

# モアモア文明から適適文明へ ～日本文明の再構築への一試論

## From a Culture of “More” to a Culture of Moderation: Suggestions for Remaking Japanese Civilization

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はじめに 久米邦武の文明論に学ぶ

久米邦武は「岩倉使節団」に随行して大記録「米欧回覧実記」五巻）を編纂した。それは西洋文明をまるごと見聞したエンサイクロペディア的な記録であるが、随処で独自の見解を述べており、その東西文明比較論は極めて示唆に富む。その中で「白人を欲深き人種とし、黄色人は欲少なき人種」だといひ、後年こんな意味のことも言っている。「天に克たんとする自然超克の西洋文明は、限度に達すれば、自然との調和を目指した東洋哲学に回帰するのではないかと。

### 1 「適適」の思想

近代の起動力は科学進歩主義と経済発展主義にあり、モットーは「もっと豊かに、もっと便利に」であった。日本はこの150年、モアモア文明を追いかけキャッチアップして来た。それは大成功を収め現下の日本はものと情報が溢れかえる未曾有の「贅沢」の只中にある。が、「過ぎたるは及ばざるがごとし」であり、文明の膨大な果実は人間の胃袋や脳髓の容量を超えて五臓六腑を疲労させ機能不全にまで追い込んでいく。人間には「適度」がある、それこそ日本文明の伝統的な知恵ではなかったのか。

### 2 「円環」の思想

モアモア文明の過度の進展は、人類に比類なき格差を生み出してしまった。資産や所得の格差はトマ・ピケティの指摘通り、目下最大最緊要の問題である。その不満が怨恨、憤懣を生み、

### Introduction: Lessons from Kume Kunitake's Theory of Civilization

Kume Kunitake, a member of the Iwakura Mission, compiled a massive five-volume account of the journey entitled *Beiō kairan jikki* (*The Iwakura Embassy, 1871-73: A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary's Journey of Observation Through the United States of America and Europe*). This is an encyclopedic record of Western civilization as observed in its entirety. Kume annotates it throughout with his own views, which offer a thought-provoking comparative perspective on Eastern and Western civilization. At one point he remarks that the white race is a race of many desires; the yellow race is a race of few. In later years he was to assert that once Western civilization, which tamed Nature in a bid to conquer Heaven, reached its limits, it would surely turn back to Eastern philosophy, which sought harmony with Nature.

### 1. The Ideal of Moderation

The driving forces of modern civilization are scientific progress and economic growth. Its motto is “Greater wealth and greater convenience.” Over the past 150 years, Japan has tried to catch up to the West by pursuing a culture of “more.” And it has succeeded magnificently. Japan today enjoys unprecedented luxury. It veritably abounds in material goods and information. But having too much is as bad as having too little. The surfeit of benefits brought by civilization exceeds the capacity of the human stomach and brain, wears out the human body, and renders them dysfunctional. Moderation is an essential human trait. That insight is part of Japanese civilization's store of traditional wisdom.

### 2. The Circular Ideal

テロ、騒乱、暴動、戦争を惹起させる。今こそ、貪欲から適欲へ、GDP から QOL へ、生産から分配へ、価値基準の大転換をすべき時ではないか。方法はいくらかもある。分配は三角でも逆三角もなく「円環」ではないのか。

### 3 「和楽」の思想

「天地和楽」は江戸期の儒者貝原益軒の言葉である。これは「SDGs 思想」の先がけであり、天地すなわち大自然との調和を大事にすべきことを説いた。江戸文明は東海の孤島に生まれた文明であり、それは限界社会において生きる人間の知恵の集約であった。それは収奪思想でなく循環思想であり、今や小さな限界社会となった地球時代に生き残る知恵ではないのか。日本で熟成された「和楽」の思想はその鍵である。

#### おわりに 梅原猛文明論の示唆するもの

梅原猛は人類に普遍する思想を模索して「人類哲学序説」を書きあげた。そこで「現代文明は、ある限度を過ぎると、急激に人間を不幸にするのではないか」と述べている。しかし、ものは考えようである。「文明は、道具であり、方便である」との思想に立ち戻れば、それを創造したのは人間自身であり「人間は本来、その主人である」ことを忘れてはならない。とすれば、そのことを達観し、謙虚に知恵を働かせれば、現代文明の恩沢を十分に享受しうるのではないか。ただ、賢愚の境は紙一重、岐路を一つ誤れば地獄の底へ落ちゆくことも覚悟せねばならない。

The hyper-development of the culture of more has engendered disparities without parallel in human history. Inequalities in assets and incomes are, as Thomas Piketty points out, among the most serious and urgent challenges facing us today. The resulting disaffection spawns resentment and anger and leads to terrorism, insurrections, riots, and war. It is surely time for a fundamental value shift from greed to temperance, from GDP to QOL, from production to distribution. This can be brought about in any number of ways. Distribution is neither a triangle nor an inverse triangle. It is a circle.

### 3. The Ideal of *Waraku*

Kaibara Ekiken, a Confucian scholar of the Edo period, spoke of “peace and geniality (*waraku*) between heaven and earth.” These words underline the importance of living in harmony with heaven and earth, that is, with nature. They thus anticipate the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The civilization of Edo-period Japan developed on an isolated archipelago in the eastern ocean. It was built on the cumulative wisdom of people living in a society on the edge—a wisdom grounded in cyclical thinking, not thirst for plunder. That wisdom is exactly what is needed to survive today in the global era, when the planet itself is a small community on the edge. And the ideal of *waraku* that emerged in Japan is the key.

### Final Observations: Hints from Umehara Takeshi's Theory of Civilization

Umehara Takeshi explored universal human thought patterns in his *Jinrui tetsugaku josetsu* (An introduction to human philosophy). In it he wrote that when modern civilization passed a certain limit, it would rapidly plunge people into misery. But that depends on how you think of it. If we return to the premise that civilization is a tool and an expedient, we must not forget that humankind is ultimately its master; for it was humankind that created it. As long as we are astute enough to realize that and act with wisdom and humility, we should be able to fully enjoy the blessings of modern civilization. But only a thin line separates wisdom from folly. We would do well to remember that one wrong turn, and we could plummet to the depths of hell.