, bureacrats, businessmen and academics. But the evaluation of such integration has been sceptical and with few admirers. The White Paper on the completion of the internal market by 1992, adopted at the Milan European Council in June 1985, and the Single European Act, signed in February 1986, ignited appreciation (and concern in some cases) in relation to European ventures. The rush of Japanese manufacturing companies to Europe may be interpreted as an over-reaction caused by overheated reports especially after 1988[53]. The evolution of EPC into the CFSP via the Maastricht Treaty has been interpreted as

another step towards European move to one voice and a common action. Based on this rather optimistic supposition, all the recommendations cited above have proposed to strenghen the political dialogues with this new entity.

However when these reports came out, it seems that there was already a more reluctant atomosphere in Japan. It is true that after the first referendum on the ratification on the Maastricht Treaty in Denmark in June 1992, the tide at least in Japanese press changed dramatically once more back towards a sceptical interpretation. Even when the Treaty came into force in November 1993, there was a growing number of reports in the Japanese press about the inablity of the European Union and its member-states to act as one. The case of the former Yugoslavia has been most typical. Some Japanese experts see no future in the Maastricht framework[54]. Of course it is difficult to evaluate these developments. There are gaps between expectations and capabilities in Europe's inter-national role even as seen from Europe and the United States[55]. However, the loss of interest and confidence in the future credibility of the emerging CFSP and the decreasing evidence of fair interpretations of European attempts to make the CFSP work may weaken the momentum to strenghthen Euro-Japanese relations which lies at the base of the reports referred above.

The change of governments in Japan, resulting from the election held on July 18 1993, has not so far affected the Japanese attitudes and policy towards Europe and the European Union.

The government run by Morihiro Hosokawa, ending 45 years of unbroken rule by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), struggled with electoral reforms and with the packages to stimulate the Japanese economy in the serious recession. But Hosokawa threw away his government in April 1994 and plunged Japanese politics in confusion. Tsutomu Hata, the former Foreign Minister, managed to form government but without the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in the coalition. Hata's minority government lasted only three months. Immediately after the budget for the FY 1994 was adopted, he submitted his resignation with optimistic expectation that he will be elected again as Prime Minister. But there was an another dramatic move. The unexpected coalition between the LDP and the SDP and others made Tomiichi Murayama Prime Minister. It is the first time since 1948 a socialist became

Prime Minister. At the same time, however, the LDP is now back to power. Despite the change of the governments, all have promised to keep the current line in foreign policy.

Not just in this negative sense, however, is the closer cooperation between Japan and the European Union and its member-states far more necessary than ever. We are living in an interdependent and transnational world and this tendency will speed, up. This makes cooperation and the coordinations of policies among nation-states and/or the groups of nation-states indispensable. Although the dialogue and cooperation with Europe are complex and difficult processes due to the mulitiplicity of the channels involved, the European Union and its member- states are and will continue to be our important partner for Japan alongside the United States and the neighbouring Asian countries. This has to be kept in our mind even though there is growing scepticism about European integration, and in particular about the future of the CFSP, in Japan.

Notes

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1) Toshiro Tanaka, "Euro-Japanese Political Cooperation: In Search of New Roles in International Politics", *Keio Journal of Politics*, No. 5, 1984, pp. 81-82.

2) Brian Bridges, "EC-Japanese Relations: In Search of a Partnership", *RIIA Special Paper*, 1992, p. 9 and also in *JIIA Paper*, 1992/No 4 (English and Japanese), p. 8, 62.

3) David Allen, Reinhardt Rummel and Wolfgang Wessels, *European Political Cooperation: Towards a Foreign Policy for Western Europe,* London, Butterworth

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