

Changing Concept of Intellectual Cooperation in the Interwar Period: the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, Japan and China*

Takashi Saikawa

Heidelberg University, Germany

THE SECRETARY. I didnt do it. It was done by the
Committee for Intellectual Cooperation.

SIR O. The what??? I never heard of such a body.

THE SECRETARY. Neither did I until this business
was sprung on me. Nobody ever heard of it.

Bernard Shaw, *Geneva*, 1939.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the changing meaning of intellectual cooperation in the interwar period. The term “intellectual cooperation”, now used in a broad sense, came into existence as an idealistic expression for world peace after World War I. In addition, it came to be embodied in 1922 as an international organization, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC). The ICIC, boasting famous intellectuals such as Henri Bergson, Marie Curie, Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, and Paul Valéry, can be seen as one of the most remarkable international organizations for intellectual and cultural exchange¹. In the postwar period, most of those ideas and programs have been taken over by UNESCO. For this reason, the ICIC has recently attracted attention as a pioneering international organization for cultural exchange in the field of international history².

However, persuasive research has not been done on the ideological background of intellectual cooperation. In fact, little attention has been paid even to the conceptual change of intellectual cooperation itself³. Considering that the ICIC was launched by the

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¹ Akira Iriye, *Global Community: the Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World*, Berkley: University of California Press, 2002, pp.21-22

² As an example, see Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, Ch.2. For details on the ICIC, see Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919-1946)*, Paris: Publication de la Sorbonne, 1999.

³ For example, Iriye understands the meaning of intellectual cooperation according to his definition of “cultural internationalism” – “the fostering of international cooperation through cultural activities across national boundaries” (Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*, p.3). However, it seems that Iriye’s argumentation has little awareness of the historical change of

League of Nations as a new project, and that the fundamental principles of intellectual cooperation were repeatedly redefined throughout the course of its activities, this problem is even more serious. For this reason, this paper follows the track of the conceptual changes of intellectual cooperation in the interwar period by scrutinizing the discourses on it in the ICIC.

Moreover, this paper examines the changing concept of intellectual cooperation from the perspective of Japan and China, because it can be thought that Japan and China, as non-Western countries criticizing the Euro-centric character of the ICIC, developed the unique ideas on intellectual cooperation⁴. In other words, this paper argues that Japan and China played decisive roles in the ideological shift of intellectual cooperation. In doing so, the paper will, it is hoped, contribute to a deep understanding of the ICIC's intellectual cooperation and its significance in the history of international cultural exchange.

Formation of Intellectual Cooperation in the League of Nations

It was in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 that the establishment of some sort of international organization for intellectual cooperation was firstly proposed. This proposal was made by a Belgian delegate, Paul Hyman, for the purpose of “developing international, moral, scientific and artistic relations among nations as well as proving by all means the formation of international mentality”⁵. However, as Hyman withdraw the proposal in the end, the League of Nations Covenant came into existence without any article concerning intellectual cooperation⁶.

Yet, after the Paris Conference, suggestions that the League should launch a new project for intellectual work were continually made from various quarters⁷. In 1922, the French Association for the League of Nations sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, arguing for the need to establishment of “an International Bureau for Intellectual Intercourse and Education”⁸. In this letter, the French Association,

concepts, because there is no doubt that the meaning of the term “international cooperation”, for example, differs considerably according to the historical context it was used in. The same thing can be said for the concept of intellectual cooperation.

⁴ Takashi Saikawa “From Intellectual Cooperation to International Cultural Exchange: Japan and China in the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation”, *Asian Regional Integration Review*, vol.1, April 2009, pp.83-91.

⁵ David Hunter Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, vol. 1, New York: G.P. Putnum's Sons, 1928, pp.349-350.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ A report prepared by the Secretariat of the League showed 47 proposals from various organizations and persons. See, League of Nations, “Report from the Secretariat of the League of Nations on the proposals submitted to it with regard to intellectual Cooperation by various organisations and persons”, 29 July 1922.

⁸ “Institution of an International Bureau for Intellectual Intercourse and Education”, Letter, dated 8th July 1920, from the President of the Executive Committee of the French Association for the League of Nations, *League of Nations, Official Journal*, No.7, Oct. 1920, pp.445-451.

emphasizing the importance of “more intimate and active interchange of ideas, impressions, scientific discoveries, moral improvements and literary and scientific publications”⁹ for the permanency and power of the League of Nations, regarded the organization as “a moral union of hearts and consciences”¹⁰. In other words, the French association unfolded the idea that an organization for intellectual work became a moral basis of the League of Nations¹¹. As will be shown later, this idea was taken over by the ICIC at the time of its establishment.

In addition, the Council of the League discussed the two proposals submitted by *L’Union des Associations Internationales* (the Union of International Associations), which asked for assisting financially the International University established in Brussels as well as subsidizing its publishing¹². In the end, the Council, withholding financial assistance to the International University, approved £1,500 subsidy to publishing of the UIA¹³. More importantly, however, the League had a keen interest in the projects of the UIA, most of which came to be included in the programs of the ICIC later.

At the first Assembly of the League in 1920, the problem of intellectual work came to be widely discussed. The discussion started with the motion cosponsored by Belgium, Romaine and Italy, which recommended that the Council should bring about an “international organization of intellectual labor”¹⁴. Accepting and approving this motion, the second committee of the Assembly appointed Henri La Fontaine a rapporteur submitting a resolution on the international organization of intellectual work to the plenary meeting of the Assembly¹⁵. Thus, in the plenary meeting, La Fontaine reported the necessity to establish an international organization of intellectual work under the auspice of the League, referring to the UIA as its prototype¹⁶. La Fontaine subsequently proclaimed the ultimate aim of the organization.

A happy circumstance has compelled us to make our last task to consider a factor which is the noblest, highest, most disinterested and most powerful in the evolution of mankind – the

⁹ Ibid., p.445.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ As will be shown later, this idea was taken over by the ICIC.

¹² The League of Nations, *Procès-Verbal of the Eighth Session of the Council of the League of Nations, held in San-Sebastian, from July 30th to August 5th, 1920*, p.13, pp.95-97. The UIA, established in 1910 by two Belgian internationalists, Henri La Fontaine (Secretary-General) and Paul Otlet, can be regarded as one of the first INGOs. Despite its significance in the history of international relations, very little research has been done on this organization. For a brief historical overview, see, Georges Patrick Speeckaert, *Le premier siècle de la coopération internationale, 1815-1914*, Brussels: Union des Associations Internationales, 1980, pp.171-182.

¹³ The League of Nations, *Procès-Verbal of the Eighth Session of the Council of the League of Nations*, p.13.

¹⁴ League of Nations, *The Records of the First Assembly, Meetings of the Committees*, I, Geneva, 1920, p.271.

¹⁵ La Fontaine, co-founder and Secretary-General of the UIA as mentioned before, was one of the Belgian delegates in the first Assembly of the League of Nations. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1913 for his achievements in promoting the establishment of international organizations.

¹⁶ League of Nations, *The Record of the First Assembly, Plenary Meetings (Meeting held from the 15th of November to the 18th of December 1920)*, Geneva, 1920, p.770.

human mind. You are paying your final tribute to the human mind, which has led mankind from barbarism and shown him the way to peace. Nothing which makes for the glory of civilisation could have been accomplished except through the mind. It is the task of the League of Nations to find the best and the most perfect, the most harmonious and the most speedy, methods by which that mind can act.¹⁷

Obviously, La Fontaine's idea on the organization for intellectual work inherits the Belgian proposal in the Paris conference that emphasized the organization as "a moral union of hearts and consciences". However, at the same time, it is notable that La Fontaine pays particular attention to the role of intellectuals in terms of the development of "human mind", that is, civilization. In other words, La Fontaine thinks here that barbarism can be overcome by those intellectuals who represent civilization as the highest point of human mind. In this way, the organization led by intellectuals was expected to contribute to civilization as well as to overcome barbarism. As a result, the Assembly, approving this resolution, recommended the Council to make an effort to establish the international organization of intellectual work, and to present to the Assembly the report on educational influence for developing "a spirit of good-will and world-wide cooperation"¹⁸.

At the Council in the following year, two different ideas concerning intellectual work were proposed; the former idea was to make the existing UIA into an organization like other technical organizations and attach it to the League, while the latter was to create an entirely new organization¹⁹. Holding off making a decision, the Council was reluctant to incorporate intellectual work into the League of Nations as an inter-governmental system, because the Council believed that intellectual work should be done by private organizations such as the UIA, and that League should assist such voluntary efforts by intellectuals²⁰.

Thereafter, according to the two directions, two memorandums were prepared by the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General, on one hand, highly evaluated the efforts and achievements made by the UIA, saying that the "League of Nations should regard these institutions to-day as most valuable organs of collaboration"²¹. On the other, he supported the creation of a technical organization for intellectual work, stating that "it is

¹⁷ Ibid., p.755.

¹⁸ League of Nations, *Resolutions adopted by the Assembly during its First Session (November 15th to December 18th 1920)*, p. 22. As the result of this resolution, the secretariat of the League launched the project to establish the organization for intellectual work. In fact, the Directors' Meeting of the League Secretariat immediately after the First Assembly appointed Nitobe Inazo, a Deputy Secretary-General, to be in charge of this matter (League of Nations, *Minutes of Directors Meeting held at the Hotel National at 3.30. p.m., on Wednesday, December 29th, Geneva, 31st December, 1920*).

¹⁹ "Organisation of Intellectual Labour: Report by M. Quiñones León, Representative of Spain, adopted by the Council on March 1st, 1921", League of Nations, *Minutes of the Twelfth Session of the Council of the League of Nations, held in Paris, in the Palais du Luxembourg, from Monday, February 21st to Friday March 4th 1921*, p.151.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ League of Nations, "Educational Activities and the Co-ordination of Intellectual Work accomplished by the Union of International Associations, Memorandum by the Secretary-General", September 5th, 1921, p.6.

unanimously of opinion that the League of Nations should include in its programme the co-ordination of intellectual activity and international co-operation as regards education”²². It can be though here that the Secretary-General intends to influence each national society by means of education, the “diffusion of a spirit of understanding and world-wide co-operation”²³. Thus, by the initiative of the Secretariat, the creation of a technical organization for intellectual work came to be envisaged.

At the meeting of the Council in September 1921, a French delegate, Léon Bourgeois, called for approving his detailed draft on intellectual work as well as the two memorandums by the Secretary-General. This Bourgeois resolution, which was obviously based on the Secretary-General’s memorandums, defined the nature of the League’s intellectual work more clearly than before.

The Assembly calls upon the Council to appoint a Committee to examine international questions regarding intellectual co-operation and education. This Committee will consist of not more than twelve members, appointed by the Council. It will submit to the next Assembly a report on the measures to be taken by the League to facilitate intellectual exchange between nations, particularly as regards the communication of scientific information and method of education²⁴.

Here the term “intellectual co-operation” was firstly, at least officially, used. It must also be noted that “intellectual cooperation” was thought to be closely related with education. As previously mentioned, this reflected the intention of the League to expand its influence not only at the international level but also at the national level by means of education. Though the meaning of “intellectual co-operation” was still ambiguous, the Bourgeois resolution the Council clearly stated that the League should implement the project for “intellectual cooperation and education” by establishing its technical organization.

Adopted by the Council, the resolution was sent to the Assembly of 1921. At the Fifth Committee of the Assembly, Henri La Fontaine reported again on the question of intellectual work and requested the adoption of the Bourgeois resolution²⁵. Though all members agreed on the necessity to establish this kind of organization by the League, some delegates expressed concerns that the term “education” possibly led to a misunderstanding that the League had a scheme to take the direction of education into its own hands²⁶. Thus, the committee eventually approved the Bourgeois resolution on the

²² League of Nations, “The Desirability of Creating a Technical Organization for Intellectual Work, Memorandum by the Secretary General”, September 5th, 1921, p.1.

²³ League of Nations, “Educational Activities and the Co-ordination of Intellectual Work accomplished by the Union of International Associations, Memorandum by the Secretary-General”, p.6.

²⁴ “Organisation of Intellectual Work, Report by M. Léon Bourgeois adopted by the Council on September 2nd, 1921”, *League of Nations, Minutes of the Fourteenth Session of the Council of the League of Nations held at Geneva*, Annex, p.2.

²⁵ League of Nations, *The Records of the Second Assembly, Meeting of the Committees, II*, Geneva, 1921, pp. 332-333.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.334-335.

condition of omitting the word “education”²⁷. Even if it was a political consideration, the omission resulted in the confusion of the meaning of intellectual cooperation.

In this situation, Gilbert Murray, a delegate of South Africa, who was appointed as a rapporteur to the preliminary meeting, prepared a report with an attempt to conceptualize “intellectual co-operation” as clearly as possible²⁸. At the beginning of the report, he explained the purpose of organizing intellectual work by the League of Nations.

The Committee realises the great importance of the Organization of Intellectual Work; it knows that the future of the League of Nations depends upon the formation of a universal conscience. This can only be created and developed if the scholars, the thinkers and the writers in all countries maintain close mutual contact, and spread from one country to another the idea which can ensure peace among the peoples, and if the efforts already made in this direction receive encouragement²⁹

Like La Fontaine, Murray assumes that this organization for intellectual work should be based on intellectuals such as scholars, thinkers and writhers, who shared a “universal conscience”. Moreover, Murray articulates its fundamental principles by suggesting some issues to be addressed by the organization: (1) international action for the protection of the intellectual worker; (2) international action for the practical advance of knowledge; (3) international action with a view to the spread of the international spirit and the consciousness of human brotherhood³⁰. However, this report was thought to be confusing and paradoxical. Because Murray identifies “the spread of the international spirit and the consciousness of human brotherhood” as one of the primary tasks, while the draft resolution that he proposes here lacks the word “education”. Therefore, in fact, a Haitian delegate pointed out this problem, asking for the reinsertion of the word “education”³¹. Responding to this motion, Murray, while consistently reluctant to make explicit provisions of education so as to avoid the false impression to the League, implied that

²⁷ Ibid., p.335.

²⁸ Even Murray, who later became one of the most ardent advocate for intellectual co-operation as the chairman of the ICIC, was complaining about the ambiguity of its meaning; “the International Organization of Intellectual Work – a somehow hazy and obscure subject, on which nobody but a few cranks seemed to have any clear views...” (Salvador de Madariaga, “Gilbert Murray and the League”, Jean Smith and Arnold Toynbee ed., *Gilbert Murray: An Unfinished Autobiography*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1960, p.189). Before reporting at the plenary meeting, he also expressed his true sentiments; “Now I must go to the Assembly again, to report on Intellectual Work. This subject is almost joke... I hate reporting to that indifferent Assembly on Int. Work!” (ibid., p.190).

²⁹ “International Organisation of Intellectual Work: Report presented to the Assembly by Committee No. V”, League of Nations, *The Records of the Second Assembly, Meeting of the Committees, II*, p. 469.

³⁰ League of Nations, *The Record of the Second Assembly, Plenary Meetings (Meeting held from the 5th of September to the 5th of October 1921)*, Geneva, 1921, p.310.

³¹ The delegate rightly noted that “I consider that the words ‘and education’, which are in the original draft by M. Léon Bourgeois, should be restored because it is extremely important for us, with a view to the formation of that international spirit of which Professor Gilbert Murray has just spoken, that an exchange of information should take place with regard to the pedagogic work carried out all over the world, so that we may arrive at that unity in varied form which we are endeavouring to achieve in this institution.” (ibid., p.312)

there was room for the interpretation that the broad phrase “co-operation in intellectual work” included education among its other activities³². As a result of the discussion, the Haitian delegate withdrew the motion, and the resolution was approved by the Assembly. In this way, the League decided to found a technical organization for intellectual work.

The following year, in 1922, the organization came into existence under the name of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. At the first plenary session, Nitobe Inazo, welcoming 12 members on behalf of the League, made an opening address, in which he defined the characteristics of “intellectual cooperation”.

The members of the Committee were all personalities eminent in the various branches of human knowledge, and their relations with their respective Governments, which they in no ways represented, were those of complete independence.

The work of the Committee, the scope of which had not been strictly defined, either by the Council or by the Assembly, was to submit to the Assembly a report on the step to be taken by the League to facilitate intellectual relations between peoples, particularly in respect of the communication of scientific information³³.

Obviously, this remark is based on the Bourgeois resolution. Yet, it is notable that Nitobe regards the members of the ICIC as independent from governments. This comes from the universalistic nature of this organization that La Fontaine and Murray emphasized. In other words, absorbing the ideas of La Fontaine and Murray on intellectual work, the ICIC identifies itself as a sort of universal community by intellectuals all over the world. On the other hand, however, the fundamental principle of the ICIC was narrowed down to facilitating “intellectual” relations among nations by means of communicating scientific information. In addition, Nitobe made no reference to the possibility that the ICIC included “education” in its activities.

In this way, the ICIC made a start with the universalistic but ambiguous idea of intellectual cooperation. This characteristic of the early ICIC provoked strong reactions from Japan and China, each of which conceptualized intellectual cooperation in its original way and urged the ICIC to redefine the meaning of intellectual cooperation.

Intellectual Cooperation in Japan

In 1926 when the Japanese national committee on intellectual cooperation was established, the term “intellectual cooperation” was also translated into Japanese, that is, *Gakugei Kyōryoku*³⁴. Though the Japanese government had used some names for it such as *Chiteki Rōdō* (Intellectual Labor), *Bunka Kyōryoku* (Cultural Cooperation) and *Gakugei Kyōryoku*, the term “*Gakugei Kyōryoku*” came eventually to be chosen as a definitive translation. Since this term is no longer used as the Japanese translation of intellectual cooperation, it should be understood in the historical context of the time.

³² Ibid., pp.312-313.

³³ League of Nations, *Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, Minute of the First Session, Geneva, August 1st-5th, 1922*, Geneva, 1922, p.3.

³⁴ Therefore, the Japanese national committee was named “*Gakugei Kyōryoku Inkaï*”.

In Japan through the 1920s, a great variety of discourses on culture (*Bunka Ron*) was produced. This is because Japan, as was the case in Europe and the United States, experienced the massive transformation of the socioeconomic structure after World War I³⁵. With the rapid development of capitalism and the penetration of American culture, the mass consumer society emerged in urban areas such as Tokyo³⁶. Furthermore, according to the rapid expansion and development of capitalism, Japan intensively experienced modernity, in which the expansion of capitalism inevitably accompanied a great deal of unevenness that was materialized as differences such as urban and rural, labor and capital, modernity and tradition, gender³⁷. For this reason, diverse discourses on culture were produced during this period, with a view to offer a coherent narrative against the fragmentation of Japanese society³⁸.

From the point of view of semantics, these discourses on culture (*Bunka Ron*) were strongly influenced by a German concept, *Kultur*. It is true that the word “civilization” (*Bunmei*), which came originally from the French word *civilisation* and meant Western civilization as a sole and universal one, had been more widely used in Japan since the late 19th century. However, as skeptic feelings toward the universality of Western civilization came to be globally shared by intellectuals in the aftermath of World War I, the word “culture”, which emphasized the particularity of culture rather than universality of civilization, instead became predominant³⁹. At the same time, the meaning of “civilization” itself was increasingly shifted from universality to particularity, from (Western) civilization to different civilizations⁴⁰. Thus, reflecting the German *Kultur*, which laid great stress on spiritual and national values, the discourses on culture of the time, tended more or less to concentrate on Japanese national culture⁴¹.

Gakugei Kyōryoku, the Japanese term of intellectual cooperation, was based on this idea on culture. In a pamphlet entitled “*Gakugei no Kokusai Kyōryoku*” (International Intellectual Cooperation), which was published by the Japanese national committee, the main purpose of the committee was clearly stated.

³⁵ For details of the socioeconomic structural changes in the 1920s Europe, see, Charles S. Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilizing in France, Germany, and Italy in the Decade after World War I*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

³⁶ Harry Harrotuanian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community in Interwar Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, Ch.1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, preface.

³⁸ For example, Soda Kiichiro’s and Kuwaki Genyoku’s philosophical “*Bunka Shugi*” (Culturalism), Oyama Ikuo’s “*Puroretaria Bunka*” (Proletarian Culture), Kon Wajiro’s “*Kōgen Gaku*” (Modemology), Gonda Yasunosuke’s “*Goraku no Tetsugaku*” (Philosophy of Fun). For details, see Minami Hiroshi, *Taishō Bunka, 1905-1927* [Taishō Culture], Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1978.

³⁹ Akira Yanabu, *Bunka* (Culture), Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1995.

⁴⁰ On the conceptual transformation of “civilization”, see Bruce Mazlish, *Civilization and Its Contents*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

⁴¹ See Yanabu, *Bunka*. In this sense, “*Nihonjin Ron*” (theories on Japanese) or “*Nihon Bunka Ron*” (theories on Japanese culture), which has been produced in terms of constructing Japan’s national identity, can be traced to the discourses on culture in the 1920s.

The primary purpose of our committee is to introduce Japanese culture. In terms of international cooperation, it must be an urgent task to show the true nature of Oriental culture to Western people who often know little about it⁴².

The national committee underscores the particularity of Japanese culture, in the hope that introducing Japanese culture to Western people contributes to international cooperation. In other words, the committee was established as a national organization of the ICIC, its main purpose as defined not as to correspond and cooperate with the ICIC but to introduce Japanese culture to the West. Therefore, the meaning of intellectual cooperation in Japan was primarily to introduce Japanese national culture to the West.

In addition, it must be noted that the active engagement of the Japanese government was anticipated in the Japanese meaning of intellectual cooperation. In fact, the Japanese national committee on intellectual cooperation was established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had been under its strong influence⁴³. The reason why the Japanese government embarked on the project for intellectual cooperation is that it was keenly realized after World War I that the Japanese government should implement cultural diplomacy toward Western countries. For example, Goto Shinpei, a politician and colonial administrator of Taiwan and Manchuria, asserted that Japan after the war had a great cultural mission toward the world⁴⁴. Goto's argument about "*Nihon no Bunka teki Shimei*" (Japan's cultural mission) was motivated by his strong resentment against Western racial prejudice of Japanese people and their culture. Taking the rejection of Japan's proposal for racial equality in the Paris Peace Conference and the anti-Japanese movement in the United States as examples of the Japan's high priority issues after World War I, Goto alleged that these problems undoubtedly resulted from the widespread misunderstanding and ignorance of Japan in Western countries⁴⁵. According to Goto, since the Japanese nation is inherently peaceful and cooperative, it is needed to introduce Japanese culture to Western people so that they can have a *right* understanding⁴⁶. Since this growing frustration was held not only by Goto but also by many Japanese policy makers and intellectuals, the mission to introduce Japanese culture to the West become a general goal of Japanese foreign policy in the 1920s.

⁴² The National Committee of Japan on Intellectual Cooperation ed., "*Gakugei no Kokusai Kyōryoku*" (International Intellectual Cooperation), Tokyo: the Japanese Association of the League of Nations, 1928, pp.18-19.

⁴³ For details, see Takashi Saikawa "From Intellectual Cooperation to International Cultural Exchange", p.86.

⁴⁴ Goto Shinpei, "Nihon no Bunkateki Shimei" (Japan's Cultural Mission), *Gaiko Jihō*, No.382, Oct. 1920, pp.19-28; "Nihon no Bunkateki Shimei ni tsuite: Sairon" (Japan's Cultural Mission Revisited), *Gaiko Jihō*, No.383, Nov. 1920, pp.11-23. Needless to say, Japan's proposal for racial equality in the Paris Conference was nothing more than the self-oriented appeal for the equality between Japan and Western powers. For further discussion, see Naoko Shimazu, Japan, *Race and Equality: the Racial Equality Proposal of 1919*, London: Routledge, 1998. On anti-Japanese movement in the United States in the 1920s, see Izumi Hirobe, *Japanese Pride, American Prejudice: Modifying the Exclusion Clause of the 1924 Immigration Act*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.

⁴⁵ Goto, "Nihon no Bunkateki Shimei", p.28.

⁴⁶ Goto, "Nihon no Bunkateki Shimei ni tsuite: Sairon", p.20; "Nihon no Bunkateki Shimei", p.22-23.

Together with the idea of Japan's cultural mission, there emerged a fundamental principle of Japan's international cultural exchange after World War I: that is, "*Tōzai Bunmei Chōwa Ron*" (the Idea of Harmony between Eastern and Western Civilizations). Though the idea that Japan should (and can) be a cultural mediator between the East and the West was seemingly banal, it has been a widely shared ideology in the field of international cultural exchange since the 1920s⁴⁷. This is because "*Tōzai Bunmei Chōwa Ron*" has functioned as an ideological basis of constructing Japan's national identity towards the world. To be more precise, on the premise that Japan is, historically and culturally, the first nation to achieve modernization among non-Western countries, the ideology makes it possible to think that Japan is qualified to ask for its equality with the West as well as superiority over the East, particularly Asia⁴⁸. Thus, employing the East/West dichotomy, a vast number of discourses on Japan's national identity as a special mediator between them has been (re)produced⁴⁹. As with Japan's Cultural Mission, "*Tōzai Bunmei Chōwa Ron*" came to be a prevailing and influential discourse in the 1920s⁵⁰. For this reason, as mentioned above, the Japanese national committee on intellectual cooperation stated that introducing Japanese culture as an "Oriental" culture to the West contributed to international cooperation.

In this way, taking advantage of its geographical, historical and cultural position in the world, the national committee regarded intellectual cooperation as an effective means for constructing its national identity. Therefore, unlike the ICIC's universalistic comprehension, the meaning of intellectual cooperation in Japan was based on the particularity of culture, Japanese national culture.

Intellectual Cooperation in China

The Chinese translation of intellectual cooperation was fixed as "*Shijie Wenhua Hezuo*" in 1933 when the Chinese national committee on intellectual cooperation was established. This committee came into existence as the result of the "Mission of Educational Experts to China", which was dispatched by the ICIC in 1931. Initiated at the request of the Nationalist Chinese Government in Nanjing to cooperate with the League of Nations, this

⁴⁷ Atsushi Shibasaki, *Kindai Nihon to Kokusai Bunka Kōryū* (International Cultural Relations and Modern Japan), Tokyo: Yūshindō, 1999; Tetsuya Sakai, *Kindai Nihon no Kokusai Chitsujo Ron* (The Political Discourse on International Order in Modern Japan), Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007.

⁴⁸ Sakai, *Kindai Nihon no Kokusai Chitsujo Ron*.

⁴⁹ For the discussion on the Postwar period since 1945, see Hirofumi Takase, *Sengo Nihon no Keizai Gaiko* (Japan's Economic Diplomacy in the Postwar Period), Tokyo: Shinzansha, 2008. It can be seen in this work that the Japanese Economic Policy has been implemented according to "Japan image" projected by the dichotomy between the East and the West.

⁵⁰ For example, Hara Takashi, Japanese prime minister at the time, proclaimed the harmonization between Eastern and Western Civilizations as one of the most critical policy issues (Takashi Hara, "*Tōzai Bunmei no Chōwa*" (Harmony between Eastern and Western Civilizations), *Gaikō Jihō*, No.388, Jan. 1921, pp.27-34.

project became the first experience for the ICIC to assist a particular government⁵¹. The mission, investigating the educational situation in China, submitted to the ICIC the report on the reform of Chinese educational system⁵². In this report, the mission suggested that China should preserve its national unity, the unity of Chinese national culture, from a variety of foreign influences while modernizing – westernizing – its educational system⁵³. Thus, the ICIC not only consolidated a close relationship with the Chinese government but also supported the construction of Chinese national culture. On the other hand, the Nationalist Chinese Government in Nanjing intended to use the League, the ICIC in this case, for its own purposes, particularly the domestic development of China⁵⁴. Particularly, after the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the Nationalist Government sought to reinforce its relations with the League in the framework of “Technical Cooperation with China”⁵⁵. In fact, the project of the mission was also formulated and implemented within this framework.

Though the activities of the Chinese national committee on intellectual cooperation, “*Shijie Wenhua Hezuo Zhongguo Xiehui*”, were limited on a small scale, through the foundation of its national committee, Chinese idea on intellectual cooperation was increasingly crystallized⁵⁶. For example, in the report of the committee in 1933 intellectual cooperation was classified by actors into three types: (1) intellectual cooperation directly implemented by the League of Nations, (2) intellectual cooperation jointly by the League and national organizations, (3) intellectual cooperation independently by national organizations⁵⁷. Among them, the Chinese committee attached overriding importance to intellectual cooperation by national organizations, asking for the

⁵¹ League of Nations, International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, Report on the Committee on the Works of Its Fourteenth Plenary Session submitted to the Council and to the Assembly, Geneva, 1932, p.19.

⁵² The League of Nations’ Mission of Educational Experts, *The Reorganization of Education in China*, Paris: League of Nations’ Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, 1932.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.197.

⁵⁴ China’s failure to maintain its position of nonpermanent seat in the Council in 1928 led to the domestic controversy over China’s withdrawal from the League. In opposition to it, Wei Zhou, one of the Chinese delegates in the League, pointed out advantages of staying and using it: international collaboration, impression of peaceful Chinese culture, cooperation with small countries in the League, assistance from the League, China’s international position as a great nation, acquisition of new knowledge through technical cooperation, diffusion of *Sanmin Zhuyi* (Three Principles of the People). Wei Zhou, “*Tuichu huo Liyong Guoji Lianmenghui Wenti*” (Exit or Use: Problem of the League of Nations), *Zhongwai Pinlun*, 17th April, 1929.

⁵⁵ For details, see Li Zang, *Guoji Hezuo zai Zhongguo: Guoji Lianmeng Jiaose de Kaocha, 1919-1946* (International Cooperation in China, with special consideration to its relations with the League of Nations), Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1999; Margherita Zanasi, “Exporting Development: The League of Nations and Republican China”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol.49, no.1, pp.143-169; Jürgen Osterhammel “‘Technical Cooperation’ between the League of Nations and China”, *Modern Asian Studies*, vol.13, no.4, 1979, pp.661-680.

⁵⁶ See, Organisation internationale de coopération intellectuelle, *Commission nationale chinoise de coopération intellectuelle*, Shanghai, 1937; Li Zang, *Guoji Hezuo zai Zhongguo*, Ch. 2.

⁵⁷ Hexi Chen, *Shijie Wenhua Hezuo: Canjia Guolian Shijie Wenhua Hezuohui di Shisi ci Huiyi zhi Jingguo* (International Intellectual Cooperation: a report of the 14th Session of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation), Shanghai: Shijie Bianyiguan, 1933, p.49.

organization of research and education institutions in China as well as the establishment of China's national organization for international cultural exchange⁵⁸. Furthermore, at the 15th Plenary Session of the ICIC in 1933, Chinese delegates, after considering the ways and means of intellectual cooperation, suggested the differentiation of the relationship between governments from the relationship between societies, both of which they equally emphasized⁵⁹. The reason why the social dimension of intellectual cooperation was emphasized is that, as discussed, China sought to use the ICIC for developing Chinese domestic society in terms of education and research.

The meaning of the Chinese intellectual cooperation, “*Shijie Wenhua Hezuo*”, was manifested at the Second General Conference of the National Committees of Intellectual Cooperation in 1937. Li Shizeng, a representative of China in the conference, presented Chinese understanding of intellectual cooperation from the perspective of the multiplicity of civilizations⁶⁰.

Each country has its traditions, its genius and its individual culture. The International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has, on many occasions, recognised the diversity of civilisation, a diversity which, in fact, enriches the common heritage of mankind. It is this mutiformity of civilizations that renders intellectual co-operation necessary. Between the International Organisation and each nation, the agency of the National Committees is of primary importance, particularly for making known the Organisation's activities in each country⁶¹. (2)

⁵⁸ The move toward unified Chinese national organization for international cultural exchange was accelerated by the establishment of *Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai* (The Society of International Cultural Relations) in 1934. China was on alert against the Japan's national organization for international cultural exchange, and sought for the countermeasure against the programs that was closely related with Japan's foreign policy. In this regard, see Deming Liu, “*Guoji Wenhua Shiye shi Shenme?*” (What is International Cultural Exchange?), *Waijiao Yuebao*, vol.6 no.6, Jun. 1935, pp.141-157.

⁵⁹ “*Shijie Wenhua Hezuo Zhongguo Daibiaotuan Zuzhi Dagang Chenbao Dahui Beian Tongqi*” (A Notice of a Report that the Chinese Delegation Announced the Outline of Organization in the Meeting of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation), *Li Shizeng Xiansheng Wenji* (Collected Works of Li Shizeng), vol.2, Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Weiyuanhui Dangshi Weiyuanhui, 1980, p.371.

⁶⁰ Li Shizeng, formally a member of the Chinese anarchist group in France, was one of the most important figures in the Chinese project of intellectual cooperation. Even after Wu Zhihui was nominated as the Chinese member of the ICIC in 1930, Li acted virtually as a pillar of intellectual cooperation in China. This is because Wu Zhihui was reluctant to engage in intellectual cooperation, and in fact, he never appeared at Geneva during his term (1930-39). Nonetheless, Li highly evaluates Wu Zhihui as a pioneer in the field of cultural exchange in China. Shizeng Li, “*Zhihui Xiansheng Liushinian Jiaoyi Sigong zhi Guanxi*” (60 Year' Friendship with Wu Zhihui), *Wu Zhihui Xiansheng Shishi Shizhounian Jinian Teji* (Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of Wu Zhihui's Demise), no date, p.15; Shizeng Li “*Shijie Wenhua*” (World Culture), *Li Shizeng Xiansheng Wenji* (Collected Works of Li Shizeng), vol.2, Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang Zhongyang Weiyuanhui Dangshi Weiyuanhui, 1980, p.279-280.

⁶¹ Li Yu Ying, “the Role of the National Committees in Making Known, in the National Field, the Activities of the International Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation”, League of Nations, International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, Second General Conference of the National Committees of Intellectual Co-operation, July 1937, p.2.

It can be seen that Li intended to redefine the meaning of civilization from a monism based on Western civilization to the diversity of civilizations, underlining the significance of national cultures. In fact, this viewpoint on diverse civilizations had been repeatedly expressed by China in the League of Nations. For example, as early as the 4th Assembly of the League in 1923, a Chinese delegate stressed the intellectual and spiritual values of the “Orient” or the “East”, and requested Western people to pay more attention to Chinese culture as its representative⁶². This Chinese appeal for the multiplicity of civilizations, because of its quasi-multicultural appearance, had been supported by most members, non-Western members in particular, of the League⁶³. For China, however, the true motive was obviously to improve its status in international society by manipulating the situation of the League of Nations, especially its Assembly in which non-Western countries had a majority⁶⁴. It is obvious that Li insisted on the diversity of civilizations in conscious of this motive. All the same, in so doing, he thought primarily of enhancing China’s position in the field of intellectual cooperation.

As seen above, intellectual cooperation in China was thought to serve two purposes: the development of its domestic society and the enhancement of its international status. In this regard, the idea of civilization functioned as a bond between the two purposes. Particularly, China regionalized the concept of civilization by prefixing “Oriental”, “Eastern” or “Asian”, so as to achieve the Chinese national goals at the same time. Therefore, again, it must be noted that the focus of the intellectual cooperation in China was primarily on its national values, not on the universal values that the ICIC emphasized. This was clearly stated in the report of the Chinese national committee on intellectual cooperation.

We are convinced that we have a special part to play in the work of co-operation, as there is an aspect of Chinese civilisation which is peculiar to itself, independent, and more original than that of the Western civilisations. In view of these differences we feel the need to multiply opportunities for the exchange of intellectual and scientific ideas and for the exchanges of

⁶² League of Nations, Records of the Fourth Assembly, Text of the Debates, Geneva 1923, p.104-5.

⁶³ Even Japan, disputing over the Shandon Peninsula with China, expressed its support for the idea with the exception of regarding Chinese culture as a representative of the “Orient” (League of Nations, *Records of the Fourth Assembly, Meeting of the Committees, Minutes of the Fourth Committee (Social and General Questions)*, Geneva, 1923, p.56).

⁶⁴ To be precise, the top priority of Chinese diplomacy with the League was to win and retain a nonpermanent seat of the Council in its election. For details, see Chi-Hua Tang, *Beijing Zhengfu yu Guoji Lianmeng (1919-1928)* (The Beijing Government and the League of Nations, 1919-1926), Taipei: Dangda Toshu Gongsi, 1998, Ch.3. Along the same lines, China asked the League to nominate a Chinese as a member of the ICIC. The basic principle for an enhanced international status can be seen as one of the main characteristics of Chinese diplomacy. According to Shin Kawashima, China has consistently sought to enhance its international status as a great nation since the early 20th century. On this point, see Shin Kawashima, “Chūgoku Gaikō ni okeru Shōchō toshiteno Kokusaiteki Chii” (The Long-term Target on Chinese Diplomatic History to Enhance Its International Status on Hague Peace Conference, the League of Nations and the United Nations), *Kokusai Seiji*, Vol.145, 2006, pp.17-35.

ideas in all fields. Our collaboration will therefore extend to a quite new and particularly important work which will subserve civilisation in the future⁶⁵.

Thus, it can be said that China, emphasizing its national values like Japan, challenged the ICIC's universalistic understanding of intellectual cooperation.

Conclusion

As above, in confrontation with the universalism of the ICIC, Japan and China respectively conceptualized intellectual cooperation in their original ways, urging the ICIC to redefine the meaning of intellectual cooperation. In Japan, the meaning of intellectual cooperation was to introduce Japanese national culture in order to remove misunderstandings of Japanese people and their culture in Western countries. On the other hand, in China, intellectual cooperation was implemented to develop Chinese domestic society and enhance its international society. In this sense, they shared the same ideological background, the idea that intellectual cooperation should be primarily based on national values. More importantly, both countries laid great emphasis on such regional concepts as the "Orient", the "East" and "Asia". Nonetheless, there was no possibility that Japan and China sought a common ground of understanding about these regional concepts. This is because the concepts of region manipulated by Japan and China functioned as a logic connecting national values with the universalistic nature of the ICIC. Therefore, the regional concepts emphasized by Japan and China in intellectual cooperation in this period were dependent on the ideas of nation and national culture.

Finally, it must be noted that the ICIC, through cooperating with Japan and China, sifted the paradigm of intellectual cooperation, from the universality to the particularity of culture. At the same time, as is the case for the Mission of Educational Experts to China in 1931, the ICIC came to seek a close relationship with governments, acknowledging the significance of national culture. This paradigm shift was clearly shown by the "International Act concerning Intellectual Cooperation", which was prepared by the ICIC with the help of the French government and ratified at Paris in 1938 by 45 governments⁶⁶. This can be regarded not only as the first international arrangement on intellectual cooperation but also as the final achievement of the ICIC, which was eventually compelled to cease all of the projects by the outbreak of World War II. Reflecting the paradigm shift from the universality to the particularity of culture, the act stated clearly

⁶⁵ League of Nations, Intellectual Cooperation Organisation, "Statement on the Work of the Chinese National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation from June 1922 to May 1934", Geneva, June 8th, 1934, p.8.

⁶⁶ League of Nations, "International Act concerning Intellectual Cooperation", Geneva, 1938. The governments that finally ratified this act are as follows: Albania, Argentine Republic, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa-Rica, Cuba, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, Finland, the French Republic, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Iraq, Iran, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Mexico, Monaco, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Siam, Sweden, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, the Union of South Africa, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia. The Japanese government sent a representative to the diplomatic conference, but finally refused to sign the act.

that “National Committees on Intellectual Cooperation...act as centres for the development of this work on both the national and international planes”⁶⁷. In other word, the work of intellectual cooperation should be based on national committees, each of which represents its national culture. The ICIC was no longer regarded as a universal intellectual community envisaged in the 1920s, but as an organization among national cultures, a “League of Cultures” as it were. In this way, the ICIC as a “League of Cultures” provided the international basis of national organizations for cultural exchange, which were simultaneously founded in various countries in the 1930s.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.17.