Is There A Japanese IR?
Seeking an Academic Bridge through Japan’s History of International Relations

Kosuke Shimizu, Josuke Ikeda, Tomoya Kamino and Shiro Sato

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PREFACE

Japan has a peculiar position in the study of International Relations (IR). In terms of the scale of its academic scholarship, Japan is the third largest country in the world. Nevertheless, its academics have mostly remained ‘consumers’ of the Western-made expertise and frameworks. By acknowledging some important works that mainly explore Japan’s location in the IR scholarship, it is reasonable to ask if there ever existed, or exists, any unique and original contribution to the IR discipline by Japanese scholars; and if so, what these contributions would be.

Our purpose is to explore answers to these questions from a historical perspective. By serious re-examination and re-evaluation of Japan’s history of IR and academic expertise, we will attempt to identify not only what is original and unique about the Japanese IR, but how to bridge the gaps between Japan and the rest of the world as well.

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2007 was a special one for Japanese International Relations (IR) scholars in two senses. First, the Japan Association of International Relations (JAIR) celebrated her 50-year anniversary of its establishment. The memorial annual conference held in Fukuoka was a great success as some 700 scholars appeared at the venue.

Second, the International Relations of the Asia-Pacific (IRAP), the JAIR’s English journal, published its special issue titled “Why is there no non-western IR theory?” Though the original workshop was held in Singapore in 2005, the issue asked squarely whether there was any non-western IR at all. Indeed, “Why is there no non-western IR theory” is the question which the “silent majority” of IR scholars, both western and non-western, might have asked implicitly. Yet, this was the first time when non-western IR specialists seriously attempted to provide an answer by devoting a single volume of an academic journal to this question.

In a Japanese context, the question submitted can also be read as “Why is there no Japanese IR theory?”, or more positively, “Is/was there any Japanese IR at all?” Today, the country has the third biggest academic community of its sort in the world. Yet, size does not match productivity, which is small in comparison. One simple example: As of spring 2008, there are only three Japanese members on editorial boards (or an equivalent) of major IR journals\(^1\). Though this does not reflect Japan’s role in the IR academic community straightforward, it may still be one parameter

\(^1\) The earlier draft was presented at the annual convention of the International Studies Association, San Francisco, 27\(^{th}\) March, 2008. The author would like to express his gratitude to comments from Professor Ralph Pettman (University of Melbourne), Professor Makoto Kobayashi (Ochanomizu University), and panel participants. Also, Mr. Sebastian Maslow (Tohoku University) provided me with language help, both English and German, as well as gave many useful comments on the paper, which is highly appreciated.
to grasp the current situation. It is a grave error to assume that Japan does not contribute to the study of IR, but it may be reasonable to say that there exists much more room for a Japanese IR for the discipline’s advancement. In the IRAP issue, Professor Takashi Inoguchi provided a reply to such “Japanese IR” question (Inoguchi 2007b). Yet his answer remains one, though persuasive, reply: there seems to be a need for more answers, from various points of view.

The aim of this paper is to provide a positive answer to the “Japanese IR” question. For that purpose, the author sets three perspectives. The first is conceptual, i.e. the analysis will particularly focus on the idea of “international society”, or the worldview of Japanese IR scholars. As will be argued later, the conceptual analysis provides a good notion for answering the “Japanese IR” question, since its theoretical reach goes beyond the boundaries of historical and geographical particularity.

The second is historical, i.e. the paper pays particular attention to inter-war period scholars. The period from the 1920s to 1940s is the one during various concepts of “international society” were developed, advocated, contested and rejected. For Japan, the inter-war period was of special importance since this was the time when the country had completed her process of becoming a major power in the world. It was also the time when the country saw itself confronted with the status of “in-between-ness”. In other words, the location of Japan was between the colonizer, as an emerging major power, and the colonized, as a country outside the Western world. Through the 1920s and 1940s, Japan had struggled to identify not only its actual status in the world politics, but also its academic standpoints.

The third perspective is inter-disciplinal. Here, the analysis covers not only IR scholars but also political theorists and publicists. It is well known that Japanese IR as a whole had been created as a “joint venture” among different scholars. In particular, political theorists and international lawyers had played significant roles for the development of the discipline (Kawata 1963). In this context, it is worth to take notice of the fact that in Japan the issue of international relations had firstly been treated within the realm of international law, through the journal Kokusai-hou Gaikou Zasshi (Journal of International Law and Diplomacy).

The next section is devoted to clarify the question, while section two provides

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They are Takashi Inoguchi (European Journal of International Relations; International Relations; Journal of Conflict Resolution), Kinhide Mushakoji (Journal of Peace Research), and Yoshikazu Sakamoto (Journal of Peace Research). Here “major journals” include: African Affairs; International Affairs; International Organization; International Politics; International Relations (David Davies Memorial Institute); International Security; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Journal of Peace Research; Review of International Studies; Survival; Third World Quarterly and World Trade Review.
categorization of four types of conceptions about international society, namely the Idealists, the Kelsenians, the Cosmopolitans, and the Greater-Asians. Basically, in Japan, pre-WWII Politics had been developed on the basis of the German Staatslehre, but the 1920s was the period when the country’s academics had countered the British “pluralist” concept of the state. Thus it is correct to assume that the Japanese vision of international society is to some extent the extension of the German and British schools of Politics. However, at a closer look, we find that there exists a distinct character which other countries’ studies do not have. Section three will explore in what points the study is unique, as a “Japanese IR”.

1. CLARIFYING THE QUESTION

Ideally, it should not matter whether the discipline of IR is “American” (Schmidt 1998), “British” (Porter 1972), or “Japanese”. As the discipline covers various dynamics of world politics, the scope of the discipline may be universal. Also, despite a serious cleavage between “positivist” and “post-positivist” camps, theories of IR do not take the issue seriously whether their creation, development, revision and application bear the influence of a particular country. However, IR is not a complete neutral to all actors. As Robert Cox once famously argued, theories, and even one discipline may be for some people and for some purposes (Cox 1981). Each country or region has a certain view towards interstate interactions. IR is often used for advocating actual political practices, and vice versa.

Apart from such practical requirements, the argument for a country-based IR has other reasons. Cultural and geographical difference among states can be a background to develop original thinking about the world. Who leads the national IR academia may also matter. Yet perhaps one major reason is that some countries, especially in Asia, have began to explore if there is any possibility to extend the vista of IR scholarship without depending much on a Anglo-American style of social science. This does not mean a “Revolt against the West” by major Asian or non-western states. Rather, they offer an attempt to make the existing mainstream of IR less absolute than before, through providing a different thought as components of a universal and multicultural IR. Recent launches of Asian IR journals seem to illustrate this project’s aims. At least in Asia, three country-based journals have been published: the Chinese Journal of International Politics (China-based. Since 2006); Indian Journal of Politics and International Relations (India-based. Since 2007); and International Relations of the Asia-Pacific (Japan-based. Since 2000).

Taking this as our background, the paper narrows down the question in the
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IRAP issue into a Japanese context. However, whether there exists any “Japanese IR” remains a big question. Thus it is necessary to present its precise meaning by clarifying what the question does mean and what it does not.

1.1. **What the Question Does Not Mean**

The first step in clarifying the question is to exclude what the question of a “Japanese IR” does not mean. One possible temptation for identifying a “Japanese IR” is to over-emphasize the country’s cultural, geographical, or historical uniqueness and arguing for its “superiority” over other countries or regions. This sort of Japan-exceptionalism can be claimed in two ways. The first is to focus on the particular points which seem to represent its uniqueness. For example, it is often mentioned that the Kyoto School of Philosophy turned its direction, during the WWII period, from reconciling the western and eastern ideas to enshrining Japanese culture. It is true that its leader, Kitaro Nishida, did have innovative ideas, influenced IR as an “innate constructivist” (Inoguchi 2007b). Yet the whole project later had a clear tendency to prioritize Japanese culture over others. The Kyoto School’s thought eventually developed into one of the major sources of the country’s expansionist policies, which was based on the close relationship between philosophers and policymakers.

Another way of over-emphasizing Japan’s background is to isolate the country and to argue that it does not belong to any other groupings. One typical example is Samuel Huntington’s treatment of Japan in his provocative book *The Clash of Civilizations* (Huntington 1998). Here, Japan occupies one of eight types of civilizations in his category. He says in the preface to Japanese translation that unlike his other categories, which usually consist of two countries or more, Japan states a case of unique status, because, the argument reads, Japan as a country and Japan as a civilization are overlapped (Huntington 2000: 3-4).

The problem with these over-emphasizing is that it would easily lose a view of universal scope as an academic inquiry. Identifying “Japanese IR” becomes meaningful only if it connects to a wider context for de-centralizing Western mainstream and adding fresh source of thinking about the world and world politics. Thus, clarifying the “Japanese IR” question goes beyond merely identifying the country’s uniqueness.

1.2. **What the Question Means**

Then the second step is to specify what the “Japanese IR” question means. For

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Footnote 1: One Major example is the roundtable discussion titled “Kindai no Chou-koku (Overcoming Modernity)”, which was held in 1942 (Kawakami et al. 1979).
this purpose, the author proposes that a study can be qualified as “Japanese IR” by meeting the following criteria:

(Criteria A) That a study is done by Japanese scholars

(Criteria B: meeting one of three)

That a study is:

(B1) about Japanese international relations
(B2) based on Japan’s foreign experience
(B3) based on a Japanese way of thinking or philosophy.

(Criteria C: meeting both)

That a study

(C1) can be generalized beyond Japanese context, and
(C2) can be evaluated and criticized from the point of IR in general.

(Criteria D) That there is no or only a few similar studies outside Japan.

The first criterion concerns the question of who conducts research, while the second addresses the issue of what kind of arguments or analyzes can be included. The third asks whether a study has some potential of being generalized and criticized in IR as a whole. And the final criterion concerns the national originality of the study. To be qualified as “Japanese IR”, a study has to meet all four criteria. Thus the problem with the Kyoto School is, for instance, it meets criteria A, B, C2 and D but not C1: it remained the logic of justifying Japan’s expansionist policy. Huntington’s work may meet B and C (2), but not A, C (1), and D: his isolation of Japan recognizing her as a single category is a unique tenet for his study, but not always applicable for others.

On the other hand, a typical example of “Japanese IR” can be found in Japan’s diplomatic/international history. As will be mentioned later, it is history, and not always theory, that was one of the essential components in Japan’s IR discipline. Theoretical aspect of Japan’s IR has been heavily influenced by foreign frameworks, and it is at this point that the country’s discipline has often been seen as one of “imported” knowledge.

Here one objection may be expected, in particular towards the first criteria, whether there really needs a condition on nationality. Indeed, as the case of the English School shows, national affiliation is not in fact necessary for the development of a country-based IR school. In this paper, it is merely a technical reason why the author put it as the first criterion: it may be the easiest way to identify Japanese IR, if any, by narrowing its figures into Japanese only. There exists real possibility that
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foreign scholars may belong to the “Japanese IR”, but dealing with the question on “who belongs” and “who do not” is not the main task for this paper.

1.3. Focusing on International Society

Having specified the conditions of what can be called a “Japanese IR”, the paper aims to answer this question, by focusing on the concept of “international society”. One simple reason for concentrating on the concept of international society is because IR in Japan did produce only a small number of outcomes related to key concepts, in comparison with historical analyses. In a sense, the paper partially shares Inoguchi’s suspicion, asking whether there exist any theories of IR in Japan (Inoguchi 2007b).

Focusing on the concept of international society may have its merits. First, international society is one of the vital concepts in the discipline, thus asking whether there have been any intellectual efforts exploring it may be a good criterion to answer the “Japanese IR” question. Also, the issue of society had attracted and deeply affected not only Japanese students but also various western scholars of the inter-war period. Triggered by Ferdinand Tönnies’ famous argument on Gemeinschaft (community) and Gesellschaft (society or association), there emerged a debate whether politics is exclusively on the issues of the states or much wider. German Staatslehre supported dominant role of the state, while British theory of the state the plurality of politics. In the context of IR, the issue was closely connected to the First Great Debate. Here, society was a key for those who reject realist’s image of international politics as Machtpolitik, and created accounts on international cooperation. The society question thus have direct relevancy with the basic understanding or the epistemology of international politics. In addition, the idea of international society is not only purely conceptual, but also practical. To understand the meaning of international society is to understand the relationship between Japan and the world. Such understanding may be the basis on which policymakers construct and/or decide the country’s direction in international politics.
2. FOUR VIEWS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

Previous section focuses on the question of what international society means for Japanese scholars. Here, the author categorizes major works by Japanese scholars into the following four types: (a) the Idealists; (b) the Kelsenians; (c) the Cosmopolitans; and (d) the Greater-Asians.

2.1. The Idealist – Masamichi Royama

The idealist vision of international society is presented by Masamichi Royama (1895-1980). Royama was a professor of the Imperial University of Tokyo, and one of the earliest scholars in modern Politics in Japan. He covered a wide range of areas, including Political Theory, Politics, and Public Administration. He also covered IR, which he approached from his intellectual background of Pluralist Theory of the State.

Royama’s view about international society was presented in his first work of Seijigaku no Ninmu to Taishou (The Purpose and Subject of Politics) in 1925, through his image of “international politics”. Here, his argument is quite original in two senses. First, he distinguishes international politics from foreign policy, and identifies the former as political activities for achieving common interests among the states (Royama 1925/1979: 361-362). Then he excludes state-centric foreign policies, as they are made “by” the state “for” the sake of the state. Second, he also differentiates international politics from cosmopolitanism, and rejects the latter since it is purely “ideational” and not material (Royama 1925/1979: 363). In short, Royama’s standpoint about international politics is in a sense one of a Rationalist, as long as he denies both realistic and cosmopolitan thinking.

However, his idea of international society did not derive in the way that Martin Wight’s Rationalism did. While Wight uses Political Theory (Political Philosophy) of Hugo Grotius for his categorization, Royama developed his own argument on society mainly referring to Sociology. In his 1928 work of Kokusai Seiji to Kokusai Gyousei (International Politics and International Administration), he used the idea of “Zentai Shakai (Total Society)” and “Bubun Shakai (Partial Society)”, both of which were

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5 All Japanese texts in this section are translated by the author unless properly stated.
6 Names in Chinese Characters are written as surname first, the opposite of western style. It is usual to put surname first in some Asian countries, which the author followed the rule.
7 It means he did not reject cosmopolitanism based on the individuals. This is important, as he later argued that both states and non-state actors could constitute international society. Royama’s conception of international society is different from the one made by Hedley Bull or Martin Wight.
originally developed by the famous Japanese Sociologist Yasuma Takada (Takada 1922). Royama then identified international society as one “Zentai Shakai” which consisted of two sorts of “Bubun Shakai (Partial Society)”: “Kiso Shakai (Basic Society)” and “Hasei Shakai (Derivative Society)” (Royama 1928: 13-14). The states belong to the “Kiso Shakai”, and non-states actors do to the “Hasei Shakai”. In short, for him, international society itself was already a “Zentai Shakai”, and consisting of two types of “Bubun Shakai”: “Kiso Shakai” of states and “Hasei Shakai” of non-state actors.

Therefore, for Royama, the notion of international society was already a complex of states and non-state actors. He made this point clear by arguing that both “Kiso Shakai” and “Hasei Shakai” had their own actors in international politics. These actors were termed as “Kokusai Seiji Soshiki (International Political Organizations)”.

“Kokusai Seiji Soshiki” is defined as a “framework created for constituting, maintaining, and developing international society” (Royama 1928: 12), and categorized into three forms of organization: (a) foreign office, (b) public international organizations, and (c) private international organizations. He explained that both, state and non-state organizations, were important for his argument on international society, and even argued that it is private organizations rather than public ones that “promote the atmosphere for developing international society” (Royama 1928: 20-21). It is these points which differentiate his argument from Wight’s or “Rationalist” conceptions of international society.

Having introduced Royama’s argument, the question is in what sense his idea is “idealist”, and the answer can be found in his intellectual background. As mentioned, he was a person studying modern politics. At that time Staatslehre was the mainstream in the country’s political studies. Yet this was also the period when British idealists had increased their influence, and Leonard Woolf was the person who made a significant impact on Royama. He frequently invoked Woolf’s report on international government (Woolf 1916), and acknowledged that it provided a “light” for observing complex European international politics (Royama 1928: 3). Indeed, his argument of “international political organization” is based on Woolf. Tying together Takada’s account of society and Woolf’s argument of international government, Royama developed his idealist view of international society.

2.2. The Kelsenians – Akira Osawa and Kisaburo Yokota

The second group of scholars can be called the Kelsenians. As the name already indicates, this group consists of international lawyers exclusively. And as mentioned, the mainstream of Japanese scholarship of Politics was formed from the German
Staatslehre, but Kelsen’s impact was also quite significant. Here, the paper especially focuses on two leading Kelsenians: Akira Osawa (1889-1967, Kyushu Imperial University) and Kisaburo Yokota (1896-1993, Imperial University of Tokyo).

2.2.1. Akira Osawa (大澤 章) on Verdrossian International Order

Osawa was a professor of International Law at the Kyushu Imperial University. Strictly speaking, he was influenced by both Kelsen, and Alfred Verdross. In his leading work titled Kokusai-hou Chitsujo Ron (On International Legal Order) he presented his idea of international society as a legal order (Osawa 1931).

In the first part of the book, he intensively argued and advocated Kelsenian theory of law. He pointed out that the major challenge for international lawyers was how to grasp the subject of research clearly, and how to construct a method to do so (Osawa 1931: 6). The pure theory of law was recognized as “new study” (Osawa 1931: 76), and he expected that the request for “pureness” in Kelsenian theory could become one meaningful methodology for analyzing international law (Osawa 1931: 78).

What Osawa then argued is that there exists an “integrated legal order”. As its name suggests, it binds the international and national orders together. International law is seen as superior to national law, since the former legitimizes the latter. In addition, he presupposed the existence of a “Kokusai-hou Kenpou (International Legal Constitution)”, which was ultimately legitimates international law, and therefore the fundamental norm of the order as a whole (Osawa 1931: 174-175). In Kelsen’s context, this is referred to as a Grundnorm (Basic Norm), but Osawa took Verdross’ idea of Völkerrechtsverfassung, or “international law constitution”.

Prioritizing international norms/order over national norms/order reflects Osawa’s worldview. He was a person who denied the supremacy of sovereign states, and recognized a wide range of actors. More specifically, he argued that there are eight types of actors— the state is one of them – as well as various relationships among them (Osawa 1931: 455-457). By rejecting the absoluteness of the state sovereignty, his line of argumentation is in accordance with Royama’s thought.

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1 However, Osawa did not mention the reason why he took Verdross’s view rather Kelsen’s. It is assumed that there exist some differences between Verdross and Kelsen, yet this is for future consideration, as it goes beyond the scope of this paper’s argument. A Japanese article focusing on this topic provides useful insights for Japanese scholars. See Uemura (1983).
2 They are: (1) the states; (2) the League of Nations, international courts and international arbitrary courts; (3) international labour organizations (including both relevant international organizations and international trade-unions); (4) international committees and administrative organizations; (5) private associations; (6) Roman Curia and other religious groups; (7) ethnic groups; and (8) individuals. See Osawa (1931: 455-456).
2.2.2. **Kisaburo Yokota (横田 喜三郎) and the Idea of a “World State”**

Yokota was a leading Kelsenian in the inter-war period, and he strongly supported basic theses of the pure theory of law. Yet it was after WWII when he extended his Kelsenian argument to the issue of international society.

In *Sekai Kokka no Mondai (The Question of the World State)* he made a radical argument, both advocating the world state and the “world sovereignty”, and instead rejecting the traditional idea of state sovereignty (Yokota 1948: 16-20). His idea was that the whole world constituted one single society, and that such society had single sovereignty (Yokota 1948: 19), and therefore a single state. The point here is that he was talking about the world *state*, and not the world *government*. Like some countries, late 1940s and 1950s were the period when the movement for the world government emerged and became popular, and often some leading scholars, such as Hideki Yukawa (Japanese Physicist and Nobel laureate), were actively committed. Here, Yokota’s argument provides a good contrast with Shigejiro Tabata’s critical analysis of the world government (Tabata 1947).

For Yokota, the “applied research” of Kelsen’s theory includes not only the concept of international society, but also the actual practice which takes place in postwar world: the United Nations. He was one of the most active scholars advocating the UN immediately after the WWII. He saw the UN Charter as the “international constitution” (Yokota 1948: 128-129), and argued that “the world state has already been partially accomplished” by the establishment of the UN (Yokota 1948: 24-29). In particular, he saw hope in the Security Council, because its resolution had binding force. The point here is that his support towards the UN and the Security Council is not a product of his utopian optimism, but of his Kelsenian attitude. Like Kelsen, he emphasized the importance of the *Grundnorm*, and supported Kelsen’s argument seeing the essence of law in its enforcement (Yokota 1944/1948; 1949). For him, the UN fit quite well with Kelsen’s theory. Although the reality of world politics soon revealed Yokota’s argument as naive, he was nonetheless the person who has drawn the picture of an international society as a society “world states” with the UN as its core.

The clearest difference from the Idealists’ standpoint is that the Kelsenians attempted to identify international society in terms of legal language exclusively. Like Kelsen’s pure theory, they did not refer to expertise outside of law. Thus there was no League of Nations, no morality, and no “society”. Instead, the term they used was “order”, and they attempted to construct theories of international society as the ones of international order. This trend is common with the “Greater-Asians”, but the Kelsenians developed the idea of order more systematically. For Kelsenians, the problem of order was not limited to international order, but the legal system as a
whole. While the latter is theoretical, former is more practical. In other words, the issue of international society was situated as a good example to which Kelsenian theory of law could be applied.

2.3. The Cosmopolitans – Hikomatsu Kamikawa and Kotaro Tanaka

The inter-war period was the time when the “cosmopolitans” had appeared and expressed their views about the world. This paper introduces two major figures: one from IR and another from Commercial Law.

2.3.1. Hikomatsu Kamikawa (神川 彦松) and his Kantian Cosmopolitanism

Hikomatsu Kamikawa (1889–1988) was a professor of IR at the Imperial University of Tokyo. Kamikawa was regarded as one of the earliest IR scholars in Japan. He was particularly strong in international history, yet he covered the discipline comprehensively.

His view about international politics was expressed in his first work titled *Kokusai Renmei Seisaku Ron* (On the League of Nations), published in 1927. Perhaps the most original aspect of Kamikawa’s work is his philosophical analysis related to world peace. He regarded ideational factors seriously, and categorized them into two, namely World Pacifism and World Solidarism (Kamikawa 1927/1966: 527, 546). Based on his review of the philosophy of world peace (Kamikawa 1927/1966: 476-526), he considered those two as “foundational principles” for international politics. For Kamikawa, international politics took the form of “Kokusai Kyoudou Kanri (international cooperative control)”, for “establishing peace and realizing cultural, societal, political, economic, and other types of values for every ethnic groups and humanity in general” (Kamikawa 1927/1966: 559). As international politics is “Kokusai Kyoudou Kanri”, he argued that “the subject of international politics is the society of mankind” (Kamikawa 1927/1966: 663).

Thus, for Kamikawa, the scope of international politics as international society was already inadequate; rather what he assumed is a sort of human society, and it was based on his argument of World Solidarism. For him, World Solidarism had four tenets (Kamikawa, 1927/1966: 550-557). First, it was an idea which recognized “moral ties” among all ethnic groups and states. Second, it respected Kantian moral philosophy, and treated other actors not as a means for advancing selfish interests, but as a goal. Third, it regarded the interest of one state as the interest of international society. Finally, it even saw individual morality was becoming a world morality or “humanity”. Indeed, he used the term “cosmopolitanism” (Kamikawa 1927/1966: 555). It is obvious that his approach was heavily influenced by Kant, and
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it is also surprising that his argument had some commonalities with contemporary normative IR theory.

2.3.2. Kotaro Tanaka (田中 耕太郎) and his Theory of “World Law”

Kotaro Tanaka (1890-1974) was a professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo, and he was later appointed to the post of chief at the Supreme Court of Japan, as well as to a judge at the International Court of Justice. Tanaka was originally a scholar of Commercial Law, yet his academic interests covered Private International Law and Jurisprudence. His argument was much more moderate cosmopolitan and even closer to the Idealist argument of international society. However, what was unique with Tanaka is his theory of “world law”, and the idea of “world society” which was based on mutual interdependence.

Tanaka’s representative publication is a three volume expertise of Sekai-hou no Riron (A Theory of World Law) published in 1931. His idea of world law was derived from his view that law should not be linked with states exclusively. He used the old maxim, *Ubi Societas, Ibi Ius* (Where society exists, law is there), and argued that certain types of law do exist in corresponding societies: Local law for local society, national law for national society, world law for world society (Tanaka 1931/1948: 5 of Volume One). Yet he did not support cosmopolitanism straightforward. For Tanaka, world law was not something that exists *a priori* universal: rather it was created when certain a law becomes universalized or worldwide, which meant world law always had started from particular law. Therefore, he also denied a view that world law always took the form of natural law (Tanaka 1931/1948: 348-349 of Volume Three).

Despite his argument that world law was not always *a priori* cosmopolitan, Tanaka did point out that world society had existed. His argument on world society is unique in two senses. First, he argued that the world society could be created as a sort of human community. This was based on Tönnies’ idea of *Gemeinschaft*, and Tanaka saw a state as a typical example. Yet he said that as the number of associations (such as churches, trade-unions, companies, etc.) was increasing and more associations did their activities beyond state borders, they would create a certain “atmosphere”, which may create in turn a wider community than states do. He argued that “creating more international associations may, after all, contribute to human solidarity and community” (Tanaka 1931/1948: 169 of Volume One).

Second, Tanaka’s idea of world society took economic interdependence seriously. As a professor of Commercial Law, the expansion of economy was a key for world society. He argued that international economy was “the richest ground on which we
can clearly see world law and world society” (Tanaka 1931/1948: 191 of Volume One). Thus, his conception of world society was first and foremost the society tied together by the global economy, on which his theory of world law was developed mainly as transnational economic law. And it is this point which set Tanaka apart from other cosmopolitans, like Kamikawa, since his theory was not solely based on philosophical thinking.

What is striking with the “cosmopolitans” was that their conception of international society already implied a wider meaning of society than “international”. Kamikawa interchangeably used the term “international society” and “the society of mankind”, while Tanaka used “international society” and “world society” almost equally.

2.4. The Greater-Asians – Kaoru Yasui and Shigejiro Tabata

The final group can be called the Greater-Asians. The name implies that this type of scholars had some relevancy with Imperial Japan’s notorious policy under the banner of the “Daitoua Kyouei Ken (the Greater East Asia Co-Propensity Sphere, hereafter the Co-Propensity Sphere)”. Here, the author chooses Kaoru Yasui of the Imperial University of Tokyo and Shigejiro Tabata of the Kyoto Imperial University as representative figures of this line of thought.

Such selection may be criticized, since there were other scholars who had been keener on Japan’s expansion than Yasui and Tabata were. In fact, an important point is here that both of them were not eager supporters of Japan’s imperialism. Though it is debatable to what extent they were “supportive” to the government’s policies, their positions were clearly differentiated from the super-right wings which gave its sole priority to Japanese culture. However, their approaches still deserve attention, since they were based on a critical perspective of international law and order, namely by the thought of Carl Schmidt.

2.4.1. Kaoru Yasui and the Schmidttian Concept of Grossraum

Kaoru Yasui (1907-1980), an associate professor of the Imperial University of Tokyo, began his career as a critic of the Kelsen – Verdross style of legal theory, before becoming an advocate of Marxian international law. However, he was also known as a leading advocate of Schmidt’s theory of Grossraum. His book Oushu Kouiki Kokusai-hou no Kiso Rinen (On the Concept of Grossraum in Europe) is considered as one of

For example, Yoshio Ogushi (1903-1967), a staff of the Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyu-jo (National Institute of Japanese Ethos and Culture, now abolished), was a leading person who supported the country's imperialist policies, based on his view of Japan-centrism.
the most important works on Schmidtian international law at that time, from which he had contributed to the project of “Daitoua Kokusai-hou Sousho (Greater-Asian International Law Book Series)”, an academic project of the Japan Association of International Law supporting the Co-Propensity Sphere Policy. After WWII, he was purged from the University of Tokyo, by the General Head Quarters (GHQ), on the basis of his “contribution” to this project. He later moved to Hosei University.

What Yasui mostly did in his Oushu Kouiki Kokusai-hou no Kiso Rinen was to introduce Schmidt’s idea of Grossraum and Konkrete Ordnung (Concrete Order or Specific Order), including his criticism on the process which conventional international law (Völkerrecht) had been universalized. Yet Yasui also mentioned its relevancy to Japan, and it is at this point where his idea of international society appeared. He argued that the Daitoua (the Greater Asia) area was a “new order” which had been “emancipated” from the European world and its rules. With Japan as its core, the Daitoua became an independent area (Yasui 1942: 3). What he argued as Daitoua Kokusai-hou was a legal system handling the relationship between the inside and outside of the area (Yasui 1942: 3), and he found the theory of Grossraum quite helpful for developing the new system of law. Like the Kelsenians, the issue of international society was one of order for him, but he differentiated himself from Yokota (but not Osawa\(^\text{11}\)) as he focused on a “concrete” or “specific” order led by Japan.

2.4.2. Shigejiro Tabata (田畑 茂二郎) and the "Plural Structure" of International Order

Shigejiro Tabata (1911-2001) was a professor of International Law at the Kyoto Imperial University. Unlike Yasui, he was not purged, and continued his career until his retirement in the late 1970s. His influence in the discipline was, and has been, enormous, especially among universities in the Western part of Japan.

While Yasui remained with his argument in the extent of Schmidt’s Grossraum theory, Tabata developed an argument of international order which was based on his original conceptual and historical analysis. In his article Kokusai-hou Chitsujo no Tagen-teki Kousei (The Plural Structure of International Legal Order), Tabata formulated the question whether international legal order had a single, integrated structure as the Kelsenians proposed (Tabata 1942: 382 of Part One). He rejected this notion, by presenting two claims. First, the “enrollment” of eastern states into the realm of “international law (which is European international law)” did not mean that those states had got the ability to be “Europeanized”, nor that “international law” had become universalized and covered non-western regions. Rather, the eastern entry into

\(^\text{11}\) As mentioned later, Osawa “converted” his academic interests and started to support the Daitoua International Law.
“international law” only meant that those countries had agreed to follow certain rules for dealing with issues relating to European states (Tabata 1942: 394 of Part One).

Second, he argued that the current world was witnessing the emergence of regional blocs, and differentiates between “regionalism” and *Grossraumordnung*. While the former was based on European, and often Kelsenian, theory of international law, the latter denied such conventional framework. Instead, it introduced an alternative framework as its basis. The point here is that Tabata distinguished the Kelsenian conception of international order, which was epistemologically single and integrated, from his idea of international order, which was ontologically plural. In short, he denied the Kelsenian idea simply because it was a “theory”, and Tabata weighed the actual world with plural structure of international order, or blocs.

Conceptualizing the structure of the international order as pluralist derives from the thought of German publicists, in particular Schmidt. Yet what differentiates Tabata from other Japanese scholars in this context is that he developed his argument by scrutinizing the history of the idea of sovereign equality. In his *Kindai Kokusai-hou ni okeru Kokka Byoudou no Gensoku ni tsuite* (On Sovereign Equality Principle in Modern International Law), he addressed the question whether modern international law had exhausted the idea of sovereign equality (Tabata 1944: 219 of Part One). He answered to the question in a negative notion, by presenting that the idea of sovereign equality as developed by Grotius, often seen as a widely accepted assumption, did recognize sovereign inequality. Instead, he argued it was Samuel Pufendorf who had completed the conception.

One important thing to notice here is that his article on sovereign equality ended up incomplete because Tabata explained that his article “would become very long” if he had continued to publish. Later he did publish his whole argument in a different format, as *Kokka Byoudou Shisou no Tenkan* (The Transformation of the Idea of Sovereign Equality). Yet this work belongs to his post WWII expertise (Tabata 1946), which means that he did not include the argument related to the *Daitoua* issue.

Another point to note with Tabata is that he later changed his view on international society from a “pluralist” one to a much more “solidarist” one, by emphasizing the importance of human rights. His publication focusing on the Universal Declaration of Human Right became one of the first books of its sort in Japan (Tabata 1951).

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12 It has been a common practice for Japanese scholars (especially in Law) to divide one’s whole argument into several pieces, and then contribute them partially in several issues of a journal.

13 In fact, Tabata issued a shorter version of the argument with the same title in 1943.
Before preceding my argument by analyzing these four groups of scholars, it may be a good idea to point out some common characters. First of all, they are all professors of Imperial Universities, and mostly the Imperial University of Tokyo. Some may criticize, the selection is biased, and to some extent it is reasonable. There were professors in Politics and IR in private universities, including famous figures such as Ikuo Oyama of Waseda University or Koh Harada of Kansai University (Osaka), but the presence of Imperial Universities was still enormous. In fact, the Imperial University of Tokyo was seen as a major source for providing academics to private universities (Taguchi 2000).

Another point worth to note is that some scholars later “converted” their academic directions in favour of the Co-Propensity Sphere policy. Indeed, it is only Yokota and Tanaka who kept their academic interests unchanged. Royama later published various articles on policies in the Co-propensity Sphere (Royama 1938), and Osawa changed his theoretical position from Verdrossian to Schmidtian (Osawa 1941). Kamikawa joined as a member of the special committee of the Japan Association of International Law, and proposed the blueprint of a postwar world order.

3. JAPANESE-NESS AS IN-BETWEEN-NESS

And now the question again arises, in what sense these studies are “Japanese”. Indeed, one may be sceptical enough after reviewing four views of international society, since they do have foreign origins. After all, both idealist and cosmopolitan positions are rooted in the western culture. Kelsenian thinking is based both on legal positivism and (neo) Kantian philosophy. Even the “Greater-Asian” argument is heavily relying on Schmidt’s idea of Grossraum. Thus, according to the criteria presented in section one of this paper, these studies seem to meet criteria A, C1 and C2, but not B and D: they are studies about one of the essential concepts in the discipline, and presented by Japanese scholars. Yet it does not always seem to reflect the country’s foreign experience, nor does it reflect ways of thinking. In addition, there is the number of studies dealing with the issue of international society. After all, all four seem to be imported and interpreted knowledge.

This said, however, the author attempts to argue that those views on international society may still belong to a “Japanese IR”. The thesis proposed here is that Japanese conceptions of international society have one distinct character which other countries do not have. That is, a Japanese vision of international society consists of three types of different questions, namely the question about solidarity, about authority, and about autonomy. Non-Japanese visions of international society
have dealt with the former two, but not with the third question. An important point is that the question about autonomy is rooted in Japan’s experience in international politics, i.e. its experience of being “in-between”: the country had been situated between the European world of the colonizer and its outside world of the colonized. In such a situation, the “in-between-ness” posed a question to what extent Japan should have been autonomous in international politics (or to what extent Japan should have been free from European rules). The question of autonomy is, in this context, particularly fit to the modern experience of Japan. Yet at the same time, the meaning of “in-between-ness” may go beyond one country’s uniqueness, and have a wider character of academic inquiry. In any case, is this question about autonomy which differentiates a Japanese vision of international society from others, and thus gives a positive answer to the inquiry of “Japanese IR”.

3.1. “Society” and “Order” Approaches to International Society

Before moving to the central argument, it may be useful to distinguish the studies about international society into two, depending on how scholars approached the subject. One line of thought can then be called the “society” approach. This position is based on the pluralist theory of the state, led by British scholars such as Harold J. Laski and Robert Maciver. Pluralist theory denies the primacy of the state in politics, and instead argues the importance of society and non-state actors. For them, international society is a field for international politics, in the form that national society is a locus of national politics. In each society, the state can be an actor, but just one actor. Both sub- and supra-state organizations also constitute these societies.

Another line of argumentation can be called the “order” approach. This approach is typical among German international lawyers, particularly to Kelsenians. For them, the question of international society is, after all, the one of international order. The main concern is how norms are structured and establish one world hierarchy, with Grundnorm or Völkerrechtsverfassnug as its top. Such understandings of international society and order are, obviously, different from other studies, such as presented by Hedley Bull (Bull 1977/1995). For Bull, international order is the “pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society” (Bull 1977/1995: 8).

These two approaches agree in some points, but are simultaneously at odds with each other. In what both agree with is that the state does not exhaust both national and international politics. Both perspectives reject the supremacy of the state, either because multiple actors (such as non-state ones) constitute the world (for the “society”
approach), or because the state is not the sole source of legal norms (for the “order” approach). The commonality found in both approaches is clearly different from Bull’s idea of the society of states of which only states can be members.

On the other hand, the difference between the “society” and “order” approach depends on how one sees the nature of society in a general sense. The former understands the society as a tied relationship between actors, and the idea of social solidarity is an important element. Yet the latter considers it as the authority of a norm, or how norms are “ordered”, that is the nature of a society (or order, in their words).

The distinction of “society” and “order” approaches seems to be similar to an argument made by the Japanese political historicist Tetsuya Sakai. In his recent book, he points out that there were two types of “orders” in the inter-war political discourse, namely “international order” and “imperial order” (Sakai 2007). The former rules the relationship between equal sovereign states, while the latter one governs inside each empire, based on an unequal relationship between the mainland and the colony. Sakai’s classification is on the geographical relationship between European states and its outsiders. To some extent his classification and the society/order distinction overlaps. In particular, it can be said that while the “society” approach and “international order” commonly focus on the horizontal relationship among actors, the “order” approach and “imperial order” locate the vertical or hierarchical relationship among them.


And where can we find any uniqueness in a Japanese vision of international society? One possible answer comes from its patchwork structure patching together the British approach of “society” and the German approach of “order”. As presented, all four views on international society introduced here belong to either the “society” or the “order” approach. Royama and the Cosmopolitans frequently refer to the pluralist theory of the state, while the Kelsenians and partially the Greater Asians commonly argue the issue of international society as one of order. Thus it may be argued that the inter-war period Japan was the locus where both approaches met and co-existed, and the whole academic discourse on international society consists of such different arguments.

In somewhat different words, Sakai makes a similar argument. With his international/imperial order distinction, he points out that Japan and East Asia have put themselves in a unique place in international relations, because these two types of order have been overlapped (Sakai 2007: 6). In a European context, these two
orders just co-existed: international order for the relationship among the colonizers, and imperial order for the relationship between the colonizer – the colonized. The story was different in East Asia, as there was the colonizer and the colonized in the same geographical area.

Such “patchwork” or “overlapping” accounts have interesting insights. The point is, besides the overlapping nature of international and imperial order, that East Asia has had other notable characteristics. First, the region had already started its status as “the other” of European international society. Second, therefore, it was imperial order, and not international, which came first into the East Asian context. In world history, East Asia had been neither the world of the colonizer’s nor the one of the colonized completely. In short, East Asia had had both worlds, and that is why there occurred an overlap between international and imperial order: two different orders in one area. The same logic can be applied to Japan. Despite the fact that Japan had not been under colonial rule (except the six years occupation since 1945) and that the country had been a major power during the inter-war period, Japan found herself always in the position of the outsider or the European world simultaneously.

Nevertheless, the “patchwork” or “overlapping” argument is inadequate because it does not explain the “in-between-ness” of Japan’s position. The “in-between-ness” has a special meaning. “Between A and B” does not always mean “half A” or “half B”; thus combining A’s view and B’s view together does not always necessarily result into an explanation for the “in-between-ness”. In the same way as it is inadequate to use American and Japanese views together for explaining being Japanese-American, it is inadequate to apply the ideas of international order and imperial order together, for explaining Japan’s uniqueness of being between the colonizer and the colonized. The same logic is applied to the society/order distinction. Being “in-between” requires its own explanation. A Japanese vision of international society has certain aspects which are based on the country’s “in-between” experience, both the international/imperial order distinction or society/order distinction are not fully appropriate for explaining the uniqueness of Japan and a Japanese vision of international society.

Rather the combination of the “society” and “order” approaches, it is instead proposed that a Japanese vision of international society is a complex of three different inquiries, namely the question about social solidarity, about authority, and about autonomy. The first concerns the horizontal relationship among actors, asking to what extent these actors are connected by social ties. The second focuses on the hierarchical relationship among actors, asking how sub-state, state, and supra-state actors are connected by legal norms. These two arguments correspond to the “society” and “order” approaches respectively. The Idealists and the Cosmopolitans address the question
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of solidarity, as their emphasis on “mutual interdependence” (Royama and Tanaka) or on “world solidarism” (Kamikawa) illustrates. The Kelsenians cover the inquiry about authority, since they see the international “order” as an integrated structure of norms. The third question about autonomy is a new one. Autonomy here is concerned to what extent each constituting actor is free from other rules. This question had been addressed by the Greater-Asians, through their idea of “plurality of sovereign equality”. What makes a Japanese vision of international society distinctively unique is this third question, because it is this question which is directly connected to Japan’s “in-between-ness”. When we think about the meaning of country’s position of “in-between”, we can find two dimensions.

On the one hand, the question about autonomy asks whether certain an actor is free from other actor’s control, and if answered positively, to what extent the actor is free. For European states, the autonomy question is not a serious one, as they have already been recognized as autonomous. However, in the context of the non-western world, the question about autonomy becomes an acute issue. Here the inquiry means whether certain states are not under foreign, or more importantly, colonial rule. To this question, the Greater-Asians answered negatively, either by arguing that states had been under the colonial rules by the European world, and claimed the “emancipation” from the European international society (Yasui 1942: 3, 112), or rejecting the universalization of European international law (Tabata 1942: 389-393 of Part One).

On the other hand, the question regarding autonomy highlights a more practical problem: how to achieve it. For the Greater-Asians, this meant a question of an alternative international order. Obviously, the Co-Propensity Sphere was an answer, and it has failed as an imperialist policy. Yet the question of autonomy and of alternative order still had two notable points. First, the argument on the alternative order was beyond criticizing the universalization of European international law, and thus beyond Schmidt’s argument. The Greater-Asians did refer to the Schmidtian concept of Raum, Grossraum, and Grossraumordnung, for criticizing the expansion of Völkerrecht, yet drawing a future blueprint required a more practical aspect. It is at this point that was linked to the country’s foreign policy.

Second, the Greater-Asian’s engagement in alternative order was not linked to the military regime and the Ministry of Greater East Asia (MoGEA), but to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). It is pointed out that Japan’s foreign policy towards East Asia itself was not single-edged and coherent (Hatano 2004). While the military regime and the MoGEA had pursued hard colonial policies towards East Asian states, The MoFA had taken a slightly different direction. The MoFA’s plan included hosting the Greater East Asia Conference, followed by the Joint Declaration,
and the establishment of the “Greater East Asia Peace Organization” (Hatano 2004: 303). The Greater-Asians, including those who had changed their academic directions, participated in the project in various ways. One is the contribution of the theory of *Daitoua Kokusai-hou* (*Greater East Asian International Law*), which Yasui and Tabata joined¹⁴. Another is the draft of a “postwar” plan of a “world peace organization” which Kamikawa contributed¹⁵.

Two questions related to autonomy reflect the situation where Japan found herself in the status of “in-between-ness”. Indeed, posing the question of autonomy alone already meant that Japan had to deal with a particular question which European states did not have to. As an outsider of European international society, it was inadequate to explore international society only from the point of “society” and “order”. Japan once became one of the permanent members in the League Council, yet such status was in a sense conditional, simply because Japan was outside Europe. In such context, the country’s invasion to Manchuria posed a serious challenge to Japanese intellectuals, asking where exactly Japan was (and perhaps should have been) in world politics, either a major power or a mere “semi-European” state. In some cases, the answers were made by linking these contradicting country images in a strange way, and such connection appeared as the “conversion” of liberal and cosmopolitan scholars. Sakai argues that, for those who supported liberal and idealist thinking, the Manchurian Incident was the turning point for “converting” their view (Sakai 2007). And in fact, Kamikawa, Osawa, and Royama had “converted” their cosmopolitan, Kelsenian, and idealist tendency, after the Manchurian Incident.

However, at the same time, Japan had been very conscious of her status of being “semi-European” in East Asia. What is striking is the implicit conviction commonly found among scholars of the Greater-Asian line of thought, who argue that it is Japan being in the leadership position (Royama 1941; Tabata 1944: 219 of Part One; Yasui 1942: 3, 112). Such conviction is also identified in the Greater-Asian’s argument on *Daitoua Kokusai-hou* and their academic practice on world peace organization. The question of autonomy was not only one of criticizing the universalization of European rule. It was also a question of how to achieve such autonomy, and more importantly, who should be one to take the initiative for achieving it. Japan’s position of being “semi-European” or “in-between” provides the answer for this question.

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¹⁴ Yasui’s book on *Grossraumordnung* was the first volume of the multiple-book studies on the Greater East Asia International Law Series (5 volumes were published by Yuhikaku).

¹⁵ According to Hatano, there were several proposals submitted. An interesting commonality is that those proposals imaged a peace organization consisting of several regional parts. See Hatano (2004: 321).
CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to give a positive answer to the “Japanese IR” question. Focusing on four views and three questions about international society, the paper now presents its answers as follows. First and foremost, yes, there was a Japanese IR. Second, its character can be found in the Japanese vision of international society. Third, more specifically, the “Japanese-ness” of IR can be traced back to the country’s position of being “in-between”: between the world of the colonizers and the world of the colonized. And finally, the “in-between-ness” of Japan’s position presented itself in the form of the question of autonomy, and it was the Greater-Asians who mainly pursued it. In sum, the “Japanese IR” can be found in the Greater-Asian’s studies, based on the self-identity of being “in-between”.

Yet this answer immediately has two important reservations. First, their attempts constituted an important intellectual foundation of Japan’s wartime policies, and in this sense the “Japanese IR” should be understood quite negatively, as a supporting discourse for the country’s imperialists anyway. Despite the bifurcation of political directions between the MoGEA and the MoFA, it is a historical fact that Japan invaded and imposed brutal colonial policies in East and South East Asia, which was later recognized as a “crimes” against peace and humanity. Second, however, some results of the Greater-Asian’s work on international order became one basis of Japan’s postwar foreign policy. As Hatano and Sakai argue, it is Tabata, and not Yokota or Tanaka, who had prepared the background worldview for the country’s foreign policy, and it can be traced back to the Pacific War period (Hatano 2004; Sakai 2007). Exploring this curious relationship remains an interesting topic for further research, but it is beyond the scope of this paper.

A final word can be added to the conclusion. That is, the disciplinary history would become an important part of Japanese IR scholarship. This does not mean that such academic inquiry has not existed before. Yet it has been marginal. Moreover, Japanese IR has an interesting origin as a “joint venture” between political theorists, historians, and international lawyers. Thus what would be necessary is a collaborative research conducted by various researchers at an interdisciplinary level.
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INTRODUCTION

This paper aims at confirming there were Japanese international relations theories even before the end of the WW II. This research question has been posed among Japanese IR scholars (Sakai 2007; Inoguchi 2007a, 2007b). Hikomatsu Kamikawa, the first president of the Japan Association of International Relations, raised the question “are we monkeys?” in his article of 1966 (Kamikawa 1966). The question came from the influential book, Adolf Hitler’s Mein Kampf. Hitler argued in the chapter on race and culture that humankind was divided into three races: the creators of the culture, the bearers of the culture and the destroyers of the culture. The Japanese race was a typical race of the bearers of European and American culture. Japan made progress to introduce European culture and technology but Japanese people were not the creators of the culture. If European and American civilization collapsed, Japan would make further progress for a while but it would also decline for the last time (Hitler 1925: chap. 9). Kamikawa posed the question, “Are Japanese IR scholars only monkeys to import European and American IR theories?” (Kamikawa 1966). The paper focuses on the pre-war Japanese IR academics and discusses the issue of whether there were Japanese original IR theories before the end of the WWII.

According to E. H. Carr’s the Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919-1939, a blind belief in idealism caused a crisis in the Versailles system (Carr 1939). The Versailles system was based on belief in three idealist theories: international organization, international law and military disarmament. One of the most important functions of international organization was the League of Nations system solving international conflicts by different types of peaceful means as well as economic and military sanctions. The functions of international law were also significantly important to preserve the
Versailles system, especially the Covenant of the League of Nations establishing the process of conflict resolutions and the Kellogg-Briand Pact banning war for the pursuit of states’ own political interests. Military disarmaments aimed at diminishing the risk of another world war. WWI broke out after arms races between Britain and the German Empire. Idealists supported these functions of the Versailles system but did not understand real politics among great powers in the world.

A crisis for Japanese IR academics and foreign policy makers, however, was a conflict between a contemporary universal order and an emerging new regional order. The Japanese Imperial Government supported the universal order in the 1920s: the Versailles system. However, after the Manchuria Incident in 1931 and Japan’s withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, the Japanese government and army would build a new regional order, Dai Tōa Kyōei Ken (the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere). As the government moved toward a political position set against the Versailles system, some Japanese IR scholars also changed their academic positions, and criticized Western IR theories supporting the contemporary universal order and created many different theories to endorse East Asian regional order.

The crisis for Japanese IR scholars was in turn that of the conflict between theory and practice. The Japanese government enacted the Chian Iji Hō in 1925 (the Peace Preservation Law of 1925) for the purpose of restricting Communist and Socialist anti-government activities. The Japanese judicial authorities increased the range of crimes punishable by this law, and arrested even liberals and democratic activists. The law also restricted academic activities in universities. Some IR researchers who had doubts regarding the government’s policies recognized that they could no longer publicly criticize the government. Other IR researchers created a theory supporting the government’s foreign policies: the theory of East Asian community supporting the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, for example. However, these researchers were deeply entangled in politics, and police and army as well as right wing activists kept watch on their language and behaviour. For Japanese IR scholars before the end of the WWII, keeping a certain distance from real politics was very crucial in order to survive.

On what conditions we can clarify that there were Japanese IR theories before 1945? One, at least, is to confirm that there were Japanese IR scholars before 1945. It is well known among Japanese IR academics that many researchers studied international politics even before the end of the WWII, but this fact might be unfamiliar to European and American IR academics. The paper confirms that Japanese scholars imported the studies of international law, diplomatic history and international politics from the European countries and the U.S. They desired the “most-advanced” knowledge from European and American literature and from
overseas education in the West. However, if they merely transplanted the European and American IR studies into Japanese academies, then perhaps they were just bearers of culture, as Hitler suggested.

So how might we confirm that Japanese IR scholars were the creators of the culture? One method is to clarify characteristics and tendencies of the Japanese IR. For example, it is often said that Asian studies in the Japanese IR are more active and advanced than in the European and American IR. That may be one of the characteristics and tendencies of Japanese IR, but it is unclear whether the advance in Asian studies within Japanese IR is a proof of its creativity. Even if Japanese IR scholars import the western IR theories and investigate politics, economy and society in Asian countries, it is not creative but rather merely supportive of the western theories. Even the use of oriental theories extracted from Asian cultures and religions by Japanese IR scholars might not qualify their work as “creative”.

Creativity comes in the first instance from critical considerations of conventional knowledge. Any theories that are critical of other theories and show new knowledge other theories do not show are creative. If we find Japanese IR theories criticizing the mainstream IR theories and providing any new knowledge on international relations, we may assume that we have confirmed the existence of Japanese IR theories. In the context of the pre-war Japanese IR academics, the theory of East Asian community provides at least one instance of the Japanese IR theory.

The paper confirms that there were IR theories even in pre-war Japan and that there were Japanese IR theories criticizing the western IR theories and endorsing the new East Asia order.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND DIPLOMACY IN JAPAN

This section aims at confirming that Japanese academics accepted theories and studies on international law and diplomatic history from European countries and the U.S. even in the pre-WWI era.

1.1. International Law

U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry appeared in the port of Uraga with his black ships in 1852 and demanded that the Tokugawa Shogunate open the country to the world. Japan and the U.S. signed up the Convention of Kanagawa opening the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate in 1854. Townsend Harris, the first Consul General to the Japan, negotiated with Naosuke Ii, and signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, securing consular jurisdiction and a conventional tariff for the U.S. Japan concluded
the same kind of unequal treaties with the U.K., France, Netherlands and Russia; thus the Japanese government required knowledge and studies of international law in order to revise these unequal treaties.

Henry Wheaton’s *Elements of International Law* was translated into Japanese and published in 1865 (Wheaton 1836, 1865). Daigaku Nankō (University of Tokyo) started a course on international law as early as in 1870. Foreign scholars taught international law at first, and Japanese scholars have taught since 1883. The Japanese Society of International Law was established in 1897 and started to publish *Kokusaihō Zasshi* (the Journal of International Law) in 1902.

Sakuye Takahashi and Nagao Ariga were famous scholars in the field of international law before WWI in Japan. Takahashi taught international law at the University of Tokyo and wrote the two textbooks: *Heiji Kokusai Hō* (*Public International Law in Peace*) in 1902 and *Senji Kokusai Hō* (*The Public International Law in War*) in 1903 (Takahashi 1902, 1903). Takahashi served as a legal advisor for the Japanese navy, and published two books in the U.S.: *Cases on International Law during Chino-Japanese War* in 1899 and *International Law Applied to the Russo-Japanese War* in 1908 (Takahashi 1899, 1908). Ariga went to study in Germany and Austria, and taught international law in *Tōkyō Senmon Gakkō* (Waseda University). He worked as a legal advisor for the Japanese army, and he published two books in France: *La guerre sino-japonaise* in 1896 and *La guerre russo-japonaise* in 1908 (Ariga 1896, 1908). These international books focused on the wartime functions of law during the first Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War.

### 1.2. Diplomatic History

Japan won the first Sino-Japanese War and these states signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895. The treaty confirmed the cessation of Liaodong Peninsula, Taiwan and the Pescadores from China to Japan. However, Russia voiced concerns about Japan’s military and political influence on China. Russia, France and Germany intervened in the treaty, and the Japanese government reluctantly accepted the withdrawal of their military forces from Liaodong Peninsula. Japan began the Russo-Japanese War in 1904. Victory was confirmed by diplomatic negotiations with Russia in Portsmouth in 1905, in which Japan was able to assert sufficient influence in relation to the positions put forward by U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt. Japan occupied the Kwantung Leased Territory in China and the South Manchuria Railway. As the Japanese government got involved in international conflicts, especially in East Asia, diplomatic theory and history became a more important area of study in Japan.

*Tōkyō Senmon Gakkō* and *Kōtō Shō Gakkō* (Hitotsubashi University) started
to teach modern diplomatic history in 1889. The Imperial University of Tokyo (University of Tokyo) also started diplomatic history in 1906. Kokusaihō Zasshi (the Journal of International Law) was renamed to Kokusaihō Gaikō Zasshi (the Journal of International Law and Diplomacy) in 1912, because research on diplomacy became more important for Japanese academics and foreign policy makers.

Nagao Ariga taught modern diplomatic history in Tōkyō Senmon Gakkō, and he published Kinji Gaikōshi (Contemporary Diplomatic History) in 1898 and Saikin Sanjūnen Gaikōshi (Diplomatic History in the Past 30 Years) in 1910 (Ariga 1898, 1910). Kiroku Hayashi went to study European diplomatic history in France, and taught diplomatic history in Keio University and published Ōshu Kinsei Gaikōshi (Modern Diplomatic History in Europe) in 1908 (Hayashi 1908).

2. ACCEPTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF IR IN JAPAN

2.1. Background

European great powers launched the First World War in 1914 and Japan declared war against the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires because Japan had entered a military alliance with Britain in 1910. After WWI, Britain and France and other countries signed the Versailles Treaty in 1919 and established the League of Nations in 1920. The Versailles system secured Britain and France’s dominance over Europe.

However, the U.S. did not enter the League of Nations, and pursued an agreement on peace in the Pacific. The U.S., the U.K., Japan and other countries signed the Nine Power Treaty in the Washington Naval Conference in 1922, giving approval to the U.S. Open-Door Policy toward China. The Nine Power Treaty denied Japan’s special interests in China although the U.S. had accepted the Lansing-Ishii Agreement in 1917 confirming Japan’s special interests over China. The U.S., the U.K., France and Japan signed the Four Power Treaty, and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was terminated. These states also signed up to the Washington Naval Treaty to limit ship tonnage and firing power, especially in relation to Japan’s hegemony over the Pacific. The Washington System denied Japan’s special interests on China and restricted Japan’s expansion over East Asia and the Pacific.

The Great Powers sealed the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928, banning war for the purpose of their national policy and interests. The 1920s was the golden age for idealists in Europe and America as well as in Japan.

2.2. An Introduction of International Relations in Japan

According to Hikomatsu Kamikawa, three academic groups started to study
international politics before 1945 in Japan: politics, international law and diplomatic history (Kamikawa 1967). The study of international politics, at least in Japan, derived from these academic disciplines. The Imperial University of Tokyo (University of Tokyo) seemed to be the first university in Japan to teach international politics. International politics was, however, taught under the umbrella of politics rather than as a separate field. Nambara Shigeru was the first scholar to teach international politics. He went to Germany to study the political philosophy of Kant and Fichte, and came back to the Imperial University of Tokyo (University of Tokyo) and taught Kant’s ideas on international politics in the first lecture of IR in Japan in 1925 (Nambara 1927). Moreover, Waseda University established the class of international politics in 1932.

Japanese scholars of colonial studies also had an influence on Japanese IR. Japan had at that time the issue of the northern frontier, or the first colony ‘Hokkaido (Ainu mosir)’. The Ainu are the native inhabitants in Hokkaido but the Japanese occupied the island. The Japanese government established Kaitakushi (the Hokkaido Development Office) that recommended that new settlers bring the land under cultivation. Hokkaido Imperial University (Hokkaido University)¹ was the center of agricultural and colonial development studies. After Japan’s acquisition of Taiwan in 1895 and Korea in 1910, the Japanese government required colonial studies and accordingly set up the colonial studies course at the Imperial University of Tokyo. Paul Reinsch’s World Politics was seen as the first basic text for Japanese colonial researchers (Reinsch 1901; Sakai 2006).

This paper introduces three leading IR researchers² from the 1920s Japan to clarify the point that there were IR theories even in pre-war Japan.

The first scholar is Jumpei Shinobu. After he resigned as a diplomat, he became a lecturer in Waseda University, studying international law and diplomatic history. He supported classical diplomacy before the Versailles system and seemed to be a classical realist (Sakai 2007). His prominent research was the Series of International Politics in 1926 with four books and over 2,600 pages. The volume one, Kokusai Seiji no Shinka oyobi Rensa, focused on concepts and history of international politics, internationalism and the balance of power (Shinobu 1925a). The second volume,

¹ Hokkaido University was founded as Kaitakushi Karigakkō in 1872. The school of Kaitakushi was renamed to the Sapporo Nō Gakkō (Sapporo Agriculture School) in 1876, and it was incorporated to the Tohoku Imperial University (Tohoku University) in 1907. Hokkaido Imperial University (Hokkaido University) incorporated the agricultural college of Tohoku Imperial University in 1918. The colonial studies and agricultural development studies had been studied since the age of the Sapporo Nō Gakkō. See Sakai (2006).

² Tadashi Kawata, an emeritus professor for the University of Tokyo and Sophia University, mentioned three leading Japanese IR theorists (Kawata 1963).
Kokusai Seiji no Kōki oyobi Rensa, covered international law and morality, and international organizations and movements (Shinobu 1925b). The third volume, Kokusai Funsō to Kokusai Renmei, dealt with international conflicts, peace movements and peaceful settlements, and the League of Nations (Shinobu 1925c). The last volume, Gaikō Kantoku to Gaikō Kikan, focused on democratic diplomacy and diplomatic institutions (Shinobu 1926). The Series of International Politics was the first and most comprehensive research on international relations in pre-war Japan.

The second scholar is Hikomatsu Kamikawa. He became a professor of the Imperial University of Tokyo (University of Tokyo) in 1923 and studied international history and international politics. His first book, Kokusai Renmei Seisaku Ron (The League of Nations and its Policies), was published in 1927 (Kamikawa 1927). His definition of international politics reflected his idealist position. “International politics is a common control over any social values and relations by people all over the world, for the purpose of confirming permanent world peace and improving human civilization, based on the principles of international pacifism and solidarism” (Kamikawa 1927: 247). He recognized the League of Nations as a world confederation to pursue the purposes of international politics (Kamikawa 1927: 250). However, he moved his academic position from idealism to realism from the 1930s. After WWII, he became the first president of the Japanese Association of International Relations.

Masamichi Rōyama went to Britain for study, and became a professor in the Imperial University of Tokyo (University of Tokyo) in 1928. He studied domestic and international politics and taught public administration. He originally endorsed the political theories of functionalism and pluralism (Sakai 2007). He published Seijigaku no Ninmu to Taisyo (Politics: the missions and targets) in 1925 (Rōyama 1925), and mentioned international politics in the last part of this book. He also brought out a book on international relations in 1928, Kokusai Seiji to Kokusai Gyōsei (International Politics and International Administration) (Rōyama 1928). He saw international politics as a part of political studies, and explored the meaning of international politics in terms of political concepts and functions. He also moved his academic position toward realism in order to endorse the Japan’s imperialist war and regime, and entered into real politics as a politician in 1942. After WWII, he became executive board member of the Japanese Political Science Association and the first

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5 Japanese political parties were dissolved in 1940, and were incorporated into Yokusan Kai (Imperial Rule Assistance Associate) in 1940 and Yokusan Seiji Kai (Imperial Rule Assistance Political Party) in 1942. The Japanese Imperial government unified political parties and constructed one party system for the first time under the constitutional regime. Rōyama won the election in 1942 and entered the Yokusan Seiji Kai. After the dissolution of the Yokusan Seiji Kai, Rōyama entered the Yokusō Giin Dōshi Kai.
3. TRANSFORMATION TOWARD THE NEW REGIONAL ORDER

3.1. Background

A rail on the South Manchuria Railway, which was managed by a company founded by the Empire of Japan, was blown out on 18 September 1931. The Japanese government argued that the incident was caused by Chinese dissidents and thus justified military operations in Manchuria. The Chinese government insisted that the incident was a Japanese conspiracy against China perpetrated as a means for the Japanese army to attempt to justify the invasion of China proper. The Japanese army occupied Manchuria and set up the puppet state of Manchuria on 1 March 1932. China appealed to the League of Nations, and the ensuing Lytton report accepted that the event had been a Japanese conspiracy and denied the Japanese-supported state of Manchuria on the grounds that China held sovereignty over Manchuria.

Some Japanese IR researchers undertook studies of the Manchuria Incident to support their government’s insistences. Shinobu asserted that Japan’s special interests could be protected under the contemporary international law (Shinobu 1932). However, Rōyama made reference Japan’s special relations to Manchuria rather than Japan’s special interests (Rōyama 1933). According to Rōyama, China and the Great Powers denied Japan’s special interests over Manchuria in the contemporary international order. He argued that the Japanese government and army, however, acted on Japan’s special relations to Manchuria. Rōyama pointed out the possibility of the use of force to actualize these special relations (Rōyama 1933: 192-193). This means that Shinobu still supported the contemporary international order but Rōyama took one step toward an inquiry into an alternative international order.

Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in March 1933, and started the second Sino-Japanese War in July 1937 to pursue her special interests in China. Fumimaro Konoe, a prime minister of the Empire of Japan, declared Tōa Shin-Chitsujo (A New East Asian Order) in November 1937. The declaration suggested that Japan, Manchuria and China should build a cooperative relationship on politics, economics and culture and the new order should aim at establishing international justice, attaining a joint defense policy, creating a new culture and realizing economic unification. The declaration seemed to be affected by Rōyama’s theory of East Asia Community because Rōyama was one of the brains behind Konoe. He was a member
of the *Showa Kenkyū Kai*, a group of researchers supporting Konoe’s policies with theory (Sakai 1979). I will give later Rōyama’s theory of the new regional order.

### 3.2. Japanese IR Theories to Support the New East Asian Order

Some Japanese IR theorists focused on three different theories for the regional order: the Monroe Doctrine in the U.S., the theories of “*Lebensraum* (Living Space)” in Germany, and theories of the new East Asian order in Japan. Each of these theories emerged as a counter-theory against the universal order.

The Japan Association of International Law started a joint research for a variety of problems in the process of founding the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and published *Dai Tōa Kokusai Hō Sōsyō (the Series of the Greater East Asia International Law)*. The first book in the series was Kaoru Yasui’s Ōsyū Kōiki Kokusai Hō no Kiso Rinen (*Basic Concepts on the European Regional International Law*) (Yasui 1942). He was an associate professor in the University of Tokyo, and examined in his book Carl Schmitt’s theory on European regional international law in with a view to transplanting the theory from Europe to East Asia. The second book was Masatoshi Matsushita’s *Beisyū Kōiki Kokusai Hō no Kiso Rinen (Basic Concepts on the American Regional International Law)* (Matsushita 1942). Some Japanese scholars of international law examined the Monroe Doctrine because the Covenant of the League of Nations referred to the Doctrine. Matsushita, however, took under consideration Franklin Roosevelt’s foreign policies of the good neighbor since 1933 and regional treaties securing independence of American countries from other states, and peaceful settlements and joint defense within the American continent. The study of the Monroe Doctrine and American regionalism aimed at importing a regional system for the purpose of founding the new regional order in East Asia. However, these studies on American and European regional orders were little more than imports from America and Europe, and as Hitler suggested, the work of bearers of European culture.

Kamikawa moved his academic position from liberalism toward realism since the 1930s. Kamikawa studied the history of the Monroe Doctrine (Kamikawa 1934, 1939a, 1939b), but he insisted on the foundation of the League of the Far East as a new regional order as opposed to an Asian Monroe Doctrine (Kamikawa 1940b). He disallowed the old world orders: nationalism, imperialism, and the system of the League of Nations; though he supported the League in 1920s, and endorsed the

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Sadaji Yabe became a professor in the Imperial University of Tokyo (University of Tokyo) after Rōyama resigned the post. Rōyama and Yabe entered the Shōwa Kenkyūkai supporting the prime minister Fumimaro Konoe. Yabe published the book *Shin Chitsujo no Kenkyū (Study on the New Order)*. The book was one of the most important and broad studies on the concept of a new East Asian order (Yabe 1945).
emergence of new regional orders in America, Europe and East Asia. He provided the new concept of Tairiku Rengōtai (the Continental Confederation) composed of the representatives from such new regional political associations (Kamikawa 1942a, 1942b). He seemed to keep pace with Japanese imperial policies during the Pacific War. Eventually, he showed his admiration and respect for Dai Tōa Sengen (the Joint Declaration of the Greater East Asia) of 1942 (Kamikawa 1944).

3.3. Masamichi Rōyama’s Theory of East Asian Community

The paper focuses mainly on Rōyama’s theories of the new regional order, because he pursued his own theories on East Asian Community (EAC) based in the context of the history and culture of East Asia, and because of his influence on Konoe’s foreign policies. Rōyama organized many articles on East Asian community into the book Tōa to Sekai: Shin-Chitsujo e no Ronsaku (East Asia and the World: the Policy toward the New Order) in 1941 (Rōyama 1941). The three leading articles were the most important for his theory of the East Asian community.

In the article Tōa Kyōdōtai no Riron (The Theory of East Asian Community), Rōyama explained the theory of regional common destiny in East Asia (Rōyama 1938b). Rōyama outlined the theory of regional common destiny: “the theory is a guiding principle for the awakening of East Asian people as East Asian, that they may realize their world historical vocation and actualize the unification of East Asia. Further, the theory is a philosophical weapon to overcome East Asian tragedy fomented by misguided nationalism” (Rōyama 1938b: 23-24). The theory of East Asian community aims at overcoming Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese movements in China and other Asian countries, and building a new regional community and political institution under the leadership of imperial Japan.

Rōyama explained the means of overcoming Chinese nationalism and unifying East Asia. “Regional ethos and fate leads to a regional common destiny in East Asia. It comes from our consciousness of Raumsschicksal (the regional destiny)” (Rōyama 1938b: 28). The regional ethos and fate stems from consciousness that East Asians’ survival and development and improvement depends on peace and firm foundations in East Asia. However, he described how Europe had common regional ethos and fate because of Greco-Latin traditions and Christianity, and explained the lack of regional ethos and fate in East Asia. He considered the means of creating consciousness of regional ethos and fate: “the regional common destiny in East Asia should be created by political movements” (Rōyama 1938b: 28).

And Rōyama put forward five characteristics of the theory of the East Asian community (Rōyama 1938b: 29-32).
• EAC should bring a specific political region within a single political institution.
• EAC should respect Asian cultural diversity but should unify Asian culture in the future.
• EAC should make rational plans for people’s survival and the improvement of their lives.
• The economic regime in the EAC should not be imperial but cooperative.
• The theory of EAC should be a principle for a new world order.

In the next article *Kokumin Kyōdōtai no Keisei (The Foundations of the National Community)*, Rōyama explained the domestic side of the EAC (Rōyama 1939a). Rōyama denied the idea that politics is political institutions and insisted that politics is a function forming an order for people’s life (Rōyama 1939a: 41, 46). Therefore, it is not enough to know political institutions and existent political order if we want to understand the cause of the formation of a new order. We should, rather, understand political functions within people’s lives because politics forms the new order (Rōyama 1939a: 46).

Rōyama also insisted that politics has the function of forming a system to which might adjust the purpose of an individual’s life and the purpose of society. Political institutions provide the political functions necessary to adjust the relationship between the individual and society. However, it is not enough to understand political institutions if we want to understand the principles of adjustment. We should also understand moral and ethical ideas and practices (Rōyama 1939a: 44, 46). Rōyama contrasted states as political institutions and national communities as political order over people’s lives including economy and society (Rōyama 1939a: 47). Rōyama quoted the *Taika no Kaishin* (Taika Reform) in 645 and *Meiji Ishin* (Meiji Restoration) in 1868 as the principles of adjustment at work in the Japanese national community (Rōyama 1939a: 52-55), and argued that European principles of adjustment were too universal and abstract whilst Japanese principles were traditional and historical (Rōyama 1939a: 50).

In the last article *Sekai Shin-Chitsujo no Tembō (The Prospect of the New World Order)*, Rōyama explained the relationship between the EAC and the world (Rōyama 1939b). He asserted that the relationship should be considered as structural. The relationship between East Asia and the world was a relationship between the special and the universal. The European world expanded across the globe, and founded the universal order. The Japanese government demanded special interests on China, and received the agreement of the U.S. in the Lansing-Ishii Agreement in 1917. However,
Japan’s special interests in China were denied after WWI because the Great Powers concluded the Nine Power Treaty in 1922 (Rōyama 1939b: 77-80).

Rōyama also asserted that the relationship between the EAC and the world should be considered in practical terms, bringing together the reality and the ideal. The main question was how Japanese status should be recognized in relation to that of other nations in East Asia, and the cognate issue of the status of Japan in the world order. After the Second Sino-Japanese War, it was time to consider together issues of the Japanese ideal and the East Asian reality (Rōyama 1939b: 81-82).

Japanese status in East Asia had been considered in the context of the universal order in terms of holding special interests, but it came to be reconsidered in terms setting Japanese ideal over East Asian reality. If the Japanese government pursued special interests in China, these actions would provoke Chinese nationalism and anti-imperialist movements. Therefore, it was argued that the Japanese government should work toward the new East Asian Order taking full account of the interests of Asian people – this was the Japanese ideal status in East Asia (Rōyama 1939b: 82-83). He also thought that the object of realizing the Japanese ideal required the revision of the Nine Power Treaty because the treaty restricted Japan’s special interests in China as well as China’s own development interests (Rōyama 1939b: 102-103). He denied the idea that the East Asian community aimed at actualizing imperialism because the purpose of the community was to realize a cooperative economy and development in East Asia (Rōyama 1939d).

Rōyama considered critically nationalism and imperialism supporting the universal order, and thus he created the theory of the East Asian Community supporting the new regional order in East Asia. Rōyama’s theory shows that there were at least some Japanese IR theories before 1945. However, ideal is ideal. The Japanese army invaded China and other East Asian countries and built the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, but Japan lost the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War. Rōyama’s theories on East Asian Community had no validity as a means of explaining real politics.

**CONCLUSION**

The research topic is whether there were IR theories before 1945. I believe that there were IR theories even in pre-war Japan. The Japanese government oriented itself toward the world order, and Japanese IR scholars eagerly imported studies of international law, diplomatic history and international politics from Europe and America. I believe that there were Japanese own IR theories even before 1945. The
Japanese government needed to justify its diplomatic position against the world order after the Manchuria Incident, and some Japanese IR scholars, especially Rōyama, created different IR theories to support the concept of an East Asian community. However, the hope of achieving an East Asian community was too optimistic to be actualized in international politics. The theories of an East Asian community in Japan had no effects on the dominant IR theories because these theories were not valid to explain international politics.

However, Japanese IR scholars’ experiences in the pre-war and war period provide a lesson on the relationship between theory and practice rather than reality and ideals. The theory of East Asian Community at least served to justify Japan’s invasion and domination of China and other countries. I believe that the theory of EAC was one of the creative Japanese IR theories but was one of the morally questionable theories. How should we judge a researcher’s morality and responsibility if his/her theory does harm to a real society? And how should we consider researchers who maintain a close relationship with governments in order to actualize their own theory in real politics? Or how should we consider researchers who keep their distance from governments in and as a result consign their theory to the world within the library walls? Social scientists should make a conscious effort to deal with the crisis in the relationship between theory and practice.

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Utopianism vs. Realism in Japanese IR?
The Great Debate between Yoshikazu Sakamoto and Masataka Kosaka

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INTRODUCTION

Is there no theory of International Relations (IR) in Japan? The purpose of this paper is to consider this unusual question with a focus on the debate on the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty between Yoshikazu Sakamoto and Masataka Kosaka in the 1960s.

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in theories of IR in the Asia-Pacific region. Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan put forward a provocative question of the reason for the absence of a non-Western IR theory (Acharya and Buzan 2007). This is not because they are opposed to the West, but because Western IR “is both too narrow in its sources and too dominant in its influence to be good for the health of the wider project to understand the social world in which we live” (Acharya and Buzan 2007: 289). They attempted to “introduce to the non-Western IR traditions” in the study of IR, and “pose the challenge of why the Western theory is so dominant, and what could and should be done about this” (Acharya and Buzan 2007: 289). The question posed by Acharya and Buzan deserves more than a passing glance by scholars and students of IR. The reason for this could be found in the famous phrase by R. Cox: “Theory is always for someone and for some purposes” (Cox 1986: 207 [Emphasis original]). To borrow this acute phrase, it appears reasonable to suppose that IR would always be for the West and for Western purposes if non-Western IR did not exist.

Takashi Inoguchi approaches IR from a slightly different angle. In his recent book Kokusai Kankeiron no Keifu (The Genealogy of International Relations), Inoguchi has

1 The research for this paper was made possible by the scholarship, Heisei 20 nendo Gakujyutsu Kenkyu Shinko Shikin Wahate Kenkyusha Youreiokin, of the Promotion and Mutual Aid Corporation for Private Schools of Japan.
questioned IR scholars and students in Japan whether or not theories pertaining to Japanese IR exist (Inoguchi 2007a). He propounded two questions emphasising Japan as a member of the non-West: (1) To what extent does Japan have original theories in the discipline of IR? (2) In what manner has Japanese IR been developed thus far? (Inoguchi 2007a: 157)

Inoguchi also conducted this research in the *Journal of International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (Inoguchi 2007b). Focusing on three Japanese theorists such as Kitaro Nishida, Shigejiro Tabata and Yoshitaro Hirano, he arrived at the following conclusion:

To sum up, my answer is no, if theories of IR are understood as narrowly positive theories, American Style. Qualified yes, if theories of IR include constructivism, normative theories, positive theories, and legal theories as well as works representing less than rigorously formal theorizing effects (Inoguchi 2007b: 383).

This conclusion was extracted from three theorists only in the 1920s and 1930s. In addition, Tetsuya Sakai highlighted the manner in which Japanese scholars approached ‘international order’ in modern Japan (Sakai 2007).

What has to be noticed is that Inoguchi offered the key to an understanding of the discipline of IR in Japan since 1945 – the end of the Asia-Pacific War. The following three questions should be answered in order to identify the development of IR in Japan (Inoguchi 2007b: 375):

1) What went wrong with Japan’s international relations?
2) What kind of international arrangements best secure peace?
3) Why is it that so much remains to be desired in our diplomacy?

This paper will focus on the second question, since it is easy to identify the debate between ‘utopianism’ and ‘realism’ over what kind of international arrangements could bring peace and security to Japan. The 1950s witnessed the debate over whether Japan should conclude the San Francisco Peace Treaty with the Western powers or all the Allied powers. Inoguchi studies this debate in his paper and classified the former stance as ‘realism’ and the latter as ‘idealism’ (Inoguchi 2007b: 376). According to

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2 The words ‘utopianism’ and ‘idealism’ differ in terms of historical context of the discipline of IR. See, for example, Evans and Newnham (1998: 235-136, 555-556). It was E. H. Carr that popularised the term ‘utopianism’ in IR. He attempted to criticise the belief of ‘idealism’ during the Twenty Years’ Crisis by labelling it with the word ‘utopianism’ intentionally. It is not, however, necessary for the purpose of this paper to conduct a detailed discussion on the
his analysis, the debate “resembles to the first great idealism-realism debate in the United States”, but “realism’s victory over idealism was somewhat incomplete” unlike the United States (Inoguchi 2007b: 376). This necessitates further discussions on whether this debate was actually held in the realm of ‘utopianism vs. realism’. The purpose of this paper is not, however, to examine the debate in the 1950s, but consider the sparring debate between Yoshikazu Sakamoto (utopianism) and Masataka Kosaka (realism) in the 1960s.

1. SCOPE AND LIMIT

In the academic community of IR scholars in Japan, the debate between Yoshikazu Sakamoto and Masataka Kosaka is believed to be a dispute between ‘utopianism vs. realism’, ‘progressivism vs. conservatism’ or ‘the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) vs. the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)’. To cite a case, Michio Royama, one of distinguished realists in Japan, indicated with a high evaluation that Kosaka had made a valuable contribution to the critical circles in Japan where the idealistic viewpoint was regarded as the orthodox one in the post-war era (Royama 1964: 447). A common pattern that has been identified is ‘Sakamoto = against the Japan-U.S. alliance = utopianism’ and ‘Kosaka = for the Japan-U.S. alliance = realism’

This pattern has left a lasting impression on IR scholars in Japan, although the debate was conducted in the 1960s.

Here, it is important to mention that this paper has great significance in terms of dealing with the debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka. The aims of this paper are to (1) examine the characteristics of the utopianism-realism debate over the Japan-U.S. alliance in the 1960s, and (2) consider implications of the debate on the IR theory, in particular, the alliance theory.

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1.1. First Aim

Although this paper deals with the debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka over the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, our present concern is not to examine which scholars won the debate in the 1960s. Rather, our concern here is to deconstruct the dichotomy between utopianism and realism not only by using the concept of ‘utopian realism’, but also by examining the perceptions of two scholars with regard to (1) domestic politics, (2) international politics, (3) the relation between domestic and international politics and (4) the concept of alliance. To put it another way, this paper attempts to propose a new interpretation that both Sakamoto and Kosaka adopted a realistic approach in considering the Japan-U.S. alliance: however, both of them were not utopian realists.

Of course, it was the mass media in Japan that created the dichotomy between utopianism and realism (Inoguchi 2007b: 376). Yet what is important is that Kosaka used the phrase “utopianism as represented by Sakamoto” in his paper (Kosaka 1963: 40). Hence, it was Kosaka himself who set the scheme of the dispute to be ‘utopianism vs. realism’ (Mushakoji 1966: 56).

Furthermore, the simplicity of discussing or debating political matters in the binary of utopianism/realism cannot be denied. The classification (of utopianism and realism) in the post-war era is so complex that the binary would trivialise both utopianism and realism as belief (Sakai 1996). Tetsuya Sakai successfully demonstrated this aspect in his recent book Kindai Nihon no Kokusai Chitsujyo Ron (The Political Discourse of International Order in Modern Japan) (Sakai 2007). What seems to be, however, is that he did not discuss the utopianism-realism debate of the 1960s. This paper is based on two assumptions with regard to the debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka. One is to assume that the image of ‘utopianism vs. realism’ has been boosted since the 1960s. Another assumption is that the debate between ‘Sakamoto vs. Kosaka’ was the trigger for strengthening the image of ‘utopianism vs. realism’. Assuming this to be true, the Sakamoto-Kosaka debate must be analysed.

‘Alliance’ can be defined as “a formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states” (Walt 1987: 1 [n. 1]). Needless to say, the concept of ‘alliance’ (the inherent right of ‘collective self-defence’) differs from that of ‘collective security’ under the Charter of the United Nations. As indicated by Hans J. Morgenthau, however, ‘alliance’ is not always directed at a specific nation or group of nations; in other words, whoever threatens the balance of power is the enemy. Based on this, he indicated that ‘alliance’ is almost the same as ‘collective security’ (Morgenthau 1959: 186-187). According to John G. Ruggie, the concept of ‘collective security’ can be defined as a permanent potential alliance “against the unknown enemy” on behalf of the unknown victim (Ruggie 1993: 10).
1.2. Second Aim

Even if the main characteristic of the Sakamoto-Kosaka debate is ascertained and the binary of utopianism/realism is deconstructed, it does not follow that we can propound a Japanese IR theory in the discipline of IR. Due to this reason, the paper attempts to consider implications of the debate on theories with regard to the concept of alliance.

1.3. Narrowing

The study on only the debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka would be superficial when we attempt to examine the debate between utopianism and realism with regard to the Japan-U.S. alliance. In addition to this, Kosaka criticised not only the paper written by Sakamoto but also by Shuichi Kato. Yet here this paper limits the discussion to the former on the grounds that a major portion of Kosaka's paper presented arguments against Sakamoto.

Moreover, we undoubtedly need to examine all books and articles by both Sakamoto and Kosaka. For example, we can examine 72 articles written by Sakamoto and 111 articles by Kosaka with the CiNii (Citation Information by National Institution of Informatics) as of November 2007. However, since the space is limited, we will concentrate on only two articles: 'Churitsu nihon no bouei kouso (A Japan's Defence Vision as a Neutral State)' by Sakamoto in 1959 (Sakamoto 2004) and 'Genjitsu shugisha no heiwa ron (Peace Theory by a Realist)' by Kosaka in 1963 (Kosaka 1963). This paper attempts to go to the heart of the debate 'utopianism vs. realism' with regard to the Japan-U.S. alliance in the 1960s.

2. SAKAMOTO VS. KOSAKA IN THE BINARY OF UTOPIANISM/REALISM

Yoshikazu Sakamoto and Masataka Kosaka can be stated to be outstanding IR scholars in Japan. It is not too far from the truth to say that most Japanese IR scholars and students have read their books as well as articles.

Yoshikazu Sakamoto (1927- ) is presently a special adviser at the Peace Research Institute, International Christian University. After graduating from the University of Tokyo in 1951, Sakamoto taught IR at the University of Tokyo and Meiji Gakuin University. Masataka Kosaka (1934-1996) graduated from Kyoto University in 1957 and taught IR at his alma mater. Both the scholars had the opportunity to be exposed to American IR. Sakamoto studied IR at the University of Chicago from 1955 to 1957 and Kosaka at Harvard University from 1961 until 1962 (Yamakage 2001: 279). Both Sakamoto and Kosaka have made numerous contributions to the academic
community of IR in Japan. Numerous current eminent IR scholars studied IR under their supervisions.


Here, we present a brief view of the argument by Sakamoto on the Japan-U.S. alliance. Tokyo initiated the official negotiation with Washington over the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in the autumn of 1958. The protest campaigns, which involved the Japanese citizens and mass media, against the Japan-U.S. alliance had just been launched in the Diet. At the time, there was the debate on whether Japan should maintain the Japan-U.S. alliance or be an unarmed neutral state. In August 1959, Sakamoto wrote a paper entitled ‘Churitsu nihon no bouei kouso (A Japan’s Defence Vision as a Neutral State)’.

2.1.1. Negative Neutralism

Sakamoto developed his argument with two key words: ‘Negative Neutralism’ and ‘Positive Neutralism’. These key words had much to do with the risk of nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. According to Sakamoto, the degree of damage and suffering for Japanese citizens would be the same if a nuclear weapon were used, irrespective of whether the war would be accidental or an unintentional, local or worldwide (Sakamoto 2004: 114). Based on this perception, he proposed, in both the negative and positive manner, that Japan be a neutral state in order to avoid a nuclear devastation and protect the security of the Japanese people. In other words, Sakamoto attempted to not only understand the situation for what it is, but also consider what it ought to be for Japanese citizens.

The concept of ‘Negative Neutralism’ is that Japan must attempt to ensure her citizens by renouncing the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. This concept was developed on the basis of two arguments (Sakamoto 2004: 106-107). Firstly, U.S. Forces must withdraw from Japanese territory since the Soviet Union would target U.S. bases in Japan if a total or a local war broke out between the United States and the Soviet Union. Secondly, Japan must not be an ally of the United States even during...
peacetime because the Soviet Union could attack Japan as long as Japan is a member state of the alliances with the United States. The reason that Sakamoto believed in ‘Negative Neutralism’ is that Japan runs the risk of being entrapped in the potential war between the United States and the Soviet Union.

According to Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, alliance states must trade-off between ‘entrapment’ and ‘abandonment’ (Christensen and Snyder 1990). It is not an exaggeration to say, therefore, that the concept of ‘Negative Neutralism’ could be explained through that of ‘entrapment’ in the alliance theory. Moreover, Sakamoto realised the reality that alliances would lead to a ‘security dilemma’. In the course of providing for its own security, the state in question will occasionally be fuelling the insecurity of other states: ‘security dilemma’. Certain writers have argued that alliances may not only increase fears and tensions with regard to security, but also generate hostility and exacerbate conflicts; others have argued that alliances may stabilise the relationship among states. For example, although Jack S. Levy concludes that conflicts have not occurred only due to the formation of alliances (Levy 1981), Randolph M. Siverson and J. King contend that the forming alliances may possibly lead to conflict generation (Siverson and King 1980). In this context, it is evident that Sakamoto was concerned not only with positive but also negative impact of alliances in a realistic manner.

2.1.2. Positive Neutralism

The concept of ‘Positive Neutralism’ is that Japan should attempt to ensure security for her citizens by calling for the ‘United Nations (UN) Police Forces’ to be stationed in Japan. In 1956, the ‘UN Emergency Forces’ were deployed in the Middle East in order to cope with the Suez Crisis. Taking a hint from this, Sakamoto visualised the UN Police Forces comprising members from neutral states (Sakamoto 2004: 117). Of course, he recognised that Japan would not achieve absolute security despite the deployment of the UN Police Forces (Sakamoto 2004: 124); however, absolute security measures are not possible (Sakamoto 2004: 124). According to Kiichi Fujiwara, Sakamoto made the concrete suggestion of deployment of the UN Police Forces in order to go beyond the debate on whether or not Japan should maintain the Japan-U.S. alliance or be an unarmed neutral state (Fujiwara 2004: 310).

We may note, in passing, that the deployment of UN Forces as visualised by Sakamoto is absolutely different from that proposed by the Japanese government after the Cold War. Both UN forces are same in that the Japanese Self Defence Forces (SDF) would join the activity of the UN Forces. But the two are also absolutely different: on the one hand, Sakamoto attempted to establish the UN Forces after the
Shiro Sato
demise of the Japan-U.S. alliance, and on the other hand, the Japanese government attempted to join the UN Forces under the Japan-U.S. alliance (Sakamoto 2004: 129).

Let us now return to examine the concept of the UN Police Forces. According to Sakamoto, the concept can be divided logically into four parts. To begin with, (1) the UN Police Forces stationed in Japan should be organised by neutral states to the East and those of the West to a certain extent (Sakamoto 2004: 117). In more concrete terms, the five superpowers – China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States – cannot join the UN Police Forces. If these countries would dispatch their forces to Japan, the Cold War occurring outside Japan would bring cause another Cold War within Japan (internal Cold War) (Sakamoto 2004: 118). Moreover, there would also be the fear that socialism/communism would indirectly invade Japan if the Soviet Union and China would station their troops in Japan under the name of the UN (Sakamoto 2004: 118). In other words, Japan regarded the Japan-U.S. alliance as a bulwark against ‘indirect invasion’ by the Soviet Union and China. Next, (2) armed forces despatched from various countries must be under the control of the Commander appointed by the General Assembly. The Commander is the ostensible ‘international officer’, and s/he is required to swear loyalty to the UN rather than to her/his country (Sakamoto 2004: 118). Furthermore, (3) the UN Police Forces must not be armed with nuclear weapons. The Japanese government must greatly minimise the presence of the SDF, and the SDF must join the UN Police Forces only under the control of the Commander (Sakamoto 2004: 119). Finally, (4) it is natural for Japanese citizens to share the burden of all expenditure of the UN Police Forces (Sakamoto 2004: 119).

2.1.3. Two Objections

Sakamoto provided two objections to the vision of the UN Police Forces in his paper. The first was that the Japan-U.S. alliance would be the best means of ensuring the security of Japan (Sakamoto 2004: 120). This argument was built on the following fact: the UN had not worked expectedly in maintaining or restoring international peace and security. Sakamoto agreed with this fact, but countered that it did not follow that the Japan-U.S. alliance was the best means for ensuring the security of Japan regardless of the paralysis of the UN in security issues (Sakamoto 2004: 120-121). Conversely, Sakamoto asked the advocates of this means certain questions: (1) If Japan were in a neutral position, which states (the United States or the Soviet Union) would attack Japan? (2) Would it be possible to attack Japan? (3) And, if it were possible, would there be a beneficial consequence for either the United States or the Soviet Union? Taking into account the answers to these questions, Sakamoto
contended that neither the United States nor Soviet Union would attack Japan in a neutral position (Sakamoto 2004: 122).

The second objection is related to the feasibility of deploying the UN Police Forces (Sakamoto 2004: 122). According to Sakamoto, it was natural for the Non-Allied Countries comprising Arab and Asian countries to support the proposal of establishing the UN Police Forces. In addition, he supposed that the Socialist Camp headed by the Soviet Union was also expected to assent to the idea of the UN Police Forces in Japan. This was mainly because Beijing and Moscow had suggested that Tokyo must adopt a neutral stance with the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Japan (Sakamoto 2004: 122). For Sakamoto, what was important was the response from Washington because the United States would lose their military bases in Japan if Japan adopted a neutral stance (Sakamoto 2004: 123). In this respect, Sakamoto argued that Japan’s neutralisation would not impact to the United States crucially as long as Japan was outside the Socialist Camp in the military sense. Added to this, Japan would not be communised as long as the capitalistic system had its roots in Japan (Sakamoto 2004: 123).

2.2. Kosaka’s Argument: The Significance of Balance of Power for Security in Northeast Asia

In his paper ‘Genjitsu shugisha no heiwa ron (Peace Theory by a Realist)’, Kosaka shared his view with Sakamoto that the significance of ‘value’ should be understood in the study of IR (Kosaka 1963: 41). If matters of value that a state should seek are not taken into account, realism will merely follow reality or cynicism (Kosaka 1963: 41). Moreover, it is value issues that enable the adoption of the most realistic approach and policy based on national interests from a long-term perspective (Kosaka 1963: 41). Japan’s diplomacy should, therefore, set out to ensure her security in a manner that actualises Japanese values (Kosaka 1963: 42).

2.2.1. Two Objections

According to Kosaka, there were two serious problems in Sakamoto’s paper. The first problem was that Sakamoto did not pay attention to potential ordinary war in the Cold War era (Kosaka 1963: 39). Kosaka agreed with the fact that we could not defend ourselves in a total or partial war with nuclear weapons, but it did not lead to the conclusion that the Japan-U.S. alliance would not be able to defend Japan from other types of war (Kosaka 1963: 39).

The second problem is related to facts that were not argued by Sakamoto in his paper (Kosaka 1963: 39). That is to say, Sakamoto did not furnish a sufficient answer to arguments that the Japan-U.S. alliance had prevented war in the Far East due
to ‘balance of power’ (Kosaka 1963: 39). It is possible, for example, that Pyongyang would have a military edge over Seoul and attempt to unify the Korean Peninsula (Kosaka 1963: 40). As a result, Japan’s neutralisation would not enable the easing of tensions or ensure the security of Japan (Kosaka 1963: 40). According to Kosaka, the reasons why the “utopianism as represented by Sakamoto” did not address these crucial aspects were that (1) a high value was attached to nuclear weapons as satanic weapons, and that (2) the significance of power politics in contemporary international politics was not realised or understood (Kosaka 1963: 40).

2.2.2. Five Alternative Suggestions

Kosaka provided five suggestions for bringing peace and security in Northeast Asia (Kosaka 1963: 47). Firstly, Japan needs to work on the normalization of diplomatic relations with China. Secondly, the involved parties in the Korean Peninsula must seriously consider freezing and reducing the number of troops. Besides, they must conclude an agreement to use non-violent means to unify the Korean Peninsula. Thirdly, Japan should declare herself to be a non-nuclear state. Fourthly, major states such as Japan, China, the United States and the Soviet Union must conclude a type of ‘Treaties of Locarno’ in the Far East. Fifthly, major states in the Far East should withdraw their troops from the region. To ignore these alternative suggestions is to miss that Kosaka attempted to not only understand what is, but also consider what ought to be. For Kosaka, both realists and idealists shared a common goal of easing the tension in Northeast Asia (Kosaka 1963: 47).

At the same time, it should not overlooked that Kosaka did not forget to mention that Japan must pay great attention to the conditions of balance of power, and study the manner in which she can maintain her relationship with the United States (Kosaka 1963: 47). In brief, Kosaka pointed out that certain conditions should be met in advance before proceeding beyond the balance of power in Northeast Asia. Meanwhile, Sakamoto proposed a concrete measure for meeting the condition in which Japan may be able to go beyond the balance of power. In this regard it may be said that Kosaka adopted a negative approach while Sakamoto a positive one.

To sum up, Sakamoto considered the Japan-U.S. alliance mainly from the viewpoint of Japanese citizens. The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was not the best security measure for Japanese citizens because it was possible that Japan would be entrapped by a potential nuclear war between the United States and Soviet Union. Under this realistic crisis, Sakamoto attempted, positively, to go beyond the balance of power known as the Japan-U.S. alliance, and contended that Tokyo must call for the UN Police Forces to be stationed in Japan so that the security of Japanese citizens could be ensured and
potential nuclear devastation be avoided. On the other hand, Kosaka re-evaluated the significance of the Japan-U.S. alliance mainly from the state-level of Northeast Asia, including Japan. The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was a better security measure for Northeast Asia on the grounds that the balance of power under the Japan-U.S. alliance produced a relatively peaceful situation in that region. Taking this realistic situation into consideration, Kosaka indicated, negatively as compared with Sakamoto’s argument, that certain conditions must be met in order to proceed beyond the balance of power in Northeast Asia. In consequence, Kosaka contended that Tokyo should positively maintain the Japan-U.S. alliance in order to ensure the national security of Northeast Asian states. This summary is presented in the table below.

Table: The Debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka over the Japan-U.S. Alliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Analytical Viewpoint</th>
<th>Perception (what is)</th>
<th>Evaluation of the Japan-U.S. Alliance (what is)</th>
<th>Suggestion (what ought to be)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sakamoto</td>
<td>Japanese citizens</td>
<td>realistic</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosaka</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>realistic</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table enables us to understand the binary of utopianism/realism in the debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka. From the item ‘Evaluation of the Japan-U.S. Alliance’ in the table, Sakamoto can be called a utopian and Kosaka a realist if the scheme of ‘Sakamoto = against the Japan-U.S. alliance = utopianism’ and ‘Kosaka = for the Japan-U.S. alliance = realism’ is followed. However, the picture would be entirely different if other aspects are examined, such as ‘Perception’ and ‘Suggestion’ in the table. In order to view the Sakamoto-Kosaka debate from another viewpoint, the next section attempts to examine the reason for the similarities and differences in the views of Sakamoto and Kosaka in the debate over the Japan-U.S. alliance. The answer will be found by taking into consideration the perceptions of the two scholars on (1) domestic politics, (2) international politics, (3) the relation between domestic and international politics and (4) alliance.
3. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE LOGIC OF SAKAMOTO AND KOSAKA

This section presents a detailed examination of the similarities and differences between Sakamoto and Kosaka in the debate over the Japan-U.S. alliance.

3.1. Three Differences

The first difference between Sakamoto and Kosaka is related to the question of who the main actor is in IR. As shown in the table, Sakamoto regarded Japanese citizens as the most important actors in the Japan-U.S. alliance while Kosaka considered Japan to be more important without taking into account Japanese citizens as actors in IR. For Sakamoto, it was Japanese public opinion that would frame the foreign policy of Japan (Mushakoji 1966: 57). It can be said that a state is a mere interim space for the activities of citizens if state behaviour reflects the claims and interests of various domestic actors (the concept of ‘a society of citizens’) (Fujiwara 2007: 22). In this sense, Sakamoto viewed international society as ‘a society of citizens’. On the other hand, for Kosaka, it was the Japanese government that would shape her foreign policy (Mushakoji 1966: 58). Therefore, according to him, the main actor in IR is a state, provided that society comprises various states (the concept of ‘a society of states’) (Fujiwara 2007: 22). From this viewpoint, Kosaka regarded international society as ‘a society of states’.

This first difference seems to lead to the second one: the relation between international and domestic politics. Kosaka examined the Japan-U.S. alliance from the viewpoint of international politics, but Sakamoto did it from the perspectives of international and domestic politics in combination. It must be noted that there was no actual debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka because Sakamoto did not respond to the objection put forward by Kosaka. According to Kazuki Kasuya, the then editor of Chuokoron, Sakamoto refused to respond to Kosaka or even talk to him and said that “if Kosaka wants to meet me, he should come to my research room” (Kasuya 2005: 167-168). As a result, both scholars met at a coffee shop near the University of Tokyo, which was the first and last dialogue between them. However, it is important to understand the domestic political situations surrounding Sakamoto in order to have a better understanding of his viewpoint. A large number of progressive intellectual persons refused to write articles for Chuokoron-Sha because of the Shimanaka (February 1961) and Shiso no Kagaku

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1 The Shimanaka Incident was spurred by a right-wing youth in February 1961. The Journal of Chuokoron serialised the novel Furyuu Yume Monogatari by Shichiro Fukasawa in December.
Incidents (December 1961). Under such a situation, it was difficult for Sakamoto to counter the argument forwarded by Kosaka in the journal of Chuokoron (Otake 1999: 90 [n. 31]). Hideo Otake noted that both Kosaka and Kasuya did not realise the domestic political dynamics brought about by the above-mentioned incidents (Otake 1999: 90 [n. 31]). Meanwhile, Sakamoto was cautious with regard to the tendency of the LDP to stay towards the right-wing. Although Sakamoto feared strongly that the argument forwarded by Kosaka would stand up for the LDP, Kosaka himself did not realise the impact of his argument (Otake 1999: 91 [n. 31]). In short, while Sakamoto considered politics from international as well as domestic aspects, Kosaka did not.

The third difference between Sakamoto and Kosaka is the perception of the impact of nuclear weapons on IR. According to Susumu Yamakage, Kosaka (1) viewed nuclear weapons and the strategy for using them merely as outcomes of production by human beings, (2) came to think that international relations in the Cold War era with those in the past could be compared, and (3) recognised the importance of recalling the lessons of history on the balance of power (Yamakage 2001: 280). For Kosaka, the characteristic of balance of power was not subject to such drastic change. As we have seen, Kosaka did not deny the possibility of nuclear devastation. But at the same time, he did not deny (rather re-evaluated) the significance of balance of power under the Japan-U.S. alliance. On the other hand, Sakamoto recognised that international relations in the Cold War era were undergoing a qualitative transformation with the emergence of nuclear weapons. For Sakamoto, the balance of power under the Japan-U.S. alliance was an unnatural condition since the future of Japan completely depended on the nuclear strategy of the United States (Yamakage 2001: 280).

On account of these different perceptions on IR, namely (1) the main actor, (2) the relation between international and domestic politics and (3) the significance of nuclear weapons, Sakamoto came to the conclusion that the Japan-U.S. alliance would never ensure the security of Japanese citizens, while Kosaka contended that the Japan-U.S. alliance was the key for ensuring the security of Japan. It is evident that the images of ‘Sakamoto = utopianism’ and ‘Kosaka = realism’ were constructed by merely focusing on their different conclusions and suggestions. The Sakamoto-Kosaka debate will be considered as the utopianism-realism debate as long as the scheme

1960. Right-wing groups protested this novel on the grounds that the Prince and Princess were assassinated by the common people in the novel. Under this situation, a young member of the right-wing broke into the residence of Hoji Shimanaka, President of Chuokoron-Sha, with the purpose of killing him. In his search for Shimanaka, he killed the housemaid and seriously injured Shimanaka’s wife.

*The Shiso no Kagaku Incident occurred in December 1961. The journal of Shiso no Kagaku, which was published by Chuokoron-Sha, featured the Imperial system in Japan in a critical manner. Therefore Chuokoron-sha cancelled the controversial publication of the journal.*
3.2. Two Similarities: Deconstruction of the Binary of Utopianism/Realism

As confirmed in the table, both Sakamoto and Kosaka possessed a realistic view on the Japan-U.S. alliance. They merely viewed it from different realistic angles: Sakamoto focused on the potential negative aspect of the alliance, while Kosaka focused on its potential positive aspect. Nevertheless, both scholars provided positively certain suggestions pertaining to the Japan-U.S. alliance. The point of difference was just whether their suggestions were positive or negative ones. The important aspect that must be noted is that both Sakamoto and Kosaka provided certain suggestions after examining the Japan-U.S. alliance in a realistic manner. In other words, both scholars considered what is and what ought to be simultaneously. This fact could lead to deconstruct the dichotomy between utopianism and realism; in this regard, E. H. Carr says that:

> Political science is the science not only of what is, but what ought to be. (Carr 2001: 6)

Based on this perception, he goes on to say that:

> There is a stage where realism is the necessary corrective to the exuberance of utopianism, just as in other periods utopianism must be invoked to counteract the barrenness of realism. (Carr 2001: 10)

Judging from the above questions, Carr observes that it is necessary to view and understand international politics with two coloured lenses: utopianism and realism. Ken Booth terms this position as ‘Utopian Realism’. According to him,

> [A utopian realist] attempts to do so in a nondualistic manner, fusing ends and means in a manner whereby one’s ideals are evident in how one acts, not only in what way one hopes to achieve. (Booth 2005: 273)

Following this definition, it is not too far from the truth to say that both Sakamoto and Kosaka examined the Japan-U.S. alliance from the viewpoint of utopian realism. This is the first similarity that can be found in the debate between Sakamoto and
Kosaka. Numerous IR scholars in Japan would agree that Kosaka is an outstanding realist; however, they would not accept that Sakamoto could be regarded as a realist. It is true that unlike realists, Sakamoto does not view ‘anarchy’ as given. Rather, he attempts to extract ‘changes of order’ in our anarchical world. Yet, Sakamoto was a distinguished realist who was categorized a utopian realist because he attempted to consider both what *is* and what *ought to be*. For example, Mushakoji did not use the term ‘utopian realism’ but indicated that Sakamoto’s approach should be known as the *realistic* method since he described the ‘means’ to achieve ‘ends’ (Mushakoji 1966: 57). Examining international relations as ‘power politics’ was merely a starting point for Sakamoto because he learned about realism in detail from Hans J. Morgenthau while staying at the University of Chicago (Fujiwara 2004: 307). Sakamoto made his idealistic arguments by taking into account the belief of realism, and as a result, he considered the arguments made by Kosaka as a common-sense view of realism (Otake 1999: 90 [n. 31]).

The second similarity Sakamoto and Kosaka shared is that they analysed the Japan-U.S. alliance in a utopian realistic way of thinking, but were not true utopian realists. To put it differently, they did not cooperate to frame a concrete policy on the alliance. Rather, it may be said that they could never to do so mainly due to three different perceptions, as we have already seen. They had three different perceptions on (1) the main actor, (2) the relation between international and domestic politics and (3) the significance of nuclear weapons. It was because of these different perceptions that Sakamoto and Kosaka were not to able to examine the Japan-U.S. alliance in the same axis of ‘time’. Sakamoto ascribed priority to changing the thought of politicians from a *long-term* perspective, and did not provide technical procedures for achieving ‘ends’ from a *short-term* perspective (Mushakoji 1966: 59). On the other hand, Kosaka ascribed priority to considering technical procedures for achieving ‘ends’ from a *short-term* perspective, and did not indicate the manner in which the thoughts of politicians could be changed from a *long-term* perspective (Mushakoji 1966: 59). If they were actually utopian realists, they had to think not only of what *is* and *ought to be*, but also from *short* and *long-term* perspectives. It was impossible, however, for them to be utopian realists because of their different perceptions with regard to the three above-mentioned aspects. The figure provided below presents a simple formulation of the fact that Sakamoto and Kosaka were not utopian realists although both of them possessed a utopian realistic view.
The question that arises now is did no Japanese utopian realists exist in the 1960s? Perhaps Kinhide Mushakoji may be regarded to be a utopian realist because he recognised that the Sakamoto-Kosaka debate was not the debate on utopianism-realism. Moreover, he indicated that the reader had the responsibility to consider which way Japan must go with reference to the debate between Sakamoto and Kosaka (Mushakoji 1966: 59). However, the images of ‘Sakamoto = against the Japan-U.S. alliance = utopianism’ and ‘Kosaka = for the Japan-U.S. alliance = realism’ possess a strong influence on Japanese scholars and students of IR even today. Taking this fact into consideration, utopian realism in the 1960s could not deconstruct the binary of utopianism/realism.

CONCLUSION: TWO IMPLICATIONS FOR THE IR AND ALLIANCE THEORY

This paper has attempted to deconstruct the dichotomy between utopianism and realism in the Sakamoto-Kosaka debate by using the concept of utopian realism. As a result, it was discovered that both Sakamoto and Kosaka analysed the Japan-U.S. alliance in a utopian-realistic manner of thinking although they were not actual utopian realists. In this paper, we were able to identify the characteristics of the utopianism-realism debate over the Japan-U.S. alliance in the 1960s, but were not able to identify a new IR theory and alliance theory.

Nevertheless, it follows from what has been discussed that there are at least two implications to the IR and alliance theory. Firstly, in the academic community of...
Japanese IR, the utopianism-realism debate in the 1960s is not though to be similar to the First Great Debate in the United States. We might say, as Inoguchi indicated, that the Japanese utopianism-realism debate in the 1950s resembled the debate between utopianism and realism in the United States (Inoguchi 2007b: 376). Yet the Japanese utopianism-realism debate in the 1960s was the debate over ‘means’ and ‘ends’ within the paradigm of realism, more specifically, utopian realism. Needless to say, the debate regarding utopian realism in the 1960s is not as same as the debate between ‘classical realism and structural realism’ in the United States.

Secondly, theories of alliance formation and maintenance have difficulty in explaining the Japanese case in the 1960s. For instance, Stephen M. Walt attempted to explain the formation and maintenance of alliances by using the terms ‘balancing’ and ‘bandwagoning’: the former refers to “allying with others against the prevailing threat” and the latter is defined as “alignment with the source of danger” (Walt 1987: 17). It must be noted that this explanation gave much weight to external threat or danger to alliance members. The Japan-U.S. alliance was concluded to balance the threat or danger from the Soviet Union and China. However, at the same time, Japan and her citizens regarded the Japan-U.S. alliance as the linchpin for undermining the threat of ‘indirect invasion’ by the Soviet Union and China, as we have seen. In brief, Japan attempted to maintain the Japan-U.S. alliance in order to undermine either external as well as internal threats or danger of socialism/communism in Japan, which could not be well explained by existing theories on the concept of alliance.

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INTRODUCTION

Is there Japanese International Relations (IR) theory? This is the question to address in this paper. It is not really new to the audience of Japanese IR as there have been numerous attempts to answer this question in the past. Interestingly, many of them, in fact, insist that there are Japanese IR theories, although there are some conditions accompanied, and they are worth studying. This would be exemplified by two contemporary figures in this paper — Takashi Inoguchi and Testuya Sakai who discussed the genealogy of Japanese IR and their arguments will be introduced and discussed in detail in the first section. The reason why I take up their texts on Japanese IR is that, among other introductory text to Japanese IR, their explications of it are particularly detailed as well as extremely comprehensive.

However, scholars and theories in their historical description of Japanese IR tradition will appear to English speaking readers as inappropriate to be called IR literature, and rather look like interdisciplinary subject including sociology, anthropology, history, economics, and philosophy, which inevitably transcend the traditional boundary of IR. This is mainly because theories of IR have largely developed in the English speaking countries such as US and Britain with a remarkable exception of the Copenhagen School of Denmark, which in turn provides the preset academic border of IR which is very much culturally specific. However, I rather widely interpret IR in this paper as including areas which have not been conventionally regarded as IR by Anglophone IR scholars such as philosophy, colonial studies, economics, and anthropology.

This attempt is to situate these narratives of outside the traditional Western IR literature into the space of IR. This practice would inevitably shake the discourse of contemporary IR as it introduces elements which are not seen to be relevant to the
analysis of power and sovereignty. Many authors have mentioned that Japanese IR literatures have been under the considerable influence of these disciplines outside international politics, and they, at least partly, appeared as involving identity politics, cultural exchange and formation, and philosophical analysis as a result. This, in turn, has made western viewers of Japanese foreign relations miss some of the important elements of the development of Japanese IR theories. Thus, to clarify the boundary of Japanese IR, describing Japanese IR literature as comprehensively as possible is the first step in this paper.

The second step is, which is somehow related to the first, to mention and explain the proclivity of Japanese IR towards cultural dimension to world affairs. This seems to be related to the way in that Japanese IR has been developed in relation to history and international structure. Some scholars would argue that this is because of the defeat of Japan in the World War II, and as a result the prominent question of IR community to answer was “what went wrong in the pre-war Japanese history”. Others would say that it is an inevitable consequence of the political economic position of Japan which is in between West and East, or to be more precise between the “international political order” and “imperialist order” of 19th century.

In this paper I would like to take these steps by focusing on the discourses of Japanese IR scholars, particularly those who have worked on the term “culture” in the context of world affairs. I start with genealogical descriptions of Japanese IR discourses by introducing two different but sometime overlapping historical explanations developed by prominent scholars of Japanese politics – Takashi Inoguchi and Testuya Sakai. Secondly I will focus on Akira Irie’s ambitious attempt to situate the term “culture” in the history of foreign policies of Japan. Thirdly Nobuya Banba’s theory of identity politics will be introduced. Fourthly, I will take up Kenichiro Hirano’s intercultural politics, which can be regarded as a more descriptive argument of cultural politics. Finally I will introduce Ralph Pettman’s argument of metaphysics of world affairs which can be seen conveying the characteristics of Japanese IR, although, obviously, he is not a Japanese scholar. This will be followed by a brief conclusion.

1. GENEALOGY OF JAPAN’S IR DEVELOPMENT: INOGUCHI AND SAKAI

In an article published in the 2007 issue of *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Takashi Inoguchi developed his argument that there were some original Japanese IR theories in the past (Inoguchi 2007). They have not been recognised by the Western audience however, because, according to Inoguchi, Japanese IR
consisted of and extended to somehow different academic areas and concerns from the American IR. Unlike the US IR literature which is largely characterised by the strict scientific orientation of empiricism and objectivism, Japanese IR is rather directed towards philosophical, regional studies, and historical methodological orientation. In a previous publication with Paul Bacon in 2001 (Inoguchi and Bacon 2001), Inoguchi empirically collected a data which proved that articles appeared in *International Organization* and *International Studies Quarterly* from 1988 to 1998 have been generally categorised as “Formalised Rational Choice”, “Quantitative Studies” or “Non-formalised Rationalism (‘Soft’ Rational Choice)” which were mainly based on positivist epistemology. On the other hand, the articles published in *International Relations*, the journal published by Japan Association of International Relations (JAIR) have largely been categorised as “Others” which “refers to purely historical or policy-related articles which contained no theory, to articles on authors, or to articles on theories which are drawn from other fields” (Inoguchi and Bacon 2001: 10). This means that Japanese IR are more concerned with pragmatic issues than theoretical issues and as a result, Japanese IR literature is concentrated on historical and regional studies. In other words, Japanese IR are more of the third dimension to world affairs (cultural and social dimension) than the first (political strategic) and the second (political economic) dimensions in comparison with the Western IR, with American international relations in particular. This is one of the most salient characteristics of Japanese IR. In fact, Testuya Sakai, another prominent IR scholar of Japan who attempts to situate narratives outside IR into the space accustomed to power politics and state sovereignty, reaches a similar conclusion (Sakai 2007). By taking up some intellectuals in the past who can be seen as being situated outside of the conventional IR literature, he argues that many of them concentrated on non-state actors and their interactions. This could be interpreted, by using the contemporary vocabulary of IR literature, that they focused upon transnational relations. In other words, they have been concerned with the third dimension to world affairs.

How could this be possible? Inoguchi distinguishes Japanese literature into four categories – *Staatslehre*, Marxism, historicism, and positivism, and argues that Japanese IR as a whole was strongly influenced by the co-existence of these four evident traditions without any efforts for integration. If such significant efforts for integration were made, it could have been more similar to Western style IR which experienced the Great Debates. In other words, it has been quite rare to witness intensive debates between paradigms and discourses. In fact, when we conduct

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1This three dimensional approach is developed in Ralph Pettman (2004).
research on the Japanese IR history, it become clear that the Great Debates of IR have never happened among Japanese IR scholars except for the First Great Debate. However, even the First Great Debate in Japan was somehow different from the Western one in a sense that “realism’s victory over idealism was somewhat incomplete” (Inoguchi 2007: 376). He goes on to say;

Parenthetically, the second great debate between traditionalism and the scientific school did not take place in Japan. The behavioral revolution did not take place in Japanese IR. The third great debate between neorealism and neoliberalism did not take place in Japan either. Nor is the fourth great debate between rationalism and reflectivism taking place. Many Japanese academics feel that they have been practicing reflectivism, rather, for long before it was preached by Americans, although they were less articulate and sophisticated about methodology (Inoguchi 2007: 376).

In this way, Japanese IR has got away with direct confrontation among different schools and approaches. Rather they have co-existed without competing each other. This could be one of the foundations on which Japanese IR has maintained and preserved the approaches of cultural aspect to world affairs.

Sakai argues that IR literature used to be developed on the basis of the division of international relations and colonial policy studies, as disciplines researching the “international order” and “imperial order” respectively. “International order” here refers to the relationship between equal states mostly in the European context, while “imperial order” was an order mainly forcibly placed on the areas outside of it. The former was, and still is, more about the institutional arrangements and organisational management of politics and international law effective to relatively equal members — European nation-states, and the latter was more about blunt and bare economic and cultural power over those who were colonised. In the process of development academically and politically, the latter as a discipline has been neglected by those who were studying the former in the West.

However, it was not the case in Japan, according to Sakai. This was because Japan has been placed in the “international order” and “colonial order” simultaneously or on the border demarcating the two different orders unlike the West which was geographically and mentally detached from the colonised area overseas. Consequently, Japan’s foreign policy makers have never ignored the “imperial order” simply because Japan has been situated on the border of inside/outside of the anarchical society (Sakai 2007: 4-7). He maintains that this unique and exceptional position of Japan made Japanese foreign policy makers and academics in need to make sense of the co-
existing two different political structures within one place. According to Sakai, the key to respond this need can be found in the usage of “society” in their discourses.

Taking up some prominent Japanese IR scholars in the past such as Inazo Nitobe who was a vice secretariat of the League of Nations, and Katsunan Kuga who was also a well-known journalist of the time, Sakai argues that Japanese academics in the late 19th century to the dawn of the 20th century, internalised both of the two different and sometimes regarded as opposite identities of the time – imperialism and internationalism. Although these two identities, or ideologies, were often seen as mutually exclusive, Sakai contends that both of these two figures simultaneously internalised them within themselves. In order to accommodate these two contending discourses, the academics of the time often claimed that Japan is a part of the international order which was built upon the western perception towards the world, that is, a community which consisted of members who had equal rights to the others. At the same time, they claimed, Japan was a leader of the Asia, and it must direct the rest of the region towards civilisation. In other words, the one of the most salient characteristics of the Japanese IR scholars’ arguments was the simultaneous orientations of cultural relativism towards the West and linear development of civilisation towards the rest of Asia (Sakai 2007: 204).

Their arguments were often directed towards a synthesis. This means that while they recognised that Taiwan and Korea were colonised by Japan, thus under the control of Japanese administration, they contended that the home country should not mechanistically apply domestic laws to the colonised territories and it should respect the socio-cultural and historical diversity of the areas concerned. Only in this way the colonising practice of Japan was justified and preserved, and the opposing discourses of imperialism and internationalism were reconciled (Sakai 2007: 210-213). This difficult, somehow contradictory, position in the international politics was precisely the reason why Japanese IR have been developed in the form of Marxism, regional studies and historicism, in other words, focusing on the third dimension to world affairs.

2. FORERUNNER OF CULTURAL IR: AKIRA IRIE

This tradition of cultural politics was used before the WWII for justification of colonialism. It also remained after the War, but in a different style. It is an approach to world affairs with exclusive focus on cultural politics.

The most widely known to Western readers among the Japanese scholars introduced in this paper is Akira Irie, Professor of Eeritus of Harvard University. He
is a historian, in fact he was a professor of history, Department of History at Harvard, but also known for his extensive writing on international relations, particularly on “cultural internationalism”. He was born in 1934 at Tokyo, and moved to the US after graduating from a high school, and received a Ph. D. from Harvard University in 1961. He experienced the defeat of WWII and the chaotic social condition of post-war period, and this could have influenced his research in his later life.

Irie’s commitment to cultural dimension of world affairs is very much salient in his numerous writings. He adopts the three dimensional approach to world affairs – political strategic, political economic and political cultural – in his books and articles. Irie wrote in explaining the aim of his research;

Japanese foreign relations are not simple. If we are to understand international order as a whole, we need at least to take into account three dimensions of military, economy, and thought (or culture). Sometime they are complementary to each other, sometime they are contradictory. Either way, this will provide a perspective to understand the ways in that Japan has interacted with the world by focusing upon the changes of Japan’s military, economic, and cultural relations in the last fifty years (Irie 1991: 8).

Although he has been contending that we need to focus on all of three dimensions to world affairs in understanding the contemporary international relations, his academic inclination towards the cultural activities of international arena has very much salient throughout his writings. In fact, he published Power and Culture: the Japanese American War 1941-1945 (Irie 1981), and Cultural Internationalism and World Order (Irie 1997), both of which have exclusive focus on the cultural dimension.

Focusing on the cultural dimension contains, according to Irie, important meanings to international relations literature, that is, a radical departure from the state-centric view of international relations. He wrote in explaining the purpose of his book published in 1997 that “I hope the book will show that it is perfectly possible to narrate the drama of international relations without giving principal roles to separate national existences” (Irie 1997: 1). Irie argues that nation-state is, no doubt, a main focus of international relations. However, he also believes that “interactions outside these (state-centric) framework exist, for which international relations may be an inadequate term but which, whatever one calls them, constitute just as much part of the story of world development as do the activities of national entities” (Irie 1997: 1 [Emphasis original]). This belief in importance of activities of the non-state actors in shaping world affairs is the foundation of his argument on which his argument of the cultural politics is based.
Focusing on the cultural dimension not only contributes in making sense of the shaping process of world affairs, but also of changing process of the world. He maintains;

[I]ndividuals and groups of people from different lands have sought to develop an alternative community of nations and peoples on the basis of their cultural interchanges and that, while frequently ridiculed by practitioners of power politics and ignored by historians, their efforts have significantly altered the world community and immeasurably enriched our understanding of international affairs (Irie 1997: 2).

In this way, he contends that the cultural dimension is undeniable or indispensable in understanding world affairs.

However, this task is not all that easy because the term culture is very much confusing. There have been a numerous definitions and interpretations of the term, there seems no strict definition of it on which every researcher has agreed. Irie is well aware of this, and conscious about the need to find his own interpretation of the term “culture”. He, therefore, attempts to provide a definition of “culture”, and contends that it is “structures of meaning”. In this interpretation, the main focus in the cultural dimension to world affairs is on “a variety of activities undertaken to link countries and peoples through the exchange of ideas and persons, through scholarly cooperation, or through efforts at facilitating cross-national understanding” (Irie 1997: 3).

Irie is very much aware that this task is also imperative in bridging the gap between international politics and domestic politics which has, for a long time, divided the literature of history of international relations. In the traditional explication of world affairs, researchers have usually been forced to choose international factors such as balance of power and anarchical structure of international society or domestic factors such as individual efforts and contributions to political decision making as decisive determinants of foreign policies. He maintains that “the challenge has been somehow to try to bring the two perspectives together; to develop a scheme in which local forces integrate themselves into a global situation” (Irie 1997: 179).

Irie is very much concerned with this gap, and fulfilling the gap by utilising the concept of “culture”. He argues that domestic and global politics may be connected, and this does not have to be done in terms of geopolitically defined international system, but of a culturally conceptualised world order. This in turn directs us to a new definition of international relations. Irie wrote:
cross-national cultural forces and developments, linking the societies and peoples of
different countries, can never be fully understood in a framework of geopolitics, economic
mobilization, security, strategy, and the like. One needs an alternative definition of
international relations, a definition of world affairs not as an arena of interstate power
rivalries but as a field for interdependent forces and movements, not as a structure of
power relations but as a social context for interchanges among individuals and groups
across national boundaries. If such a cultural formulation were adopted, it would become
easier to link international to domestic affairs (Irie 1997: 180-181).

He maintains that it would be easier to understand the influence of international
on domestic politics too in a sense that it would be not so much in terms of their
impact on national politics or decision making as in terms of their producing forces
that would create cultural borderlands and contribute to global change that domestic
forces would be linked to the larger world (Irie 1997: 181).

Irie’s intention to connect local to global somehow overlaps an argument
developed in the pre-war period by Nishida Kitaro, a prominent philosopher of the
Kyoto School, whose argument was also to connect the local to global. He in fact stated
“the distinctiveness of the Japanese is only of local value; it is enhanced when its core
can be extracted and translated into something of world scope” (Inoguchi 2007: 379).
This shows the strong current of cultural interpretation of IR in Japanese academia.

For Irie, this is not only out of an academic interest, but it is also out of a political
concern. In the pre-war period, similar arguments to Irie’s, that cultural exchange
would lead to peaceful reconciliation of contending nation-states, were in fact
advocated by some historians and international relations scholars, but history tells us
a tragic story that their attempts were followed and defeated by a violent reaction by
nationalists. To avoid a repetition of this sad history, Irie proposes that:

cultural internationalists in all countries will need to struggle against cultural
chauvinists as well as geopolitical nationalists; that is, both against parochial tendencies
that deny possibilities for cross-cultural communication and against policy formulations
that give primacy to military considerations (Irie 1997: 185).

In this way, focusing on the third dimension to world affairs is inherited and
further developed by Irie into academic development as well as political practice.
3. NOBUYA BANBA AND IDENTITY POLITICS

In the final chapter of Irie’s *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*, he demands for a scheme of international relations in which local forces integrate themselves into a global situation, and maintains that this has been started by theorists of international relations by applying postmodernist critique of world politics. In so doing, Irie refers to James Der Derian and Michael Shapiro’s *International/Intertextual Relations* (Irie 1997: 179; Der Derian and Shapiro 1994). Postmodern readings of world affairs of this sort is by no means confined to Der Derian and Shapiro. It also refers to such prominent works as R. B. J. Walker’s *Inside/Outside* (1993) and Jim George’s *Global Politics* (1994).

While these so-called postmodernist IR flourished in the 1990s in the Western IR community, a similar argument can be found in Nobuya Banba’s theory of identity politics. He was born in 1937 in Kyoto, completed his undergraduate at Doshisha University, and then moved to UC Berkeley where he received his Ph. D. He taught at Tsuda College and Osaka University. Although he was expected to become a central figure of Japanese IR community later on, he died young in 1989.

Banba was exclusively concerned with possibility of oppositional politics, and ended up with conducting a thorough research on identity politics. Writing politically is one of the features of cultural politics in Japan, as Irie’s case suggests, and Banba was later, in fact, incorporated with some peace movements. What drove him towards this direction was his firm belief that world politics not only consists of nation-state, but more importantly of individual actors. Thus while he accepted power politics of international relations in military terms, he was also aware of power of individual actors.

In writing of the role of individuals in shaping world affairs, he utilises two concepts of human identity, that is, “conscientious revolution” and “proof of existence”. Banba develops his theory of “conscientious revolution” under significant influence of Paulo Freire’s “conscientization”. This term means a revolution of consciousness which liberates a variety of peoples everywhere on the earth from oppressive authorities and autocratic political powers which dominate and oppress peoples’ everyday lives (Banba 1981: 257). This is not, of course, done by an individual, but social groups and movements which consist of conscientiously revolutionalised individuals. Thus his focus is, in the contemporary vocabulary of international relations, transnational and global civil society. This in turn makes international relations scholars, who have been concentrated only on state-state relations, of the missing dimension to world affairs.

But what makes people get conscientiously revolutionised? Banba searches
for the driving force of the “conscientious revolution”, and defines it as “proof of existence”, which could be interpreted as raison d’être of individual actors. It is a proof that one exists for someone for some reason in a given time and space. Banba assumes that everyone has this driving force, desire for the proof of existence, which directs them to political actions. According to Banba, the activities searching for “proof of existence” is not limited to individuals, but also applicable to other actors of world affairs such as communities, regions, nation-state, supranational organisations, and so forth. A nation-state, for example, desires to occupy a position in the world history. This desire is formulated on the basis of its history, national ethos, international perspective, and ethnic perception (Banba 1981: 10).

The interactions of actors driven by the desire for identities will be distilled into a series of meanings and values, and this is what Banba calls “culture”. Thus nation-state relies upon not only the cultural tradition in the past, but also on “present culture” grounded in the domestic interactions of individuals and groups within the national boundary as well as external interactions with other nation-state as well as supranational organisations. Of course, this culturalist explanation of community is also applicable to other forms of organisations and groups like “proof of existence” thesis (Banba 1981: 11).

Banba’s explication of culture of world affairs could be criticised for its abstract and idealistic orientation. In fact, many of the case studies he uses for justifying his theory of identity are focusing exclusively on individuals and social groups. Moreover, his explanation is not clear enough in stating the connection of these individual actors to the wider context of world affairs. However, he was definitely in the tradition of Japanese culturalist IR, and probably the most devoted IR scholar of Japan to the cultural politics especially when cultural politics itself is interpreted as political action.

4. HIRANO AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

Kenichiro Hirano is another example of successors of the culturalist tradition of Japanese international relations. He was born in 1937, received an undergraduate and masters degree of Liberal Arts from the University of Tokyo, and moved to Harvard University where he earned his doctorate. He moved back to the University of Tokyo later on and taught international relations and intercultural relations there before moved to Waseda University where he is currently a professor of International Relations. He published wide-ranging subjects of international relations as well as cultural interactions of world affairs but he has been consistent in a sense that he has
been focusing on the “culture” in making sense of world affairs.

If one is to study intercultural studies, or Kokusai Bunkaron, in Japan, his textbook titled Kokusai Bunkaron is usually referred to as the starting point of the subject and the book is definitely a not-to-be-missed (Hirano 2000). Like Irie, Hirano has also been concerned mainly with the term “culture”. However, his approach is slightly different from Irie’s. While Irie defines “culture” as an area which consists of a part of world affairs, Hirano advocates seeing the world through cultural lenses. In other words, Irie sees “culture” as separated from other areas such as political and economic, Hirano attempts to analyse world affairs as a whole with anthropological methodology. Thus Hirano states “IR itself is cultural” (Hirano 2000: ii).

What is “culture” to Hirano then? He defines the term as “distinctive ‘bodies’ of a variety of individuals and groups” which can be regarded as subjects performing important roles in shaping the world (Hirano 2000: ii). In the age of globalisation, these subjects are no longer static. They are rather active and dynamic in terms of geography and social class. People are moving here and there transcending national borders and socio-political boundaries. Thus a theory of international relations which does not count them should be severely criticised for its lack of attention to those diasporic subjects.

However, Hirano’s definition of “culture” sometimes becomes unstable. On the one hand, he defines, as stated above, “culture”, in a very much abstract way, to be “bodies” of subjects, thus cultural relations means the relationship between the “bodies”. On the other hand, he also uses the term “culture” in referring to concrete individuals or non-state communities which perform crucial roles in shaping international structure. In this sense, Hirano’s “culture” contains both abstract and concrete meanings which have, in either way, been forgotten in the IR literature.

One of the good examples of Hirano’s interpretation of intercultural relations is a story of the end of the Cold War. This incident has been often understood as the victory of the West and the collapse of the communist regimes. According to Hirano, this is too simplistic an interpretation. He argues instead that the end of the Cold War was not suddenly marked in the form of the collapse of the Berlin Wall. The inception of the end of the Cold War was long before that, which is, at least from the 1960s when civil movements for democracy elapsed everywhere on the planet. He contends that these movements are intimately related to the end of Cold War. This in turn means that the end of Cold War refers not only to the internal decay of the East, but also to the internal decay of the West (Hirano 2000: 190).

Another example of his argument of intercultural relations is his severe critique of Samuel Huntington’s “clash of civilization” theses. Hirano contends that
Huntington’s these confuses two similar but different words—“civilization” and “culture”. Huntington uses these two words relatively interchangeably, thus he confuses “clash of civilization” with “cultural friction”. Hirano, on the other hand, strictly distinguishes these two words and argues that “cultural friction” leads to efforts of the parties involved for reconciliation, thus becomes one of the main means to avoid “clash of civilization”. Hirano maintains that this phase of individual and local possibilities to reconcile “cultural friction” has been intentionally eliminated from Huntington’s argument (Hirano 2000: 28-33).

In this way, Hirano’s contention of intercultural relations provides new lenses through which we look at world affairs. His approach to world affairs is very much on the tradition of Japanese IR which focuses on cultural relations among not only different nations, but also among different individuals and communities.

5. PETTMAN AND JAPANESE IR

It would look odd to some readers to take up an Australian born, LSE trained, and currently working for Melbourne University IR scholar in this article, particularly when its focus is set exclusively to Japanese IR. However, as Inoguchi stated in his article on Japanese IR, Ralph Pettman’s argument is strikingly approximate to Japanese IR theories some of which I have introduced in this article, and he significantly developed further the concept of “culture”.

There are many Western IR scholars who attempted to theorise the socio-cultural dimension, but many of them ended up with some extreme structuralist account such as Huntington’s “clash of civilisation” thesis and Fukuyama’s “end of history” scenario.

Ralph Pettman’s work Reason, Culture, Religion: the metaphysics of world politics provides not an easy formulation of culture witnessed here and there in the IR community which uncritically assumes that culture is a static and inert object like some contemporary Western culturalist IR scholars concluded with. Rather, Pettman argues that the academic effort to objectify world affairs including cultural dimension is a modernist attempt constructed on the basis of modernist culture. Therefore it is a cultural project solely based on the intellectual heritage of a particular area–Europe. For him, it is culture of this sense which to be critically assessed in order to achieve precise and comprehensive knowledge of world affairs.

Pettman starts his argument with severe criticism on the contemporary knowledge system of Rationalism (with capital “R” he refers to a rationalism of modern European thought) and Positivism (epistemological position of Rationalism).
He points out that we (IR scholars) are often trained to recognise the world by objectifying it. This means that we are destined to reach what the traditional IR theories have regarded as “general knowledge” or “common sense”. However, the scientific knowledge obtained in this way is not really “scientific” at all. Pettman states “scientific Rationalism... is a philosophic doctrine, an analytic language, and ideology” (Pettman 2004: 5).

In order to transcend the limits set by the Positivist/Rationalist knowing, he sets three steps away from it. The first step is to combine Rationalism with romantic “negativism”. This means to stand back to look at world affairs from a scientific distance (Positivism/Rationalism), then try to experience these affairs emotionally (the irrational form of “negativism”), before look from a scientific distance again. There is another way of this combination. It is of Positivism and phenomenological “negativism”. This involves standing back to look at world affairs, then choosing to experience these affairs mentally, then standing back to look from a scientific distance again. The second step is to get out the European modernist milieu to “entertain non-Rationalist ways to know”. This “puts the Rationalist project in its own politico-cultural context, and in the light of other such contexts, then asks what those of other tradition might have to say”. The third, most radical, step is to move even further outside the Rationalist culture to entertain not only “negativist”, not only non-Rationalist, but also anti-Rationalist ways to know.

In what way is Pettman’s argument similar to Japanese IR tradition then? First of all, his argument accepts a variety of perspectives, or metaphysics, of world affairs as they are. He takes up in his recent work such different and diverse metaphysics as Taoist strategies, Buddhist economic, Islamic civics, Confucian Marxism, Hindu constructivism, Pagan feminism, and animist environmentalism. This is what overlaps with Japanese IR tradition in a sense that, as Inoguchi indicated, Japanese IR community has existed for a long time without evident and direct academic confrontations which have frequently witnessed in the Western IR society. Inoguchi contends, in introducing four main currents of Japanese IR,

It is important to note these four diverse currents are clearly evident in Japan’s IR studies even today and that they co-exist fairly amicably without many efforts made toward integration... Diversity without disciplinary integration – if not without organizational integration – is one of the features of academic community of Japan (Inoguchi 2007: 373).

Hirano also contends that the most important in understanding the diverse
cultural activities in contemporary world politics is to analyse world affairs by accepting an assumption that there are different and peculiar local and cultural practices (Hirano 2000: 3). In a similar manner, Pettman accepts diverse literatures of world affairs without ranking or making them contend each other. This is the first point which his argument overlaps with Japanese IR tradition.

Secondly, Pettman sees the modernist project which includes traditional IR theories as culturally specific. Unlike the prevailing interpretation of modernism and positivism which are supposed to be universal in their theoretical scopes, he argues that they are products of Western intellectual tradition, thus culturally specific. This perception also penetrates Japanese IR tradition in a sense that Japanese scholars have long been under influence of a series of dichotomies such as West and East, “international order” and “imperial order”, and Self and Other, and often placed themselves on the border of the two different worlds as Sakai argues. Thus they have been very much aware of that mainstream IR discourses of US and Britain are culturally specific even if they look embracing the universal orientation.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I tried to describe Japanese IR tradition and to extract some essential features of it. As I explained, Japanese IR literature is characterised by its acceptance of diverse perspectives and approaches. This allowed some scholars to devote themselves into the cultural dimension to world affairs which is not common among the Western IR. It is also important to note here that even within the culturalist tradition of world affairs in Japan, there is diversity among scholars in terms of definition of “culture” and meanings of taking it up in the context of world affairs. Thus it is not something which should be call “school” of IR. It is rather an academic orientation or intellectual current which embraces diverse cultural interpretation of world affairs.

It is still arguable to take up Ralph Pettman’s argument of metaphysics in the context of Japanese IR tradition. However, I firmly believe that Pettman’s academic attitude which accepts a variety of perspectives and his interpretation of modernist project as culturally specific represent striking similarities with Japanese IR tradition. Probably what is needed here in order to further develop non-Western and non-Rational Japanese IR is a cooperative work of Japanese IR scholars and Western IR scholars without Western tradition of metaphysics such as him.
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Is There A Japanese IR?
Seeking an Academic Bridge through Japan’s History of International Relations

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The logo mark of Afrasian Centre is adopted from an Adinkra symbol of ‘Siamese crocodiles’ in the ancient kingdom of Asante that existed in what is now the Republic of Ghana, West Africa. It is a popular symbol of peace and unity, as Siamese crocodiles share a stomach, or the same ultimate goal, even if they tend to fight with each other.