

# SPACE JAPAN BOOK REVIEW

From a satcom researcher point of view

Reviewer: Takashi Iida, Editorial Advisor



George Friedman: "The Next 100 Years A Forecast for the 21st Century", Doubleday, 2009.

This book gives us a fresh impression, since it has a big title and describes many predictions that we have not even thought so far. Among them, it is the most impressive that the U.S. prosperity has just begun, and the 21st century is the opening of the U.S. era. While there are many books discussed on the U.S. dusk (for example, references [1]), the author of this book analyzes from a geopolitics point of view to the end, although the reviewer wonders whether it is true.

In the first place, what is geopolitics? According to the Japanese "Kohjien" dictionary, the geopolitics is a study on the relationship between political phenomenon and geographical environment [2]. Also according to Wikipedia for more modern description, the geopolitics is the art and practice of analyzing, prescribing, forecasting and using political power over a given territory. Its purpose is to give a scientific basis and justice to a state strategy in United Kingdom, Germany and the U.S., etc [3]. This book is selected in this column, because it includes a description related to space as shown later. Let's introduce it now.

The author of this book is a founder and CEO of STRATFOR (Strategic Forecasting Inc.), a private intelligence company established in 1996, going through Director of the Center for Geopolitical Studies, the Louisiana State University. He heads the company which provides original information related to politics, economics, security and so on and has a nickname of "behind-the-scenes CIA". It's said that its customer is wide from a first-class enterprise of all over the world to the U.S. agency and a foreign government.

At first, how the situation goes: As for Iraqi and Afghan war which we are concerned about, the U.S. does not have to beat these war, but it is enough if the wars confuse the situation and the Islamic zone does not have power to gather up and challenge the U.S. This seems to be a conclusion to come out of geopolitics.

The geopolitics displays its ability to show that the U.S. prosperity is based on the powerful military power, in particular, the navy that grasps command of the world seas. And it is shocking that countries opposed to the U.S. at the middle of the 21st century will be Japan, Turkey and Poland, while Mexico might be an opposed country to the U.S. at the end of the 21st century. The reason is as follows: Since China isn't true capitalism like a Japanese bubble economy period (connections and personal considerations give priority) so that it is estimated that there is a bad debt to 25% of all things. China can not maintain its economy unless high economic growth continues. China is not the U.S.'s future menace, because the high economic growth does not continue forever. Russia might confront the U.S. at the beginning of the 21st century, and might offer source of the second Cold War. But this second Cold War would terminate with Russian collapse due to the serious domestic problem, sharp decrease of population and poor infrastructure.

Then, why Turkey, Poland and Japan? Please read this book for more detailed, but this is a conclusion led by geopolitics. Writing the reason briefly, Japan whose history of militarism is shouldered can not be just as it is, and Japan that opposes intake of large-scale immigration can't help finding a way out of new labor of other countries although it holds a serious population problem. It will be pressed for policy switch sometime soon.

As for Turkey, historical main Islamic Empire was ruled over entirely by Turks. Ottoman Empire collapsed at the end of World War I, but Turkey is already a stable base in a chaotic situation and boasts of the local strongest with economic power and the military forces. Turkish influence would be strengthened, as it saves the power more from now on. Concerning this, Japanese GDP became not only the third in the world recently, but also it is expected that Turkish GDP will exceed the Japanese one in 2021[4]. It seems to be reliable that Turkey grows big.

Poland slipped down from a seat in a major power with the 16th century in the end, but it was surely a large country, and it is thought to gain the seat again in future, because Germany declines. In addition, Russia pressures Poland from the east, but Poland will become a leader of an ally confronting Russia.

As described above, each of Japan, Turkey and Poland would confront the U.S. that deepens confidence after the second Russian collapse. Then, Japan causes a war with the U.S. in 2050. It is a space war including the surface of the moon. This is related to space, but this is a part that seems absurd slightly for the reviewer. A summary of space war is as follows: Japan begins a surprise attack to a space platform called as a "Battle Star" of the U.S. military pivot from the Japanese secret military base made on the surface of the moon, to oppose to the U.S. marine rule. However, it is a story that Japan loses in this war immediately.

In addition, this book emphasizes that the technology is developed drastically by war. After reading of this book, the reviewer agrees the contents as "Indeed" from a geopolitics point of view. There is a book review in newspaper about this book [5].

#### [References]

- [1] Shindo Eiichi: "Dusk of Empire U.S.A.", Iwanami Shoten, 1994 (in Japanese).
- [2] Izuru Niimura, Ed. : "Kojien Dictionary", Iwanami Shoten, 1971 (in Japanese).
- [3] Geopolitics: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geopolitics>
- [4] Yuzuru Hatakeyama: "It is fall course unless it takes a Japanese offensive of the third place GDP", Asahi Shimbun, January 26, 2011 (in Japanese).
- [5] Tamaki Saito: "Next 100 Years Prediction—Future Hegemony Map Written by the World Strongest Intelligence Company—George Friedman: 'The Next 100 Years A Forecast for the 21st Century'," Asahi Shimbun, April 13, 2010 (in Japanese).

#### [Comment]

It is really amazing that such a forecast for the world politics in 50-100 years future is seriously examined by the leading private intelligence group in the U.S. In Japan, we often hear the words by the government officials or politicians saying "It is not considered adequate to discuss right now on the future assumptions. We will adequately handle the matter when they actually occur in the future." This inability in our country to seriously examine the future and to prepare for the possible important situations might be the source for enlarging the difference of national power in economy, finance, technology and other areas between our country and other countries, I am afraid. From that view point, I hope that this book is read by all the concerned people in Japanese political and official world. (By Takao Ueda, Editorial Advisor)