

The Study of International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan

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**The Study of International Cultural
Relations of Postwar Japan**

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Abstract

The paper examines policies and activities of cultural exchange carried out by Japanese national, local and private agents since the end of WWII. Methodologically, we distinctively use the notion culture as a tool and as an object of study, and to synthesize the two in full intention, based on the debate among IR students about so called Cultural Turn in IR theories.

As case studies, the Japanese experiences are examined from two points. Firstly, it is compared with the German experiences in Europe, with special attention to the construction of national identity. In both countries, the peoples tried to make use of cultural exchange activities in the management of international relations. The actual developments of cultural relations by the two countries, however, were in striking contrast to each other. Secondly, our study focuses on the explosive expansion of private sector's international cultural exchange in the 1980s in association with so called "emerging civil society" phenomenon observed worldwide throughout 1970s and 1980s. By using our original approach mentioned in the Chapter 1, the paper tries to sketch out that the increase of the private organizations is largely the response of the Japanese society to outside influences, not something genuinely outgrown from within the society itself due to mainly domestic causes.

Keywords:, international relations, Cultural Turn, international cultural exchange,
identity, civil society

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1. Framework of Analysis

1-1. Introduction

Masayoshi Ohira (1910-1980), Prime Minister of Japan from 1978 to 1980, was characterized as a prophet of the coming 1980s as well as the 21st century [Kumon 1993]. In 1980, the year of his sudden death during his second term in office, Ohira allowed his advisory group to publish a paper called “The Age of Culture (*Bunka no Jidai*)”. It was the time, so Ohira recognized, when Japan had caught up with the advanced Western societies in terms of modern economy and technology and was ready to step forward into the course of creative development with a philosophical basis of its own. Ohira also regarded the earth as a single community with growing interdependence, and he insisted in his 1979 statements that the 1980s for Japan would be the age of culture as well as internationalization (*kokusaika*) [Ohira 1979a, 1979b].

People refer to “culture” in the context of international relations when they face new challenges in an uncertain world. The case of Japan is not an exception. At the turn of the 20th century, when the concept of *bunka* (culture, *Kultur*) was imported from Germany, it soon became an intellectual keyword of the growing nationalism of the modern nation in construction, which desired to become a member of the society of “civilized (culturally enlightened) nations”. Just after the defeat of WWII, the building of a “cultural state (*bunka kokka*)²” and rejoining the international community became the national slogan of Japan. In the above example, Ohira recognized the ongoing transformation to modernity in the postwar world, and encouraged the Japanese people to open themselves up to the global community and to make a contribution to

¹ The content of this paper is based on the result of co-research project by Study Group on International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan (*Sengo-Nihon Kokusai Bunka Koryu Kenkyuka*,.) and published in Japanese as *International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan* (co-authorship of the Study Group with editorial supervision by Kenichiro Hirano, Keiso Shobo publishers) in 2005. It is a group of young Japanese and Korean researchers based at universities and research institutions in Japan. The members are Members (in alphabetical order) Maki AOKI-OKABE (Researcher, Institute of Developing Economies, Chiba), Yoko KAWAMURA (Associate Professor, Faculty of Humanities, Seikei University, Tokyo), Kyungmook KIM (Full-time Lecturer, College of Liberal Arts, Chukyo University, Nagoya), Sayaka KISHI (Research Fellow, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) Toichi MAKITA (Professor, Obirin University, School of International Studies, Tokyo),

² In Japanese terms, “cultural state” refers to a state that pursues non-military, peaceful, and moral governance. Here, “culture (*bunka*)” is used in a sense that derives from classical Chinese literature, rather than European/German sense of “Kultur.”

international cooperation by using the terms “culture” and “internationalization”. Today, at the starting point of the 21st century, international cultural relations are regarded in Japan as a priority by various government ministries in respective policy fields [Advisory Group for Prime Minister 2005; Commissioner's Advisory Group 2003].

In the study of international relations, various approaches using the concept of culture – sometimes called “the Cultural Turn” in general – originate from the sense of crisis and uncertainty about fundamental research methods. Our research project, “International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan”, shares such methodological concern, but we focus on culture not only methodologically, but also examine cultural relations themselves as the object of study. That is, we study cultural exchange and cultural cooperation in a broad sense, under a single concept of “international cultural relations” (in Japanese words, *kokusai bunka koryu*; thereafter abbreviated as ICR). In our research we distinguish between two different dimensions of ICR, i.e., phenomenal and policy, and, as for the policy dimension, two different levels of ICR policies according to the agency (central/governmental and local/grass-roots). We also pay special attention to the interaction of different dimensions and levels. In doing so, we attempt to analyze the transformation to a sovereign nation-states system and the dynamics of the globalizing world from the level of human beings. Such a broad and synthesized approach is becoming more and more important for social science in general – especially when our life is structurally transformed by the process of globalization, and at the same time, strong national sentiments seem to be growing.

In the following sections, I would like to sketch out the framework of our study group's analysis. In the next section I survey the development of ICR-Studies in Japan, which has been backed by the societal development in postwar Japan since the late 1970s and 1980s – in Ohira's words, the age of culture and internationalization. The Japanese concept of ICR is also briefly examined. In section 3, I try to position our approach in the broader development of the “cultural turn(s)” in the study of international relations. Sections 4 and 5 respectively examine the distinction of broad/narrow ICR, and summarize our analysis of the actual development of postwar Japanese ICR. In the final part, the future agenda and general implication of our research are presented.

1-2. ICR-Studies: The Japanese Approach to Culture in International Relations

The Japanese term “international cultural relations (*kokusai bunka koryu*)” is originally a practical one³. It refers to various attempts of human beings to bring different cultural elements in contact – the word *koryu*, indeed, originally means a two-way flow of things, such as alternating flows of electricity⁴. As described later, there are two dimensions in such human attempts – the policy (or activity) dimension, i.e., the activities and policies which intentionally aim to bring different cultures in contact (hereafter also referred to as “narrow ICR”), and the phenomenal (or factual) dimension, i.e., the whole transnational movement of people, goods, information, etc., with different cultural backgrounds (hereafter also referred to as “broad ICR”).

After WWII, and especially since the mid-1970s, the Japanese society experienced a rapid development of ICR policies on different levels. On the government level, the Japan Foundation was established in 1972; on the local level, “pioneer” prefectures such as Hokkaido, Kanagawa, etc., began to integrate international cooperation as a core policy of local governments. In the 1980s, when the people of Western advanced industrial societies became interested in the cultural peculiarity of Japan⁵, while those in neighboring Asian countries became critical about Japan’s arrogance and insensitivity to history⁶, more and more Japanese, not only elites and intellectuals but also ordinary citizens, became aware of the need for cultivating human relations with people of different nations and cultures. In the later 1980s, numerous citizen groups and semi-official bodies promoting ICR were created nationwide. At the grassroots level, ICR was sometimes called simply *kokusai koryu* (international exchange); the term “culture” was omitted because the word *bunka* had a connotation of high culture and sounded too exclusive and elitist for some citizen

³ For a detailed examination of the concept, see [Kawamura 2005], Section 1.

⁴ In dictionaries, the word *Koryu* is used as a Japanese translation of the English words “exchange” and “interchange”. While “exchange” tends to mean a one-time swap, however, *koryu* has a connotation of constant contacts and mutual interaction.

⁵ In 1979, the report of European Communities described Japan as “a country of workaholics living in rabbit hutches”. In the same year, well-known books by Western Japanologists, such as Edwin O. Reischauer’s *The Japanese* and Ezra F. Vogel’s *Japan as Number One*, were published.

⁶ Symbolical incidents are, among others, the heated debate on the descriptions of invasion and colonial dominance in Asia in Japanese history textbooks, and on the then Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone’s visit to Yasukuni Shrine, where war dead for the country, including war criminals, are commemorated.

activists.

Here, in the Japanese context, it is to be noted that the activities of ICR and “internationalization” (*kokusaika*) in general meant – at least in part – an effort towards Westernization (e.g. higher command of English language among Japanese citizens) and inner reform of the Japanese society to suit the “global standard” (e.g. bilingual signs in public spaces). Such a posture of self-transformation in ICR is based on the experiences of Japanese modernization since the 19th century, which was often synonymous with Westernization. This self-transforming characteristic of Japanese ICR policies contrasts with the “export-orientation” of American and Western-European ICR policies (public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, foreign cultural policy, etc.), which focus on the spread of their own languages and the information of their own cultures to other peoples. At the same time, the effort to open up Japanese minds and society to *non-Western* people had long been limited, especially at the central government level. It was in the late 1980s, and through the 1990s in particular, that general Japanese citizens became aware of the importance of developing dialogues and mutual relations with the people of neighboring Asian countries.

Gradually, practitioners of ICR, but also some in academia, became interested in incorporating the activities of ICR as an object of the study of International Relations. In 1984, the first seriously academic anthology that focused on the role of ICR in broader international relations was published by the Japan Institute of International Affairs [Saito et al.: 1984]. In the early 1990s, a research committee named “International Exchange (*Kokusai Koryu*)” was established by the Japan Association for International Relations (JAIR) as one of the Association’s specialized committees.

After the bubble economy ended, the enthusiasm for ICR activities among the Japanese general public seemed temporarily to wane; however, the study of ICR persisted, with the attention on Samuel P. Huntington’s claim of a “clash of civilizations” [Huntington 1993, 1996] and upon the rapid development of ICR in the phenomenal dimension, i.e., the growing trend of globalization. Indeed, since the latter half of the 1990s, the general interest in ICR policy was revived, this time as a tool for the revitalization of Japanese economy and for the better management of local communities, which were becoming more and more multicultural. The attention to the former point is especially strong among government officials and business people,

backed by the publications of two American scholars: Joseph S. Nye's work on "soft power" [Nye 2004] and Douglas McGray's analysis on "Japanese cool" [McGray 2002].

In spite of this growing attention to ICR activities in the Japanese society at large, only a small number of "pure academics" have seriously focused on ICR with the attention to its policy dimension as the object of study⁷. Kenichiro Hirano, scholar of international relations at Waseda University (until 1998 at the University of Tokyo, Komaba), is one such rare academic that contributed to the development of ICR-studies⁸. Originally a specialist of diplomatic history in modern Asia, Hirano was attracted to the acculturation theory of anthropology, and came to regard international relations in general (i.e., not only inter-state relations but also inter-societal or transnational relations) as "cultural relations" [Hirano 1976]. He also took an active part in the development of ICR activities in Japan, including the networking of grassroots ICR organizations and became a mediator between academia and practitioners. In his 2000 publication, he summarized his analytical framework of ICR-studies [Hirano 2000].

The Study Group on International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan has two interconnected origins. One is a study group of graduate students at the University of Tokyo, started in the mid-1990s voluntarily by those who gathered in Hirano's seminar⁹. The other is a research project in the mid-1990s led by Hirano himself, which began as a working commission, on the request of the Japan Foundation, to draft a report on overall status of Japanese ICR policies toward ASEAN countries [University of Tokyo Study Group 1997]. The latter project evolved into a more

⁷ This does not mean that Japanese academia remained insensitive to overall ICR. In JAIR, a research committee named "Transnational" was set up at about the same time as the committee "International Exchange" was established. Today, the committee "Transnational" hosts numerous sociologists who are interested in movements of people across borders – in our terms, broad ICR –, analyzing migration and multiculturalism from the micro level.

⁸ Apart from Hirano, the recent commitment of anthropologist Tamotsu Aoki at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) on the policy study of ICR is noteworthy. Aoki's approach seems to be more practice-oriented than Hirano's historical approach. Other academics have been active as policy advisors of ICR, some of whom entered into the government, such as psychologist Hayao Kawai, currently the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs.

⁹ Early works of some core members of the first days of this study group can be seen, among others, in [Hirano 1999].

independent research project on the general development of Japanese ICR in the postwar period, funded by the Toyota Foundation; the project membership partly changed, with some younger researchers who participated in the voluntary study group at graduate school more recently. The result of the work of this new project group, the Study Group on International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan, was published in an anthology early this year [Study Group 2005]. In the following two sections, I try to position our approach in broader currents of the study of International Relations and to point out the unique features of our framework.

1-3. The “Cultural Turns” and the Study of International Cultural Relations

With the growing criticism of rationalist/positivist research methods as well as the rise of cultural studies, it has become fashionable among the scholars of social science to speak of “the Cultural Turn” in the respective research field. In our view, one can recognize two currents if one looks closely at the flood of “cultural approaches”. That is, actually there seems to have been two “Cultural Turns,” i.e., the use of “culture” as the tool of study (Cultural Turn I) and as the object of study (Cultural Turn II).

In the study of International Relations, the **Cultural Turn I**, the use of the concept of culture as a research tool, means the shift from rationalism and material power-political analysis (realism) to research methods that are more sensitive to different contexts defined by history, geography, ethnicity, gender, etc., and to norms and values in policymaking (see Figure 1). The current from postmodernism to constructivism [Lapid & Kratochwil 1996], the application of literary criticism, sociology, cultural anthropology, etc., is representative thereof. Since the latter half of the 1990s, scholars following this current have often favored to choose “non-cultural” themes, such as national security [Katzenstein 1996], for their case studies, in order to test the validity of their “cultural tool” in the fields that are traditionally advantageous to realists.

The **Cultural Turn II**, the focus on “culture” as the object of study, overlaps partly with the first Cultural Turn, but can be recognized as a somewhat different tradition. It is the shift of focus on state-centric analysis and hard politics to transnational activities of non-state or societal agents and various issue-oriented international cooperation – often inspired by the transformation of the actual world as a result of growing interdependence and globalization. This trend of research is seen

most obviously in the studies of diplomatic history under the themes of “cultural internationalism” and “cultural diplomacy” [Iriye 1997, Gienow-Hecht 1999, Gienow-Hecht and Schumacher 2003, Scott-Smith and Krabbendam 2003]. Some currents of peace studies, such as WOMP and contributions to the journal *Alternatives*, seem to share the same interest. The studies of civil society and of “global culture” (cultural globalization), whose thematic concern often derives from that of peace studies but which are not always considered as constitutional element of the “Cultural Turn” [Banba 1983, Featherstone 1990, Robertson 1992, Appadurai 1997, Boli and Thomas 1999] are also regarded here as part of “Cultural Turn II”.

There are some other “cultural approaches” in International Relations that deliberately do not use the term “culture” in their names. Examples can be seen in the focus on social interactions [Deutsch 1966], on non-material dimensions of power politics [Nye 2004], and on the relations between values and conflicts [Huntington 1996]. The overall locations of various cultural approaches according to the two “Cultural Turns” are indicated in the Figure 2.

In this map, the positioning of Japanese ICR-Studies is on the upper far right. That is, we attempt to synthesize the two “Cultural Turns” by using analytical tool of historical analysis, sociology, cultural anthropology (acculturation), cultural studies, etc., and at the same time, focusing on ICR as both phenomenon and policy as the object of study (see section 4).

1-4. **International Cultural Relations as Phenomenon and Policy** (Figure 3)

As mentioned earlier, the uniqueness of our approach lies in discerning different dimensions and levels of ICR as the object of study. That is, we distinguish between the broad (phenomenal/factual) and narrow (policy/activity) dimensions of ICR according to the intentions of agents, as well as between national (central-governmental) and non-state (local, grassroots) levels of ICR according to different kinds of agents promoting ICR.

The **phenomenal/factual dimension of ICR (broad ICR, ICR as phenomenon)** refers to people, goods, money, information, ideas, etc., that move, or “flow,” across borders. These transnational movements occur as a result of various individual objectives such as building career and friendship, gaining profit and popularity, or satisfying one’s curiosity and desire; since these movements occur across

national and cultural borders, they necessarily involve the contact and interchange among different nationals and cultures, thus consisting of “culture contacts,” or “cultural relations” in a broad sense. One may say that the broad ICR is another word for the ongoing globalization itself, if one wants to use the popular term.

In postwar Japan, the development of broad ICR especially since the 1970s/1980s was regarded as a great shock – and, sometimes, even a threat – in society in general because many Japanese had taken it for granted that Japan consisted of overwhelmingly homogeneous populations with strong in-group identities according to family (*ie*), local community (*mura*), school, company, etc. The growing international reputation of Japanese industrial products brought about sense of pride among the Japanese people, but the criticisms by foreigners on the exclusiveness of Japanese society (later also termed “Japan bashing”) caused serious identity crisis among intellectuals as well as among the general public. Some, however, especially the people of postwar generations and local activists, regarded this crisis as a chance to construct an open, democratic society that commits itself to international cooperation and understanding. On the other hand, some politicians such as Ohira (see section 1) and Yasuhiro Nakasone (prime minister 1982-1987) tried to take this opportunity for Japan to assume a stronger national pride and an active leadership in international relations. Such undertakings, both on the societal and governmental level, resulted in active practices of ICR policies and activities described next.

The **policy/activity dimension of ICR (narrow ICR, ICR as policy/activity)** refers to various international exchange and cooperation activities, or international cultural policies of various social agents. These activities and policies make up a part of broader ICR, but they are peculiar in that they deliberately create contact between various people and cultures¹⁰. Although called *koryu* (alternating flow) in Japanese terms, narrow ICR can in fact be both two-way mutual interactions and one-way “export” or “import” of cultures.

When analyzing narrow ICR, we recognize a variety of agents, or levels, of ICR. **Narrow ICR level 1** consists of international cultural policies of national

¹⁰ In fact, it is not always easy to make a clear demarcation between broad and narrow ICRs. There are “gray zones” such as the case of exchange students, who in the first place go to foreign countries for their own personal cause (e.g. better career opportunity), but sometimes gradually start to recognize themselves as mediators between nations and cultures, therefore as “practitioners of ICR activities”.

governments (foreign cultural policy and internationalization of inland culture-related policies). **Narrow ICR Level 2** consists of international cultural policies and activities carried out by non-state agents (NGOs/NPOs, local governments, individuals, etc.).

In the case of Japan, ICR activities began in the immediate postwar period as primarily non-governmental (level 2), idealistic international movements such as world federation movements, UNESCO movements, etc. In the shadow of the Cold War, educational and intellectual exchange activities with the US soon dominated, with active support by the American government (level 1, e.g. Fulbright Programs) and by American private foundations (level 2, e.g. the establishment of major Japanese private international cultural organizations supported by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations). In the 1970s, when the US suddenly took a major change in her foreign policy and the people in other Asian countries became critical of Japan, the Japanese government began to make some efforts to practice ICR policy. The main “target countries” of such “level 1” ICR were the United States and Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries, not immediate neighbors such as China and Korea, with whom Japan had problems of the traumatic past of the highest magnitude. ICR activities with China and Korea as partners developed only in later years, primarily from level 2, when broader ICR in general grew within Northeast Asia, and when Japanese people looked to foreign residents originating from such countries as fellow citizens.

In our research project, we have paid particular attention to the interactions of different dimensions and levels of ICR (see Figure 3). For example, agents pursue narrow ICR in order to adapt to the development of broad ICR; the trend of broad ICR are often set by the policies of narrow ICR; non-state agents pursue ICR activities in order to make a better life in the multicultural world and to reform the state-centric world order; national governments pursue ICR policy in order to promote, to complement, to compete with or to counter ICR activities by non-state agents; and, finally, state and non-state agents can coordinate their activities and form a (loose) coalition in order to achieve common objectives.

1-5. The Experiences of International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan

With such notions of ICR in mind, and making use of “culture” both as the tool and the object of study, the Study Group examined the experiences of ICR in

postwar Japan. The detailed stories of level 1 and level 2 ICRs are depicted in the second and third chapters respectively. Here in this section, the main findings of our research are enlisted in the form of four points.

(1) Narrow ICR as the Construction of Identity

Altogether, international cultural relations can be regarded as the consequence as well as the process of human pursuits to identify the self in contemporary international society. In the case of Japan, the policies and activities of cultural exchange/cooperation since WWII have been the pursuits of people at all levels of society to position “us (Japan, the Japanese)” in the postwar world¹¹. Particularly in the early period, the location of “us” was conceived vis-à-vis “the West” – practically, the United States. Neighboring countries in Asia were not regarded as equal partners or the members of the same community. It is also to be remembered that throughout the Cold War period, the main “target countries” of Japanese cultural policies were Southeast Asian (ASEAN) countries, not her immediate neighbors such as Korea and China [Study Group 2005: Chapters 1 and 2].

As the time passed, however, new trends of cultural relations came out, initiated by local and nongovernmental agents (level 2). People looked to their Asian neighbors in the pursuit of issue-oriented cooperation and of making better communities both locally and internationally [*idem.*]. Here it is interesting to pay attention to the people’s awareness of the multi-culturalization of Japanese society since the 1980s and the special roles played by foreign residents in Japan, such as Korean permanent residents (“*zainichi*”), in the emerging new cultural relations in Asia; and also, to the formation of new image of multilayered and multidimensional “us” among Japanese citizens as the result of developments in both broad and narrow ICRs [*ibid.*: Chapter 3, Section 3]¹².

¹¹ Peter Katzenstein states in his recent work that “(th)rough cultural diplomacy, ... governments seek to present specific images to support or alter existing state identities” [Katzenstein 2005: 38]. His statement here refers mainly, in our terms, to narrow ICR level 1; we think that the same thing can be said regarding level 2 ICR activities.

¹² It should be noted, however, that like in Europe, “anti- (Asian-) migrant” sentiments have at the same time been growing among the general public, being influenced by the voices of some conservative politicians such as Shintaro Ishihara, the mayor of Tokyo Metropolitan City.

(2) Interaction between Different Dimensions and Levels of ICR

Another major finding is that there have been constant interactions between different dimensions and levels of ICR.

In the case of postwar Japanese ICR, the most significant of such interaction was the gradual change of government ICR policies (level 1) that occurred in the 1990s, influenced both by level 2 ICR and by “broader ICR.” In the 1980s, when the “economic giant” faced the rapid increase of transnational flows of people, goods, information, etc., Japanese grassroots agents (level 2) had begun to actively cooperate with their Asian neighbors in the form of networking, joint artistic production, etc., and to construct equal partnerships in the larger regional community. This cooperative and reciprocal technique of ICR activities was, later in the 1990s, adopted by the central government and incorporated in its national cultural diplomacy (level 1) [*ibid.*: Chapters 1 and 2].

The personal connection between different levels of narrow ICRs is also noteworthy. For example, Japan-American exchange programs sponsored by Japanese and American nonprofit organizations (level 2 ICR) resulted in a network of intellectuals, business elites, politicians and government officials supportive of government ICR policies (level 1 ICR) [*ibid.*: Chapter 5].

(3) ICR as Cultural Encounter

As stated in section 2, ICR originally means the efforts to bring different cultural elements into contact. Such undertakings necessarily accompany the process of cultural encounters. In the Japanese case, various new cultural elements were brought into the Japanese society as a result of ICR activities. The reception and development of the concept of civil society (*shimin shakai*) is a prime example of such acculturation [*ibid.*: Chapter 3].

In retrospect, the ICR activities in postwar Japan have developed hand in hand with the construction of a “Japanese version” of civil society. Those who were involved in Japan-American intellectual exchange programs during the time of the Cold War, which were backed by major American foundations, became an active promoter of the concept of civil society in Japan. In more recent years, the experiences of cooperation and networking over Asia produced a unique philosophy of grassroots activities; in development cooperation, for example, Japanese NGOs show greater

attention to cultural difference and self-reliance. It was through these grass-roots initiatives for international cultural exchange and cooperation – with the West as well as with Asia – that the Western concept of civil society was fused with a unique Japanese (or Asian) value and incorporated into Japanese society as an ordinary term of practice.

(4) Comparison of Japan/Asia and Germany/Europe

In our research project, the commitment of Japan in Asian regional cultural cooperation and that of Germany in European cultural cooperation were compared [*ibid.*: Chapter 2]. Both countries have made efforts to make use of ICR in order to establish a new identity in the postwar contemporary world.

When contrasted with the experiences of the Federal Republic of Germany, which was located at the forefront of the Cold War and made (or, had to make) constant commitments to European cultural cooperation according to the “grand strategy” to embed herself in Europe, the hesitation of Japan in constructing ICR, and especially its unnatural disproportion in her setting of target countries of ICR, was striking. While Germany seemed to be successful in establishing an identity of “Germany in Europe,” Japan remains somewhat outside of other Asian countries – indeed, people often speak of “Japan *and* Asia,” but not “Japan *in* Asia.”

This contrast stems partly from the historical and geopolitical difference between the two countries, which created unfavorable conditions for Japan to develop ICR in Asia. We must say, however, that with all these objective disadvantages, Japanese policymakers still lacked a general will, or the initiative, to build constructive relationships with neighboring countries based on mutual trust. The most serious problem for Japan today is that it has no major regional partner comparable to France for Germany. In recent years, some ICR initiatives on both level 1 and level 2 have been taken to build a future-oriented relationship with Korea and China based on dialogue on historical issues, such as joint research project of historians and the edition of common history teaching materials, which we hope will become the cornerstone of regional partnerships.

1-6. The Implication of ICR-Studies and the Future Research Agenda

Japanese ICR-Studies, though still in the making, seem to show some unique features in the development of the cultural approach in the study of International

Relations. It would, for example, methodologically be useful to distinguish between culture as a tool and culture as an object of study, and to synthesize the two “Cultural Turns” in full intention. Our key concept of ICR, with awareness of different dimensions and levels of “cultural relations” and their mutual interactions, is unique in its inclusiveness and elaboration necessary for the analysis of multidimensional and multilayered international relations of our age. The Japanese term “*Koryu*” might sound somewhat esoteric to Western scholars, but the use of this concept is appropriate in the moral and political context of today in that it provides us more focus on the possibility of mutuality and reciprocity of intercultural activities.

The agenda for our future research can be summarized in three brief points. First, we need more case studies; especially ICR in their phenomenal/factual dimension and their interaction with policy/activity dimension must further be analyzed. With regard to narrow ICR, the position of ICR policy in general governmental policy fields should be examined. Here, we could have fruitful cooperation with scholars of other research fields, such as historians, sociologists, and researchers of general International Relations.

Secondly, it is obvious that we need more theoretical/methodological improvement. We should develop connections with related approaches in broader (including Western) academia. Through such interactions, we also hope to refine the term “culture” in general in the study of International Relations.

Thirdly, and related to the first and second agenda, we need to develop a broader network of ICR-Studies. Since ICR especially in its narrow sense is a field strongly connected to social practice, we have been inviting ICR policy practitioners, such as staff of the Japan Foundation, local international associations, etc., to the Research Commission within the Japan Association of International Relations for dialogue and discussion. In Japanese academia our group is still young and small, but we hope to extend this network of researchers and practitioners also internationally.

Today, Ohira’s prophecy seems to have come true in a somewhat ironic form. Indeed, we find ourselves in “the Age of Culture,” facing a crisis of multicultural co-existence and waves of fierce nationalism. The ICR approach is to prove its analytical strength as a synthesis of two Cultural Turns. At the same time, the study of ICR is not, and must not be, a mere “science of the academics, by the academics, for the academics”.

In the Japanese language, “culture (*bunka*)” originally means a way of government with non-military power of morality. This concept of culture with a nuance of peacemaking and social reform derives from classical Chinese literature, and is shared broadly among the people of Asia. With this Asian concept of culture in mind, we endeavor to conduct research that helps us understand the dynamics of international relations in terms of complex cultural encounters, and present a hint to develop better ICR, both in its narrow and broad sense, in the actual global community.

2. National Commitment to Regional Cultural Cooperation in Asia and Europe

This chapter examines the development of national commitment to international cultural relation policies (hereafter referred as ICR policy) within a regional framework. In the modern era, one of the mainstreams of ICR policy by nation states has been public diplomacy which constructs its own “national culture” by projecting it both inward and outward. Recently, there appeared another trend: that is, interactive ICR policy among nations within the regional framework.

“Region” is defined here as a group that consists of more than a single nation-state. It will be defined by the perception of the peoples who live within it, especially of the national policymakers. In other words, interaction among people and “we-feeling (collective identity)” formed as a result will be potent factors for region building [Oba 2004: Chapter 1]. ICR policy projects are closely related with development of “we-feeling,” in the sense that they are intended to bring people into direct contact with what is “foreign” for them. Today, regional ICR policies are implemented across issues ranging from mutual understanding, science and technology to sometimes political issues like human rights. In this chapter, we would like to put such broad ranges of projects together under a single term as “regional cultural cooperation (here referred as RCC),” and try to correlate them with regions as social constitution.

Why do the national policymakers conduct RCC? Is there any pattern of RCC? Here we try to answer those questions by comparing Japanese RCC toward Asia with Germany’s case in Europe.

After the end of World War II, while burdened by defeat and national

division, Germany started ICR policy aiming at “rehabilitation of national prestige” and reconciliation with neighboring nations. Reentering into international society was a big challenge for postwar Japan also. Japanese government under occupation by Allies launched ICR policies from a quite similar compulsion to Germany’s. It is to be noted however, that throughout Cold War period, main target countries of Japanese ICR policies were the US and Southeast Asian nations, not her immediate neighbors such as South Korea and China, with whom Japan had problems of the traumatic past. Japan’s RCC has been developed in seemingly “distorted” form, when compared with the West Germany, which has been engaged in RCC in a partnership with France. This “disproportion” reflects the struggle inherent in Japanese policymakers over how they identify themselves in international society. What keeps the Japanese policymakers away from forging a regional partnership with their immediate neighbors, then?

The problem that besets Japan with her neighbors will be even more striking through the comparison with the case of Germany, which was another latecomer to the game of international politics, and another “problem in the region,” but developed a totally different pattern of RCC in the postwar era.

2-1. Regional Cultural Cooperation and National Identity

Since the late 1990s, the idea that the perception of individuals determines the dynamics of international relations has come into the spotlight in International Relations [Katzenstein 1996, Lapid and Kratochwil 1996, Wendt 1999]. Some of them especially focused on the perception about the world that one lives in, and about the relations between selves and others. This chapter also pays attention to such perception about selves and others, and defines it as identity. We then focus on ICR, which was out of touch with the IR studies mentioned above. Our point here is that ICR policies can be the clue to study the process of constructing/ re-constructing identities. More concretely, RCC is pursued by policymakers to construct the national collective identity. Conversely, RCC involving cross-sectoral public can modify the policymakers’ original identity. Therefore, they can control the image of themselves both in eyes of people overseas and their own by ICR policies [Banba 1983].

National policymakers can use RCC as a tool to construct positive identity. By promoting RCC under the concept of “unity in diversity,” for example, they can

guarantee the uniqueness of national “selves” within a larger framework. On the other hand, they can appeal both at home and abroad the positive image of “selves” by taking initiative in the international RCC policy making process. It should be noted that one can thus fortify national identities through commitment to RCC.

For the cases of Germany and Japan, the policymakers started with negative identities as “defeated countries” or “ex-invaders” in the postwar world. Under such circumstances, it was considerably difficult to pursue ICR policies as independent “national” projects as France or the US did. As a result, the both countries tried to transform their negative identities into positive ones through active commitment to ICR policies in collaboration with neighboring countries. Nevertheless, as we will show later, RCC in each case drew sharp contrast.

In this chapter, we would like to examine RCC from two different perspectives. The former is the structure of partnership; whether they pursue hierarchical order lead by hegemonic power, or equal partnership. The latter is emphatic point of the projects. When one emphasizes the uniqueness and autonomy of each unit, the region will be the one like Karl Deutsch’s famous concept of a pluralistic security community. When one focuses on the commonality of the members, in contrast, they will be lead to a framework like a well-integrated nation state.¹³⁾ As for RCC, their contents and outcomes, and even the style of policymaking are closely dependent on these two points.

Paying attention to those points, we will analyze the case of “Germany in Europe” and “Japan and Asia” in the following sections.

2-2. German Commitment to European Cultural Cooperation

For the policymakers of postwar Germany, “Europe” was an essential basis of their identity. Referring to the identity as “Germany in Europe” propounded by Elizabeth Pond, “Europe” as a “niche” for postwar Germany has even been fortified though the membership of the region varies across the ages [Katzenstein 1996: 33].

In the later period of occupation, the future major figures of the German public ICR agencies gathered in the Wiesbaden Working Circle and envisaged postwar

¹³⁾ See [Deutsch et al. 1957].

ICR policies as the renaissance of the German nation based on Europe. There they envisioned to promote fundamental research of “abendländische Kultur” and the European integration movement history within the supranational framework. More noteworthy was the point that the ideas of “renovation of Germany” and “internal renaissance of the German nation” were strongly related to the Europe-oriented cultural projects (Kawamura 1999a).

It was in the 1960s when the German-Franco partnership was built, and it worked as a pivot for European Cultural Cooperation thereafter. As Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between France and Germany signed in 1963, bilateral ICR policies between two nations started. Activities such as youth exchange programs allowed for international art collaboration and language learning. Aiming at promotion of mutual understanding among the citizens, the projects involved a wide range of people from both countries. Besides, beneath those national ICR policies underlay the various patterns of exchange programs at the grass-roots level since the occupation [Farquharson and Holt 1975].

Thus the postwar German ICR policies were prefaced with the bilateral exchanges with neighboring countries aiming at rapport. Curiously, the public opinion research unexpectedly reported that it was the awareness of being “European” that was promoted as a result of such bilateral ICR policies [*op.cit.*: 189-191].

In the 1980s, German commitment to the European Cultural Cooperation was further enhanced under the initiative by Hans-Dietrich Genscher. As is well known, he assumed the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs as *Education of EC* was published by the EC committee under Ralf Dahrendorf who lead the Directorate General of Research, Science and Education within the committee. *Education of EC* advocated introduction of “Europe Term” to the education program in EC member countries as well as facilitation of teachers and students’ international activities in the regions. Thus the report aimed to foster the sense of the region among the individuals in EC through ensuring the equal right of education regardless of nationalities, which Dahredolf regarded as essential for European citizenship.

Backed by the trend in the 1970s, the German RCC after the 1980s was marked by the aspiration for a comprehensive European identity, which was based on the idea that “German identity”, whether it was West Germany or a hypothetical “united

Germany,” could not be realized without “Europe” which surrounds and sustains it. Although the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 expanded the realm of “Europe” both geographically and conceptually, the position of “Europe” remains central in the pursuit of Germany’s national identity in international society. It is to be noted, however, that the gravity in the German RCC has on the gradual shift from German-Franco pivot to hypothetical “Mitteleuropa” [Kawamura 2005].

German commitment to post war European cultural cooperation can be summarized as continuous enterprise to embed Germany within the framework of “Europe.” Emphasis on “Europe” as an identity enhanced the national framework and vice-versa. Active involvement in RCC within the “European” framework helped Germany to get rid of the distrust of neighbors toward the “successor of the Nazis.” It eased tensions among the members, and even established regional relations centered on Germany herself¹⁴⁾ Behind this background, there was the fact that determinant problems for the German state and society have been intricately intertwined with the international environment in Europe.

Above all, European Cultural Cooperation as a “grand strategy” for German ICR policies was supported by bilateral cooperation with regional members who were under historical tensions. Overcoming antagonism from the pre-modern era, Germany and France have built a partnership which played a pivotal role for the European cultural cooperation, and they contributed to European Identity as a result. As for “Mitteleuropa” countries, Poland for example, continued textbook dialogue with Germany since the 1970s and now is an important RCC partner in Eastern Europe [Nishikawa 1992: Part II]. Interestingly, those quiet dialogue processes brought up participants of the international cultural exchange programs into leaders of the next generations, and they promoted RCC further. Moreover, those bilateral ICR policies are characterized by equal partnership among the parties, aiming at co-prosperity by respecting the uniqueness of one another.

2-3. Japanese Commitment to RCC in Asia

¹⁴⁾ Markovits and Reich [Markovits and Reich1993] likened united Germany in Europe to Gramsci’s hegemony.

1) ICR policies as a tool for “Contribution to international society”

Compared with Germany’s case, what is distinctive about the ICR policies between Japan and other Asian nations is the duplex “disproportion” of its structure. One of its points is the overemphasis of Southeast Asian nations as RCC partners, more precisely, the members of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (here referred as ASEAN). While Europe is defined as a region including Germany herself, Japan obviously stands out of Southeast Asia, not even a member of ASEAN. It should be that a group consists of both Northeast and Southeast Asian countries that forms a counterpart of Europe in Germany’s case. Nevertheless Japan’s RCC started and developed in the form of projects for Southeast Asian nations.

Another is the relationship with the US. ICR policies by postwar Japan, both at governmental and grass-roots level, started as occupation by the Allies, and developed as a response to the US. Beneath the Japanese commitment to RCC, underlays a peculiar identity which considers the Japanese people as “we who contribute to security in Southeast Asia, which is the area of responsibility under the umbrella of the US.” In other words, “Asia” represented by Southeast Asia has been a target rather than an active partner for “contribution to international society.”

Just after the end of the war, Japanese policymakers regarded ICR policies as a measure for re-entering international society. For example, *Naruhiko Higashikuni*, the first prime minister of postwar Japan, envisaged in his diary to establish “new Japan as a democratic, peaceful, morally and culturally enlightened nation,” and “to reconstruct Japan into the supreme contributor to the worldwide disarmament, peace and welfare of mankind” [Higashikuni 1957: 200-201]. It is interesting that such aspiration was espoused inside and outside the government¹⁵, and that they regarded “cultural diplomacy” as a measure to change their negative national identity as a “defeated country” into a positive one as “the contributor.” Interestingly, they imagined Asian nations as partners for “contribution”.¹⁶⁾

¹⁵ As for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they upheld “renewal of cultural policy” together with political and economic reconstruction in “the Plan for Voluntary and Immediate Policy Enforcement” which was drawn up in 1945 as a counter plan for occupation by the Allies. As for non-government actions, Legal scholars *Eiichi Makino* and *Asao Odaka* insisted in their co-writing *Theory of Cultural Nation: Power to Make Law* on developing the independency and uniqueness of their nation in order to “promote diversity and fairness in the international community.”

¹⁶⁾ *Mamoru Shigemitsu*, who was the Foreign Minister of *Higashikuni* administration, regarded the newly

Thirst for being a “contributor to international society,” however, did not move into action during the occupation. It took shape after the Japanese national sovereignty was fully restored, and formed the foundation for Japan’s ICR policies thereafter. As the San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed in 1951, Japan embarked on economic interaction via trade and investment with Southeast Asian countries along with the US strategy to build anti-communist block in Asia [Hirano 1985; Shimizu 2001: 78-101]. The surge of goods, money, and people among Japan and Southeast Asia gradually increased international cultural exchange and cooperation projects for those countries. For example, admission of students and exchange of youth from Southeast Asia (began in 1959 by the Management and Coordination Agency of Japan) started as part of the Postwar Compensation toward the invaded nations begun in 1954. Those ICR policies toward Southeast Asia, as the speeches by the prime ministers of the period show, were implemented as the lubricant of economic interactions rather than a tool to constitute a regional collective identity¹⁷.

It was in the 1970s when the Japanese policymakers strongly recognized the need to emphasize cultural ties with Southeast Asia. The government embarked on the RCC aiming to construct “Asia” which includes both Japan and Southeast Asia. In 1972 the Japan Foundation (referred as JF) was established as a national ICR agency with the purpose of promoting international cultural exchange and cooperations,

- a) to promote Japan as a “peaceful nation ” to the international society,
- b) to promote domestic understanding of other countries and cultures,
- c) to contribute to the advancement of technology and well-being in developing countries

[Japan Foundation 1986, MOFA Cultural Project Division 1973]

What is important here is that ICR policies was envisioned to include not only art and humanities but also technological assistance, and explicitly defined as a

independent Southeast Asian nations as partners to establish the politically and culturally independent and prosperous “Asia” through nonmilitary measures such as cultural cooperation [Sato 1999: 171].

¹⁷ In the speeches of Premiers in this period, the term “culture” is always accompanied with “economy”, shown as “cooperation in the economic-cultural field”(Tanzan Ishibashi at the 26th Diet, Feb. 1957), “economic cooperation and cultural partnership”(Shinsuke Kishi at the 27th Diet, Nov. 1957), “active exchange both in the economic and cultural field with friends” (Hayato Ikeda at 39th Diet Sep. 1961) See [Hirano 1985: 351].

tool to contribute to the world's welfare. Moreover, the US and Southeast Asian countries were envisaged as major targets of the activities¹⁸⁾. It was followed by the establishment of "the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Program" in 1974, and financial support to the ASEAN's cultural cooperation, which was initiated by Premier *Takeo Fukuda*, who propounded "heart to heart communication" among ASEAN and Japan, in his famous message toward ASEAN called the "*Fukuda Doctrine*."

Events in the world that occurred around 1970 triggered these transformations of Japanese ICR policies. One jolt was the restoration, unexpected by the Japanese, of full relations between the US and China, and the so-called oil-shocks. Japan's views on both were markedly different from those of the US. It was at the Japan-US Joint Economic Conference held a year after President Nixon's visit to China when the Prime Minister Fukuda proposed establishment "for enhancement of mutual understanding between Japan and the US." In other words, reform of ICR policies in the 1970s was started primarily to bridge the communication gap with the US.

Another was growing economic friction with Southeast Asian nations. The rapid deployment of Japanese corporations, in parallel with a flood of "made in Japan" products in Southeast Asian markets, increased mistrust among local peoples there. Boycotts of Japanese products in Thailand in 1972, together with an anti-Japanese riot in Indonesia during the Premier's tour to ASEAN members in 1974 strongly impressed the Japanese policymakers on the limit of conventional economy-biased diplomacy. Those shocks provoked initiatives to new ICR policies, which focused on confirming cultural ties between Japan and Southeast Asia¹⁹⁾.

Southeast Asian countries, at this juncture, were regarded by the Japanese policymakers not only as economic partners; it was also an area to fulfill her responsibilities in international society as a junior partner of the US. *Fukuda* and his advisors in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs envisioned that there arose a space for Japan

¹⁸⁾ It was obviously stated in the response by Fukuda (Foreign Minister at the time) at the Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee on March 15th 1972 [Compilation Committee for Fifteen year's History of Japan Foundation 1990: 235].

¹⁹⁾ *Prospective and Retrospective of International Exchange, (Kokusaikoryu no Genjo to Tenbo)* [MOFA Cultural Project Division 1973], a preparatory report for the establishment of JF, stressed the importance of Southeast Asia as the target for Japanese ICR policies, and pointed out the urgent need to correct the "wrong image of Japan" such as "an economic animal." Similar opinions can be found in Fukuda and figures in his camp. See [Nisiyama 1978] e.g.

to play a “political role” after the withdrawal of the US forces from Asia. To speak precisely, “the role” was targeted to stabilize the relationship in Southeast Asia by two measures: by bridging communist Indochina and ASEAN, and by supporting the development of ASEAN nations [Tanaka 1999]. ICR policies were the only diplomatic tool available without feeding the fire in Asian nations. In fact, the decades-cherished desire for the “Japan as a contributor to the world well-being” was fulfilled when it found Southeast Asia as its area of activities. To put it differently, it meant that the structure of relationship among “the regional members” was assumed a hierarchical one with Japan as a regional leader who provides technological or political support.

The Japanese “political role” was, however, forced to turn about at the end of the 1970s by an unexpected invasion by Vietnam of Cambodia. As the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan stoked international tension in the so-called New Cold War, Japan refrained from a role of bridge-builder in Southeast Asia, and emphasized her position as “a member of the Western camp.”

2) Silent Change in the 1980s

As Japanese “political roles” receded, the weight of RCC in Japanese foreign policy apparently decreased. Figure 1 shows that the appropriation for the JF remained on the same level until 1987 [Compilation Committee for Fifteen year’s History of Japan Foundation 1990, pp. 222-223, The University of Tokyo Study Group on International Cultural Relations 1999: 29]. Despite the quantitative downturn, Japanese ICR itself experienced qualitative transformation in this era. The change was characterized by the following points: rapid rise of non-national agents of ICR, a surge of two-way interaction, the emergence of issue-oriented projects, and collaboration among various agencies such as the national and local government, NGOs and individuals.

As the following chapter reports, NGOs and local governments in the 1980s eagerly incorporated ideas and methods of international cultural exchange and cooperation through the interaction with agencies of Europe and the US. What is interesting here is that those Japanese agencies exercised such ideas in the activities with Asian counterparts. Such collaborative style of ICR projects was a fresh departure from the conventional national RCC viewing Southeast Asian nations just as

“targets.”

Those new movements at the non-national level were soon incorporated into national policies via collaboration between national and non-national ICR agencies. As aforementioned, JF's budget remained plateaued at that time. JF embarked to collaborate with other agencies and to outsource part of its projects in order to overcome its fiscal limit [Compilation Committee for Fifteen year's History of Japan Foundation 1990: 50]. JF Prizes for Community-Based Cultural Exchange (since 1985) and various collaborations with local governments and agencies, for example, worked as channels to absorb methods and ideas at non-national levels, and cross-sectoral networks were built as a result. Thus the idea of collaboration and interactive style became a nation-wide trend of ICR, and the agencies practiced them in the projects with Asian nations.

3) Revival and Renewal: RCC in the end of 1980s

In the latter 1980s, RCC toward Asia came back into spotlight at the national level. No sooner than his assumption of premiership, *Noboru Takeshita* sent the Cultural Mission to Southeast Asia in November 1987²⁰⁾. The Mission pointed out in its report the need to promote collaborative ICR projects with Southeast Asia [Japan Foundation 1988: 32-37]. The recommendation was taken into *Takeshita's* initiative for Southeast Asian policy taking the form of the Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Cultural Exchange Program, and establishment of the ASEAN Cultural Center within JF [MOFA 1987]. The Mission's report encouraged Japanese ICR policies, as well as Southeast Asian policy. A year after *Takeshita's* message to ASEAN, the Premier announced “the Vision for International Cooperation” in the speech at his visit to London in January 1988. He expressed in his speech that Japan was willing “to contribute to world peace and prosperity” via three measures namely, financial and civil commitment to peace-keeping operations, expanded ODA and further commitment to ICR policies.

Behind *Takeshita's* initiative was the international upheaval both at a

²⁰⁾The mission consisted of major figures in the business community, academics, major cultural figures and directors of national/ non-national ICR agencies

regional and global level. The former was the settlement of the Cambodian conflict. In the face of detente among conflicting parties in late 1987, the Japanese policymakers envisaged to play their once abandoned “political role”²¹ to broker peace in the region. Another was the political cataclysm in the Communist world. As the end of the Cold War came into sight, Japanese policymakers understood that they were no longer allowed to sit still in the shelter of “the Western camp” and to watch the international order to be constructed [Kuriyama 1990]. Thus, again, their appreciation of RCC as a tool for contribution arose, aiming at Southeast Asia as its target.

Right after the speech in London, Prime Minister *Takeshita* directly organized the Advisory Group on International Cultural Exchange (*Kokusai Bunka Koryu ni Kansuru Kondankai*)²². The report was characterized by the idea which regards ICR policies as a tool for “contribution to the world well-being.” The report stood on the same point with the initiative in the 1970s, in the sense that they both assumed that international cultural exchange and cooperation foster mutual understanding among peoples, and enhances the diversity of the world’s cultures [Advisory Group on International Cultural Exchange 1989: 2]. On the other hand, the initiative in the late 1980s differed from the one in the 1970s in that it recognized the need to involve various agents such as NGOs, local governments, and individuals with ICR, and advocated to facilitate cooperation between the public and private sectors. Furthermore, the report propounded “the academic cooperation in the field which requires global efforts such as environmental conservation” [op.cit.: 9], and “enhancing the activities of ASEAN Cultural Center in order to promote interactive ICR policies among the parties” [op.cit.: 8]. It should be emphasized that those ideas reflected the concept and methods which grew up at non-national level in the 1980s.

4) Expanding “Asia” and RCC for “Symbiotic Relationship”

The influence of non-national agents was well embodied in the JF ASEAN

²¹) [MOFA 1989: 144-146] and [Tanino 1988: 35] are eloquent about such aspirations to retrieve a “political role” in Southeast Asia.

²²) It is noteworthy that it was the first advisory group on ICR policies directly organized by a prime minister in the postwar Japan, for the fact that the policymakers urgently needed ICR policy.

Cultural Center. When established in 1990, the Center merely provided data and information on both Japan and ASEAN with the purpose of “maintaining the mutuality of ICR with ASEAN nations” [Japan Foundation 1988: 35]. Its scope and target of activities were remarkably expanded by the “Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative” (*Heiwa Yuko Koryu Kiekaku*) announced by Prime Minister *Tonmi’ichi Murayama* in 1994. The Initiative was the first national attempt to come to grips with the historic issue among Japan and other Asian countries [The University of Tokyo Study Group on International Cultural Relations, 1999: 35]. As a part of it, the ASEAN Culture Center was reorganized into the Asia Center and expanded its target to broader Asia including China and South Korea. What should be noted here is that the Center’s basic concept of “interactive ICR” was put into practice in the projects with those Asian countries.

While conventional ICR projects by the national government such as “Japan-ASEAN Dialogue” (since 1977) were rather general consultations by major cultural figures [op.cit.: 47], the intellectual exchange programs by Asia Center were policy-oriented collaboration by experts of particular issues from Asian nations. The Center aimed to construct and share “new history” among peoples in Asia via such collaboration with artists and academicians in the region [Advisory Group on International Cultural Exchange 1994: 8]. Its ultimate goal was to build a “symbiotic relationship” among them [Sato 1999: 118]. The Center’s projects like the “Intellectual Exchange Program” which supports academic research and conferences in the field of global issues like environment or security, and conservation of Asian cultural heritage, multinational collaboration theatre performance “*King Lear*” played in 1997, aimed to network Asian intellectuals and artists [Sato 1999: 119, 121]²³.

RCC after the late 1980s depicted a sharp contrast with the ones in the former period in the following ways. Firstly, they focused on the commonality among the parties. Secondly, the projects were developed in the framework of “Asia” which includes Japan, Southeast Asia and Northeast Asian nations. Thirdly, issue-oriented and collaborative projects were rarely seen in the former period. This new RCC was inherited by the successive national attempts thereafter. For example, the Multilateral

²³) Asia Center was disorganized and incorporated into other agencies within JF, as JF was reorganized into independent administrative institutions in April 2004.

Cultural Mission organized in 1997 consisted of artists and academics from Japan and ASEAN countries. The mission aimed to collaborate in addressing conservation of cultural heirlooms in Asian countries, “which are in danger under rapid globalization” [Joint Secretariat of ASEAN-Japan Multilateral Cultural Mission 1998]. In regards to RCC with Northeast Asian nations, the national government has become proactive in its commitment to projects such as Japan-Republic of Korea National Exchange Year alongside the Soccer World Cup co-hosted by South Korea and Japan in 2002. It is to be emphasized that such national RCC with Northeast Asian nations are backed by ICR at the grass-roots and local government level. Most interesting of such grass-roots ICR is the penetration of popular culture. Japanese *Manga*, Korean TV dramas and Chinese cinema are rapidly becoming popular among Asian nations. For example, the Korean drama “*Winter Sonata*,” broadcast on Japanese national TV station in 2004, sparked the Korean boom and brought a 15% increase of Japanese tourists to South Korea in 2005. Though it is more phenomenal than intentional, it is interesting that ICR in the broader sense propels narrow ICR policies like RCC²⁴.

In the meanwhile, the national RCC over historic issues among Japan, China and South Korea has stayed stagnant since the “Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative” in 1995. Fueled by the problem of junior high school textbooks on history²⁵, the tension between Japan and other Northeast Asian nations is mounting²⁶. Thus phenomenal ICR among Japan and other Northeast Asian countries is rising with

²⁴ Meanwhile, pop culture does not necessarily fill the perceptual distance among nations. As anti-Japanese mob in Beijing after the Asia Cup Football final game between Japan and China shows, pop cultural exchange sometimes fuels the antipathy of contraries.

²⁵ The “history textbook problem” is the debate among Japan and other Northeast Asian nations over the interpretation of the Japanese invasion of China and Korea. It once got vigorous in 1982, and revived in 2001 by an “ultra-nationalistic” Japanese textbook that cleared censorship by the Education Ministry in 2001.

²⁶ For example, 30% of respondents of the internet questionnaire survey by Chinese online portal *Shanghai Searchina* answered that the present China-Japan relation is “less favorable” while 12% felt “favorable.” Moreover, about 70% of the respondents pointed out that the most important issue in future Sino-Japan relations will be the “history problem.” See Searchina Marketing News 9 Jan. 2004 (URL: http://marketing.searchina.net/report/disp.cgi?y=2004&d=0109&f=research_0109_001.shtml&mb=searchina, last downloaded on 1 Dec. 2005).

national ICR policies left far behind.

Unlike European Cultural cooperation, the Japanese commitment to RCC toward Asia is neither organized nor rigidly institutionalized. Since its change in the 1980s, it developed into complex bilateral or multilateral networks at various levels which interact with each other. But it is this interaction among national/non-national levels that brought new methods and ideas into Japanese RCC. As for the Japanese national identity, such ideas and methods paved the way to change the structure of relationships between Japan and Asian nations. Though the aspiration for becoming a “contributor to the world’s welfare” remains unchanged and even partly substantiated, the position of Asian nations seems to shift from “the area of activities to be supported” to “partner to work together with.”

2-4. “Germany in Europe,” “Japan and Asia”

Comparing national commitments to RCC by Germany and by Japan, the cases seem to have three points in common.

The first is that both countries used RCC as a tool to identify themselves in contemporary international society. It is obviously observed in the “Grand Strategy” of Germany’s case, while Japanese attempts to build self-including “Asia” experienced ebb and flow.

Secondly, it can be observed in both cases that the membership of the region is variable in reflection of the identities they pursue. It appears more prominently in the Japanese case, but in the German case as well, the definition of “Europe” has always been controversial among the policymakers. As discussed in this chapter, the pivot of European Cultural Cooperation is shifting to Eastern Europe in the post Cold War era. Economic disparity among the new and old members cast a pall over “Europe with equal partnership.”

The third point is that ICR as a phenomenon propels ICR as policy in both cases. As for the case of Germany, the participants of German-Franco bilateral ICR projects lead the ICR in the next generations, and expand it into European-wide RCC. On the other hand, interaction of people, goods, information and ideas set off the definition of “Asia” and the style of Japanese ICR policies, and they were incorporated into national RCC projects via interaction between the national/non-national agents.

Meanwhile, we would like to mention the difference between RCC by Germany and Japan; that is, the structure of the relationship among the regional members. As for RCC, Germany seems to be successful in embedding herself “in Europe,” while Japan is still at the beginning of forging a self-including “Asia” with equal partnership. It is her peculiar identity that she “contributes to security in Southeast Asia, which is the area of responsibility under the umbrella of the US” that kept Japan away from building an “Asia” as essential as “Europe” to Germany. In other words, the primary partner of Japan in the post war world was the US, not China or South Korea, or even the nations of Southeast Asia. The national commitment to RCC over historic issues with Northeast Asian nations were left until the 1990s, and the perception gap among them still remains wide.

Despite such experience, since the latter 1980s, Japan has started to express herself as a member of Asia and tries to construct a self-including region built upon collaborative relationships. Just like non-national agencies like NGOs and local governments, the national agencies are developing RCC at various levels with various counterparts. The Japanese national commitment to RCC requires further development of ICR with neighboring nations. As the case of Germany in Europe suggests, quiet and sustainable dialogue, discussion and exchange among peoples of Asia as a whole will be the building blocks for building the region, expressed by the phrase “Japan in Asia.”

3. Japanese Civil Society from ICR Perspectives

3-1. Phenomenon observed

When the Study Group on International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan started their work, it was quite obvious that one of the most prominent phenomena of postwar Japanese international exchange was the explosive expansion of private sector activities in the 1980s. The number of private organizations that are engaged in “cultural exchange or interaction” surged especially in local cities, characterizing decentralization of “internationalization²⁷.” The number was about 660

²⁷ The term “internationalization” or “*kokusai-ka*” in Japanese was the catch word of the era, which implied that Japan must be socially and culturally prepared even on the level of common people and local community to survive in the world by aggressively communicating and interacting with the foreign

in 1971, and it has more than doubled to 1,540 by 1981, then to 2,600 in 1991 and 3,430 in 1995. So called “NGOs,” that is private organizations involved in overseas humanitarian aid²⁸, were very small in number, only 20-30, in the early 1980s, but they also rapidly increased to about 200 in the late 1980s and 400 in 1995. Not only in these citizen level activities, but also in the private corporate sector a similar phenomenon was observed. During the 1980s the accumulated asset of private corporate foundations²⁹ was tripled, of which the majority of newly established ones were to be engaged by their statutes in “international exchange” such as giving scholarships to foreign students. And, many big multinational corporations started philanthropic activities in the same decade, under such rubrics as “corporate philanthropy”, “corporate citizenship”, and “corporate social responsibility [Study Group on International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan 2005].”

The phenomena were clear and simple. The problem was how to interpret these phenomena and look for the causes and implications. In the prewar and early postwar period until the 1970s, “international exchange” was almost a monopoly of the government with a few exceptions. The exceptions, private international exchange organizations such as the International House of Japan and the Japan Center for International Exchange, functioned exclusively as the locus of activities of elite internationalist intellectuals³⁰. And, in general, Japan was considered to be a state-centric country where the private sector was deemed as an arena only for money

countries and people, not like before as being inward-looking and shy.

²⁸ The literary meaning of NGO is non-governmental organization, so that it does not necessarily imply that they are involved in foreign humanitarian aid; however, in Japan the term is almost exclusively used for those organizations involved in foreign aid.

²⁹ In the United States, major private foundations are mostly family foundations established by millionaires such as the Rockefeller and the Ford Foundation; however, in Japan the major foundations are corporate ones mainly because of difference of the taxation system.

³⁰ It might be interesting to note that the International House of Japan was established by the suggestion and financial donation of John D. Rockefeller 3rd. He was suggested by Foster Dulles, then the Secretary of State and the former President of the Rockefeller Foundation, to visit Japan and propose him how to flame new international cultural relations of postwar Japan. Dulles was anxious if Japan would be attracted by Chinese market and he wanted to keep Japanese people to be pro-America through cultural exchange with the U.S. and its allies. He thought that for that purpose private foundation is more effective than governmental programs. Rockefeller collaborated with Japanese old liberals to establish the International House of Japan in 1955 that almost dominated the early postwar cultural exchange with Rockefeller money and human contacts until the Japanese government has created the Japan Foundation, a governmental institution equivalent to British Council or Goethe Institute, in 1972.

making. So, why the sudden and rapid increase of private organizations engaged in international activities seemingly for non-profit and public or even global purposes in the 1980s?

3-2. Approach

Our primary assumption was that this phenomenon of a rapid increase in the number of private agents in Japan could be related to the so-called “emerging civil society” phenomenon observed worldwide, started in late 1970 and expanded throughout the 1980s. It seems to resemble, though much more speedy due to perhaps globalization effect, the process of “modernization” spread from the West to Asia and other parts of the world, so we considered the ICR theory, using such a process model of “cultural contact”, “conservative resistance”, “re-interpretation of foreign cultural elements”, and “re-arrangement of cultural whole by incorporating foreign elements³¹.” [Hirano 2000] The result of our applying this model to the phenomenon with historical perspectives is available in the next section of the summary of the essay, “Evolution of ‘Civil Society’ and International Cultural Relations in Postwar Japan: Discourse and Reality,” included in the book, *International Cultural Relations of Postwar Japan* [Hirano 2005] (originally written in Japanese).

However, the observed expansion of “civil society” worldwide might be different from modernization, which is strongly universal based on purely universal spheres of natural science and technology development. It could be a version of ideology craze such as socialism or communism in the early 20th century. It could be a parallel of the current spreading of liberal democracy or neo-liberalism after the end of the Cold War. Until now it is not very clear if this civil society spreading worldwide is a post-Cold War phenomenon or a post nation-state one. If claims such as “global civil society formation” become reality in the near future, the latter is to be plausible, but if the former is correct, the phenomenon could be short-lived.

Although there were slight differences of opinions among co-researchers, our stances are generally cautious and maybe a little skeptical about the universality of civil society and our assumption remained same that the increase of private

³¹ Here, interrelation or mutual influence between broad ICR (phenomenal dimension) and narrow ICR (policy dimension) is considered to be problematic.

organizations is largely the response of the Japanese society to outside influences, not something genuinely outgrown from within the society itself due to mainly domestic causes. We could not discard our concern that this could be a short term fashion of a sort of political ideology.

3-3. How the ICR approach is different from other approaches to the civil society issue

After publishing our book, a number of academic works on Japanese civil society appeared. It might be interesting to think about the differences or hopefully advantages of the ICR approach vis-à-vis other approaches. Here, we categorize these works into two types; area study approach (ASA) and comparative politics approach (CPA).

The ASA is typical of the works compiled by Frank J. Schwartz and Suzan J. Pharr in *The State of Civil Society in Japan* [Schwartz and Pharr 2005]. The works included in this volume analyze Japanese civil society from different angles with rich contents. The major difference, we realized, is that the ASA tends to start with the assumption that Japan is different from the West and it continues to be so. In other words it stresses continuity or even un-changeability of Japanese-ness and pays less attention to the change of society and culture by foreign influences. Typical of this attitude is that the civil society issue is reduced to one of relations between society and state, as the “civil” concept is too European and thus too foreign to Japanese minds, almost irrelevant. Based on the ICR approach, on the other hand, we tried to depict and analyze how Japanese intellectuals struggled with this very foreign cultural concept, “civil,” and re-interpreted it in the Japanese context.

In fact, *shimin shakai*, the Japanese translation of civil society, is widely used although different authors use this term quite differently, but it is not in Japan alone. The core problem in the case of Japan is the notion of the moral individual of “civil,” as in the Japanese culture morality always stays within the society or group, not resting on the individual. Without having absolute morality originating from God, the individual cannot stand alone morally, but rather interpersonal relationships are the basis for the social morality. However, this fundamental difference of human existential philosophy did not hamper “modernization” and “democratization” of Japan, so why not civil society? Actually, because the relative increase of civil society agents

vis-à-vis the state is clear as mentioned earlier, we can say to some extent that the Japanese state-centric feature is changing. In this change, re-interpretation that is sometimes very much strategically done by leading figures has great significance because a majority of the Japanese, who have limited knowledge about the real meaning of civil society in the West, can only imagine something through the re-interpreted version of civil society discourse. And, this re-interpreted discourse could change the perceptions of the people and institutions of the society as the foreign concepts much like democracy, modernization, freedom, and so on had a tremendous impact on Japanese social change after the Meiji Restoration in late 19th century.

The CPA approach is represented here by the book compiled by Muthiah Alagappa, *Civil Society and Political Change in Asia: Expanding and Contradicting Democratic Space*, although recently quite a number of books covering the issue of civil society in Asia have appeared. In his article in the book, Alagappa acknowledges the huge diversity of the Asian political economy and the state of civil society. But, as the book proves, the authors seem to agree that comparison among Asian civil societies is not meaningless. In our view, it is more beneficial to compare civil society between Japan and the U.S. rather than Japan and China as Japan was more influenced by America after the war than by China in the Middle Ages as far as civil society is concerned. Although a resurgence of civil society may be initiated by East European intellectuals, the voice that reached Japan was not theirs but the articulated discourses of Western scholars. The situation is similar throughout Asia. The influence of Asian countries was almost non-existent compared with the influences of Western scholars.

Also, it should be noted that in some developing countries, civil society discourse was associated with the democratization machinery of international aid. The U.S. official development aid distributing institutions such as the Asia Foundation have been advocating civil society discourses in Asia and have given funding to local Asian NGOs in the name of creating and supporting civil societies in Asia for the purpose of democratizing these countries. Not only in Africa, but also in some countries of Asia such as Cambodia, to a substantial degree “civil society” consisted of developmental NGOs that were in fact created by international aid agencies. So, the civil society could be understood most in relation to Western countries, not in relation to neighboring Asian countries. Thus, also in the case of Japan, we believe that civil society discourses and the emerging civil society organizations (NGOs, NPOs) associated with

them should be analyzed in ICR with the Western world.

Secondly, what is important in our ICR approach and not in the CPA is the attention to local civil society discourses. We feel that the global emergence of civil society organizations is caused to some extent by the spread of civil society discourses. The discourses were interpreted and applied differently in each country and stimulated the birth of local versions of civil society discourse that caused an increase in the number of actual private organizations. The actual civil society situation and how its changes are different in each country of Asia could be analyzed by how civil society discourses were selectively introduced, reinterpreted, and how they stimulated the birth of local versions, reflecting the context of each country as well as the local scholars' creativity.

3-4. Evolution of 'Civil Society and ICR in Postwar Japan: Discourse and Reality'³²

In the 1980s exchange activities by private organization have seen a rapid expansion both in terms of volume and quality. In addition to the private activities, it is also characteristic of the 1980s that local governments appeared as another agent of international exchange activities. What do these phenomena mean?

The essay tries to analyze this phenomenon not only by focusing on agent analysis, but also by looking at the discourses that were associated with and are considered to have supported and stimulated these substantial changes of the agents.

If we look at the development of civil society at both the substantial level as well as the discourse level in postwar Japan, we can identify three major local versions of civil society discourse: "people to people diplomacy" discourse in the middle 1970s, NGO discourse in the 1980s, and NPO discourse in the 1990s that first appeared and were influential in each period.

The first discourse which appeared that seems to be related to the Japanese civil society discourse was "people to people diplomacy" or *minsai* discourse, advocated by the Kanagawa Prefecture governor *Kazuji Nagasu*. *Nagasu* was one of the symbols of "progressive local governments" in the 1970s and early 1980s, being the

³² While preparing this article, I did not mechanically summarize the original paper, but up-dated and changed it slightly so as to reflect the change of situation after the publication of the original as well as to fit the purpose of the presentation at the conference. I believe that the changes are minor, but it might be safer to say that this summary contains my current reinterpretation of the original paper.

governor of the most progressive prefecture from 1975 for 20 years.

The second epoch in the evolution of Japanese civil society was the emergence of NGOs, private civic organizations engaged primarily in foreign aid and advocacy for the cause of women, environment, or peace. The year of 1980 is called “Year One of the Japanese NGO” as many NGOs were established to work for Cambodian refugees in Thai boarder camps, who fled from their homeland because of the outbreak of the civil war between Pol Pot’s army and the invading Vietnamese in 1979. The NGO discourse was accompanied by the emergence of actual NGOs, and it supported the increasing NGOs by highly evaluating their relative advantages as flexible and effective donors over government in development aid giving.

The third and probably the climax was the passage of the so-called “NPO law” by the parliament in 1998. The law was made by negotiations between the networks of private non-profit organizations, including NGOs and domestic groups, and the bureaucracy and political parties. The major gain of the civil society was loosening of the firm governmental control over private non-profit organizations that seek legal status. It is not any more necessary to be approved by the government, and the government has no authority to screen them when they apply for registration. There were concerns that loose government control over private non-profit registration could lead to abuse of this legal status by for-profit businessman and organized crime, and they proved to be partly true; however, the benefit of healthy citizen activities was prioritized. The impact of a huge number of volunteers, gathered to the ruins of *Hanshin Awaji* Great Earthquake in Kobe city in 1995, gave a big push to the movement of private organizations to secure public acknowledgement and trust, thus negotiating power vis-à-vis the politicians and bureaucracy. In the course of law making, “NPO” discourse played a significant role.

1) . Kanagawa Prefecture’s “People to People Diplomacy” and Its Limitations

Started in the 1963 local elections, progressive local governments with such leaders as Yokohama City Mayor *Kazuo Asukata* and Tokyo Prefecture Governor *Ryokichi Minobe* have prevailed nation-wide. In the movement political agencies were considered to be no more a labor class, but “citizens.” The vision was to set a “civil minimum” and realize “civil welfare by citizen participation [Matsushita 1996:33].”

While domestically on the local government level, as mentioned above,

“democratic polity based on citizens” was pursued by progressive local leaders, on the international front in the 1970s Japan experienced the Nixon Shock and the deepening international mutual dependence. Yoshikazu Sakamoto, the leading progressive political scientist, tried to capture the time’s trend with a concept, “people to people relations,” that was replacing international relations according to him. He pointed out that in the relations among developed countries, tremendous goods, information, and human exchange occurred on the private level and these “people to people” relations were rapidly increasing their predominance over “government to government” relations and thus could be post nation-state phenomena and the key for future international peace. And he also stressed that Japan’s “people to people” relations with Asia are not sufficiently developed and thus should be promoted [Sakamoto 1972].

Influenced by Sakamoto, *Nagasu* advocated “people to people” diplomacy by assuming citizens as the agents of international relations while trying to make local government independent as much as possible from the central government, which was seized by the conservative LDP during the postwar period, by promoting citizen’s participation in local governance and policy making. The fact that Kanagawa Prefecture had the most numerous American military bases next to Okinawa was an immanent inevitability for the conflict between the central and local governments and thus the local government has some legitimacy to pursue independent “diplomacy” different from the central one on behalf of the local residents.

Nagasu was an academician of economics by profession and was one of the advocates of “structural reform,” the new line of the Socialist Party program, adopted in 1960. The core of this theory, according to *Nagasu*, was direct democracy through citizen participation. He interpreted that the original purpose of Marxism was to create the society as a new association of free individuals, and he conceptualized as “formation of civil society” the creation of a society in which civic values were to be embodied through the democracy of direct participation “from below.” He saw the emergence of citizen’s activities in the 1960s as the birth of the “citizen” in Japan, who was supposed to exercise grassroots democracy [Nagasu 1969; 1973]. However, at the same time, he also proposed that the progressive leadership should organize mass movements to realize civil society [Nagasu 1969:126-129], which contradicted his idea of reform “from below.” To resolve this conceptual conflict, he placed the local government between the citizens and the progressive leadership as the “secretariat” of “civil

society,” the coordinating body [Nagasu and Sakamoto1983].

He paid special attention to the relations of Japan with Asia as the target of “people to people” diplomacy where he found the only possible way for Japan to survive by pursuing the international cultural relations of equality, self-determination, coexistence, and co-prosperity. He was critical of Japanese foreign aid that he concluded to be self-centered and having a deep conceptual gap with Asian countries because Japan in her modernization process had neither democratization nor the creation of civil society [Nagasu 1971].

In order to implement his “people to people” diplomacy, he set up a bureau for international exchange in his local government office in 1976 and in the following year also established Kanagawa International Association (KIA), a local government affiliated organization. KIA was the first of this sort that were established in other local prefectures in 1980s and 1990s. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was furious with this revolt of a local government to their basic principle of unity of diplomacy and the central government intimidated Kanagawa prefecture by abusing its authority over local government.

In addition to conventional international activities of local government such as sister city friendship, *Nagasu* emphasized the eminent importance of emerging Japanese NGOs, working for Cambodian refugees in Thai border camps. He was especially fond of the Japan Volunteer Center, and he visited their project sites in refugee camps in Thailand and delivered the donation money to JVC by himself. He also allowed JVC to have their desk at KIA for their public relations activities. In his eye, newly born Japanese NGOs were the evidence of an emerging genuine civil society, while the central government was critical of NGOs as they were amateur and lacking in accountability. Later, KIA established the endowment fund to support NGOs in Kanagawa by securing finances from the local government budget as well as citizen’s donations.

His “people to people” diplomacy has great impact on the policies of other local governments. Many followed the good example of the “progressive prefecture” and started similar activities though they were not as antagonistic with the central government as Kanagawa in early days of *Nagasu*’s governorship. Later in the decade, the Ministry of Home Affairs pushed this movement and guided all local governments to have their own international policy encouraging them to establish international

associations like KIA. In the 1990s the largest agent of government's international exchange activities was no longer the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its affiliates, but the Home Ministry with many local governments.

Nagasu's "people to people" diplomacy showed its limitation when its focus turned to the issue of Koreans and other immigrants. Kanagawa was one of the most populous areas of Koreans who migrated from the Korean Peninsula during the imperial period. Some of them were forced to come and work for industries located in Kanagawa and in general they were discriminated against by Japanese people. Most of them returned to their homeland when Japan was defeated, but around eight hundred thousand remained for various reasons. The Japanese government divested them of Japanese nationality when she regained sovereignty and they were put in insecure status for a long time. They were denied their civil rights and related privileges due to the lack of nationality. Still, most of them did not want "naturalization" due to their attachments to their homeland and their resentment towards the Japanese government.

In the 1980s Korean movements demanding civil rights flared up. *Nagasu* named his approach to this issue of the legacy of imperialism "internal internationalization," meaning that the frontline of "people to people" relations is not limited to issues beyond national boundaries, but also between non-Japanese and Japanese inside Japan, above all in his own prefecture of Kanagawa. *Nagasu* intended to include foreign residents in Kanagawa as the target of local government services by defining them as "Kanagawa residents of foreign origins," not as foreigners without Japanese nationality and citizenship [Kanagawa Prefecture 1995]. However, Kawasaki City and Osaka City, where the Korean populations were largest and thus their movements were strongest, have outstripped Kanagawa in such matters as abandoning fingerprint compulsion for alien registration, removing the nationality clause from local government employment code, and establishing a city council of foreign residents. Currently, some staff of KIA say that Kanagawa started earlier but has now been left behind.

One of the reasons why *Nagasu* and Kanagawa could not catch up with the Korean movements for civil rights was that in his definition of "citizen," which is supposed to be the agent of creating civil society, Koreans were not included, but rather were considered to be someone helped and cared for by "citizens." His paternalistic approach was criticized and rejected by Koreans who were excluded from the society

and thus from the “citizenry.” The civil rights were not given from the progressive leader and merciful “citizens,” but were gained through political struggle of the marginalized against local governments as agents of the state.

Nagasu and his advisors were all intellectuals of the Left, who never held government after the war, knew well about Western political theories and had the will to apply their new program within the political space available around local government. It is noteworthy that the key concept of their theory was “civil society” as early as the mid-1970s, although as mentioned above there were limitations in their paternalistic approach inherited perhaps from the Leninism legacy of progressive leadership as advance guard; their inability to conceive and empower the marginalized as the agent of social change; and the “outside in” method of a “people to people” diplomacy-centered approach to “creating civil society.” Their difficulty was deprived from the very fact that civil society as an independent political sphere was thin in Japan and thus they had to “create” civil society strong enough to be the agent of their political reform. The local government was the tool for that purpose, but because of that the local government became the major agent in international cultural relations after *Nagasu*, working in the sphere close to civil society.

2) Emergence of NGOs working for international causes in the 1980s

As mentioned earlier, *Nagasu* was very impressed by NGOs established by citizens which worked for Cambodian refugees and seemed to him to symbolize an emerging new civil society, something different from old civil society symbolized by labor organizations. The NGO is a recent phenomenon in Japan that started in early 1980 with a few earlier exceptions. From 1979 to 1982 forty three NGOs were established, almost all of which were responses to the influx of Cambodian refugees to Thailand border camps and they later became the core group of the Japanese NGO sector [JANIC 1998].

JVC was established in Bangkok, Thailand by a group of people with diverse backgrounds such as housewives, journalists, diplomats, social workers, business people, UN staff, academics, students, and young company employees who got short leave from work to act as volunteers. The term suitable to call the group would be “citizens” even if one would not agree to the “civil society” discourse of *Nagasu*. The motivation behind the inception of this small NGO was related to the motivation

that the Western NGOs gathered to the refugee camps gave to the Japanese relief-related people and volunteers. Among 57 emergency relief teams only 4 were governmental, including Japan, and others were all experienced Western NGOs. The people came to refugee camps and observed the activities of Western NGOs witnessed with their eyes the very existence of NGO for the first time and thought similar NGOs were necessary for Japan as well [JVC 1990].

The Japanese NGOs, symbolized here by JVC, seemed to follow the same generational evolution theorized by David Korten and others [Korten 1990]. While the first generation is mainly dedicated to emergency relief and usually maintains political neutrality developed through the activities of the Red Cross, the second generation tends to focus on developmental issues and to pay more attention to local communities. This turn from the first to second generation occurred in the case of JVC when it started its own projects in Cambodia while continuing its relief activities in Thai border camps. The JVC activities in the second generational period realized in their participation in International NGO Forum on Cambodia and Cambodia Coordination Committee, NGO consortiums placed in Phnom Penh, initiating local projects in South Africa as a consequence of their campaign against apartheid, and the relief activities to local Iraqi people during the Gulf War [JVC 2000].

The third generation of the JVC activities is more political than before, for example; advocacy related to the first Cambodian election; humanitarian relief to politically controversial North Korea; and also humanitarian aid to internationally isolated Serbs being inspired by the NGO statement requiring immediate stoppage of air bombing by NATO. JVC intentionally put itself in the situation where justices are contending with each other and aggressively pursued the controversial aid programs in the situation where the justice of powers tends to prevail. In the third generational activities, the advocacy became more instrumental in appealing to its unique position and deliberations as an NGO to the Japanese government and other official entities for their policy changes and the networking with other organizations became more necessary to gather support. Currently JVC joins in more than seven NGO networks as an institution, and the JVC staffs are members of seven other networks. Worthy of mention here is that JVC was invited by Oxfam International to become a member although JVC finally declined this offer after a year of deliberation. It might also be interesting that NGO discourses had some impact in the course of its development.

These discourses were generated based on the examples of European NGOs, not American ones. In the 1980s so many visitors repeatedly asked the same questions that famous NGOs in Europe such as Oxfam and NOVIB restricted Japanese visitors.

In terms of quality of activities, as indicated by the JVC case, Japanese NGOs have almost caught up with Western NGOs within a relatively short period of time, following generational evolution depicted by Korten drawn from Western NGO experiences. However, in terms of quantity the Japanese NGO sector shows a very poor profile, which could be said to be under the “poverty line,” considering Japan’s economic power. Foreign visitors to Japanese NGOs are often frightened by the working conditions of NGO staff. The office rooms in a small building are tiny and congested. If one wants to work for an NGO, he or she must give up stable family life, although the salary and benefits have become far better than decades ago. Their scale of activities in terms of budget is minimal compared to major Western NGOs.

Two main reasons could be pointed out. One is little money flow from the government into NGO finances, and another is the small number of their membership. In most European countries and the U.S. 20-30 percent of the official development assistance (ODA) money goes to NGOs, which are to be spent by NGOs on behalf of the government. However, in Japan, there remains resentment on the side of NGOs and also public opinion to pipe substantial ODA money because NGOs would be easily co-opted by the government should they receive funding from them. In fact, there are a lot of quasi-governmental or quasi-private organizations that receive government funds and are controlled by it working as an extension of the government. Once it receives continual financial subsidy, it is widely believed that it should accept government retired personnel as members of the management. It is true that the flow of money from government to NGOs has increased gradually over the last decade, but it is not yet substantial enough to change the scale and character of NGOs. In order to maintain the character of NGOs as a civil society organization while getting government funding, it is widely recognized that they should raise more funds from the public through donations/membership fees and sales of their services or some kind of business.

Thus, the first problem is related to the second that is more fundamental and serious. The membership of NGO is rather limited compared to the scale of Japan’s population. The membership is not only an indicator of financial resources,

but also of social recognition and popular support. One reason is the lack of capability and willingness of NGOs with respect to advertisements and public relations. They tend to ignore or dislike commercial advertisement techniques, being scrupulously aid oriented. However, another reason lies on the public side, i.e. that the people who have global or even social concerns and commit themselves through volunteering or donations are absolutely small in number. If allowed to call them “citizens,” here again we should say that the citizen segment is thin in the society. We counter now the same problem of non existence of civil society that could counter the strong state. Currently, Koizumi’s conservative regime is trying to make the government small by privatization, liberalization of regulations and so on; however, it is unknown if small government policy from above automatically creates strong civil society on the ground.

3) NPO discourses and NPO law

Although Japan was democratized through occupation by U.S. military forces, the mainstream of postwar intellectual discourses was in general not pro-America. The earlier half of the occupation, when the blue print of democratization prepared during the war by the State Department such as liberalization of labor movements, land reform, democratic educational reform, purge of militarist from public offices, and dismantling conglomerates was in order, was honey moon period for those intellectuals that suffered during the war; however, the Cold War strategic thinking that emerged in the late 40s and early 50s in the U.S. administration and the change of occupation policy to remilitarize Japan and utilize it as a base for its anti-communist world strategy was not favored by Japanese intellectuals who considered it a kind of betrayal to its promise of peace and democracy. The situation remained roughly the same until the end of the Vietnam War, after which at least in Asia the U.S. anti-communist offensive showed a clear slow down.

After the mid 1970s, different versions of civil society discourses originating in the U.S. were introduced from time to time. They were “private philanthropy,” “third sector,” “voluntarism,” “corporate citizenship,” and “non-profit organizations (NPO) or non-profit sector.” The last and most influential was the NPO discourse. They shared the common features of being based on Parsonsian structural functionalism; emphasize importance or advantages of private sector vis-a-vis government; and more or less corporatism oriented or non-conflictive with the market

economy.

The agents that introduced these discourses to Japan were private institutions such as the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), the Toyota Foundation (TF), and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF). They had close relationships with American private philanthropic foundations, especially the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation. It could be said that these organizations with their leaders such as *Tadashi Yamamoto* of JCIE, *Yujiro Hayashi* of TF, and *Akira Iriyama* of SPF are a sort of Japanese postwar liberals and favored American social system that differs substantially from Japan. They thought that the state-centered Japanese system with its strong power of bureaucracy should be changed or modified by empowering private philanthropy or the third sector. The taste of their arguments was rather of elitism, directed at reform from the top, and naturally of the social engineering sort.

The discourses directed at the corporate sector, i.e. the need for corporate philanthropy or corporate citizenship, were accepted by major Japanese corporations mainly members of *Keidanren*, the largest association of big industries. In 1990 *Keidanren* started its One Percent Club that encouraged its member corporations to donate one percent of their profits for philanthropic activities. In this JCIE was the major advocate by doing research for *Keidanren*. The SPF was the major agent in advocating the discourse of corporate citizenship, then fashionable in the U.S. They argued that corporations have obligations to contribute to the public interest as citizens of the society like individuals.

The focus of discourse, as described above, originally was addressed to the elite core of the society such as *Keidanren*, but later shifted to target grassroots level organizations. Until then, the grassroots level civic movements were generally guided by the left and antagonistic to the government and big business. The anti-pollution movements were typical of the sort and *Minamata* and other victims of the dangerous pollution caused by the industry were symbols of the movements. The civic peace movements against the atomic bomb, the American war in Asia, and problems related to U.S. bases were usually anti-America and thus opposed to the government that had kept Japan one of the closest allies of the U.S. The student movements that reached their climax in the 1960s were heavily influenced by the left or leftist thinking and strongly anti-LDP lead government and anti-capitalism. All these leftist social movements on

the grassroots level, in a sense, failed as far as their ultimate goal of fundamental social change is concerned. The government remained to be controlled by the conservative LDP throughout the postwar period and the power has been continuously held by the iron triangle of the bureaucracy, the big corporations and the LDP. By the latter half of the 1970s grassroots social movements were in a slump and segregated from each other, pursuing very narrow causes of their own.

The advocates of civil society discourse of the liberal sort tried to revitalize the grassroots activities by networking and depoliticizing them. The argument was that the leftist civic movements only demanded that the government do or not do something, but did nothing by themselves. They supposed that by taking hold of the government, all could be attained, and if not, nothing could be gained. So, the term was proposed to be changed from civic movements to civic activities. Now that the success of the civic activities do not mean “take all or nothing,” but how far they could approach the goal by their own efforts.

The unified demand of these civic groups, guided by liberal civil society discourse, was liberalization of the government control over civic groups. So far, it was required that official approval of an appropriate ministry be obtained to be registered as a private legal entity and usually ministries did not give their approval easily. The Civic Code legislated in the Meiji period provides two general types of legal personality to private organizations, but both types of legal status were not easily obtained due to strict government regulations. Also, they have to report to the government every year and should obey the order of the supervising ministry. Other types of private legal status were legalized by different laws; for example, schools were prescribed by the school organization law and put under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. In fact, it was almost impossible for civic groups on the grassroots level to be incorporated and thus they had difficulty in obtaining social acknowledgement and trust. They were unable to enter into contracts, so it was impossible to rent an office or borrow money from the bank as an organization. In most cases a representative of the group had to take all the risks as an individual.

Many different types of civic groups made a nationwide network and coordinated themselves to demand that the government enact a new law for them to lift hitches and obstacles to work in society. In short, they demanded more freedom from state control.

Thousands of volunteers gathered at the ruins of the *Hanshi Awaji* Great Earthquake that killed more than 5,000 people in 1995 were the spurs for their advocacy for voluntarism and the advantage of private activities over the government bureaucracy. The term, NPO, became fashionable in the press, overtaking NGO, after the earthquake. This term is taken from the U.S. civil society discourse and used like NGO without being translated into a Japanese term. The term might be most popular in Japan, being much more prevalent than in the U.S. “NPO” is used strategically by implicating that the civic groups are not anti-government, but complementary to the government being apolitical and service oriented; they are also complementary to for-profit corporations and thus market friendly; and they are institutions for self support of citizens.

3-4. Current situation

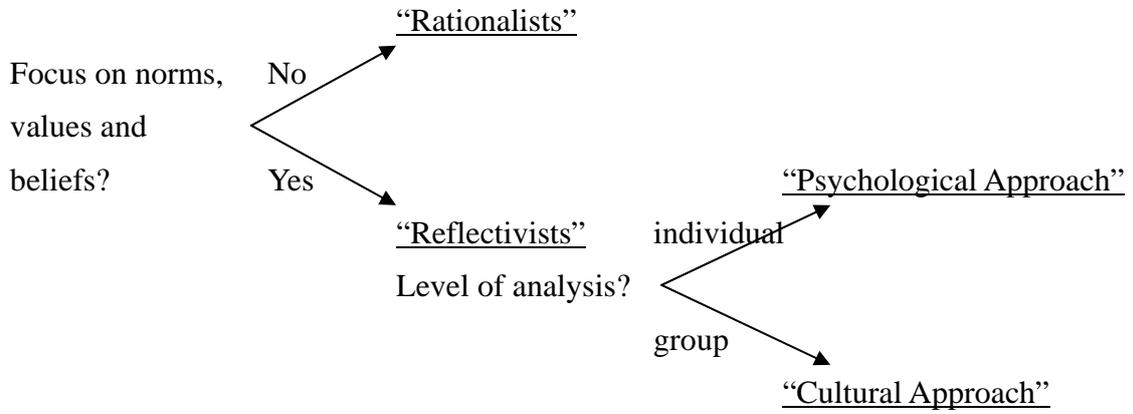
The author thinks that the above three elements of the civil society, progressive local governments and their affiliates, NGOs working for international development, and NPOs providing basic services to the local needed, are the ones who articulated their legitimacy of existence by using the term, civil society. They had their own meaning and implications of “civil” or “citizen” in the Japanese context with their own political strategy. Here the term “political” means that they had their visions for the future of the Japanese society and their will to change it. By focusing these social elements, this chapter intentionally focuses on the sphere where Japan interacts with the outside world, or more precisely the Western world, and thus it is biased in being change-oriented, looking at how Japan has changed through foreign cultural contact. Acknowledging that the civil society encompasses other more conventional or traditional spheres such as communal, religious, industrial, and labor organizations, the authors cannot find any significance in examining these organizations just to draw the predictable conclusion that the state dominates civil society in Japan. This has been widely known for a long time. The very point of using civil society as an analytical concept is to know how much possibility there is for civil society to prevail and change the state-civil society relation.

The rapid increase of private sector organizations in ICR in the 1980s was caused by socio-economic causes as well as socio-cultural ones. The former are simply formulated based on the fact that the globalization of people, goods, money, and information flow that occurred in the 1970-80s stimulated the Japanese people to set up

these organizations. The latter, as explained in this chapter, are more complex, nuanced, and context-related. They are also related to the purposes of these organizations, their vision, political orientations and the substance of changes that occurred. The purposes are articulated in a general form in each discourse that appeared from time to time, i.e., “people to people diplomacy,” “NGO,” and “NPO” discourses. At the same time, these discourses influenced and in general encouraged increases in the number of substantial organizations.

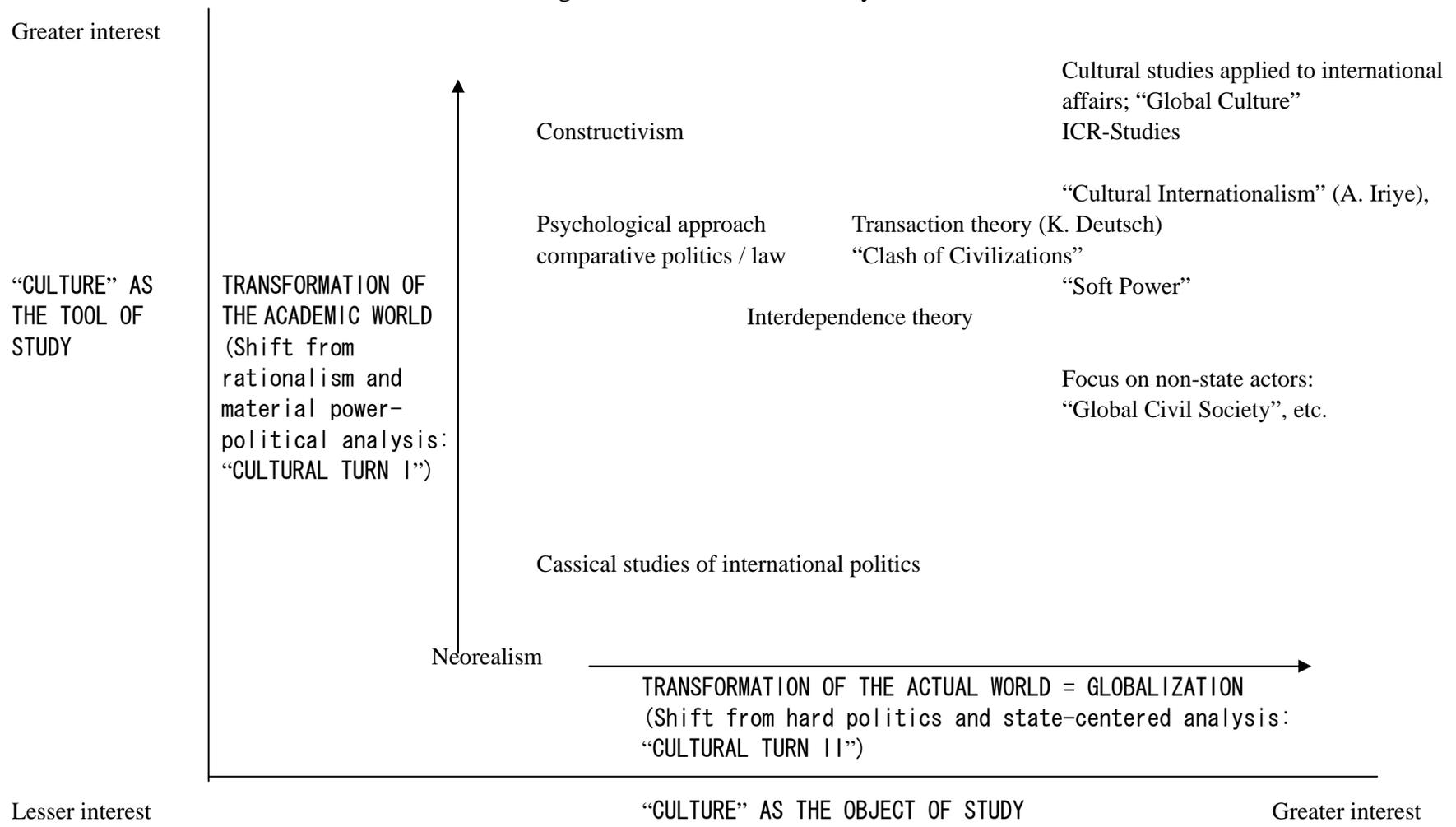
Currently, they all exist simultaneously and continue to be the most active cause-oriented part of civil society in Japan, although they have different initial and current political orientations. If it is acceptable to focus our attention on this part of the Japanese civil society, it is not irrelevant to compare Japanese civil society and American or European civil society rather than to analyze Japanese civil society within the geographical framework of Asia. It could be more fruitful to compare Japanese and American NPOs as service providers within the liberal welfare state system than to compare Japanese traditional communal organizations with their Chinese counterparts, because it is clear that the former is a more important and urgent issue for present day Japan.

Figure 1: “Cultural Approach” in International Relations Studies



(Made by the author based on the categorization of [Verweij 1995])

Figure 2: “Culture” in the Study of International Relations



Source: Kawamura (2004), p. 42.

Figure 3: The Focus of the Study of International Cultural Relations (ICR-Studies)

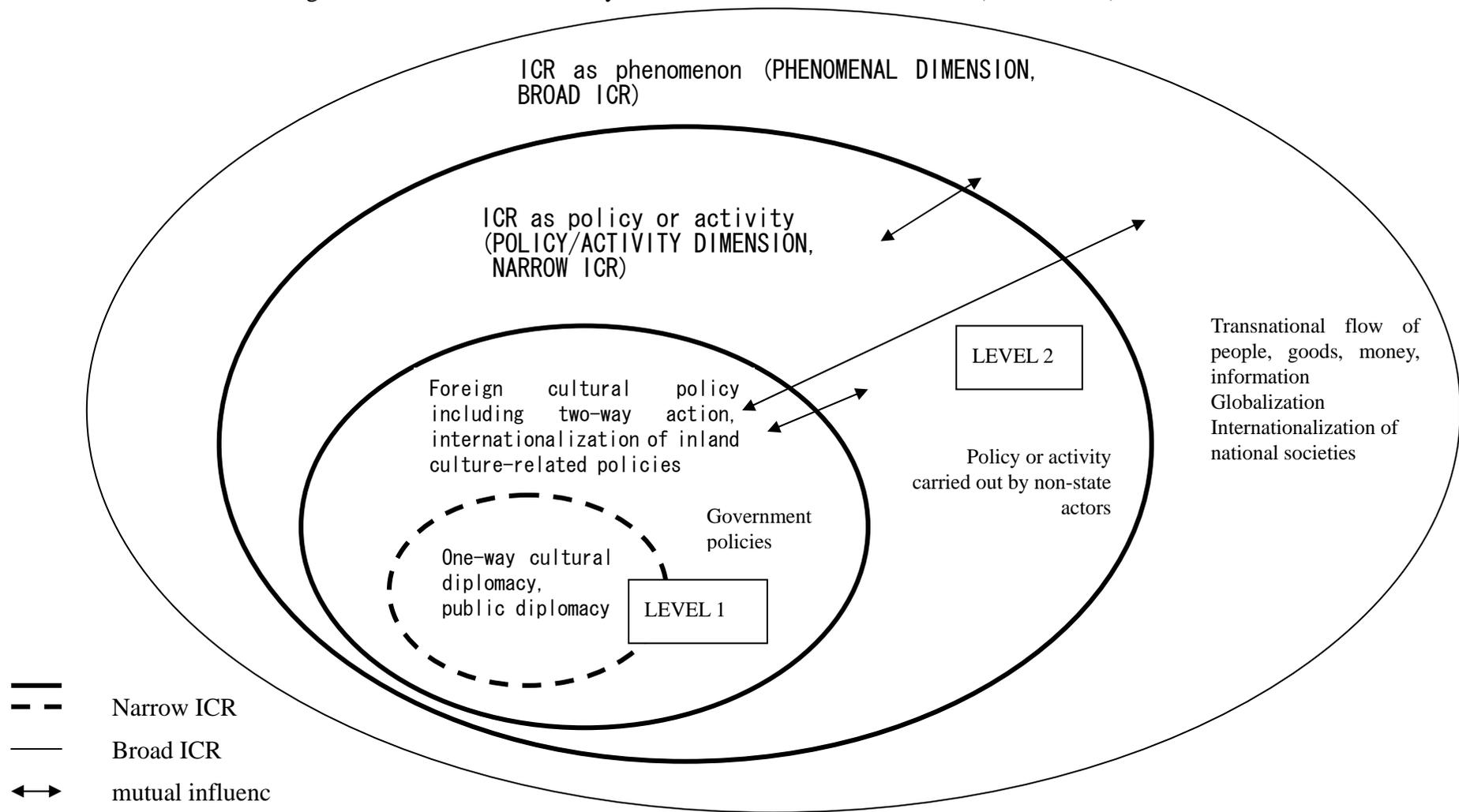
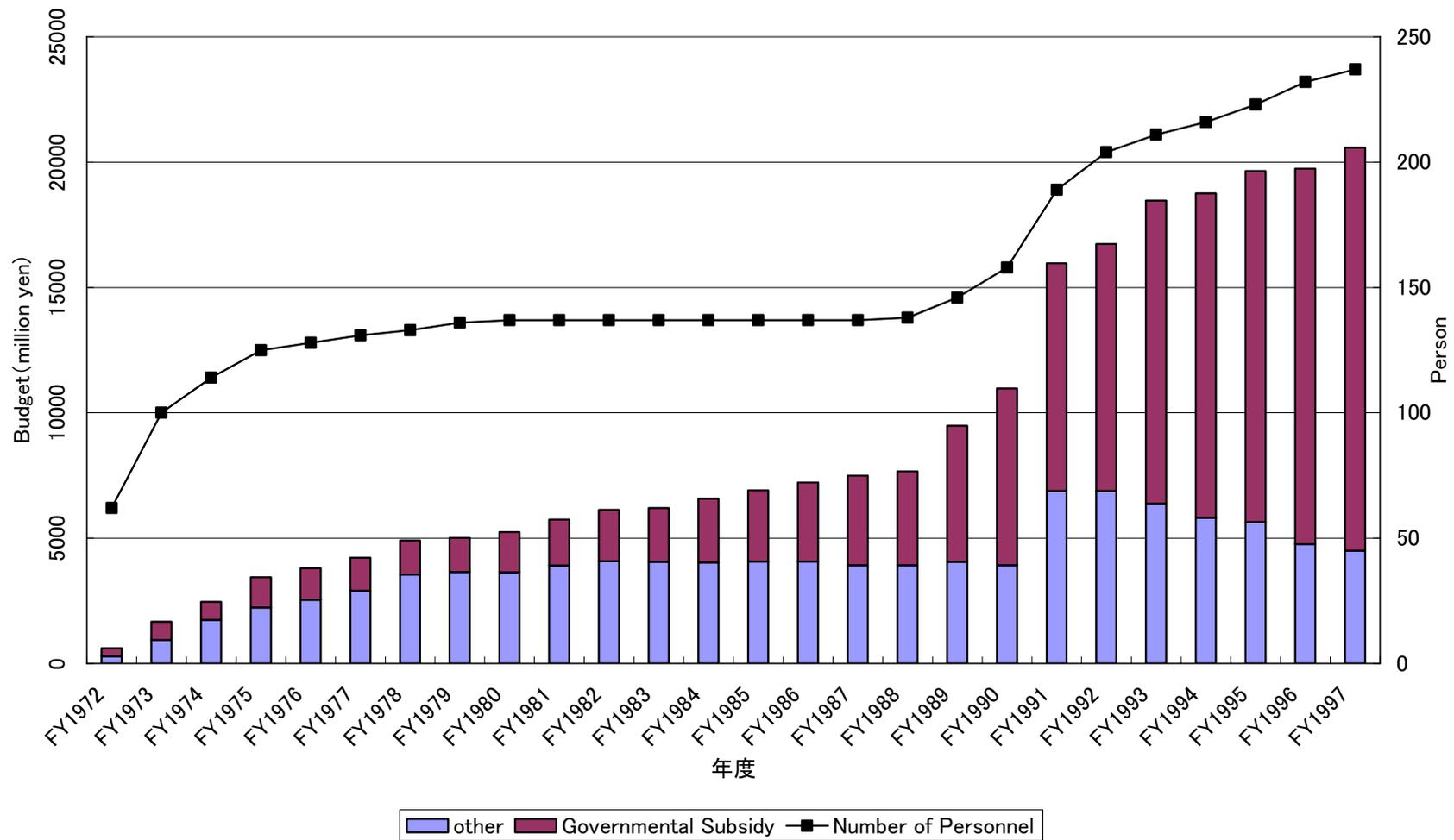


Figure 4 Shift of the JF's Budget and Number of Personnel



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