

*BUNKA GAIKŌ* (JAPAN’S CULTURAL DIPLOMACY)  
RE-CONSTRUCTING JAPANESE IDENTITY IN FRANCE AND TURKEY  
(1952-1989)

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2022

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(1952-1989)

Thesis submitted to the  
Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
Asian Studies

by  
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Boğaziçi University

2022

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Semiha Karaoğlu, certify that

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## ABSTRACT

### *Bunka Gaikō* (Japan's Cultural Diplomacy)

#### Re-constructing Japanese Identity in France and Turkey (1952-1989)

Japan has evolved into a cultural nation in the aftermath of World War II owing to the promulgation of the Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan. Given its pacifist culture and emerging role as a responsible member of the global society, cultural diplomacy became the primary and immediate foreign policy instrument to reconstruct Japanese identity in international relations long before the theory of Soft Power emerged. The present research unveils Japan's identity reconstruction through cultural diplomacy as a rehabilitative and constructive foreign policy mechanism to heal its image as a peace-loving nation by comparing Japan's cultural diplomacy in France and Turkey between 1952 and 1989 comparatively to discern what kind of perception of Japan has emerged as a product of Japan's international cultural policies in both countries. Ultimately, the thesis reveals that Japan's cultural diplomacy in France has generated an intellectual ecosystem, whereas, in Turkey, the perception of Japan and Japanese culture remains underdeveloped due to the lack of an official culture house—inaugurated by the Government of Japan—which can constitute a legitimate institute or culture house to coordinate international cultural policies.

## ÖZET

### *Bunka Gaikō* (Japonya'nın Kültürel Diplomasisi)

#### Fransa ve Türkiye'de Japon Kimliğinin Yeniden İnşası (1952-1989)

Japonya, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Japonya Anayasası'nın 9. Maddesi'ne dayanarak bir kültür ulusu haline gelmiştir. Pasifist kültürü ve küresel toplumun sorumlu bir üyesi olarak ortaya çıkan rolü göz önüne alındığında, kültürel diplomasi, Yumuşak Güç teorisi ortaya çıkmadan çok önce, Japon kimliğini uluslararası ilişkilerde yeniden inşa etmek için birincil dış politika aracı haline gelmiştir. Bu araştırma, Japonya'nın barışsever bir ulus olarak imajını iyileştirmek için iyileştirici ve yapıcı bir dış politika mekanizması olarak kültürel diplomasi yoluyla 1952 ve 1989 yılları arasında Japonya'nın Fransa ve Türkiye'deki kültürel diplomasi faaliyetlerini karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemektedir. Bu inceleme yoluyla, Japon kimlik yeniden inşasının, Japonya'nın uluslararası kültür politikalarının bir ürünü olarak ne durumda olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Sonuç olarak, tez, Japonya'nın Fransa'daki kültürel diplomasisinin entelektüel bir ekosistem oluşturduğunu, oysa Türkiye'de Japonya ve Japon kültürü algısının, Japonya Hükümeti tarafından açılacak olan uluslararası kültür politikalarını koordine etmek için meşru bir kurum ihtiyacını giderecek bir kültür evinin olmaması nedeniyle gelişmediğini savunmaktadır.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to extend my most profound gratitude to several people without whose support and advice I could not complete this MA dissertation. First and foremost, I want to express my most sincere gratitude to Emeritus Prof. Selçuk Esenbel for her constant guidance on my research and for mentoring me regarding my plans to continue my studies by showing an unfailing willingness to share her precious time every time I needed it. I would also like to thank Prof. Esenbel for her faith in me to offer me to work as the Assistant Coordinator of Boğaziçi University Asian Studies Center, Program Coordinator at the Master of Arts in Asian Studies (MAAS) Program, and Project Coordinator at the Japanese Studies Association (JAD) in İstanbul. I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Oğuz Baykara for always trusting and supporting me since my bachelor years at the Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies of Boğaziçi University. To be his student again at the Master of Arts in Asian Studies (MAAS) Program and serve as his course assistant were unforgettable experiences. My heartfelt appreciation goes to Dr. Erdal Küçükyağcı, whose enlightening comments have allowed me to shape my thesis, for his invaluable mentorship and listening to my future dreams. I also thank Dr. Altay Atlı for his fatherly support and guidance and his unfailing enthusiasm to mentor me academically and personally. I would also like to acknowledge Prof. Arzu Öztürkmen for her guidance throughout my MA dissertation and for providing me with her invaluable opinions and encouragement for my future studies on the subject matter through her constructive criticism and inspiring comments. Special thanks to Prof. Nissim Otmazgin of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for accepting to be my external jury member and guiding me with his generous support. In addition, I

remain forever grateful to the Ambassador of Turkey to Japan, Mr. Korkut Güngen, and the Second Secretary of Politics and Culture of Japan to Turkey, Mr. Yuta Nagamura, for accepting to get interviewed by me and for their most illuminating remarks on Japan's cultural diplomacy. The valuable assistance of Ms. Buket Köse, Secretary of our Master of Arts in Asian Studies (MAAS) Program, is also precious. I express my deep appreciation to my dearest friends, Yalın Akçevin and Ayşe Selin Kot, for always being there for me and encouraging me to overcome the stress. And, of course, to my most adorable kittens, Mia, and Leo, for making my life extraordinary and helping me cope with stress through their tiny loving hearts. Finally, my most sincere appreciation goes to my beloved mother for being my biggest supporter in this life journey. I want to dedicate this study to her, who has given her all for my happiness and is always nothing but loving and encouraging whatever I choose to pursue in life. I will do my best to deserve your love and sacrifice.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACA – Agency for Cultural Affairs

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

CD – Cultural Diplomacy

CLAIR – Council of Local Authorities for International Relations

FRS – Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GNP – Gross National Product

IFRI – Institut Français des Relations Internationales

JAD – Japanese Studies Association

JCIC – Japan Consortium for International Cooperation

JET – Japan Exchange and Teaching

JKAD – Japan–Izmir Intercultural Friendship Association

JNTO – Japan National Tourism Organization

KFC – Kentucky Fried Chicken

METI – Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

MEXT – Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey

MIC – Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

MOE – Ministry of Education

MOFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

MTV – Music Television

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

NHK – Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai

ODA – Official Development Assistance

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OIF – Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie

OUP – Oxford University Press

PD – Public Diplomacy

PMC – Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet

PR – Public Relations

PRC – People’s Republic of China

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

TICAD – Tokyo International Conference on African Development

TJV – Turkish–Japanese Foundation Culture Center

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

US – The United States

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WWII – World War Two

## CHAPTER 1

### CULTURE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

Cultural diplomacy has gained recognition from various scholars and academics thanks to the heightened influence of globalization and the increasing pace of information technology.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, cultural diplomacy before the era of globalization remains usually untouched and undiscovered both as a practice and a research field. The rationale for the increasing importance of cultural diplomacy is that globalization has introduced a new spectrum where cyber communication and exposure to cross-cultural settings have gained momentum. Intercultural communication and dialogue have grown more prestigious, and culture has become more visible and influential in today's global society. Globalization has also brought fundamental changes to many aspects of the nation-state, communal, and individual lives, further challenging traditional values and social orders. Eventually, the ease of access to information enhanced research on intercultural flows and cultural diplomacy.

Therefore, as a research area, cultural diplomacy has started to reap the benefits of this power shift in international relations, where the role of culture in international relations and foreign policy has grown into an inevitable aspect of international relations studies. Nevertheless, pre-globalization cultural diplomacy and soft power await to become unearthed and discovered. Furthermore, notwithstanding the increasing attention circulating cultural diplomacy studies, cultural diplomacy (both as theory and practice) does not receive the recognition it deserves. In particular, the Cold War cultural diplomacy of nations other than the

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<sup>1</sup> Bukh, "Revisiting Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: A Critique of the Agent-Level Approach to Japan's Soft Power," 461.

United States of America (US) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) pose tremendous insight into how states positioned themselves during an ideological war where culture was the principal weapon.

Japan, constituting the principal subject of the present thesis, comprises a unique example thanks to its rehabilitative cultural diplomacy in the post-war period, providing an illuminating case study to discern the fluctuating dynamics of culture in international relations and foreign policy. Evolving into a pacifist nation, owing to Article 9 of its contested constitution, Japan has had to rely on its peaceful culture—as defined by Kazuo Ogura—since the culmination of World War II to rehabilitate its image in international relations, also healing its post-war scars. In other words, Japan’s catastrophic defeat in World War II led Japan to peaceful behavior, as firmly expressed by Ogura.<sup>2</sup>

Studies revolving around Japan’s cultural diplomacy have gained remarkable attention in international relations. Evolving into a cultural nation from an assertive and militarist one in the aftermath of World War II, Japan inevitably had to rely on its peaceful culture “to strengthen its presence on the international stage,”<sup>3</sup> and “communicate a correct understanding of Japan”<sup>4</sup> as the pacifist nature of Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan renounces *casus belli*, the right to wage war to a country. Japan invented a new foreign policy instrument to reconstruct its identity in global politics, which is *bunka gaikō*, cultural diplomacy by abstaining from hard power and concentrating on soft power. After its defeat in World War II, Japan reconstructed its cultural and national identity to reaffirm its standing in the bipolar

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<sup>2</sup> Ogura, “Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present,” 46.

<sup>3</sup> Stanislaus, “Japan is using cultural diplomacy to reassert its place in the world—but is the message too exclusive?”

<sup>4</sup> Stanislaus, “Japan is using cultural diplomacy to reassert its place in the world—but is the message too exclusive?”

world order of the Cold War by highlighting its natural beauties such as cherry blossom (*sakura*) trees, scenery portraying Mount Fuji in the background, and its traditional culture. Japan also incorporated cultural components with aesthetics and abstained from promoting the Japanese language during the early post-war years since it would evoke unpleasant feelings in the former colonies of the Empire of Japan. Cultural constituents such as flower arrangement or literally the way of flower (*ikebana*), tea ceremony or literally the way of tea (*chadō*), calligraphy (*shodō*), and peaceful and calm (*zen*) values provided to transmit the peaceful unity and conformity of harmony (*wa*) in Japanese culture that would invoke sympathy and build positive emotions toward Japan.

Within this historical discourse, the present thesis analyzes Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy, which emerged during the immediate post-war years and lasted until the end of the 1980s, to respond to the question “How did Japan’s identity reconstruction through cultural diplomacy as a rehabilitative foreign policy instrument differ in France and Turkey in the Cold War period?” It also unveils how Japan employed its culture in Japanese foreign policy as a rehabilitative and constructive tool and sets out the reconstruction of Japanese identity through culture by investigating how Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France and Turkey during the Cold War period (1952-1989) became a fundamental component of Japan’s foreign policy strategy to rehabilitate its cultural and national identity. In addition, the thesis includes the elucidation of the divergence of Japan’s endeavors in France and Turkey through cultural diplomacy. The research, therefore, evaluates the modality and changeability of Japan’s cultural diplomacy strategies and policies toward France and Turkey during the Cold War to illustrate what agents, actors, instruments, and



targets of Japanese culture Japan emphasized to reconstruct its identity in both nations.

It carries significant weight to scrutinize Japan's cultural diplomacy in France thanks to the profundity of Franco-Japanese relations in historical, legal, and cultural terms. In fact, "in 2018, France and Japan commemorated the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their diplomatic relations."<sup>5</sup> According to the website of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of France, "The two countries are bound together by an "exceptional partnership" promoting security, growth, innovation, and culture."<sup>6</sup> France lays an exceptional precedent, a nation renowned for its cultural diplomacy. In a similar vein, Japan followed in the footsteps of France. The astuteness of Franco-Japanese cultural relations granted Japan the space to promote itself as a cultural nation while proving the longevity of Franco-Japanese cultural connections. The most eminent manifestation of Japan's cultural diplomacy in France is *Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris*<sup>7</sup> (The House of Culture of Japan in Paris).

On the other hand, Turkey provides a prominent example that possesses an amicable connection with the Land of the Rising Sun. In 2020, former Ambassador of Japan to Turkey, Akio Miyajima, described Japan-Turkey relations as "two states, one heart."<sup>8</sup> However, the research concludes that Turkey, contrary to France, was the admirer rather than the admired. Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey insinuates that Turkey was not a priority for Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy despite amicable relations and strong cultural bonds between both countries, proven by vivid

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, "France and Japan."

<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/japan/france-and-japan/>

<sup>6</sup> Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, "France and Japan."

<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/japan/france-and-japan/>

<sup>7</sup> House of Culture of Japan in Paris (*Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris*).

<https://www.mcjp.fr/>

<sup>8</sup> Demirtaş, "Turkey, Japan 'two states, one heart': Japanese envoy."

memories of the Ertuğrul Frigate. The thesis shows that Turkey still lacks such a well-established legitimate cultural institution as *Maison de la Culture du Japon à Paris* by the Government of Japan. The analysis, therefore, reveals how Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy as a rehabilitative tool intersects with the way it reconstructed its national and cultural identity and how this identity demonstrates a difference in the French and Turkish models. The thesis also demonstrates how, in turn, Japan links its “national interest in providing a key element in its foreign policy” to cultural diplomacy.<sup>9</sup> The analyses of the terminal situation of Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France until the end of the Cold War with a comparative perspective of Turkey reveals to what extent Japan consulted the efficacy of its culture in the two countries and how it redeemed Japan with a novel standing in international relations through its cultural identity.

Cultural diplomacy has always been a vital instrument for Japan’s international relations and foreign policy. Though not always rehabilitative and constructive, Japan, through its ability to preserve its traditional spirit and national culture while adapting and importing from other countries and modernizing its national and cultural identity, combined its traditional and contemporary cultural artifacts with exceptional mastery. Today, Japan introduces itself with the motto “Japan: Where Tradition Meets Future” through the promotions and campaigns of the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO). Japan’s ability to Japanize what it imports and adopts and preserve its traditions enables Japan to harbor diverse cultural components to employ them in Japanese intercultural policies. However, cultural diplomacy, or cultural propaganda, has always been on the agenda of Japan.

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<sup>9</sup> Goncharova, “Cultural Diplomacy of Japan,” 6.

Cultural diplomacy has also been one of the most vital post-war foreign policy instruments for reconstructing Japanese identity in international relations and global politics long before Joseph S. Nye invented the concept of Soft Power, given Japan's pacifist culture and its emerging role thanks to its "newfound status as a responsible member of the international community."<sup>10</sup> Since the end of World War II, Japan has immensely built its *raison d'être* on the philosophy of *Wa* (harmony, peace) in order to raise its position in international relations as per Article 9 of its Constitution and has re-emerged in the world stage. The Yoshida Doctrine<sup>11</sup>, named after Shigeru Yoshida (1878-1967), who was the prime minister of Japan between 1948-1954, and the Fukuda Doctrine<sup>12</sup>, which is the product of a speech made in 1977 by Takeo Fukuda (1905-1995), who was the Prime Minister of Japan between 1976-1978, reflected Japan's pacifist foreign policy tradition and globalization. The Yoshida and Fukuda Doctrines emphasized Japan's role as a responsible member of international society in promoting international peace and prosperity. Reborn out of its ashes thanks to its serene and developmental cultural elements<sup>13</sup> and referred to as a cultural nation<sup>14</sup> since World War II, Japan presents excellent precedent whose cultural diplomacy applications provide an illuminating source for productive and fruitful research. Likewise, it is also significant to elaborate on the theory of cultural

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<sup>10</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>11</sup> The Yoshida Doctrine is a national policy that puts economic development at the top priority of the country and practices diplomacy at a low profile.

<sup>12</sup> The Fukuda Doctrine is a policy put forward by the former Prime Minister of Japan, Takeo Fukuda, in a speech he delivered in Manila in 1977 while visiting ASEAN member states. In his address, Fukuda declared that Japan, committed to peace, would refuse to transform into a military power (once again) and support stability, peace, and prosperity in Southeast Asia.

<sup>13</sup> In "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," Kazuo Ogura advocates that Japan promoted its cultural elements with serene, peaceful, and harmonious themes such as flower arrangement (*ikebana*) and (tea ceremony) *chadō*. Ogura also underscores that Japan projected itself to prioritize harmony (*wa*) by exhibiting its natural beauty, like distributing postcards picturing Mount Fuji and cherry blossom (*sakura*) trees.

<sup>14</sup> Natsuko Akagawa projects Japan as a cultural nation in the conclusion chapter of her book titled *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*. Akagawa emphasizes that post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy rendered it a cultural nation.

diplomacy further by tracing Japan's post-war international cultural policies and cultural diplomacy activities to contribute to the theoretical approaches to Japanese cultural diplomacy.

Japan's adventure in cultural diplomacy started with the Meiji Restoration, when Japan broke away from its 200-year-old *sakoku* (closed country) policy. Following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the Empire of Japan pursued a strategy of spreading its language and culture to its colonies by following an aggressive and expansionist policy. So much so that it is possible to name policies implemented by the Empire of Japan during these years as cultural imperialism. Imperial Japan's term for cultural diffusion has been explicitly referred to as propaganda diplomacy (*senden gaikō*) and rarely cultural diplomacy (*bunka gaikō*).<sup>15</sup>

Following the end of World War II, during the Allied Occupation of Japan between 1945 and 1952, Japan lacked the independence of resorting to cultural diplomacy as a foreign policy tool. After 1952, the expansionist cultural propaganda or cultural imperialism of the Empire of Japan before and during the World War II became a concern of war memory that Japan had to solve, especially with its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific. Since Japanese language-oriented cultural policies were a strategic instrument of Japanese cultural propaganda during the pre-war and inter-war years, there was a rapid decline in international language policies in post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy.<sup>16</sup> In need of identity reconstruction, Japan received criticism and reactions from the countries it colonized during the imperial period—especially the present Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> This quotation is from the presentation of Prof. Nissim Otmazgin during the “International Symposium on the Occasion of Sixty Years of Diplomatic Relations” held between 7-9 May 2012. Prof. Otmazgin delivered this speech themed as “Japan and Israel: Regional, Bilateral, and Cultural Perspectives” during Panel I: Japan and Israel in their Regional Contexts.

<sup>16</sup> Ogura, “Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present,” 46.

<sup>17</sup> Watanabe, “Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations,” 1.

Therefore, the Government of Japan did not support cultural practices aimed at spreading Japanese culture and language that were not supported in Japan's post-war years, especially in the Asia-Pacific countries. Likewise, Japan avoided cultural policies targeting East Asian and Southeast Asian countries during this period.<sup>18</sup> In the immediate years following the end of World War II, Japan adopted the pacifist foreign policy tradition based on Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan and transformed into a cultural nation to reconstruct its national and cultural identity.

Following the Japanese economic miracle, as illustrated by the Flying Geese Model, Japan transformed into a cultural nation in the late 1970s under the former Japanese prime minister, Masayoshi Ōhira, to reconstruct its national and cultural identity, first in the United States and Southeast Asian countries, and later in the People's Republic of China. The budget of the Japan Foundation, established in 1972 for this purpose, reached its peak in the late 1980s, indicating the rising importance of cultural diplomacy for Japan.<sup>19</sup>

Japan, which could not remain active in its cultural diplomacy policies due to Japan's ongoing asset price bubble in the 1990s, re-emerged as a "Soft Power Superpower" in international politics in the early 2000s following this "lost decade" and took firm steps to maximize its potential for cultural diplomacy. The beginning of the 2000s marked a new era in Japanese cultural diplomacy. Japan has resorted to cultural diplomacy to reassert its place in global politics with the support of the tripartite alliance of former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, then Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, and then Foreign Minister Taro Aso by establishing the Department of Public Diplomacy under MOFA with certain bureaus devoted to

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<sup>18</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>19</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-War Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 111.

exchange, Japan began to emphasize the importance of soft power and openly encourage cultural diplomacy policies.

Since then, niche forms of cultural diplomacy have emerged, such as MOFA's Pop-culture Diplomacy<sup>20</sup> and the Cool Japan<sup>21</sup> initiative launched by METI in 2011. The Agency for Cultural Affairs within the body of MEXT has also recently come to the forefront with its cultural diplomacy projects. In addition, the Government of Japan initiated the culture house project called "The Japan House" in São Paulo in 2017 and in London and Los Angeles in 2018 in order to convey its traditional culture to the masses. With the acceleration of access to information technologies, the role of Japanese creative content industries, which produce cultural content in order to provide cultural export material for cultural diplomacy policies in the globalizing world, has increased in cultural diplomacy, and public-private cooperation has gained tremendous importance in Japanese cultural diplomacy as well as diplomatic channels. As a result, Japanese cultural diplomacy, which served as a cultural rehabilitation mechanism in the Cold War Era and a soft diplomacy mechanism in the New Millennium, has gradually established and strengthened its legitimacy since the early 2000s and has become an indispensable foreign policy tool in Japan's international relations.

As sources, the thesis uses primary sources such as the Diplomatic Bluebook of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan released every year and government documents by the Government of Japan, secondary sources, and interviews conducted with the Japanese and Turkish diplomats to reveal their perception of Japan's cultural diplomacy. Since cultural diplomacy is both a theory and a practice,

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<sup>20</sup> MOFA, "Pop-culture Diplomacy."

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/exchange/pop/index.html>

<sup>21</sup> METI, "Cool Japan."

[https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono\\_info\\_service/creative\\_industries/creative\\_industries.html](https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono_info_service/creative_industries/creative_industries.html)

the books and works released by prominent diplomats such as Kazuo Ogura and Hirotaka Watanabe are also used. The testimonials by the ambassadors are especially significant in discerning the future trends in Japan's cultural diplomacy and their perception of the current status of Japanese cultural diplomacy in France and Turkey, which has helped me massively in understanding how Japanese approach differed in the two countries, which manifested itself in the words of the ambassadors.

Secondary sources include the works of prominent scholars and professors in the field. To name a few, the books, articles, interviews, and analyses of Prof. Nissim Otmazgin, Prof. Yasushi Watanabe, Prof. Alexander Bukh, Prof. Jean-Marie Bouissou, and Dr. Atsuko Nakagawa, and Dr. Aurelijus Zykas helped me tremendously through their scholarly contributions and insightful pieces. I hope that this study will encourage more comprehensive studies on Japanese cultural diplomacy without neglecting the history of Japan's international cultural policies since one has to unveil the past to trace the future. In this sense, learning more about the past and future of Japan's cultural diplomacy will enable the researchers and young scholars in the field with more knowledge and expertise in Japan, a country full of soft power.

As a young researcher from Turkey, I also hope that this study will improve the relations between Japan and Turkey in cultural and academic terms. In accordance with the present study, there is plenty of room to enhance Japanese cultural diplomacy and cultural presence in Turkey. In this sense, I hope that this MA dissertation will be an inspiration to establish more resolute cultural relations between the two countries. Japan has learned from the French cultural diplomacy model and emerged as a cultural nation, followed by its evolution into a "Soft Power Superpower." By tracing the post-war history of Japanese cultural diplomacy, I also

hope that this work can inspire Turkey to adapt Japan's strategies in becoming a cultural nation so that it can also come under the spotlight with its growing and maturing soft power embellished with Turkish drama series and both traditional and popular culture.

In an age when anyone can be a cultural ambassador with the growing means of information dissemination, competition for cultural supremacy for nations is also growing more crucial than ever. In this sense, the role of culture as a component of foreign policy serves nations' foreign policy objectives, contributes to their internationalization and globalization, advances their economy, and encourages brain drain, resulting in the flow of highly skilled workers, which Japan will need due to its shrinking population. With this study, I aim to touch upon one of the most significant themes in international studies/relations and introduce the reader to different aspects of Japanese cultural diplomacy.

A demilitarized country with pacifist tradition in the post-war period, Japan rehabilitated its presence on the global scene and perception by other countries thanks to the post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy. Furthermore, Japan has managed to reconstruct its national and cultural identity since the post-war period, which I handle by analyzing Japan's cultural diplomacy activities in France and Turkey—the two countries presented as case studies. France and Turkey serve as two cases to show how post-war cultural diplomacy was practiced.

Following the first and introductory chapter, the second chapter examines the definitions of cultural diplomacy and suggests cultural diplomacy as a rehabilitative foreign policy instrument. After defining cultural diplomacy and proposing the diplomatic practice as a rehabilitative instrument in Japanese post-war foreign policy within the theoretical discussion of Joseph S. Nye's theory of Soft Power, the third



chapter narrates the evolution of post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy after briefly introducing Japan's pre-war and interwar cultural propaganda (*senden gaikō*) and how Japan's cultural diplomacy evolved from expansionist propaganda to peaceful art of flower arrangement, *ikebana*. The fourth chapter elucidates Japan's cultural diplomacy activities in France, handling the country as the first case country by unveiling the history of cultural relations between the two nations and how Japan invested immensely in France as its cultural admirer. The fifth chapter investigates Japan's international cultural policies in Turkey, which constitutes the second case country. The sixth chapter, the comparison, compares Japan's endeavors and implementations as a cultural nation in France and Turkey and strives to discern the differences in Japan's international cultural policies in both countries. The seventh and final chapter concludes that Japan was a long-time admirer of France and French culture and invested considerably in France to promote Japanese cultural identity and encourage reciprocal cultural dialogue with France, which commenced with the Japanism (*le Japonisme* in French) of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The present thesis discusses that Japan's cultural diplomacy is rehabilitative, healing Japan's post-war scars and transforming its cultural identity in global politics and international relations. It has healed Japan's profound scars stemming from its wartime military aggression, ultranationalism, and war atrocities it committed during World War II and the Second Sino-Japanese War. As the chapters on France and Turkey constituting the two case countries of the thesis treated in the following chapters demonstrate, Japan's cultural diplomacy has enabled a change of perception of the country in other countries. Furthermore, it has allowed Japan to rise from its ashes as a cultural nation—as suggested by Ogura—and welcomed it into the international stage as a responsible—and peaceful—member of the global society.

## CHAPTER 2

### CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: A REHABILITATIVE INSTRUMENT IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Cultural diplomacy is a matter of both diplomacy and international relations (as well as cultural studies). As far as the definition is concerned, cultural diplomacy exists as both theory and practice. Therefore, investigating the diverse descriptions of cultural diplomacy in both theory and practice should serve as the initiating point to shed light on the distinction of the notion under theoretical and practical categories. In this view, some definitions approach and define cultural diplomacy as applied cultural diplomacy handling the concept as a practice. “Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary,” compiled by the Academy for Cultural Diplomacy and edited by Dr. Kishore Chakraborty, defines cultural diplomacy as a diplomatic activity conducted by the cultural attachés, commissioned employees, and politicians in the embassy or consulate settings authorized primarily by foreign ministries and sometimes by “non-state actors such as foundations, universities, the private sector, and NGOs.”<sup>22</sup> “There is no agreed-upon definition of cultural diplomacy”<sup>23</sup> that positions the subject of investigation (or the practice) within a designated framework. On the contrary, diverse definitions exist to define cultural diplomacy and its functions. Furthermore, the descriptions of cultural diplomacy also concern what cultural diplomacy centers around and what its end goals are. One concern is that the conventional definitions of cultural diplomacy do not treat the discipline as a rehabilitative or healing agent even though they strictly differentiate cultural

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<sup>22</sup> Chakraborty, “Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary,” 30.

<sup>23</sup> Isernia and Lamonica, “Cultural Diplomacy as Discipline Practice: Concepts, Training, and Skills,” 10.

diplomacy from propaganda. What does, then, distinguish traditional diplomacy from cultural diplomacy and result in the tertiary and more neglected status of influence diplomacy? The subsequent paragraphs, in this view, elucidate diverse explanations to the practice by emphasizing different attributes of cultural diplomacy. However, one might argue that promoting a nation's culture is the focal point of the following definitions. In other words, cultural diplomacy is about the promotion and marketing of the cultural identity of a state to attain the desired foreign policy outcomes through branding a nation's culture.

In a similar vein, cultural diplomacy is about representation. It is a representative power enabling a cosmopolitan environment where mutual understanding and amicable relations are ubiquitous. In addition, cultural diplomacy is about conveying a message abroad. Therefore, cultural diplomacy is also about creating universal values, such as security, human rights, intercultural communication, peace, stability, and prosperity for sustainable governance and international relations. Cultural diplomacy, accordingly, is a goal-oriented cultural transmission executed by legitimate governmental agents to foster intercultural dialogue and global peace. Yet there is an understated aspect of cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is rehabilitative, an attribute most scholarly work disregard.

## 2.1 Defining cultural diplomacy

Lexico, produced by the Oxford University Press (OUP) defines cultural diplomacy as “the furthering of international relations by cultural exchange” and “the practice of publicizing and exhibiting examples of one's national culture abroad.” Another definition is by one of the most prominent and well-known institutions on cultural diplomacy studies, the US-based Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, and its Berlin-

based branch Cultural Diplomacy Academy. Both establishments possess a jointly published dictionary solemnly on Cultural Diplomacy. The Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (US) and Cultural Diplomacy Academy (Germany) define cultural diplomacy both as a theory and a practice. According to both institutes, it is imperative to unearth cultural diplomacy in two ways. First, it is inevitable to “define cultural diplomacy as a theory and cultural diplomacy (or applied cultural diplomacy) as a practice.”<sup>24</sup> The theoretical definition of cultural diplomacy, according to the Cultural Diplomacy Academy, describes cultural diplomacy as “a course of actions, which are based on and utilize the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation, promote national interests and beyond; Cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either the public sector, private sector or civil society.”<sup>25</sup>

The Academy, on the other hand, defines cultural diplomacy as practice (also referred to as applied cultural diplomacy) as the “the application and implementation of the theory of cultural diplomacy, including all models that have been practiced throughout history by individual, community, state or institutional actors.”<sup>26</sup> Prof. Aslı Yağmurlu Dara stresses that, in its simplest terms, there are two distinct emphases discerned from the definitions of cultural diplomacy.<sup>27</sup> Yağmurlu, then, classifies the descriptions into two separate groups, signifying two various connotations of the term.<sup>28</sup> Initially, the first group of scholars who define cultural

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<sup>24</sup> Academy for Cultural Diplomacy, “Center for Cultural Diplomacy Studies: Promoting Global Peace & Stability through Strengthening Intercultural Relations,” 3.

<sup>25</sup> Academy for Cultural Diplomacy, “Center for Cultural Diplomacy Studies: Promoting Global Peace & Stability through Strengthening Intercultural Relations,” 3.

<sup>26</sup> Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, “What is Cultural Diplomacy? What is Soft Power?”

<sup>27</sup> Yağmurlu, “Kültürel Diplomasi, Kuram ve Pratikteki Çerçevesi,” 1189-1193.

<sup>28</sup> Yağmurlu, “Kültürel Diplomasi, Kuram ve Pratikteki Çerçevesi,” 1189-1193.

diplomacy accentuates the exchange-oriented essence of cultural diplomacy, positioning the diplomatic practice as a reciprocal cultural exchange forum.<sup>29</sup> “Cultural diplomacy harbors an orientation based on exchange (of views, ideas, ideologies, and cultures), assuring the establishment of partnerships, and promoting global intercultural dialogue via diplomatic (or interstate) settings,” where diplomacy comes into play.<sup>30</sup>

Demonstrating a similar trajectory with the previous definition, positioning an exchange of values at the center, Yağmurlu posits the elaboration on the term pronounced by the US-based Institute of Cultural Diplomacy. The institute defines cultural diplomacy as “a set of activities based on the change of thoughts, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity to strengthen relations, ensure socio-cultural cooperation, developing national interests and similar purposes.”<sup>31</sup> The Institute highlights in the definition that the ultimate goal of cultural diplomacy is “to articulate mutual respect and awareness of cultural differences and heritage across states.”<sup>32</sup> The growing recognition of cultural differences and traditions leads to a more productive global intercultural dialogue. As a result, cultural diplomacy serves as an apparatus to protect international human rights, and diplomatic activities stationing culture at the core helps nations realize world peace and balance, justice, equality, and interdependence.

A tendency to undermine cultural diplomacy as consisting merely of cultural exchange programs, projects and events may upsurge at this point, and it may downplay the significance of cultural diplomacy both as theory and practice. However, as Yağmurlu suggests, cultural diplomacy eventually serves for a more

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<sup>29</sup> Yağmurlu, “Kültürel Diplomasi, Kuram ve Pratikteki Çerçevesi,” 1189-1193.

<sup>30</sup> Yağmurlu, “Kültürel Diplomasi, Kuram ve Pratikteki Çerçevesi,” 1189-1193.

<sup>31</sup> Yağmurlu, “Kültürel Diplomasi, Kuram ve Pratikteki Çerçevesi,” 1189-1193.

<sup>32</sup> Yağmurlu, “Kültürel Diplomasi, Kuram ve Pratikteki Çerçevesi,” 1189-1193.

peaceful world order and sustainable intercultural communication. Therefore, analyzing the definitions by one of the most legitimate institutes researching cultural diplomacy, it is plausible to see an approach towards cultural diplomacy as if merely consisting of international cultural policy activities. A sense that points to an undermining of the discipline compared to the traditional—or classical—political or economic diplomacy is present even in the definitions. However, cultural diplomacy consists of more and serves more, which constitutes one of the focal points of the present research.

American political scientist and author Milton C. Cummings defines cultural diplomacy as “the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.”<sup>33</sup> A former US State Department cultural diplomacy practitioner Richard T. Arndt, on the other hand, is more precise and distinguishes cultural diplomacy from cultural relations or international cultural exchange by stating, “[C]ultural diplomacy only takes place when the governments pay attention to this complex field and try to give sense to chaos so as to configure it, to some extent, and put it at the service of the elusive ‘national interest,’ so difficult to define.”<sup>34</sup> Louis Bélanger defines the components of cultural diplomacy as “the activities of foreign policy that deal with culture, education, science, and, to a degree, technical cooperation.”<sup>35</sup> In other words, those that relate to activities of the spirit,<sup>36</sup> emphasizing the personal and spiritual aspect of cultural diplomacy underscoring the receiving end at individual citizen’s level. Jacquie L’Etang defines cultural diplomacy as “carrying out long-term campaigns aimed at winning hearts and minds,” and “developing emotional bonds with overseas

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<sup>33</sup> Cummings, *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey*, 1.

<sup>34</sup> Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, 31.

<sup>35</sup> Bélanger, “Redefining Cultural Diplomacy: Cultural Security and Foreign Policy in Canada,” 678.

<sup>36</sup> Bélanger, “Redefining Cultural Diplomacy: Cultural Security and Foreign Policy in Canada,” 678.

domestic publics to gain their identification and sympathy.”<sup>37</sup> L’Etang puts forward examples of “exchange programs and art exhibitions abroad,”<sup>38</sup> including direct experiences between people. He also adds “cultural diplomacy influences public opinion directly through personal experiences such as educational and cultural exchanges, and not just through the media.”<sup>39</sup> The unity in these definitions is the idea of the predominating purpose of cultural diplomacy to enable a forum of intellectual exchange for nations to acquaint with each other, utilizing cultural elements and thus contributing to world peace through cooperation and partnerships. Cultural diplomacy, in this sense, is not only a means of cultural exchange. It can also establish cross-cultural networks through global, international, and intercultural dialogue, which, in culmination, will create the much-needed forum(s) of exchange as a medium of international collaboration on global issues. These forums will eventually meet the need for the institutionalization of cultural exchange.

The second group of definitions, as suggested by Yağmurlu, states that cultural diplomacy converges on the promotion of nations—particularly, national interest(s)—by exercising their cultural constituents as a communicative channel. The Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary prepared by the Germany-based Cultural Diplomacy Institute emphasizes that the best way to describe cultural diplomacy is as follows: “the means through which countries promote their cultural and political values to the rest of the world.”<sup>40</sup> Nicolas J. Cull, demonstrating a similar tendency, defines cultural diplomacy as “an actor’s attempt to manage the international

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<sup>37</sup> L’Etang, “Public Relations and Diplomacy in a Globalized World: An Issue of Public Communication,” 610.

<sup>38</sup> L’Etang, “Public Relations and Diplomacy in a Globalized World: An Issue of Public Communication,” 610.

<sup>39</sup> L’Etang, “Public Relations and Diplomacy in a Globalized World: An Issue of Public Communication,” 610.

<sup>40</sup> Chakraborty, “Cultural Diplomacy Dictionary,” 30.

environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas and/or facilitating cultural transmission abroad.”<sup>41</sup> Cull, besides, queries to clarify the significance of controlling the international medium with cultural resources and cultural exchange, stating “Historically, cultural diplomacy has meant a country’s policy to facilitate the export of examples of its culture.”<sup>42</sup> Emphasizing that “the export of cultural models and the adaptation, approval and sympathy of the country’s policies are among the aims of cultural diplomacy,” Cull states that “many aspects of culture can be presented in the international arena.”<sup>43</sup> Zamorano proposes his definition as “Cultural diplomacy involves the systematic intervention of governments in the arts, sciences, and other cultural expressions as the basis of an official categorization of national identity.”<sup>44</sup> Finally, a prominent scholar in cultural diplomacy (specifically Japanese cultural diplomacy) is Ogura. Ogura describes cultural diplomacy as a goal-oriented phenomenon and elucidates that “the main objective of cultural diplomacy is to improve a nation’s image and prestige through such aspects of culture as fine and performing arts, language education, and intellectual traditions.”<sup>45</sup>

Comparing and analyzing the two groups of definitions of cultural diplomacy as put forward by Yağmurlu, the first group emphasizes the exchange-oriented, two-sided, or dimensional, characteristic of cultural diplomacy. The second group of scholars, on the other hand, concentrates on the promotion of the source culture to the target one. At this point, a note of warning is in order. The projection of the source culture in the target ecosystem should not resonate that cultural diplomacy is

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<sup>41</sup> Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*, 19.

<sup>42</sup> Cull, “Public Diplomacy before Gullion,” 10.

<sup>43</sup> Cull, “Public Diplomacy before Gullion,” 10.

<sup>44</sup> Zamorano, “Reframing Cultural Diplomacy: The Instrumentalization of Culture under the Soft Power Theory,” 169.

<sup>45</sup> Ogura, “Cultural Diplomacy, Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy,” 45.



similar to propaganda. Although the second group of definitions suggests the one-sided (from source to target) nature of cultural diplomacy, it is imperative to note that propaganda is a manipulative tool.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, cultural diplomacy concentrates ultimately on international and intercultural dialogue and how to generate mutual understanding. In a similar vein, cultural diplomacy is not propaganda since it does not aim to narrow others' minds. Even when associated with the national or cultural promotion and marketing (as seen in the nation-branding model), cultural diplomacy should strive for reconciliation and international and intercultural dialogue, aiming at global peace and security.<sup>47</sup>

In brief, cultural diplomacy has two different dimensions following the two distinct, yet not completely adverse explanations. Initial classification suggests that cultural diplomacy is a two-directional interaction based on ideas, values, and cultures. Following this activity onward, a consequential forum of exchange of values contributing to world peace emerges. The second group, in this view, is oriented more towards the national interests of a state. The chief characteristic of cultural diplomacy should be promoting one's culture abroad and producing results that serve the national interest. This second group of understanding of cultural diplomacy is easier to connect to the idea of Joseph S. Nye's Soft Power Theory, given the power relations emphasized through a nation's culture.<sup>48</sup> In addition, a state's cultural (or national) identity will also be one of the fruits that it bears through cultural diplomacy, which suggests that the publicity of its cultural (hence national)

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<sup>46</sup> Nazarov, Gorbunov, and Kolegova, "Features of Propaganda and Manipulation in the Modern Information Space of New Media," 246.

<sup>47</sup> Bukh, "Revisiting Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: A Critique of the Agent-Level Approach to Japan's Soft Power," 461-485.

<sup>48</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 5.

identity heightens the spirit of a nation abroad—again—serving its interests in the global spectrum.

The preceding discussion has attempted to investigate the two groups of definitions of cultural diplomacy, endeavoring to elucidate the question, “What do we mean by cultural diplomacy?” All the explanations above discussing the attributes of cultural diplomacy conclude that cultural diplomacy is a results-focused, long-term diplomatic medium utilizing the values, ideas, art, and knowledge of states. The results-focused disposition of cultural diplomacy delineates the practice of cultural diplomacy as a long-term strategy that governments strive to formulate and communicate to bear its fruits as not immediate quick fixes but permanent and enduring establishments. The following paragraphs will explain that the long-term strategic nature of cultural diplomacy distinguishes soft power associated with cultural diplomacy from hard power.

Elaborating on the goals in more detail, Giles Scott-Smith states that “cultural diplomacy has eight goals.”<sup>49</sup> These goals are to “establish a dialogue and build trust with other nations, seek cultural (and political) recognition, pursue economic benefits, improve the image and reputation of the national culture, undermine prejudices and antagonisms, contest competing (negative) interpretations of the national culture, lay the groundwork for future partnership in other activities, promote a worldview based on a particular narrative, belief system, or ideology.”<sup>50</sup> Arguably, these objectives are inclusive of the two assemblages of definitions elucidated above. Nevertheless, cultural diplomacy fundamentally “involves the efforts of nations and state-level agents to represent their cultural elements.”<sup>51</sup> In

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<sup>49</sup> Scott-Smith, “Cultural Diplomacy,” 187.

<sup>50</sup> Scott-Smith, “Cultural Diplomacy,” 187.

<sup>51</sup> Scott-Smith, “Cultural Diplomacy,” 187.

other words, cultural diplomacy can and does utilize every aspect of a nation's culture, which can be seen in the following table and Appendix C,<sup>52</sup>

Table 1. Walter's Components of Cultural Diplomacy<sup>53</sup>

The arts including films, dance, music, painting, sculpture
Educational programs such as universities and language programs abroad
Exchanges (scientific, artistic, educational)
Literature (the establishment of libraries abroad and translation of popular and national works)
Broadcasting of news and cultural programs
Gifts to a nation, which demonstrates thoughtfulness and respect
Religious diplomacy, including inter-religious dialogue
Promotion and explanation of ideas and social policies

As mentioned in the following paragraphs, descriptive studies are some of the challenges to cultural diplomacy studies. A product of such descriptive scholarship, Ogura's *Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present*, has been renowned as a central piece that examines the evolution of Japan's cultural diplomacy. Ogura lays the groundwork for cultural diplomacy at the beginning of his book, intimating that a country magnifies its political authority in international relations through applied cultural diplomacy. He, in his elaboration, links the practice to the political interests of a state. However, as mentioned in the introductory sentences of this chapter, there is not a shared agreement on the definition regarding what cultural diplomacy entails and what it serves. Therefore, the following section will reveal the semantic

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<sup>52</sup> Page 197.

<sup>53</sup> Walter, "Cultural Diplomacy, Political Influence, and Integrated Strategy," 82-87.

quagmire that entails cultural diplomacy and individualize the notion by differentiating it from other terms and practices that may lead to a misinterpretation or misjudgment of this rehabilitative diplomatic tool.

## 2.2 Semantic quagmire

Cultural diplomacy, today, is susceptible to misconceptualization since it becomes confused with international cultural exchange and propaganda, bringing about the issue of the semantic quagmire. Another much-needed distinction exists between public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy, as both disciplines are prone to becoming intertwined and mistaken for one another. In this view, the verbal baggage of cultural diplomacy renders it unavoidable to pose specific questions regarding the definition of cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, international culture exchange, and propaganda. Only then does it become plausible to distinguish the concepts from one another and outlay a well-defined framework for the present research so that cultural diplomacy will not become intertwined and imbricated.

As cultural diplomacy and international cultural exchange are two intertwined notions used mistakenly interchangeably, Ogura emphasizes the difference between cultural diplomacy and international cultural exchange. In this sense, Ogura states that the latter does neither consistently prerequisite political goals nor require official agents. Accordingly, international cultural exchange and activities are creative endeavors that formulate mutual inspiration between nations. In addition, the international cultural exchange does not nurture strategic aspirations that should contribute to the national, political, or economic interests of states by all means. Moreover, another crucial distinction between cultural diplomacy and international cultural exchange is the governments or governmental bodies that execute cultural

diplomacy. However, the international cultural exchange does not require government involvement and occurs organically between nations, peoples, and cultures. In other words, (international) cultural relations emerge and exist organically, without state-level intervention, while cultural diplomacy is a diplomatic tool provisioning foreign policy goal. Cultural diplomacy supports diplomacy or foreign policy, or both. Therefore, although cultural commissioners and attaches can work under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism—as in the case of Turkey, cultural diplomacy agencies are associated with a country's foreign ministry or ministry of international relations. Cultural diplomacy includes foreign policy goals or diplomacy.

### 2.3 History of cultural diplomacy: From gift-giving to globalization

Cultural diplomacy has its origins in ancient times. A culture that had emerged within a single ecosystem, following constant or occasional interaction with another culture, has culminated in cross-cultural networks and intercultural flows. Different groups of people have communicated and interacted with various cultures throughout history. If considered as an intercultural activity taking place between people, or attachés, gift-giving between attachés, political leaders, military staff, and representatives of countries is the primary building block of modern cultural diplomacy and diplomacy in the general sense.<sup>54</sup>

Following the culmination of World War II, the US went under the spotlight by venturing into cultural diplomacy activities. In the bipolar world order divided with the Iron Curtain, nations tried to exhibit their soft power during the Cold War. The United States strove to restructure Europe with the Marshall Plan and Japan with

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<sup>54</sup> Biedermann, Gerritsen, Riello, *Global Gifts: The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia*, 34.

the Dodge Plan. It was also significant for Cold War cultural diplomacy, as an example to the world by using cultural elements such as exhibitions, radio programs, student exchanges, and music under the leadership of the US and the USSR. The Cold War was fundamentally an ideological war, and culture was the most effective means to impose the national ideology and spread the intended messages. In addition, the iron curtain, and the bipolarity of the global order during the post-war period aggravated a nation's cultural appeal and rendered cultural diplomacy even more significant. With the emergence of the capitalist free market economy and consumer-driven society, the polarization between the free world(s) and the totalitarian dictatorships rendered cultural diplomacy even more consequential in international relations. It would be the culturally powerful country that would emerge triumphant from Cold War politics, making the Cold War a fruitful period for research on cultural diplomacy.

Joseph S. Nye's words introduced a brand-new perspective on the Cold War cultural diplomacy in his 2004 book, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, suggesting that European international cultural affairs were more substantial even than the US. Nye summarizes the balance of the politics of soft power and intercultural communication of European states and the United States in the following and enlightens the history of soft power, stating that Japan spent more than France and Germany in terms of the percentage of its budgets, which is accordingly 14 per cent during the Cold War.<sup>55</sup>

This thesis accepts the end of the Cold War as 1989 with the fall of the Berlin Wall. At the beginning of the 1990s, the global society evolved into a more united, exchange-oriented, and connected ecosystem. Such a transformation in the global

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<sup>55</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 114.

network and the ease of access in communication technologies later known as globalization. Feigenbaum elaborates on Venturelli's words, highlighting the importance of culture and cultural sector(s). Venturelli argues that "the cultural sector will become the leading edge of most economies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."<sup>56</sup> The edge that cultural industries create will also be referred to as "Creative Economy," which is an alternative to the "Information Economy"<sup>57</sup>. According to Venturelli, Feigenbaum quotes, (culturally) creative industries will constitute the core of innovation, which will be increasingly crucial and content providers will become the key economic producers for the internet and other media.<sup>58</sup> In short, culture will not be a luxury anymore and it will move from periphery to center in terms of economy, international relations, and globalization. It will not be an option but a necessity in the future.

The Cold War initiated the evolution of culture as a global prerequisite for countries to prosper in the international—and intercultural—arena and rendered cultural diplomacy a more earnest medium to achieve this. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century marked culture as the core value of nations and transformed culture from an elevated to a fundamental component paving the way for the members of the global society to prosper—economically, politically, or culturally—in the age of globalization, likewise, "cultural diplomacy thus became more important to smooth resentments and strengthen common interests on private citizen's level."<sup>59</sup>

In conclusion, the evolution of cultural diplomacy throughout history has resulted in possibly the most prominent instrument in international relations.

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<sup>56</sup> Feigenbaum, "Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy," 23.

<sup>57</sup> Feigenbaum, "Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy," 23.

<sup>58</sup> Feigenbaum, "Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy," 23.

<sup>59</sup> Wang, "The Dilemma of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy in China: A Case Study of Japanese Manga and Anime," 4.

Traditional diplomacy that diplomats practice in its classical sense is no longer enough. At this juncture, there is no better remedy than cultural diplomacy in the age of globalization. Ultimately, all diplomacy is cultural, as there is always an interpersonal and intercultural dialogue. Decrypting cultural codes eventually serves as a rehabilitative instrument in international relations. Ideas are not static. They are inherently dynamic and fluid. In this sense, cultural diplomacy should not resonate with propaganda or ideological imposition. On the contrary, it is more reasonable to approach cultural diplomacy not as rigid, ideological programming but as central perspectives with fluid boundaries which can and, indeed, overlap and evolve.

## 2.4 Problem with cultural diplomacy: Continuity and disjuncture

### 2.4.1 Cultural diplomacy handled as a subcategory of public diplomacy

The third pillar of international relationship, cultural diplomacy, compared to economy and politics, has not gained enough attention in academic and diplomatic settings based on the *realpolitik* of the respective nation-states and periods. The annual report of the US Department of State Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy defines cultural diplomacy as “the core pillar of Public Diplomacy,”<sup>60</sup> which contributes to the under-recognition of cultural diplomacy, approaching cultural diplomacy as less comprehensive and compelling than public diplomacy. The report also states that “Cultural diplomacy is the linchpin of public diplomacy.”<sup>61</sup> Apart from cultural diplomacy and international cultural exchange, another term, public diplomacy, exhibits its consequence. Ogura puts forward that public diplomacy is categorized under the concept of (international) cultural

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<sup>60</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy.”

<sup>61</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy.”



exchange. I suggest Ogura places cultural diplomacy as a subtitle of international cultural exchange, given the organic and inorganic cultural flows both exist as international cultural exchange. In this sense, cultural diplomacy represents inorganic cultural flows. However, he also draws attention to the fact that this should not imply that cultural diplomacy, as the definition hints, covers public diplomacy in all political spheres. The opposite scenario is more accurate while classifying cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy. It is possible to introduce a more elaborate explanation of public diplomacy based on this definition and differentiation. In this sense, public diplomacy functions as a medium to promote Japan's internationalization (*kokusaika*) by engaging the country in various exchanges with foreign countries through—mainly—media and press conferences, international conferences, and public relations endeavors. Yet this time, such an engagement is not via culture and cultural persuasion but rather through public relations activities or intellectual interchange forums. Therefore, one contrast between cultural and public diplomacy is that the latter uses media and press as their principal instruments, while the former consults and promotes culture to strengthen international diplomatic relations. Donelli quotes Ogura and suggests that “Public diplomacy refers to a national government's efforts to influence international opinions on its national or foreign policies through public relations activities or intellectual exchange targeting the media or citizens' groups.”<sup>62</sup> Hence, it does not constitute the same notion as cultural diplomacy. While public diplomacy has more close connections and associations with “a well-defined political objective and aimed at certain pre-determined targets,” cultural diplomacy, according to Ogura, does not have to be linked to a certain political goal. Nor does it attempt to achieve a strategic foreign

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<sup>62</sup> Ogura, “Cultural Diplomacy, Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy” 45.

policy objective.<sup>63</sup> The two sometimes overlap in the sense that the forms public diplomacy takes include efforts to improve the nation's image by means of cultural activities. But even in this case, there is a subtle difference between the two because public diplomacy is usually linked with an effort to improve the nation's image for some specific strategic purpose.<sup>64</sup>

As a counterargument to Ogura's view, I suggest that cultural diplomacy also harbors strategic goals; strategy does not only pertain to public diplomacy but also cultural diplomacy. In the Japanese case, such examples as the strategic designation of Cool Japan (*Kūru Japan* in Japanese) project, nation-branding strategies, and national plans to generate domestic and international revenue—also referred to as Japan's Gross National Cool as discussed in upcoming chapters—for the country by promoting Japanese cultural products abroad and enhancing tourism, for instance, strongly contradict with Ogura's suggestion. Likewise, countries design explicit targets for their cultural diplomacy in their annual reports of foreign policy and international diplomacy and allocate the necessary budget to realize their cultural diplomatic or international cultural policy-related goals. Another example is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations. Cultural policy and diplomacy are increasingly constituting an integral part of the core prerequisites in realizing SDGs by 2030. Accordingly, it would be unrealistic to mention a lack of strategy, political goal, or national interest in theoretical and applied cultural diplomacy. Therefore, what Ogura undermines in terms of cultural diplomacy is the strategic and political nature that the practice ingeniously harbors. Even though the end goal of the execution of cultural diplomacy can be subject to alteration, such a contextual or instrumental change does not necessarily deprive cultural diplomacy of

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<sup>63</sup> Ogura, "Cultural Diplomacy, Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy" 45.

<sup>64</sup> Ogura, "Cultural Diplomacy, Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy" 45.

its strategic use. On the contrary, its producer, material, receiver, and context shapes any activity of cultural diplomacy, which signifies its adaptable and strategic nature, which also enables cultural diplomacy to seek to fulfill the national interests.

Another scholar, David Clarke, on the other hand, illuminates the difference between cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy by quoting Simon Mark stating that the political system of a nation produces or generates public diplomacy to target a certain mass to shape the opinions and change those opinions in favor of the subject nation. However, cultural diplomacy exists to “recycle the products of the cultural life of a country in the service of foreign policy goals.”<sup>6566</sup> Inherently, cultural diplomacy deploys culture to serve the foreign policy goals or political objectives of a nation while public diplomacy consists more of political components rather than culture of a nation itself. Through this definition, it is possible to conclude that public relations, media, international conferences, and mediums serving the public diplomacy of a country are regarded as political rather than communicational tools of a nation by Simon Mark.

What distinguishes cultural diplomacy from public diplomacy is not that the former lacks strategy. It is rather what instruments these two types of diplomacy employ. Ogura suggests that the primary aim of public diplomacy is to generate a more internationalized outlook for a country and promote an international understanding of foreign cultures within that country. Public diplomacy, in Ogura’s words, harbors two principal goals. Herewith, it is beneficial to discuss two contrasting peculiarities—or functions—of public diplomacy. The internationalization of a country is an outside-in strategy, suggesting that it brings

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<sup>65</sup> Mark, “Rethinking Cultural Diplomacy: The Cultural Diplomacy of New Zealand, the Canadian Federation and Quebec,” 43.

<sup>66</sup> Clarke, “Theorising the Role of Cultural Products in Cultural Diplomacy from a Cultural Studies Perspective,” 149.

outside developments and cultures to the home (country). The (from) outside (to) inside flow of cultural riches generating an internationalized outlook from outside (abroad) to the inside (home country) enhances mutual understanding. Therefore, internationalization enables intercultural communication. Internationalization provides citizens with the chance to integrate into multicultural settings. Eventually, thanks to such opportunities, citizens can blend in with unique cultures, expose themselves to unconventional perspectives and grow into global citizens.

Ogura suggests that a state can establish an international cultural ecosystem as a medium to synchronize diverse cultures through the first dimension of public diplomacy. The first dimension, the outside-in internationalization strategy, is a vital prerequisite in the age of globalization. Besides, internationalized nations persevere more proficiently in the global world order. The second one, the promotion of a domestic understanding of foreign (international) cultures, on the other hand, is a from-inside-towards-outside strategy, which encourages a more interconnected nation (Japan) to the rest of the world. Both perspectives carry tremendous significance and are indispensable strategies that countries should implement, especially in the age of globalization, as Ogura firmly believes. The rapid developments in the information age and the popularization of global society following globalization have culminated in a state-level awareness. In a similar vein, a more elevated number of government investments to contribute to the internationalization processes of their countries through public and cultural diplomacy is unquestionably on the foreign policy agenda of many nations.

Cultural diplomacy is a forum of exchange dominated by peaceful means. However, it also harbors interest-seeking and power-oriented characteristics. Diplomatic practices employing culture can evolve in time. Furthermore, countries

can—and must—adapt to the expectations that emerge owing to political realities and international relations of a given period. Governments carry out cultural diplomacy while independent entities carry out the international cultural exchange, and the objectives for each differ.

Public diplomacy attempts to achieve more determined political goals than cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy, nevertheless, undoubtedly strives to transmit not only cultural but also political messages. The most striking difference, however, as stated, is that this time, cultural diplomacy carries this out by employing the culture of a nation, as the name suggests. The difference between cultural and public diplomacy does not stem from their ultimate goals or what these practices seek to achieve. It is merely a matter of context and instrument, in other words, what public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy employ, and in what settings. Seeking its interests may not be a nation's first goal in mind while investing in its international cultural offices or launching overseas cultural policies. Cultural diplomacy can be a more long-term-oriented strategy than public diplomacy is. It may also utilize different means than public diplomacy does. However, the bottom line here is that both diplomatic practices, in the fullness of time, strive to enhance a nation's image abroad, which will, in turn, lead to amicable and profitable relations between states as well as a forum of intellectual discussion and exchange. Finally, public diplomacy differs from cultural diplomacy for two reasons. Public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy strive for distinct targets. Second, their means of achieving their goals also indicate a tremendous difference. Their patterns of communication vary considerably.

While both cultural and public diplomacy practices deserve equal recognition, the mere problem here is that international relations literature approaches cultural

diplomacy as a less recognizable political tool and handles it as a subchapter of public diplomacy. Such a mishandling does not grant cultural diplomacy an individual standing either as theory or practice. Cultural diplomacy deserves recognition placed next to public diplomacy. One of the grounds explaining cultural diplomacy as a segment of public diplomacy is that the latter incorporates a more all-inclusive scope of realms of practice, whereas the former is one of the ways (and this way is culture as the name suggests) through which nations execute their public diplomacy. Yet cultural diplomacy is more than that. The categorization, therefore, should be in such a way that it should handle cultural diplomacy as a separate unit, not as a sub-branch or sub-field of public diplomacy, as defended previously.

#### 2.4.2 Descriptive studies and lack of theoretical contribution

Most of the works discussing diplomacy positioning culture at its center are descriptive.<sup>67</sup> These works concentrate on the substantive practice and execution of cultural diplomacy (applied cultural diplomacy) and rarely employ theoretical criticism, apart from Nye's *Soft Power*. Therefore, descriptive books, and articles that outlay the history and evolution of Japan's cultural diplomacy, concentrate on the actual practice and execution of cultural diplomacy, leaving the theoretical approaches untouched. In theory and practice, cultural diplomacy constitutes a crucial aspect of modern diplomacy. Academically, the partial recognition of cultural diplomacy in international relations finds its origins in that cultural diplomacy itself is a diplomatic practice. Cultural attachés exchange views, ideas, and ideologies between nation-states and cultures, articulating a misunderstanding of this high-level

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<sup>67</sup> Kazuo Ogura's book *Japan's Cultural Diplomacy* and his two articles "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present" and "Post-war Japanese Cultural Diplomacy" provide robust examples for descriptive studies of Japanese cultural diplomacy handling the diplomatic tool as a practice (also referred to as applied cultural diplomacy).

diplomatic practice with international cultural exchange. The parallel nature of both cultural diplomacy practices (applied cultural diplomacy) and international cultural exchange is indisputable. However, the former necessitates state-level agents and legitimization of its institutionalization by governments. The latter corresponds to cross-cultural interactions and the transfer of ideas by whatever medium. Hence, some works on cultural diplomacy undermine the importance of cultural diplomacy as an individual diplomatic tool and are descriptive without contributions to the theoretical literature on the discipline.

#### 2.4.3 Regional limitation

There is also the issue of regional focus. Works revolving around cultural diplomacy generally concentrate on the United States as the leading cultural power of the globe. As Nye expresses, the budget Europe or Japan allocates to their cultural diplomacy has grown increasingly. Yet, studies disregard other regions and center on the US and American culture. The Cold War, as discussed, was a tremendously illuminating era for cultural diplomacy studies. Sherif states that “culture during the Cold War reveals itself as the primary front or the battlefield, the desired site of transformation and conviction.”<sup>68</sup> However, cultural diplomacy studies on the Cold War focus either on the Western or the Eastern blocs. The United States, as the primary example, has proven the efficacy of cultural diplomacy. Following its triumph against the USSR in the ideological war, in the aftermath of the Cold War, The US became a beyond-politics medium, dominating the global order with its nation-branding strategy and cultural goods. However, due to this US-centric and Western-dominated, Western (or

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<sup>68</sup> Sherif, *Japan's Cold War: Media, Literature, and the Law*, 13.

more specifically US-oriented) cultural atmosphere, transnational cultural flows tend to be neglected and disregarded, respectively, in academia.

Accordingly, cultural diplomacy—as a practice mostly disregarded even in the US mindset, should be a matter of focus of other countries as well. Diverse countries should be the focus of the research on cultural diplomacy. However, that has rarely been the case, given the predominance of the US cultural diplomacy in the global sphere thanks to Hollywood, MTV Broadcasting, The Walt Disney Company, Pixar Animation Studios, DreamWorks, and more. The US dominance is observable in cultural diplomacy both in the quotidian spectrum of life and in academia. The US-centered orientation of global cultural diplomacy is so invincible that US-originated output is not only in our televisions through media influence but also on our plates and streets through fast food franchising such as McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Burger King to name only a few. Therefore, in order to “de-Americanize the soft power discourse, complex cultural history of other countries”<sup>69</sup> should also be a matter of discussion for cultural diplomacy studies that the mainstream studies do not concentrate much on, for which Japan poses an excellent example with its traditional and popular culture appealing to both elites and masses.

Japan had the privilege of representing traditional Asian and East Asian culture and aesthetics during the Cold War. While Taiwan was too small, China could not reach globally, and it was too Communist for the Western world to accept it as a cultural transmitter. On the other hand, Korea had not yet achieved Japan's status as an economically advanced country. In a way, the post-Cold War era-Rise of China and Korea snatched Japan's privileged monopoly over representing Asian aesthetics. It may be even that China and Korea sometimes imitate Japanese cultural

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<sup>69</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 5.



diplomacy by utilizing its established images, such as Chinese tea ceremony and classical calligraphy, and Korean minimalism. It is possible that they studied Japan and now model what Japan has achieved through its cultural might.

## 2.5 The evolution of cultural diplomacy in theory

The introductory part of this thesis has presented cultural diplomacy both as theory and practice. The section on the challenges of cultural diplomacy also included the problem regarding the underdevelopment of the theoretical discussion surrounding cultural diplomacy explaining that it lacks in-depth analysis, and more research is fundamental in developing the area further. That cultural diplomacy is already a diplomatic practice executed by the cultural attaches of nations constitutes an academic drawback preventing a more all-inclusive contribution to the theory of cultural diplomacy since we already get to see the practice of cultural diplomacy in the diplomatic settings. However, we do not encounter a sufficient number of works on cultural diplomacy in academia. Moreover, cultural diplomacy as a practice also tends to become undermined compared to political and economic—in other words, classical—diplomacy. There have been various theoretical discussions and approaches to discover the shifts, the (political) aims of cultural diplomacy more effectively. The present thesis will include another critique that is likewise essential in discussing (Japanese) cultural diplomacy as a rehabilitative tool and will focus on Nye's soft power since soft power theory has functioned as a milestone in the theorization of cultural diplomacy.

## 2.5.1 Soft power: Theoretical inauguration of cultural diplomacy

### 2.5.1.1 Soft power

The term “soft power” describes a country’s ability to get what it wants by attracting rather than coercing others. It signifies that a nation can obtain the desired outcomes by engaging hearts and minds through cultural and political values and foreign policies that other countries see as legitimate and conducive to their interests.<sup>70</sup> Nye expresses that soft power has three fundamental pillars proposing culture as one of the building blocks of soft power. In other words, the soft power of a country, according to Nye, rests on three resources. These resources are (a country’s) “culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority).”<sup>71</sup>

In behavioral terms, soft power is attractive power. The inventor of the concept and theory, Joseph S. Nye, describes soft power as cultural and ideological appeal. A challenge to the theoretical framework of cultural diplomacy is that besides descriptive studies, studies employing theoretical frameworks and analyzing cultural diplomacy from a critical perspective theorize cultural diplomacy merely within the realms of soft power. cultural diplomacy, only analyzed via a soft power filter, inhibits the development of the study further. Furthermore, as soft is an intangible, unmeasurable attribute bestowed upon power, another problem, that is the measurement quagmire, emerges. To what extent can power be soft? How can one measure the softness of potency? How is it feasible to trace the effects of soft power?

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<sup>70</sup> Watanabe and McConnell, *Soft Power Superpowers, Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, 17.

<sup>71</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 11.

In other words, how can the efficacy of soft power be calculated? To answer this question, an investigation, The Soft Power 30, can be regarded as an assessment tool for countries' soft power intensities and effectiveness. The Soft Power 30 aims at revealing countries' soft power by evaluating culture as one of the six components through which nation-states employ their soft power and engage in cultural diplomacy activities. These countries, in this view, promote their cultures by engaging in intercultural communication with their audience(s) or cultural consumers.

Table 2. Nye's Three Types of Power

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	Coercion Deterrence Protection	Threats Force	Coercive Diplomacy War Alliance
Economic Power	Inducement Coercion	Payments Sanctions	Aid, Bribes, Sanctions
Soft Power	Attraction Agenda Setting	Values, Culture Policies, Institutions	Public Diplomacy Bilateral and Multilateral Diplomacy

Nye describes Soft Power as intangible yet not necessarily invisible and prerequisites that a country first should harbor a mighty national spirit within itself. Only then can a country also fascinate other countries via its elevated spiritual presence and values. This chain of influence culminates in the inner strength of a nation. A nation with unattractive culture—though it may sound politically incorrect—therefore, may not be able to present soft power as much as “Soft Power Superpowers.”<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> “Soft Power Superpowers” is an expression generally used for countries with attractive power resources. Although Yasushi Watanabe and David McConnell’s jointly published book *Soft Power*

If soft power constructs a power-oriented relational composition between nations, then the power of the receiving end—or the receptive power—always constitutes the foundation of soft power, which contributes to the constructivist approach. In other words, the consumer, or the receiver of a Hello Kitty-themed cultural good in the case of Japan, for instance, should perceive the fictional character as a cute cultural element so that it can be soft. No matter how cute, loveable, and cute, adorable (*kawaii* in Japanese)<sup>73</sup> Hello Kitty might be in the eyes of the cultural exporter, it should also remain cute in the target audience. In other words, in the case of cultural diplomacy, the Government of Japan has to ascertain that its audience will perceive the messages as initially intended. If the audience that the Government of Japan targeted initially does not perceive Hello Kitty as cute, then Hello Kitty cannot produce soft power. The exporter and importer of culture should be on the same terms regarding the content of the message so that cultural diplomacy can constitute soft power and serve Japan's national interests and heighten its spirit.

As explained, if the source country exports soft power to the target one, it is equally consequential who the exporter and importer (which country or the citizens of that country) are. Furthermore, by whom and under which circumstances this process takes place give invaluable clues about the process of cultural diplomacy. In addition, to unearth cultural diplomacy, it is equally significant to unearth how such a (cultural) power export can affect a nation's ability to obtain the outcomes it desires. The answers to these questions can be malleable and contested since there is no scientific measurement tool to calculate the efficacy of the consequences of soft power. The more cultural diplomacy or soft power concentrates on the receiving end

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*Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States* takes Japan and the United States as its center of gravity, countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Spain can also be suggested as examples of Soft Power Superpowers.

<sup>73</sup> *Kawaii* means cute in the Japanese language.

(personal or state level), the more difficult it becomes to trace and measure the outcomes of soft power. In this view, the contextualization of cultural diplomacy is equally crucial in obtaining the desired outcomes.

## CHAPTER 3

### BUNKA GAIKŌ: JAPAN'S CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

As Dayan and Katz states, “Japan is indeed special, singled out for the atomic bomb that carried peace into the world.”<sup>74</sup> Since the culmination of World War II, Japan has relied massively on cultural diplomacy attempting to generate soft power stemming from its pacifist tradition and The Yoshida Doctrine<sup>75</sup>, named after Shigeru Yoshida (1878-1967), who was the prime minister of Japan between 1948-1954. The Yoshida Doctrine, former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru's policy for Japan's post-war recovery, prescribed Japan's economic recovery by positioning the country allied with the United States in international security. However, it is possible to see that most research has disregarded the role of the Yoshida Doctrine to project Japan as a global peace advocate in rendering Japan's cultural diplomacy a vital foreign policy instrument embedded with the country's traditional cultural elements. Japan's pacifist tradition, the Yoshida Doctrine, and Japan's evolution into a cultural nation have rendered Japan obliged to invest in culture, soft power, and intercultural communication to reposition its standing in global politics. Therefore, Japan's cultural diplomacy (*bunka gaikō*) has become one of the most crucial aspects of Japan's soft power implementations, especially in the aftermath of World War II. Scholars in international relations elaborate on various practices such as public diplomacy, media management, international press conferences, international cultural exchange, and cultural diplomacy researching Japan's cultural diplomacy applications and soft power. The present chapter will

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<sup>74</sup> Okuda, “Remembering the Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Collective Memory of Post-war Japan,” 26.

<sup>75</sup> The Yoshida Doctrine is a national policy that puts economic development at the top priority of the country and practices diplomacy at a low profile.

focus on Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy as one of Japan's soft power apparatuses in the light of international politics of the period and Japan's domestic cultural policy currents.

Japan grew obliged to rely on its soft power owing to Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan (*Nihonkokukentō dai kyū-jō*), renouncing Japan's hard power and *casus belli*<sup>76</sup> by any military means. Hence, Japan's international cultural policies gained tremendous momentum during the post-war era. Accordingly, Japan commenced seeking remedies to reposition itself in the post-war global order, culminating in the Japanese culture becoming an indispensable component of Japan's foreign policy, transforming Japan into a cultural nation. Nation-states such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and France have constituted research and debate concerning their cultural diplomacy practices. However, adorned with its unique and deeply rooted culture, Japan portrays a fruitful example of cultural diplomacy both in theory and practice. Despite the magnitude of the cultural products Japan exports in diplomatic settings, scholarly works investigating Japan's cultural diplomacy with a particular focus on Japan's post-war period rarely employ theoretical approaches.

There are also pressing concerns in fulfilling the internationalization of the Japanese cultural identity. The collective and national memory of the Japanese as to historical resistance to immigration prevents the internationalization of the Japanese society. Finally, there is a distinction between traditional culture and contemporary cultural trends regarding the Japanese culture and soft power elements. What does the Government of Japan wish to reflect per Japan's national image? Which political values have been at the heart of Japan's cultural diplomacy? Hovering between globalization and a reassertion of patriotic nationalism, how did Japan construct its

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<sup>76</sup> A *casus belli* (in Latin, meaning 'occasion for war' in English) is an act or event that provokes or is used to justify war.

national and cultural identity through its post-war cultural diplomacy? The present chapter attempts to answer these questions about Japan's *bunka gaikō* both as a theory and practice by analyzing post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy strategies, domestic political currents, and international trends in the respective periods before two case countries, namely France and Turkey.

Culture in Japan's foreign policy consisted of elements representing peace-loving, serene, and aesthetically appealing Japanese aspects. Nevertheless, which features of the Japanese culture Japan employed and promoted through its international cultural policies changed in specific periods, according to the needs of the time and reactions from the global audience, as shall be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs. The modality and adaptability of Japan's cultural diplomacy prove that cultural diplomacy was a first-class strategy to reestablish, rehabilitate and reform Japan's wartime image in global politics. To this date, Japan's cultural diplomacy remains an indispensable part of Japan's international relations and foreign policy, which has enabled the regeneration and recreation of the Japanese national image and rehabilitated its national spirit. Furthermore, an influencing political instrument, cultural diplomacy also permitted Japan to reconstruct its cultural identity in the international sphere to fashion and adjust the international public opinion on its rejuvenation.

Throughout Japan's post-war diplomatic history, Japan faced criticisms, and some of the cultural diplomacy applications did not raise to the surface due to specific circumstances in each relevant period. Following the political currents, Japan's cultural diplomacy transformed based on the needs and conditions of the respective period and reactions from other countries with which Japan aimed at bolstering its relations. Consequently, despite its modality and varying forms and



methods, Japan's cultural diplomacy has always been an ordained means to sustain Japanese international relations. In this sense, the reactions towards Japan's international cultural policies depending on the relative cultural diplomacy implementations based on the cultural diplomacy practices of that period are crucial to conducting comprehensive research on the evolution of Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy.

The present chapter will trace Japan's cultural diplomacy and the evolution it underwent during its post-war years, breaking down the post-war period into two categories as 1945-1950s (post-war) and the 1960s-80s (post-war). Except for the post-war period, another section discussing the 1990s to present addresses the recent focuses. Each section sheds light on what fluctuations, tendencies, and inclinations Japan's cultural diplomacy demonstrated in each period. Consequently, the present thesis aims to unveil the transformations Japan's cultural diplomacy encountered during its post-war years by excluding the contemporary agenda. However, Japan's cultural diplomacy before 1945 (inter-war period) and during the new millennium will also be succinctly enlightened to discern the history of Japan's cultural diplomacy in global politics. The timeline of Japan's cultural diplomacy unveils the strategies adopted. In addition, it unearths the reasons why these specific strategies constituted the diplomatic agenda of the Government of Japan based on their background reasons. The author hopes that a detailed analysis of Japan's cultural diplomacy will encourage a more profound and elaborate understanding of Japan's post-war years and how domestic and international developments shaped Japan's statecraft and identity construction after its defeat in World War II.

### 3.1 The government of Japan and soft power

The historian John Dover states that Japan's most important soft power is Article 9 of its constitution,

Article 9. Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized. (Chapter II, Renunciation of War)<sup>77</sup>

There is indispensable recognition of Japan's pacifist culture and emphasis on its culture as one of the principal instruments in Japan's foreign policy. How did Japan, the cultural icon, reconstruct its identity in the post-war era and was reborn out of its ashes in the aftermath of World War II? And what have the Japanese valued and wanted to share with the world?

Initially, drawing on the arena of Japanese cultural diplomacy, it is beyond doubt that Japan's cultural diplomacy has not evolved in a linear trajectory. On the contrary, the historical footsteps of Japanese cultural diplomacy are full of conflicts, dynamics, and fluctuations. There are some conflictions between the cultural items that Japan has been marketing for financial gain and the culture Japan has fostered throughout its history. Discussing the problems circulating cultural diplomacy studies both as theory and practice, it is evident that cultural diplomacy is a long-term investment. In a way, it is plausible to observe a West-centric locus on cultural diplomacy circulating some countries prominently realizing their cultural diplomacy practices, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and the French Republic. However, there is a cultural superpower also in the east. Japan, with its

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<sup>77</sup> Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, "The Constitution of Japan."  
[https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution\\_and\\_government\\_of\\_japan/constitution\\_e.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html)

demilitarization and embedded pacifist culture in international relations, invested in cultural diplomacy and strove to manifest its standing on the international stage through culture. However, academic studies have often neglected the pre-globalization period of Japan's cultural diplomacy practices and other cultural elements than popular (pop) culture. Studying Japan's early post-war years is of tremendous significance, given that Japan, with its unique cultural elements, had an advantageous position in terms of cultural diplomacy in the early post-war years. A cultural nation with a pacifist tradition, Japan, lays an unmatched example as a soft power superpower. Therefore, it is inevitable that Japan's foreign policy will employ cultural diplomacy as Japan's cultural diplomacy is growing as an integral part of Japanese foreign policy indicatively in the contemporary era thanks to the spread of information technology and globalization in the New Millennium.

Nye suggests that "As we have seen, popular culture is more likely to attract people and produce soft power in the sense of preferred outcomes in situations where cultures are somewhat similar rather than widely dissimilar."<sup>78</sup> In Japan's case, it is plausible that the country does not manifest tremendous cultural similarity to the cultures of the receiver countries of cultural diplomacy.<sup>79</sup> However, although the Japanese culture is widely dissimilar to any other culture, the Government of Japan has successfully implemented its international cultural policies in European countries. Despite being widely disparate to the cultures of different countries, as Nye puts it, the miracle of the Japanese cultural fragments is that the Japanese culture is unprecedented and profoundly insular compared to, for instance, the American culture.

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<sup>78</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 17.

<sup>79</sup> Chinese and Korean cultures excluded.

There are two reasons I suggest, explaining Japan's cultural appeal. Firstly, Japan's cultural diplomacy started as a rehabilitative tool rather than a commercial one starting with the early post-war years. Although today's Pop-culture Diplomacy and Cool Japan Initiative envision to generate income for the Japanese economy, it is still Japan's most serene, nature-oriented, peace-loving cultural elements that resonate most with the image of Japan. Secondly, Japanese culture remains more insular and unique since the frequency of exposure to Japanese culture remains, to date, much less than that of the American—or Western—cultures. We do not see a Japanese restaurant at every corner of the streets. Likewise, we do not eat Japanese dishes and become exposed to Japanese cuisine as often as we eat fast food at the largest fast-food chains. We do not encounter the recently emerging Japanese fast-food chains such as Yoshinoya, Sukiya, and Matsuya as much as we come across Subway, Starbucks, McDonald's, Dunkin', Pizza Hut, Burger King, Wendy's, Taco Bell, and plenty others. American TV broadcasts and channels are everywhere, thanks to satellite technology. However, we have to dive into the internet to watch Japanese dramas or music programs. Hollywood, MTV, Disney, Pixar, and Netflix are everywhere. Yet not everyone knows Studio Ghibli movies or Japanese dramas. The seldomness of exposure to Japan-originated—tangible or intangible—cultural products make Japan and its culture highly insular, a culture awaiting discovery and unearthing. Japan is not as accessible as the European or American cultures in geographically distant countries to Japan, rendering Japanese culture appealing to the five senses and beyond once exposed.

To elucidate the concept of the Gaze (*le regard* in French) more elaborately, it is possible to state that Michel Foucault's Gaze tinged by power relations is another theory employed to Soft Power. Invented originally by Michel Foucault in

1979, Gaze (*le regard* in French) is an anthropological term corresponding to various ways of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, and perceiving in other ways. However, Gaze is not merely a bodily movement. Gaze also denotes power relations embedded in five senses. It, then, evolves into a socioculturally contextualized perception beyond five senses.<sup>80</sup> The relation of Gaze with Soft Power emerges from the common understanding of power relations existing within both theories. In the context of Gaze, the power dimension is between the Gazer (individuals exposed to Japan and Japanese culture) and the Gaze (anything about Japan and Japanese culture). Japan's Gaze is so mighty that the country has tremendous potential to penetrate beyond the five senses of its gazers. Although the present chapter will not delve into the concept, the chapters on Japan's cultural diplomacy in France and Turkey will analyze how Japan manifested its Gaze in both countries with a comparative perspective. Although not studied enough—especially in international relations—Gaze is an enlightening theory providing fruitful discussions for cultural diplomacy studies to discern how countries retain their Gaze through their culture.

The uniqueness of Japan, here, does not aim to contribute to the *Nihonjinron*<sup>81</sup> discussions. In fact, the frequency of exposure to Japanese culture remains scarce and seldom compared to other (Western) cultures. The scarcity of exposure, in turn, formulates an image of mysterious Japan. Once exposed, however, the likelihood of Japanese culture to generate soft power raises in level given Japan's prominent potential to retain gaze. Therefore, soft power is crucial for Japan since the nation

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<sup>80</sup> Hashimoto, *Japanese Language and Soft Power in Asia*, 164.

<sup>81</sup> *Nihonjinron* is a genre of texts that focus on issues of Japanese national and cultural identity. The concept became popular after World War II, with books and articles aiming to analyze, explain, or explore peculiarities of Japanese culture and mentality, usually by comparison with those of Europe and North America. *Nihonjinron* employs high antiquity and deploy the results in a programmatic attempt to define the uniqueness of Japan against a foreign civilization.

has manifested its cultural might although not being presented or promoted as highly capitalized as the American cultural goods, artifacts, and products.

Nye quotes that “As two RAND analysts argue, in the information age, ‘cooperative’ advantages will become increasingly important. Moreover, societies that improve their abilities to cooperate with friends and allies may also gain competitive advantages against rivals.”<sup>82</sup> In this view, Japan’s unmatched soft power and the cultural unipolarity functions as a tool for a (culture-oriented) persuasion method that Japan has employed and will continue succeeding in the future.<sup>83</sup> “In other words, this model of soft power places the nation in the center, takes the unilateral perspective of the nation, and regards (pop) culture as a tool for persuasion in international politics.”<sup>84</sup> However, unearthing how Japan unleashed its soft power in the aftermath of World War II (pre Pop-culture Diplomacy) is also of tremendous significance to discern the past of the Japanese international cultural policy agenda. Only then can it be possible to track the prospects of the future of Japan’s cultural diplomacy and how Japan will unleash its culture and position its soft power in diplomacy in the upcoming years.

### 3.2 Historical perspective and periodization

The periodization of Japan’s cultural diplomacy carries tremendous significance for this research, for, in each respective period, it is plausible to witness variations in the *modus operandi* of Japan’s cultural diplomacy. Various scholars suggest diverse periodization methodologies. The present thesis focuses on post-war Japanese

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<sup>82</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 20.

<sup>83</sup> Yasushi and McConnell, *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, 109.

<sup>84</sup> Yasushi and McConnell, *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*, 112.

cultural diplomacy and specifically its diplomacy during the Cold War, from 1952 until 1989. Thus, dismantling Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy practices through a more detailed periodization is an instrumental methodological tool for the purposes of the present research. In methodological terms, comprehensively, the period between 1952-1989 will be the focal point of this research. In this view, the periodization of the history of Japan's cultural diplomacy is essential to specify.

In the aftermath of World War II, Japan evolved into a cultural nation to make a fresh start in its international relations and erase the national memory of the war atrocities, aggressive militarism, and ultranationalism of its inter-war years and years during World War II. This sub-chapter on the historical footsteps of Japan's cultural diplomacy divides post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy into three phases. An additional fourth section discusses the recent focuses on Japan's cultural diplomacy. Phase one covers the years 1945-the 1950s and unearths of how Japan's cultural diplomacy and propaganda diplomacy in the inter-war years evolved. This period witnessed a shift from aggressive language policies and the imposition of the warrior culture such as *samurai* and swordsmanship—further nourishing the manifestation of the Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere (*Daitōa Kyōei-Ken*)—to the peaceful cultural elements such as *ikebana* and *chadō*. Phase two covers the period with the increasing emphasis on Japan, a country growing as a cultural nation. It narrates the challenges it faced during the later post-war years as the “economic animal” and what kind of international cultural policy shifts these downturn trajectories in international relations resulted in Japan's cultural diplomacy. Phase three focuses on the years from the 1990s to the present to discuss the role of the Japanese culture in the information age by elaborating on how globalization aided Japanese diplomatic PR through culture. The additional fourth period will argue

Japan's cultural diplomacy in recent years and today by investigating several endeavors of Japan to manifest itself as a culturally unyielding and resolute nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Reviewing the literature on Japan's cultural diplomacy, different scholars periodize Japan's cultural diplomacy in various ways. The periodization, however, remains more or less similar, with one or two shifts in the years or in the specification of dividing the periods into relative categories. The mainstream periodization divides Japan's cultural diplomacy into four periods. Three of four falls into the post-war period (hence the heading of post-war cultural diplomacy), and one falls into the inter-war years. One can conceptualize the significance of the research on Japan's (specifically) post-war cultural diplomacy since most research concentrates on its post-war years, even though it is not sufficient to trace Japan's cultural diplomacy practices and identity construction. Other research on Japan's cultural diplomacy mainly focuses on the inter-war period with a heightened focus on the 1930s and 1940s to discern the propaganda diplomacy of the Empire of Japan on its colonies.<sup>85</sup> One example of such propaganda diplomacy lies in the Japanese enforcement of inaugurating language schools in its colonies in Asia—specifically today's People's Republic of China, Republic of China (Taiwan), and the Republic of South Korea. War memory of World War II resulted in Japan's abstention towards promoting its culture during the early post-war years. However, Japan did not limit itself and went beyond wartime memory by also striving to reconcile with its neighbors and former colonies to rehabilitate its relations and bitter past. In this sense, it is crucial to study Japan's cultural diplomacy for it will provide insight

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<sup>85</sup> A note of warning is in order at this point. As distinguished at the beginning of the present thesis, it is more politically correct to approach Japan's cultural promotion practices and faculties not as cultural diplomacy but as propaganda diplomacy (or cultural propaganda) during its inter-war years.



regarding how Japan employs its culture in its foreign policy more accurately. On the one hand, in diplomatic terms, cultural diplomacy and international cultural policies will remain irreplaceable diplomatic tools in Japanese foreign policy. On the other hand, academically, culture and identity will constitute the fundamental elements in Japan's international relations with the increasing influence on the constructivist literature.

Takahiko Tennichi divides Japan's cultural diplomacy into four periods and tackles each period with a distinct approach.<sup>86</sup> Tennichi suggests that it is possible to trace the history of Japan's cultural diplomacy in four periods. These periods are respectively before 1945 (pre-war), 1945-1972 (post-war), 1972-1989 (post-war) years added with the current foreign policy debate. Prof. Nissim Otmazgin categorizes the history of Japan's cultural diplomacy into three eras as pre-war, post-war, and the present.<sup>87</sup> Otmazgin puts forward that in each period, Japan redesigned its international cultural policies to serve its political agenda in his article, following a slightly different trajectory from that of Tennichi. Japan did so first as an empire, later as a peace-loving power, and more recently as a culturally exciting country. Comparing the two scholars, Tennichi conceives three separate periods for Japan's post-war years, and two of them are the immediate decades after World War II. Otmazgin, on the other hand, handles the post-war years as a single period without dividing it further into two categories for a more comprehensive time frame. Otmazgin also analyzes the contemporary agenda on Japan's cultural diplomacy (also referred to as Pop-culture Diplomacy). Both Tennichi and Otmazgin incorporate the pre-war years as the first period into their articles. A third scholar,

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<sup>86</sup> Tennichi, "Debates on Japan's Foreign Policy," 74.

<sup>87</sup> Otmazgin, "Geopolitics and Soft Power: Japan's Cultural Policy and Cultural Diplomacy in Asia," 37.

Yasushi Watanabe draws the trajectory of Japan's public diplomacy in three phases as phase one (1945-the 50s), phase two (1960s-80s), and phase three (1990s to present) by excluding the inter-war years of the Japanese propaganda diplomacy operating as cultural diplomacy. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, Ogura<sup>88</sup> elaborates on Japan's foreign policy thoroughly. Ogura, furthermore, describes shifts and evolutions in terms of cultural diplomacy and analyzes Japan's cultural diplomacy considering each decade by analyzing and concluding transformations with the beginning and end of each decade. According to Ogura, in tracing the history of Japan's cultural diplomacy, there are, roughly speaking, six phases corresponding to different decades the 1950s to the 1960s, the 1960s to the 1970s, the 1970s to the 1980s, the 1980s to the 1990s, the 1990s to 2000 and the current phase.<sup>89</sup>

In each of these decades, it is possible to observe and analyze the two aspects of Japan's cultural diplomacy: the motive or purpose of the activities and the agent or modality of these activities.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, Ogura divides Japan's cultural diplomacy into four periods and tracks its evolutionary steps in five decades but does not necessarily categorize them based on a systematic periodization. He also includes the contemporary agenda and handles Japan's cultural diplomacy in each decade of the post-war years coinciding with the Cold War period with an exhaustive analysis of Japan's global position in international relations and role in global politics. Plus, Ogura's work discusses both Japan's cultural diplomacy applications and how such practices evolved in what ways in the face of global reactions towards Japan. The fluctuations in Japan's cultural diplomacy are crucial for a comprehensive analysis of

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<sup>88</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>89</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>90</sup> Ogura, "From *Ikebana* to *Manga* and Beyond: Japan's Cultural and Public Diplomacy is Evolving."

how Japan's cultural diplomacy evolved after World War II. In conclusion, it is possible to understand that the periodization of Japan's cultural diplomacy can display some shifts based on the approaches by different scholars.

Table 3. Stages in Japan's Cultural Diplomacy since 1945<sup>91</sup>

VACUUM			FIRST WAVE		LOST DECADE	SECOND WAVE
1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s

It is plausible to witness a shift from Japan's desire to envision a national image that designs Japan as a peaceful democracy to Japan's nation-branding projects to represent Japan as cool where Japanese popular culture has become Japan's primordial cultural export. Most scholarly work discusses Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy focusing primarily on the later post-war years, more specifically from 1972 onwards with the founding of the Japan Foundation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). With the idea that Japan's increasing cultural promotion was topped with its economic boom and Japan exemplified the flying geese pattern of economy modeling, scholarly work on Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy focused on the years—markedly after 1972. In this view, the years marking the anteriority of the establishment of the Japan Foundation and how Japan practiced cultural diplomacy through which policies and agendas remain mostly disregarded and unearthed. The present-day recognition of Japan's cultural diplomacy (also conceptualized as Pop-culture Diplomacy) is analyzed within the realm of the theory of Soft Power and Nation-Branding model thanks to the Cool Japan Initiative by the Ministry of Trade, Economy and Infrastructure (METI). Popular culture is vitally

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<sup>91</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 107.

instrumental in Japan's current international relations. Japan's cultural diplomacy, embellished with its popular culture, grows into the essential component of Japan's soft power, manifesting itself in the Japanese *manga*, *anime*, Ghibli Studio movies, and (popular) culture festivals.

The social and political reactions in Japan's (re-)constructing its identity through cultural diplomacy are indispensable to understanding the shifts, dynamics, fluctuations in Japan's international relations. At this point, it is possible to alleviate the theoretical gap that stems from employing merely Nye's Soft Power through the employment of the constructivist approach. Constructivism comes in handy also in areas where soft power does not suffice to illuminate the shifts in international cultural policies Japan underwent not through political goals but via social dynamics. Japan was too busy trying to heal its traumatic post-war scars in the early post-war years. Therefore, employing Nye's Soft Power prevents a thorough understanding of Japan's—specifically early post-war—cultural diplomacy since the country had neither time nor energy it could allocate to “get the desired outcomes.” However, Japan consulted cultural diplomacy to heal its scars and reconstruct its identity severely harmed by wartime memories. In the case of halting Japanese language promotion or Japan's culture harboring aggressive elements, it was not Japan's strategic foreign policy goals but its desire—and need—to be loved, appreciated, and cherished by the world. In addition, the country was almost asking for forgiveness from its close neighbors—and former colonies—in Asia. In other words, Japan was an outcast, marginalized, and alienated by its neighbors. Therefore, it needed to adapt to the social shifts culminating in Japan's recognition by its former enemies and geographically distant allies.

### 3.3 Trajectory of Japan's post-war reconstruction using cultural diplomacy

#### 3.3.1 Phase I: From militarism to *ikebana* (1945-1950s)

Akagawa quotes Takeuchi and Kishida (1950) and describes Japan's situation in the post-war years by stating, "In the post-war era, Japan expressed its regret for its aggression during the war and announced that it was no longer a militaristic country but, instead a *bunka-kokka* or peace-loving, cultural nation."<sup>92</sup> Japan as a cultural nation meant that the Government of Japan discouraged policies that would evoke wartime feelings in the international public opinion and former colonies of the Empire of Japan. The main goal of the Government of Japan was to fix the image of Japan in international politics. Therefore, cultural diplomacy was seen as an effort to interpret, promote, re-create, exhibit, and disseminate a new national identity through re-defining the nation's culture.<sup>93</sup>

One example laying out how norms are constructed and culminate in strategic cultural diplomatic policies lies within the main argument of the present thesis: Cultural diplomacy is a rehabilitative tool. Japan, as a precedent case study, relied heavily on cultural diplomacy during its inter-war period. However, as the definition of diplomacy<sup>94</sup> suggests, Japan's international cultural policies did not aim to be that diplomatic. The term Japan used for its cultural dissemination was openly called propaganda diplomacy (*senden gaikō*) or rarely, cultural diplomacy (*bunka gaikō*).<sup>95</sup> The Government of Japan attempted to construct a peaceful post-war Japan deprived

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<sup>92</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 35.

<sup>93</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 35.

<sup>94</sup> Involving the work of maintaining good relations between the governments of different countries.

<sup>95</sup> This quotation is from the presentation of Prof. Nissim Otmazgin during the "International Symposium on the Occasion of Sixty Years of Diplomatic Relations" held between 7-9 May 2012. Prof. Otmazgin delivered this speech themed as "Japan and Israel: Regional, Bilateral, and Cultural Perspectives" during Panel I: Japan and Israel in their Regional Contexts.

of its language-related cultural diplomacy and concentrated on harmonious cultural elements. Accordingly, Japan had to promote its serene cultural aspects to enhance its status in the global order during the first decades of the post-war years. International cultural policies centering around the Japanese language were almost nonexistent. However, the Government of Japan supported Japanese language-related projects in a confined manner. Ogura discusses Japan's international cultural policies in the 1950s and early 1960s and describes them as a complete deviation from *samurai* spirit or feudal traditions to natural elements that emphasized Japan's harmonious nature, *wa*.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, Japan did not encourage language-related cultural diplomacy, either for Japanese language as a component of soft power would result in Korea and China "recalling Japan's prewar efforts to propagate the Japanese language in Asia."<sup>97</sup> The connection was not yet lost. Hence, Japan had to adapt [emphasis added by the author] its cultural diplomacy application during at least until the 1970s to abstain from a possible backlash from its former colonies since the war memory still survived in the minds of Asian nations.

For instance, according to Ogura, "the first overseas performance of *kabuki*<sup>98</sup> after the Second World War took place in China in 1955."<sup>99</sup> These facts demonstrate that any cultural item resonating with Japan's warrior spirit would resonate with imperialist Japan, which generated an apathy in the global audience but especially in Asia. The reason is that Japan, since the late 1890s, had colonized neighboring countries in Asia and continued imposing the Japanese language, social systems, social practices, and values on the colonized natives until Japan's defeat in World

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<sup>96</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>97</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>98</sup> *Kabuki* is a classical form of Japanese dance-drama.

<sup>99</sup> Ministry of the Foreign Affairs Committee, "The 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the Japanese Diet." <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>

War II, 1945. Unable to consult its language or its warrior spirit, Japan, instead, inaugurated the process of reconstructing its identity via peaceful cultural elements that would constitute rehabilitative cultural diplomacy. Japan characterized itself as a cultural nation, promoting traditional cultural practices such as *ikebana*.

One may claim that Japan desisted from imposing its culture thoroughly to prevent the perception of a cultural imperialist, which, as mentioned, proved itself to exist during its pre-war imperialist years. However, post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy paraded a function through which Japan would facilitate its relations, mutual understanding, cultural and information exchange. Therefore, it is more appropriate to say that Japan did not cease cultural diplomacy but altered its nature in different periods. Tea ceremony *chadō* and the art of flower arrangement *ikebana* became the primary traditional cultural symbols. So much so that they remain to this day an emphasis in Japan's diplomatic PR, as seen in photographic calendars published and distributed annually.<sup>100</sup> Another strategy was to embed nature-oriented pictures and photographs on photographic calendars and postcards. The iconic scenery of the Mount Fuji, for instance, was abundant in the distributed visual stationary. The intention was to present Japan as a serene, peace-loving nation to the rest of the world.<sup>101</sup> Japan was also under the influence of the United States during the Allied Occupation of Japan (*Rengōkoku senryō-ka no Nihon*) not only politically but also culturally. During this period, Japan remained within its nest, presenting only the most harmonious aspects of its culture. Henceforth, the Allied Occupation of Japan also resulted in the reconstruction of cultural diplomacy.

Japan joined the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on July 2, 1951, before becoming a UN member on

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<sup>100</sup> Watanabe, "Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations," 1.

<sup>101</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

December 18, 1956. With this membership, Japan took a step further towards its principal effort to prove that it transformed into a peaceful democracy by implementing the appealing, aesthetic, and exquisite Japanese art forms outside Japan. Joining UNESCO also signified that Japan, now, was prioritizing international peace and stability by becoming a responsible member of the international community.<sup>102</sup> Only one year after Japan's membership in UNESCO, the International House of Japan, Inc. (*Kokusai Bunka Kikan*) was established on August 27, 1952. Although the founding of the center took place in the early 1950s, its origins date back to an encounter between John D. Rockefeller III and Matsumoto Shigeharu at the third conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations held in Kyoto in 1929.<sup>103</sup> The International House was not an institution through which Japan would execute cultural diplomacy through exporting its culture or external cultural promotion. As the word "international" in the name suggests, the center focused on internationalizing Japan with an outside to inside strategy by focusing on importing different cultures and accelerated Japan's *kokusaika*. It also operated as a venue where intellectual exchange and intercultural dialogue between Japan and the United States increased tremendously. Cultural diplomacy and the US intervention on culture were indispensably significant for Japan during the immediate post-war years due to political constraints resulting in Japan lacking much latitude for exercising cultural diplomacy.

Watanabe states that coinciding with the Allied Occupation of Japan, the first dominant constraint in the era was Japan's shaky political foundation. The other one was a general shortage of resources.<sup>104</sup> Japan's constraints during the Allied

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<sup>102</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46.

<sup>103</sup> International House of Japan, "History."  
<https://www.i-house.or.jp/eng/history/index.html>

<sup>104</sup> Watanabe, "Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations," 1.



Occupation of Japan, however, did not prevent the country from embarking on cultural diplomacy-related activities and practices. Japan demonstrated its willingness to join the international community during its immediate post-war years. The country remained under the US umbrella not only in national security but also in cultural diplomacy. In brief, while it is plausible to conclude that Japan did not act as an entirely independent actor in legitimizing cultural diplomacy, it did not remain entirely inactive or passive, either.

### 3.3.2 Phase II: Age of culture and Japan as a cultural nation (1960s-80s)

Phase two between the 1960s-80s was the Age of Culture. We witness the comeback of cultural diplomacy practices circulating the Japanese language as Japan's imperial, expansionist, and highly assertive wartime image demonstrated a shift towards a peaceful democracy nearing the 1960s. Such a transformation, where soft power based on Japan's cultural diplomacy grew into the principal means of asserting Japan's position in international relations, also ensured that Japan's wartime image *partially* faded away in the eyes of Asia-Pacific countries.

Henceforth, Japan repositioned its reputation in international relations by adopting different policies to execute cultural diplomacy according to the periodical needs. Towards the late 1960s and early 1970s, Japan shifted its efforts to create an image of a peaceful democracy to an economically advanced Japan. As a result of Japan's newfound status as a responsible member of the international community, Japan hosted the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, established the Economic Cooperation Bureau, installed restoring the Cultural Activities Bureau in MOFA, and joined the OECD. These new developments were manifestations of Japan's growing status in the

international community and its rejuvenated identity as a democratic, economically developed, peaceful, and cultural nation.<sup>105</sup>

During this period, reactions from international public opinion have culminated in diverse transnational cultural policy implementations in Japan's cultural diplomacy as a band-aid. While Japan abstained from launching projects aiming to promote the Japanese language during the immediate post-war years, more precisely until the early 1970s, the Japanese language-oriented policies started to secure their position in Japan's cultural diplomacy practices from the early 1970s. The policy transformation stemmed from the alleviation of Japan's wartime image and imperialist cultural policies during the inter-war period thanks to the peaceful cultural elements Japan decided to employ during the immediate post-war years. Japan also entered a novel stage of rapid technological and economic advancement during the late 1960s and early 1970s. The flying geese pattern of development (*gankō keitai-ron*), coined originally by Kaname Akamatsu, resulted in Japan's economic boom, also referred to as Japan's record period of economic growth between the post-World War II era to the end of the Cold War. Nevertheless, Japan's rapid economic growth and its growing status as a responsible member of the international society resulted in political tension and trade frictions with the United States. Japan's advancement received reactions from the US and, in broader terms, the Western market, and Japan, now, was a threat to the United States and global trade. Consequently, Japan employed cultural diplomacy policies to produce a positive response from the reactive West during this period.<sup>106</sup>

Phase two, marking the years between the 1960s and 1980s, witnessed its unique challenges similar to Japan's early post-war years. By the late 1950s,

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<sup>105</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 46

<sup>106</sup> Watanabe, "Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations," 2.

conflicts between the US and Japan arose, first exemplified by the US-Japan trade imbalance—that would last—until the 1980s. The cheap Japanese exports had the United States clamped limits on imports of Japanese textile products.<sup>107</sup> A second blow took place in 1971 in the form of a series of “Nixon shocks.” The then US president Richard Nixon endeavored to alleviate the trade imbalance because Japan triumphed in international trade thanks to the cheap raw material it purchased from the Southeast Asian nations, resulting in Japan’s perception as an exploitative country. Then-president Richard Nixon ended the convertibility between the dollar and gold without consulting his foreign counterparts. Furthermore, without prior consultation with the United States’ allies, announced plans to visit China.<sup>108</sup> Nixon Shocks, in this sense, had both economic and political impacts on Japan. Japan grew obliged to shift its attention towards cultural diplomacy and adjust its international cultural policies, this time more assertively. The United States was not the only region that Japan was on conflictual terms. In addition, Southeast Asia was becoming a rough zone for Japan to reposition its standing in international relations. “Japan’s economic inroads in Southeast Asia had exacerbated latent ill will.”<sup>109</sup> Along with the United States and the West, Southeast Asia also perceived Japan as an economic animal. Resulting in the mentioning of the 1970s as the decade of Japan-bashing and *gaiatsu* (outside pressure) incidents. The discourses of ‘yellow peril’ and aggressive Japanese arose once again.

When the Japanese Yen doubled against US dollars in one night due to the Plaza Accord of 1985, the illusionary richness of the Japanese and Japan resulting in the arrogant spirit of robot-like workaholics who love spending extravagantly

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<sup>107</sup> Watanabe, “Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations,” 2.

<sup>108</sup> Watanabe, “Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations,” 2.

<sup>109</sup> Watanabe, “Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations,” 2.

*kaneamari*<sup>110</sup> culminated in discourses such as faceless Japan. To the other countries, the Japanese were workaholic people with no culture. They were almost similar to robots living in small places where they are trapped to make the country—and themselves—wealthier to purchase more. To the West, Japan was a consumer-driven society obsessed over purchasing and having low quality life. Surely, this can be a this a totalizing Japanese perception.

One influential epithet during this period was the slogan of “banana Japan” expressed by the Southeast Asian nations. Southeast Asian nations, previously thinking that Japan could evolve into a supportive geographical ally, commenced to label Japan as a hypocritical nation. To them, Japan was a banana, yellow (Asian) on the outside yet white (Western) on the inside. Japan’s growing into an economic animal and providing the ultimate benefit from cheap raw materials from the Southeast Asian nations was a hypocritical act in the eyes of the Southeast Asian nations. The country failed at evoking sympathy in its geographically close targets. Watanabe states that the animosity had boiled over into a vitriolic boycott of Japanese goods in Thailand in 1972 during Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka’s visit to Indonesia and Thailand.<sup>111</sup> In turn, Japan’s cultural diplomacy was more reactive than rehabilitative, and both its cultural and public diplomacy aimed at Southeast Asia besides the United States.

Apart from political currents of the time, MOFA strove to raise sympathy in the global public. MOFA published a condensed version in English of *Tateshakai no Ningenkankei* (human relations in vertical society) by Chie Nakane, Japanese

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<sup>110</sup> The word *kaneamari* describes how the globe perceived Japan and the Japanese during the years of Japan-bashing. *Kaneamari*, in this sense, means that the Japanese are robot-like workaholics. Their power stems from financial means, and they rely on their material power and become obsessed with it. Zykas states that the feeling that Japan could purchase anything: paintings by Van Gogh or even the Rockefeller Center in the center of New York, according to the Aurelijus Zykas’ interpretation.

<sup>111</sup> Watanabe, “Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations,” 2.

anthropologist, and Professor Emerita of Social Anthropology at the University of Tokyo.<sup>112</sup> Later, MOFA distributed it in the United States, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. Hence Japan's public diplomacy grew more assertive yet remained reactive. Matsumura emphasizes that the geographical targets of Japanese cultural diplomacy remained strategic during this period, the most important objects, constituting the Western countries (mainly the United States) and Southeast Asia, for obvious reasons. There were several underlying reasons for Japan's targeting (1) the United States and the Western world and (2) its geographically close yet spiritually distant neighbors.<sup>113</sup> First, Japan had to solve its international challenges. This also had another goal behind it. Japan, as previously mentioned, was on in the process of manifesting its economic miracle by expanding overseas through its companies. Therefore, any favorable opinion of Japan would ease the expansion of Japanese market abroad. Just like the international relations, international trade and business had to proceed smoothly.<sup>114</sup> In this sense, "beginning in the 1970s, cultural diplomacy became, in the words of Katzenstein, a 'lubricant' in international relations, especially from the economic point of view (2002)."<sup>115</sup>

The most significant turn in Japan's cultural diplomacy took place when the Japanese Parliament passed the bill that provided for establishing the Japan Foundation (*Kokusai Kōryū Kikin*) in the name of promoting mutual understanding in October 1972. The foundation was designed as a special legal entity supervised by MOFA until its reorganization in October 2003 as an incorporated administrative

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<sup>112</sup> Watanabe, "Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations," 2.

<sup>113</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 110.

<sup>114</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 110.

<sup>115</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 110.

agency. Since its foundation, the Japan Foundation has become the principal-agent executing Japan's cultural diplomacy. MOFA clarifies in the Diplomatic Bluebook, an annual report on Japan's Foreign Policy and Activities published by MOFA, that the Japan Foundation is the official body for Japan's cultural diplomacy.

Furthermore, it highlights that the Japan Foundation is also responsible for international cultural policies, intercultural dialogue, and exchange. The following table lists the activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1970s which can also be found in Appendix D, Table D1.<sup>116</sup>

Table 4. Activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1970s<sup>117</sup>

1973	Started Japan Foundation Fellowship Program
1973	Established the Japan Foundation Awards
1974	Commenced Training Program for Japanese Language Teachers Abroad
1974	Started quarterly publication of <i>Kokusai Koryu</i> (International Exchange)
1975	Published the first issue of An Introductory Bibliography for Japanese Studies
1975	Released the first report of Survey on Japanese-language Education Abroad and found approximately 78,000 Japanese-language learners overseas
1977	Held the first Noh theater performance in the Middle East Invited French cultural anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss
1978	Dispatched a sport team to six Asian countries for the first time, having gathered a total of 200,000
1979	Sent a Kabuki troupe to China – the first cultural exchange project under governmental auspices

<sup>116</sup> Page 198.

<sup>117</sup> Japan Foundation, "What We Have Done: Looking Back on the Achievements of the Last Forty Years."

Domestically, with the administration of Masayoshi Ōhira beginning in 1978, harmonious and nature-oriented cultural policies started to appear in Japanese politics. The Age of Culture has arrived, and Ōhira's understanding was to finish the economic-centered era and concentrate on the qualitative enhancement of the lives of the Japanese in the following, days, years, and periods in general.<sup>118</sup> In this sense, the Japanese and Japan, as a country, would stop focusing merely on quantitative advancement and would start focusing on the qualitative development, Internationally, due to resource constraints and the progress of interdependence systems, human survival is now becoming difficult without awareness of the global society' as a community.<sup>119</sup>

The Government of Japan set out the slogan at the end of the 1970s in the framework of Garden Cities Nation (*Den'Enmiyakoshi Kokka no Kōsō*), which started as a planning concept and continued to be used during the early 1980s. The national concept of the garden cities nation is crucial. The reason is that the "Age of Culture" was set out in the frame of this global concept aiming at people's quality of life. Yukiko Nagashima, a researcher at the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology at the University of Tokyo, states that there was a tremendous change in the meaning of the words in the mid-80s through the shift to neoliberalism and culture that would mark the age shifted from "garden cities nation planning" to

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<sup>118</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

<sup>119</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

traditional and performing arts, culture, and language. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Ohira's demise in June 1980 halted the concept.

The 1980s also witnessed an intellectual shift in Japan's cultural identity construction. The pacifist and peaceful cultural policies of the 1950s and 1960s left their place to a more nationalist one. During this period, intellectual discussions revolved around the "Creation of National Culture," initially proposed by Shimon Miura, a late novelist, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs (1985-86), approached, and appointed by the Nakasone Cabinet. Shimon Miura's unique concept of "Creation of National Culture" suggested that national culture is the culture of the mass people.<sup>120</sup> Striving to divert from the understanding that culture appeals to the elites, Miura argued that culture rooted in daily life and the various regional traditions and people's cultural activities is a means of self-expression. Miura strongly advocated that through the cultural policies implemented by the Government of Japan, the goal was to make Japanese culture something people can be proud of and promote to the rest of the world. Like Ohira, Miura was also a strong advocate of a non-hierarchical development of Japan in general. Japan had to advance qualitatively as well. Furthermore, it was a chain reaction in that the qualitative advancement was also a result of the increasing self-expression capabilities of the non-elite groups, which he describes as "non-elite self-expression." The 1970 World Expo was a primary means for this advancement and augmenting confidence of the masses or public groups. In this sense, Miura also highlights "a growing qualitative self-assertion of common people as the increased

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<sup>120</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.



audiences of high-culture events.”<sup>121</sup> In short, it was cultural performances, whether amateur or professional yet mostly the former, that enabled an ecosystem for the masses. In turn, their confidence increased, and they became more willing to perform further performances, engage in (mostly amateur) cultural activities and contribute to Japan’s “qualitative” advancement. It is imperative to note that qualitative denotes to cultural advancements or advancements outside the economic spectrum. For this thesis, however, qualitative is specifically meant to highlight Japan’s cultural improvement and the ability of the masses to express themselves through cultural settings more freely.

When it comes to culture, it was Tokyo versus the regions. Miura claimed that each regional culture needed to be “refined” by showing its true essence. Miura’s concept was that the local culture can acquire universality by competing with each other. His vision of culture was within the context of enhancing international competitiveness. Shumon Miura’s unique concept of “Creation of National Culture” had the central goal of enhancing the quality of common people’s cultural self-expression. Nagashima states that Miura’s thinking was, “Since people’s expression must be refined when they go abroad, it is necessary to prepare a common place for it.”<sup>122</sup> In turn, National Culture would shed light on the culture of the host prefecture “*refining*” local culture so that it can acquire internationally. Although a domestic cultural policy, Miura’s unique concept reveals much about Japan’s

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<sup>121</sup> This quotation is from the author’s notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled “Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s.” My notes are from Nagashima’s words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

<sup>122</sup> This quotation is from the author’s notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled “Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s.” My notes are from Nagashima’s words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

cultural diplomacy. He underlines that Japanese way of life, which should raise to a status to be desired by other cultures at the first stage, should be exported. To realize this export, Japan's way of life should be an attractive one and it will not be enough for Japan to win the hearts and minds of the international public through exporting merely products or hardware as he claims it. Miura defines, "If Japan exports only products, it is possible that other countries will dislike us, but if we export Japanese software, in other words, Japanese attractive way of life desired by foreign people, we can say that Japan has become a cultural state. A cultural state is a country whose way of life is learned by neighboring countries."<sup>123</sup>

During this period, intellectual challenges were also present. The post-war discussion on the nature of Japaneseness (*Nihonjinron*), represented an expression of concern for the declining national distinctiveness, has become prominent since the 1970s and 1980s. The *Nihonjinron* view gained tremendous momentum during this period. Intellectuals bifurcated into two categories: *Nihonjinron* supporters and advocates for a more internationalized outlook in Japan. The *Nihonjinron* supporters insinuated "the nationalistic view that the Japanese language has been constructed solely by people whose mother tongue is Japanese."<sup>124</sup> An anthropologist, Befu Harumi (2001) and Yoshino Kosaku (1992) interpret *Nihonjinron* as "a type of cultural nationalism."<sup>125</sup> Akagawa quotes writers<sup>126</sup> on *Nihonjinron* and summarizes the notion as "works of cultural nationalism concerned with the ostensible

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<sup>123</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

<sup>124</sup> Hashimoto, *Japanese Language and Soft Power in Asia*, 164.

<sup>125</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 35.

<sup>126</sup> Akagawa lists these writers as "Roy Andrew Miller (1982), Ross Mouer and Sugimoto Yoshio (1986), Peter Dale (1986) and Yoshino Kosaku (1992, 1997)" who engaged in intellectual discussions and wrote *Nihonjinron*-themed works during the 1980s and 1990s.

‘uniqueness’ of Japan in any aspect, and which are hostile to both individual experience and the notion of internal socio-historical diversity.”<sup>127</sup>

In the intellectual sense, the *Nihonjinron* view has been a grand challenge in Japan’s cultural diplomacy, signifying another factor in the inhabitation of Japan’s promoting its culture, language, know-how, and values abroad. “The nationalistic view that Japanese language has been constructed solely by people whose mother tongue is Japanese”<sup>128</sup> and unique to Japan and Japaneseness rendered it even more challenging for Japan to manifest its cultural and linguistic identity abroad. More than a decade ago, Nye, for instance (2004), also pointed out that “Japan’s weakness in languages made it difficult for Japan to exercise its soft power.”<sup>129</sup> Challenges to the employment of the Japanese language in Soft Power existed within the framework of cultural diplomacy. Seen from afar, it may sound like a superficial problem whose resolution is through governmental intervention. However, the latency in Japan’s language promotion results in the consequential idea that it culminates in self-containment rendering Japan’s place in the international community obscure. Japan, hence, cannot transmit its ideas (books, culture, academia) to foreign audiences in its own language. The accessibility created by language promotion to disseminate ideas is indispensable in cultural diplomacy. Hence, it is no surprise that the United States is today world’s leading cultural power, even though the facts and figures demonstrate a different trajectory in terms of national spending and French was the language of intellectual mastery and culture.

To challenge the *Nihonjinron* current, beginning with the 1980s, the target audience of Japan’s cultural diplomacy became more diverse and global. Neoliberal

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<sup>127</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 35.

<sup>128</sup> Hashimoto, *Japanese Language and Soft Power in Asia*, 164.

<sup>129</sup> Hashimoto, *Japanese Language and Soft Power in Asia*, 2.

policies were expanding in the global context of the early 1980s. The premiership of Margaret Thatcher began on May 4, 1979, in Britain, and Ronald Reagan's tenure as the president of the United States began on January 20, 1981. Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone became the Prime Minister in Japan in 1982, and Nakasone Cabinet soon followed these international liberal trends. With the Nakasone Cabinet, the Government of Japan enhanced administrative, fiscal, and educational reforms. Japan also strove to establish a firm political position in the Western camp and defend the free trade system. Japan sought active and swift diplomacy and targeted the most controversial nations during this period. J. Prime Minister Nakasone held an official meeting with President Chun Doo Hwan, The Republic of Korea, in January 1983. The same month, Nakasone met with US President Ronald Reagan, also referred to as the "Ron-Yasu Meeting," arranged by Keita Asari, founder of Shiki Theater Company (*Gekidan Shiki*).<sup>130</sup>

As stated in the first chapter of the present thesis, all diplomacy is inherently cultural. Therefore, the Ron-Yasu Meeting and Asari's organization demonstrate that Japan was a full-fledged cultural nation that aimed to promote its culture even throughout a political-diplomatic bilateral meeting. Japan's public diplomacy gained momentum during this period, and the government consulted well-versed media strategies. The trade friction worsened towards the mid-1980s, constituting the most significant international economic issue. Nagashima, claiming that the United States was under a grand challenge due to remarkable trade deficits and budget deficit, which he categorizes as "twin deficits," was in a contrasting position vis-à-vis Japan.<sup>131</sup> A trading surplus country importing crucially cheap raw materials from the

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<sup>130</sup> The Japan-America Society of Georgia, "Keita Asari, Founder of Shiki Theater, Dies in Tokyo at Age 85."

<sup>131</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the

Southeast Asian countries, continued pursuing its open-market policy in the mid-1980s. Therefore, the frictions between the United States and Japan aggravated during this period, which culminated in protectionism.<sup>132</sup> Totalizing discourses in Japan emerged and Japan faced a kind of stereotypical labeling. During this period, Japan's economic advancement was not described as an "economic miracle." Instead, Japan transformed into an "economic animal" as well as the Japanese themselves. It is true that Japan had already emerged as an economic power and started to be renowned and acknowledged for its economic superiority even in the face of the United States. However, the problem was that Japan remained a "culturally unknown country and was often subject to bashing."<sup>133</sup>

Nearing the end of the Cold War, in the 1980s, Japan's cultural diplomacy also became more language oriented. The degree of assertiveness and reactivity decreased. Japan gave much focus and significance on the language promotion overseas, intending to internationalize Japan and design a route for the intellectual and cultural exchange with the Western world. Therefore, Japan was ready to come out of its shell during this decade. This period marked the age of *kokusaika* strategy officially announced by Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone in 1984, signifying the internationalization of Japan. Zykas state that "During the short period of 1986-91,

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University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

<sup>132</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

<sup>133</sup> This quotation is from the author's notes during the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Asian Studies: Continuity and Change. During the Session 5, Yukiko Nagashima, Ph.D., a researcher from the University of Tokyo delivered a lecture in the Panel titled "Changes in Cultural Policies and Cultural Industries in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s." My notes are from Nagashima's words on how domestic cultural policies shifted with the Ōhira Administration.

the budget of the Japan Foundation almost tripled, reaching 20 billion JPY annually.”<sup>134</sup>

Shin Katsuta and Naoko Sakamoto from Japanese Studies and Intellectual Exchange Department, Asia and Oceania Section of the Japan Foundation describe that “Ōhira School in Beijing was established in 1980 based on the 1979 agreement between then Prime Minister Masayoshi Ōhira and then premier Hua Guofeng to foster human resources to promote Japanese language and Japanese studies in China as well as cultural exchange.”<sup>135</sup> Five years later, through negotiations between the Japan Foundation and the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the Government of the People’s Republic of China, the Ōhira School was reconstructed as the Beijing Center for Japanese Studies.<sup>136</sup> The center later became a hub for Japanese language and research in China and the most significant step of Japan’s cultural diplomacy in China to heal the enmity between after the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and the People’s Republic of China (*Nihonkoku to Chūka Jinmin Kyōwakoku to no aida no Heiwa Yūkō Jōyaku*) on August 12, 1978. Japan, during this period, employed the language in cultural diplomacy agenda by targeting riskier regions such as China.

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<sup>134</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 111.

<sup>135</sup> Katsuta and Sakamoto, “A Hub of Japanese Studies in China: Commemorative Symposium for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Beijing Center for Japanese Studies.”

<sup>136</sup> Katsuta and Sakamoto, “A Hub of Japanese Studies in China: Commemorative Symposium for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Beijing Center for Japanese Studies.”

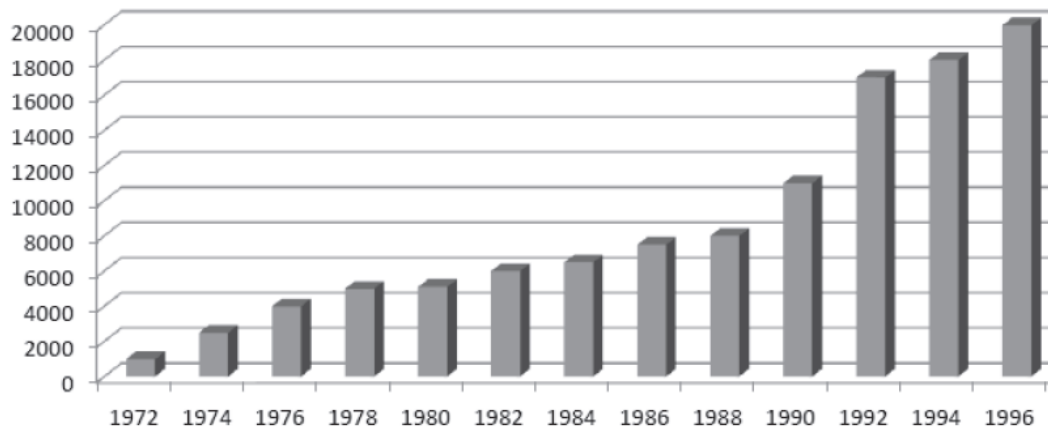


Figure 1. Increase in the Japan Foundation budget in 1972-94<sup>137</sup>

Another attempt to challenge the *Nihonjinron* view was when the Government of Japan launched the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme in 1987. The program was a result of the collaboration of Japan's local government authorities, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR). The goal of establishing the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme was "to promote grassroots cultural exchange between Japan and other nations."<sup>138</sup> JET Programme provides an interesting example of the role of language in cultural diplomacy or as an aspect of soft power. The following table lists the activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1980s which can also be found in Appendix D, Table D2.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-War Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 111.

<sup>138</sup> The Government of Japan, "The JET Programme: A Great Way to Experience Japan."

<sup>139</sup> Page 199.

Table 5. Activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1980s<sup>140</sup>

1983	Started broadcasting of TV skits for Japanese-language learners Yan and the Japanese People overseas
1984	Held the first Japanese-Language Proficiency Test External link overseas. Taken by 4,473 in 19 cities in 14 countries
1986	Published English version of <i>The Basic Japanese-English Dictionary</i> , followed by multiple language versions
1986	Exhibited “ <i>Japon des Avant Gardes 1910-1970</i> ” in France. Visited by 150,000

Japan became an economic giant between the 1960s and 1980s. The trade frictions and the Nixon Shocks shattered Japan’s relations with the US and Southeast Asia. Japan-bashing ending in the epithet of Banana Japan was the final straw on Japan’s international relations. However, with the establishment of the Japan Foundation, the Government of Japan finalized the legitimacy building of Japan’s cultural diplomacy. Therefore, starting from the early 1970s, Japan was ready to project itself as a cultural nation with legitimate and assertive cultural diplomacy. The above table shows the international cultural activities conducted by the Japan Foundation during the 1980s revolved around the Japanese language and education to grant Japan a more internationalized outlook. In particular, the role of the *kokusaika* strategy adopted by Nakasone bore its fruits. Despite the political and economic conflicts occurring both in governmental and corporate levels, surrounding the period beginning from the late 1960s until the end of 1980s, the perception of Japan improved tremendously thanks to the healthy and productive strategies employed in Japan’s cultural diplomacy. Nearing the end of the Cold War, Japan finally achieved to generate a positive image in the Southeast Asian countries and the

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<sup>140</sup> The Japan Foundation, “What We Have Done: Looking Back on the Achievements of the Last Forty Years.”



United States. Zykas states that the data obtained from MOFA states that the US opinion polls show that in the 1970s Japan was considered a reliable partner by 45.8% of the population, while in the 1980s and 1990s this proportion increased to 51.8%.<sup>141</sup>

### 3.3.3 Phase III: From Japan-bashing to Japan-passing (1990s-present)

With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Japan also entered a new era when the new emperor ascended the throne. This new era, called ‘Heisei,’ coincided with the burst of the bubble economy, and Japan commenced to suffer from many challenges both in the international and domestic scene. Therefore, this period, also referred to as “the lost decade,” and the overall crisis atmosphere of the 1990s deprived Japan of much-needed energy and resources to conduct a robust cultural diplomacy.<sup>142</sup> The following table lists the activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1980s which can also be found in Appendix D, Table D3.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 110.

<sup>142</sup> Table 5 lists the activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1990s which can also be found in Appendix D, Table D3 on page 200.

<sup>143</sup> Page 200.

Table 6. Activities of the Japan Foundation in the 1990s<sup>144</sup>

1991	Started Abe Fellowship Program
1993	Published the first issue of <i>Japanese Book News</i>
1994	Held performances of a triple production of Noh, Bunraku, and Kabuki versions of “Shunkan” in Europe
1995	Exhibited “Asian Modernism: Diverse Development” in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand
1996	Organized Japan Pavilion at the 6th Venice Architecture Biennale, having won the International Prize Golden Lion for the best national participation
1996	Launched Asia Leadership Fellowship Program
1998	Published English translation of Shiba Ryotaro’s <i>The Last Shogun: The Life of Tokugawa Yoshinobu</i>

Paradoxically enough, Japanese popular culture goods gained incredible popularity during this period. However, financial constraints resulted in decreased attention to cultural diplomacy at the governmental level. It is plausible to understand why Japanese traditional culture drew the attention of the Government of Japan and appealed to Southeast Asian countries and the United States. The peak of Japan’s cultural diplomacy with the start of the *kokusaika* strategy enabled such an atmosphere during the 1980s. The 1990s, on the other hand, was also lost in the sense that the Government of Japan did not make use of the momentum the Japanese popular culture gained in cultural diplomacy. Japan was busy fixing its economic status and adapting to the new world order with the Cold War ending.

Zykas, in terms of the organic cultural flourishing of the Japanese culture towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, states that not only the emerging Japanese popular culture, also referred to as modern Japanese culture, started to conquer East

<sup>144</sup> The Japan Foundation, “What We Have Done: Looking Back on the Achievements of the Last Forty Years.”

Asia.<sup>145</sup> As we know it today, Japanese popular culture included content industry such as “*manga*, *anime*, computer games, cinema, J-pop” and others as Nakano lists and went beyond cultural content. Japanese culture transcending beyond these elements started to be recognized as “life culture (*seikatsu bunka*)”<sup>146</sup> which was “embodied in fashion, food, and other aspects of daily life, sharply increased both in East Asia (Nakano 2002) and in the West (Hoshibe 2009).”<sup>147</sup> Going back to the theory of Soft Power, it is possible to quote Nye’s evaluation that during this period, Japan transformed into a significant global cultural actor in less than a decade.”<sup>148</sup> So much so that Zykas underlines that Japan’s growing assertiveness in culturally creative content industries and in *seikatsu bunka* rendered it even able to “compete with the USA, the world’s major global actor in popular culture.”<sup>149</sup>

With the end of the Cold War, economic liberalization became one of the pivotal aspects of Japan’s cultural diplomacy, which also necessitated cultural diversification to address mass audiences abroad. Ogura states that Japan has given even more importance to cultural diplomacy in the New Millennium. The evidence for this increasing importance finds its hints in Ogura’s statements which demonstrated Japan’s need for a forum of exchange and the result of this need. MOFA established “advisory groups under successive prime ministers to discuss and formulate Japanese cultural policies”<sup>150</sup> out of the need for a more robust bureaucratic structure to execute Japan’s cultural diplomacy.<sup>151</sup> These groups had

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<sup>145</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 113.

<sup>146</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 113.

<sup>147</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-War Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 113.

<sup>148</sup> Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 46.

<sup>149</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 113.

<sup>150</sup> Ogura, “Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present,” 44.

<sup>151</sup> Ogura, “Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present,” 44.

previously existed yet were less formal in organizational structure. Such advisory groups were not official bodies but rather discussion forums frequently called forums on international cultural exchange.<sup>152</sup>

The New Millennium also signified a new cultural diplomacy. Japan recognized the significance of cultural diplomacy and experienced a second peak with the Koizumi cabinet in 2001<sup>153</sup>. In the polysystem of Japan's foreign policy, cultural diplomacy started to move from periphery to center and guarantee its position as the upcoming central element in Japan's foreign policy agenda. During this period, MOFA installed an official body for a similar purpose under the Koizumi cabinet.<sup>154</sup> The cabinet, this time, named the forum the office for discussing the promotion of cultural diplomacy.<sup>155</sup> At around the same time, the MOFA merged the section in charge of international cultural exchange with the public relations office and named the new Public Diplomacy Department.<sup>156</sup>

The trajectory as elucidated by Ogura reveals the maturation of international cultural policies in Japan's international relations. The Koizumi administration reinforced the legitimacy of Japan's cultural practices by naming the body as a "forum for discussing the promotion of cultural diplomacy" and merging the international cultural exchange section of MOFA with the public relations office. It is, therefore, indisputable that Japan, although not employing its policies an official status in its inception, contrived a bureau to enhance the legitimacy of cultural diplomacy. The reason is that cultural diplomacy represents Japan's cultural (hence national identity) abroad gained momentum. Another important office for Japanese

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<sup>152</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 44.

<sup>153</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 44.

<sup>154</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 44.

<sup>155</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 44.

<sup>156</sup> Ogura, "Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Past and Present," 45.

Culture, Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA), part of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, started to expand its activities beginning in the early 2000s. Zykas states that the Agency previously embarked on projects and activities were already present during the peak decade of Japan's cultural diplomacy in 1980s. However, with the increased attention given to the Agency, Japan Foundation and the Agency for Cultural Affairs became competitors for a more robust cultural diplomacy. Japan's current cultural diplomacy is therefore mainly conducted by both MEXT (Agency for Cultural Affairs) and MOFA (Japan Foundation) affiliated institutions.<sup>157</sup>

INSTITUTION AND PERIOD OF ACTIVITY	DOCUMENT AND YEAR OF ISSUE
MOFA: Council on the Movement of People Across Borders (2006–8)	Five Proposals to Strengthen Japan's Communication 日本の発信力強化のための5つの提言 (2007)
	The Means and System by which to Strengthen the Information Distribution of Our Country 我が国の発信力強化のための施策と体制 ～「日本」の理解者とファンを増やすために～ (2008)
MEXT (ACA): Office for International Cultural Exchange (since 2001)	–
MEXT (ACA): Advisory Group on International Cultural Exchange (2002–3)	About the Future Promotion of International Cultural Exchange (2003)
MEXT (ACA): Council for Cultural Promotion Strategy (2003–9)	About Means for the Distribution of Culture with the Aim of Increasing the Understanding of and Interest in Japanese Culture 日本文化への理解と関心を高めるための文化発信の取組について (2009)
PMC: Council for the Promotion of Cultural Diplomacy (2004–5)	Creating Japan, the Peaceful Country of Cultural Exchange 「文化交流の平和国家」 日本の創造を (2005)

Figure 2. New institutions of cultural diplomacy and strategic documents<sup>158</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 114.

<sup>158</sup> Zykas, "Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan's Cultural Diplomacy," 114.

MOFA started to promote cultural diplomacy in relation with soft power at the beginning of the 2000s. With the increasing popular culture elements such as *anime*, *manga*, (cosplay) costume play, *karaoke*, and the electronic world manifested by the electric city Akihabara,<sup>159</sup> Japan leaned more towards its popular culture elements to construct a medium for Pop-culture Diplomacy. From 2004, the Japanese MOFA began to promote this concept of ‘soft power’ explicitly when it established the Public Diplomacy Department with specific sections devoted to publicity and cultural exchange. During this period, the Government of Japan began to recognize once underestimated Japanese popular culture. The Japanese MOFA started to openly promote this concept of “soft power” when it established the Department of Public Diplomacy with specific departments devoted to the promotion of the Japanese culture and cultural exchange beginning in 2004. “Later, in 2006, Abe, in his first speech to the Japanese Diet as prime minister, called for a Japanese cultural industry strategy promoting everything from film to cuisine, constituting a sort of massive global re-branding campaign (Bremner 2007).”<sup>160</sup> Indeed, Nye’s notion of ‘soft power’ was referred to explicitly by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taro Aso (2005-7), later Prime Minister of Japan (2008-9), when he commented in a speech entitled “ODA: Sympathy is Not Merely for Others’ Sake” held in Japan National Press Club that,

In recent years, it is vociferously claimed that diplomacy requires a selling point, i.e., ‘culture.’ I hear that it is referred to as the ‘soft power’ in contrast to the apparent, exposed power. I believe these activities performed by the Japanese people are indeed the ‘soft power’ we should take pride in. It is about working hard on the ground together with the local people while

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<sup>159</sup> According to the definition by Japan Travel Agency, “Akihabara is a buzzing shopping hub famed for its electronics retailers, ranging from tiny stalls to vast department stores like Yodobashi Multimedia Akiba. Venues specializing in manga, anime, and video games include Tokyo Anime Center, for exhibits and souvenirs, and Radio Kaikan with 10 floors of toys, trading cards, and collectibles. Staff dressed as maids or butlers serve tea and desserts at nearby maid cafes” (Source: Japan Travel Agency, <https://www.japantravel.agency/tokyo.html>).

<sup>160</sup> Zykas, “Traditional and Popular Cultural Discourses within the Post-war Development of Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy,” 116.

spreading the very concept of joy in labour. It is about aspiring to create a cultural base which will facilitate the independence of the aid recipient country through these acts.<sup>161</sup>

Former Minister Aso, in fact, had remained optimistic about Japan's cultural diplomacy, regardless of its connection to soft power. Suggesting that the Japanese culture is a bridge to the world, Aso gave the most exquisite and elaborate speech on Japan's cultural diplomacy titled "A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan's Cultural Practitioners" at Digital Hollywood University. Aso's speech was a call for a new era in Japan's cultural diplomacy by investing in popular culture products to create a new era of culture in Japan's international relations and foreign policy. With Taro Aso, Japan's cultural diplomacy gained tremendous momentum. In 2009 MOFA acknowledged the policy shift when it noted that,

In recent years, there has been a discussion that Japan has a latent ability for 'soft power,' such as through pacifism, traditional culture, modern culture, etc. and by drawing these out, we could elevate the status of Japan in the world.<sup>162163</sup>

Today, cultural diplomacy and soft power are indispensable foreign policy instruments for Japan. The following table lists the activities of the Japan Foundation in the 2000s which can also be found in Appendix D, Table D4.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> MOFA: Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro Aso, "ODA: Sympathy is Not Merely for Others' Sake."

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0601-2.html>

<sup>162</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 92.

<sup>163</sup> Original in Japanese, translated by Natsuko Akagawa.

<sup>164</sup> Page 201.

Table 7. Activities of the Japan Foundation in the 2000s

2001	Co-hosted the first Yokohama Triennale 2001
2002	Launched “Future Leaders Forum: Japan-China-Korea”
2005	Invited Afghanistan potters for peacebuilding through culture
2006	Held a symposium and workshops “A Wild Haruki Chase: How the World Is Reading and Translating Murakami”
2006	Launched Long-term Invitation Program for Chinese High School Students External link (Chinese text only)
2006	Initiated Japan-US Dialogue for Cooperation in Reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina
2006	Invited young designers from five countries in Asia and held a joint fashion show with Japanese students
2007	Organized performing arts workshops for children in Aceh External link, Indonesia for peace-building through culture
2009	Held the first-ever Bunraku performance in Russia External link
2009	Found 3.6 million Japanese-language learners overseas
2010	Released “JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education 2010”
2014	Started the Asia Center Programs



### 3.4 *Bunka gaikō* and the Land of the Rising Soft Power

#### 3.4.1 UNESCO and heritage-based diplomacy

Japan has pursued a heritage-based cultural diplomacy since it became a member state of UNESCO in 1951 at the sixth UNESCO General Conference. Maeda Tamon having concurrently worked as the chairman of the Japanese committee of UNESCO and also worked as the Minister of Education (1945-1946), stated that “The spirit of UNESCO is the guiding principle for Japan, which is on the path (of) [to] rebuilding itself as a peace-loving and democratic state.”<sup>165166</sup> When the Allied Occupation of Japan ended in 1952, the United States remained as an observer to check Japan’s status as an international member of the global society. Ever since, heritage conservation and heritage-based strategy have become one of the pivotal elements of Japan’s cultural diplomacy and foreign policy in general. In 1952, soon after the end of the Allied Occupation of Japan, the Japanese Parliament quickly enacted the Law Concerning UNESCO Activities. As stated, the role of the United States in Japan’s newfound role as a member state of UNESCO also meant meeting the US expectations for Japan. Akagawa states that the US had expected Japan to rejoin the international community and reveals a report of the United States Education Mission during a visit to Japan in 1946. The report is a precursor of Japan’s permanent status and growing role at UNESCO, expressing that it will provide Japan with “assistance and encouragement.”<sup>167168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 80.

<sup>166</sup> Quoted in National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ), 2011.

<sup>167</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 102.

<sup>168</sup> Quoted in National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ), 2008:8.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered Japan's act to join the UNESCO and to enact the Law Concerning UNESCO Activities as 'Japan returning to the international community.'<sup>169</sup> As Japan extended its role and influence in the global context, particularly through UNESCO, the Government of Japan has been showing a growing interest in UNESCO diplomacy and scholars, academics and NGO workers have now shifted their attention to Japan with a view to discerning how Japanese cultural heritage policy and practice function. Japan's involvement in conjunction with and within UNESCO grew into an even more significant status when, "On 31 December 1984, the United States, the biggest supporter of UNESCO, withdrew from the organisation. It criticised UNESCO's excessive politicisation, poor management and lack of budgetary restraint (US Department of State 1993, cited in Gunaratne 1994)."<sup>170</sup> The US' decision was soon followed by the withdrawal of the United Kingdom and Singapore on 31 December 1985. Not only did Japan become the leading funder of UNESCO but it also acted as an independent nation and did not follow suit the US. In this sense, Japan's persistence in the US was one of the major steps towards Japan's independence as a cultural nation. Such an independence was, without doubt, thanks to Japan's cultural diplomacy centered around UNESCO and its newfound status as a responsible member of the global community. Akagawa states that the Nara Conference on Authenticity (1994) and the appointment of Matsuura Koichiro as the Director-General of UNESCO (1999-2009) are two specific examples that reflect Japan's influence at a global level. The first example Koichiro gave was Japan's particularly deep relationship with UNESCO.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 51.

<sup>170</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 105-106.

<sup>171</sup> Quoted in National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ), 2008, 29-30.

To Koichiro, this was a reciprocal relationship and appreciation. In other words, UNESCO recognized its profound association with Japan while, at the same time, Japan always acknowledged that UNESCO was a truly crucial organization for the country. What is more striking in Koichiro's words is that other Asian countries than Japan also favored and even "provided active support" for Japan's membership to UNESCO, which is a development that "cannot be forgotten."<sup>172</sup>

One major development concerning Japan's cultural diplomacy through UNESCO went beyond rehabilitating Japan's international relations. This time, Japan aimed at rehabilitating other nations thanks to the assistance provided through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, which the then Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru described as Japan's evolving status towards a during a speech in London. He said that Japan would develop a "Japan that contributes to the world" by constructing a framework for international cooperation.<sup>173</sup>

With this development, Japan took another step towards proving its status as a cultural nation. The idea, as Akagawa states transformed from "culture as a basis of development" to "enhancing the representation of Japan" through cultural identity. Japan's involvement in conjunction with and within UNESCO also aided Japan in preserving its national interest through cultural heritage as an element in cultural diplomacy. Japan's leading status in UNESCO enabled Japan to present itself as a responsible global citizen. With UNESCO cultural diplomacy, Japan also rendered cultural diplomacy more diverse and multilateral. In other words, rather than merely trusting its own cultural elements—either traditional or popular—Japan also partnered with international organizations to transform cultural diplomacy into a

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<sup>172</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 105-106.

<sup>173</sup> Akagawa, *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, 160.

more international diplomatic tool. After World War II, the global idea was to build the idea of peace in the souls of the people, especially in the younger generations. In this view, Japan's membership to UNESCO also demonstrates that Japan also strove for fostering mutual understanding in the global politics and rehabilitate its international relations. Appendix F on page 204 reveals the development of Japanese heritage conservation system, history, and Japanese identity while Appendix G on page 203 displays the organizational framework of Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage.

### 3.4.2 Japan's empire of Cool: Cool Japan and nation-branding

The Cool Japan strategy, with Cool Japan denoting to the aspects of Japanese culture that non-Japanese people perceive as “cool,” is part of Japan's overall brand strategy, aiming to disseminate Japan's attractiveness and allure to the world.<sup>174</sup> The target of Cool Japan “encompasses everything from games, *manga*, *anime*, and other forms of content, fashion, commercial products, Japanese cuisine, and traditional culture to robots, eco-friendly technologies, and other high-tech industrial products.”<sup>175</sup> In 2002, in a Foreign Policy article titled “Japan's Gross National Cool,” Douglas McGray wrote of Japan “reinventing superpower” as its cultural influence expanded internationally, despite the economic and political problems of the “lost decade” that is the 1990s.<sup>176</sup>

McGray's article “Japan's Gross-National Cool” started a new era in Japan's cultural diplomacy and a novel current under the concept of content industries started

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<sup>174</sup> Cabinet Office, “Cool Japan Strategy Public-Private Collaboration Initiative.” [https://www.cao.go.jp/cool\\_japan/english/pdf/published\\_document2.pdf](https://www.cao.go.jp/cool_japan/english/pdf/published_document2.pdf)

<sup>175</sup> Cabinet Office, “Cool Japan Strategy Public-Private Collaboration Initiative.” [https://www.cao.go.jp/cool\\_japan/english/pdf/published\\_document2.pdf](https://www.cao.go.jp/cool_japan/english/pdf/published_document2.pdf)

<sup>176</sup> McGray, “Japan's Gross National Cool.”

to emerge in the Japanese market.<sup>177</sup> As Japan's technology industry, electronic goods, and popular culture elements gained popularity exclusively among the Japanese youth, the Japanese culture turned from merely generating soft power to a strategy to produce economic value through Japan's culture. The same year Margaret Talbot from the New York Times wrote an article titled "The Year in Ideas; Pokémon Hegemon."<sup>178</sup> The final emphasis culminating in the popularization of the expression took place when in the mid-noughties, NHK began a series entitled *Cool Japan Hakkutsu: Kakkoi Nippon!* The expression *cool* gained momentum and spread of coolness of Japan found its place in cultural diplomacy. Ever since the first use of the concept, MOFA in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) has engaged in various projects and initiatives. The most legitimate step was the establishment of Cool Japan Fund Inc. under the Law of Cool Japan Fund Inc. (Act No.51 of 2013).<sup>179</sup> METI has also launched Cool Japan Initiative in January, July, and September of 2012 as well as in July 2014.<sup>180</sup> "Cool Japan public-private partnership Platform" was enacted in December 2015.<sup>181</sup> The Cool Japan project is an inevitable discussion item in nation-branding. In particular, the nation-branding model is relevant in researching Japanese cultural diplomacy. In addition, the nation-branding model introduces (Japan's) cultural diplomacy not only as a rehabilitative tool but also as a profitable model, generating income for the country. While this does not suggest that Cool Japan is not soft power, placing it within the nation-branding model produces a more specific tune and framework.

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<sup>177</sup> McGray, "Japan's Gross National Cool."

<sup>178</sup> Talbot, "The Year in Ideas; Pokémon Hegemon."

<sup>179</sup> METI, "Cool Japan / Creative Industries Policy."

[https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono\\_info\\_service/creative\\_industries/creative\\_industries.html](https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono_info_service/creative_industries/creative_industries.html)

<sup>180</sup> METI, "Cool Japan / Creative Industries Policy."

[https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono\\_info\\_service/creative\\_industries/creative\\_industries.html](https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono_info_service/creative_industries/creative_industries.html)

<sup>181</sup> METI, "Cool Japan / Creative Industries Policy."

[https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono\\_info\\_service/creative\\_industries/creative\\_industries.html](https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono_info_service/creative_industries/creative_industries.html)

The Cool Japan initiative constitutes one of the most concrete projects by the Government of Japan generating soft power. Cool Japan proposes that by branding Japan's (pop) cultural artifacts, one of the goals is to increase international cultural consumption and contribute to the GNP of Japan. In other words, the Cool Japan project fits well within the framework of the theory of soft power and nation-branding model equally. However, the more pinpoint targets of the nation-branding model orients towards generating incremental revenue for the Japanese economy. Such an economic orientation of cultural promotion suggests that the principal motive behind the inauguration of the Cool Japan project by the Government of Japan is to brand the Japanese national identity through its cultural consumer goods. Branding the Japanese culture will, thus, promote its culture. In this view, discussing soft power distinctively from the nation branding models is of tremendous significance to discern different applications and examples of Japan's cultural diplomacy following the related theoretical approaches. Do we place Kawaii Diplomacy within a larger framework of international relations? It is worth analyzing the fictional character Hello Kitty, also known by her full name, Hello Kitty White, which is a humanoid feline designed by Yuko Yamaguchi and owned by the Japanese company Sandio,

Since the birth of the Japanese Corporation Sandio in 1974, a global, gendered, and commercial symbol, Hello Kitty has extended in the 1980s from the original target market of young girls to adult women, particularly with licensing agreements that have placed the image upon several goods<sup>182</sup>. "With Hello Kitty's introduction in the US Market in 1976 followed by the European markets in 1980 and official Asian markets in 1990, Hello Kitty's expanded global girl culture has

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<sup>182</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, "Hello Kitty."  
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hello-Kitty>

made it one of the most recognized symbols of *Kawaii* around the world.”<sup>183</sup> Today, Hello Kitty contributes to what American journalist Douglas McCray called “Japan’s Gross National Cool” in 2002. Hello Kitty, a commodity of Japanese soft power, is not simply a fictional character that the Japanese company Sanrio produced. Hello Kitty has also become a symbolization of the innocence of the Japanese—thus the Government of Japan—that enabled the country to reconstruct its national and cultural identity. Although not a diplomatic tool, Hello Kitty aided Japan to seem innocent. Hello Kitty nourished the nation to project its innocent nature symbolized with the white color. Therefore, Japan could—although partially—obliterate its wartime image through such soft yet powerful cultural elements. Cultural elements such as Hello Kitty helped Japan evolve into a cultural exporter by boosting its soft power. Eventually, Japan succeeded in transforming its national image. Hello Kitty, in fact, represented Japan’s historical evolution from a militarist nation to a cultural one depicted by a white, cute, tiny kitty evoking an image of innocence and cuteness in the eyes of millions, making up a radically different scenario from what we witness in pre-war Japan. In other words, Hello Kitty was a retreat into Japan’s performance of innocence.

In this view, nation-branding is both a cultural and economic diplomacy mechanism. The more Japan promotes its *kawaii* culture overseas, the more the financial interest of nation-branding projects to Japan’s GNP/GDP becomes. If implemented strategically and elaborately, Cool Japan can highly contribute to the Japanese economy and its image in international relations. Intellectually, Cool Japan is about uniqueness and authenticity, contributing to Said’s orientalism.<sup>184</sup> The quest

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<sup>183</sup> Yano, “Hello Kitty and Japan’s Kawaii Diplomacy.”

for authenticity, alternate fantasies, and alternate lifestyles are what make Japanese culture so cool. As William Gibson, who visited Tokyo and was struck by Tokyo, suggested, Japan exists a few clicks ahead of us with its cyberpunk culture, and this is where the future begins.<sup>185</sup> With the spread of information technology, cultural and visual codes of Japanese products are so well-known that it is possible to recognize these products easily when exported. Therefore, any improvement in the coolness of Japan may result in the reinvention of consumer products by the consumers, not by people making them. Moreover, Cool Japan cannot guarantee the momentum Japan can obtain from cultural diplomacy. In each decade, Japan needs to create a cultural identity.

### 3.4.3 Pop-culture diplomacy

Recently, with the increase in information technology, the spread of Japan's popular cultural goods has gained tremendous momentum. Therefore, Japan now strives to build a nation adorned with Pop-culture Diplomacy. To the Government of Japan, the success of Japan's popular culture should exceed the boundaries of the consumer market and become a key instrument in Japan's foreign policy through which Japan tries to build on the success that has a cultural product and declare it as representative of its culture. The footsteps leading to Pop-culture Diplomacy

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<sup>184</sup> Embellishing Japan's cultural diplomacy only with Pop-culture or constructing a Pop-culture Diplomacy brings along a risk that is the perception of Japan by the West as bizarre, which contributes to the idea of Orientalism initially proposed by Edward Said. Japan's mysterious nature, appealing and distinct popular cultural elements, and the juncture points of history (traditional culture) and future (popular culture) can render Japan as the different one in the eyes of the West. Any unique feature that would be attached to Japan as a result of its Pop-culture Diplomacy or any attempt to put forward Japan's culture as "fascinating because different" has the risk of bringing to mind Said's Orientalism. Therefore, while interpreting the cultural elements of Japan's cultural diplomacy, it is vital to analyze Japan going beyond the discussions placing Japan at an alien position such as *Nihonjinron* (Japan is unique) and Orientalism (Japan is different). It is inevitable to investigate Japanese culture, which hovers between uniqueness and strangeness, in a more neutral and unfiltered manner to employ the appropriate theories. Otherwise, approaching Japanese culture and appreciating it just because it seems "so different" or "unique" may linger the risks of creating an orientalist tune.

<sup>185</sup> Sanders, "Postmodern Orientalism: William Gibson, Cyberpunk and Japan," 17.



consisted of three politicians: Koizumi, Abe, and Aso. Japan was lucky as the three politicians, Koizumi, Abe, and Aso, have been individual fans of Japan's popular culture. Growing up in the aftermath of World War II, Koizumi, Abe, and Aso were especially fond of *manga*, which constituted an integral part of Japanese daily life. As Pérez states, the state, then, should build further on the success its cultural products already obtain and launch it or them as sources of cultural pride of that nation and includes that Japan did this with a little tardiness despite its unparalleled cultural riches.<sup>186</sup> Pointing to the early 2000s, Taro Aso's recognition of *anime* and Japanese popular culture, in general, constituted a very significant and even an indispensable ally for the Japanese diplomacy and soft power. However, Pérez also underlines that Japan has not been able to fully "exploit" its culture, especially popular, in international arena.<sup>187</sup>

It is challenging for the present thesis to create a separate subchapter on Japan's Pop-culture Diplomacy since Japan's cultural diplomacy centering around popular culture is highly associated with soft power and nation-branding. In addition, what makes Japan "cool" is the popular culture elements that the country has attempted to promote with the Cool Japan Initiative. These items of Japan's cultural diplomacy are all linked and intertwined. Therefore, the following paragraphs will elucidate Japan's Pop-culture Diplomacy and its highlights by Japanese politicians. One example for this lies in Aso's speech titled "A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan's Cultural Practitioners" in 2006 to discern the significance of pop-culture (diplomacy) for Japan's international relations. Blended with the Cool Japan ideal, the concept of *J-cool* and cultural diplomacy become intertwined in the current Japanese foreign policy. The J-currents have an increasing

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<sup>186</sup> Pérez, "Pop Power: Pop Diplomacy for a Global Society," 5.

<sup>187</sup> Pérez, "Pop Power: Pop Diplomacy for a Global Society," 6.

influence on the global youth, specifically with the rising popularity and importance of online content. Another risk this time, however, is the threat of *mukokuseki*<sup>188</sup> (the lack of membership or statelessness), which can also be referred to as cultural deodorization for this thesis, described as the long-standing policy of Japanese corporations to “deodorize” national identity from their cultural products sent abroad. In this sense, the deodorization of the Japanese culture as culture becomes less traditional and more popular to appeal to the masses emerges. However, challenges still exist regarding Japan’s Pop-culture Diplomacy. The argument criticizing the effectiveness of international popular culture policies revolves around the idea that Japan’s soft power does not merely consist of Japanese popular culture. In other words, Japan’s soft power capacity includes and should incorporate more that *anime*, *manga*, and others, which result in losing the sense of “real Japan.”<sup>189</sup> The solution for this, as suggested by Allison, is to go beyond exporting Japanese popular culture to the rest of the world but instead showcasing Japan’s cultural might through (1) social policies and (2) social practices that can be a role-model for other nations as well.<sup>190</sup> Through this, Japan “could fuel a yearning or attraction for the so-called real Japan.”<sup>191</sup>

A similar criticism is from Koichi Iwabuchi. Iwabuchi underlines the risk of *mukokuseki* as the Japanese cultural diplomacy becomes too popular culture-oriented and conceals the real Japan with its traditional features and historical odors. In other words, Pop-culture Diplomacy has the risk of being less cultural due to reflecting Japan’s in a deodorized way washing the cultural nationalism embedded in the

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<sup>188</sup> Watanabe and McConnell describe *mukokuseki* as “the long-standing policy of Japanese corporations to “deodorize” national identity from their cultural products sent abroad” in *Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and National Assets of Japan and the United States*.

<sup>189</sup> Allison, “The Attractions of the J-Wave for American Youth,” 100-101.

<sup>190</sup> Allison, “The Attractions of the J-Wave for American Youth,” 100-101.

<sup>191</sup> Allison, “The Attractions of the J-Wave for American Youth,” 100-101.

culture element away. While the aim here is to increase the possibility of appeal to the international masses, the risk of Japan's cultural diplomacy being not so cultural after all remains a challenging issue on the agenda. Therefore, to enhance a pluralist model in terms of Japan's cultural diplomacy, Taro Aso delivered a speech titled "A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan's Cultural Practitioners."<sup>192</sup>

Regarding the utility of Japan's cultural diplomacy in international relations as *iyashi* (healing) and affined an illusionary peacemaker, Aso gave tremendous significance to Japan's cultural diplomacy. Among the elements Aso highlighted was also cultural diplomacy centering around Japan's popular culture, in other words, Pop-culture Diplomacy.<sup>193</sup>

As one initiative of Pop-culture Diplomacy, MOFA organizes the Japan International MANGA Award, also having MOFA as its executive committee. The idea behind the award was, not surprisingly, former Foreign Minister Taro Aso. While this international award aimed at promoting *manga* overseas and increasing other people's interests, another project called "Anime Ambassador" began in 2008. In March of the same year, the *anime* character Doraemon was appointed as Ambassador of Japanese culture by MOFA. MOFA states that "On this opportunity, "Doraemon the Movie Nobita's Dinosaur 2006" was translated into five languages (English, French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian) and screened in 67 countries and regions worldwide as of January 2017."<sup>194</sup> Finally, after *manga* and *anime* diplomacy, MOFA has conferred a Foreign Minister's Prize on the best costume

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<sup>192</sup> MOFA: Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro Aso, "A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan's Cultural Practitioners."  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0604-2.html>

<sup>193</sup> MOFA: Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Taro Aso, "A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan's Cultural Practitioners."  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0604-2.html>

<sup>194</sup> MOFA, "Pop-culture Diplomacy."  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/culture/exchange/pop/index.html>

player at “the World Cosplay Summit,” the most prominent Cosplay event held annually in Japan, since 2007. It is apparent that Pop-culture Diplomacy has gained popularity and received international acclaim. Nevertheless, to date, neither Japanese diplomacy nor the government has managed to exploit the popularity of their own pop-culture in the world, as scholars and critics claim. There is, undoubtedly, more room to practice for Japan to exercise cultural diplomacy. Although some scholars claim that Japan is no longer a cultural nation or soft power is the opium of Japan, it is beyond doubt that the country will rely on its foreign policy centered around cultural diplomacy as well as international cultural policies more, as the international image of Japan is shuttered once again by the country’s Covid-19 policies and Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

## CHAPTER 4

### BUNKA GAIKŌ IN FRANCE: A LONG-STANDING AMOUR

Questions such as to what degree Japan managed to legitimize and institutionalize cultural diplomacy in France and how France functioned as a band-aid as Japan's cultural and diplomatic partner by providing leeway for reconstructing its identity during the Cold War constitutes the central theme of the present chapter. In this view, this chapter analyzes post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy in France as the first case country of how Japan reconstructed its identity through cultural diplomacy in the Cold War. The chapter will investigate Japan's international cultural policies in France from 1952 until 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall, to discern how France received Japaneseness and the second wave of Japonism (*le Japonisme*<sup>195</sup> in French) during the Cold War period. The final paragraphs of the present chapter will elucidate the recent developments in Franco-Japan cultural relations. The thesis will then analyze Turkey as the second case study to understand how Japan's cultural diplomacy showed resemblance and divergence in the case of both countries in terms of the construction of the Japanese identity during the post-war period.

France and Turkey constitute the two case countries as the receiver countries of Japan's cultural diplomacy. France poses an outstanding model as a receiver of Japan's cultural diplomacy. Turkey makes up the second case country since the author of the thesis is from Turkey. From another point of view, there is hardly any analytical scholarly work investigating Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. In this view, the ultimate goal of the present thesis is to unveil Japan's cultural diplomacy trends in both countries to discern how Japan can implement its mighty cultural

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<sup>195</sup> The term *Japonisme* was coined by the French journalist and art critic Philippe Burty in an article published in 1876 to describe the strong interest for Japanese artworks and decorative items.

diplomacy in Turkey, constituting a strategic and geopolitical ally of the Land of the Rising Sun. Finally, the socio-linguistic and socio-cultural landscape of France and Turkey compared to Japan, the Japanese language and culture create an intriguing bigger picture since it is more challenging to measure the effects of cultural diplomacy in geographically distant countries. To an example, today, Southeast Asian nations and Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea are fields where the political economy of Japan's popular culture has manifested its relevance. It is, therefore, not surprising to see the emerging and growing markets of Japan's contemporary (popular)—and traditional—cultural markets in these countries since geographical proximity renders it easier to access Japan's cultural content for these nations. However, France and Turkey make up more challenging and distinct case studies, given the non-existence of geographical proximity to Japan.

The present thesis underscores that analyzing Japan's cultural diplomacy in France is crucial mainly due to the fact that—as Watanabe states in his summary on Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy<sup>196</sup>—Japan's cultural diplomacy during the Cold War focused predominantly on the United States and Southeast Asian countries. Otmazgin also accentuates the same idea that Japan's concentration was around the United States as its primary ally and secondly Southeast Asia in terms of cultural diplomacy.<sup>197</sup> In this view, discerning how Japan positioned itself in Europe during the post-war period has not been a matter of enough analytical discussion. In this sense, to what extent Japan had its hand out to France to have a geographically distant yet diplomatically close ally during the Cold War remains an unanswered

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<sup>196</sup> Watanabe, "Public Diplomacy and the Evolution of U.S.-Japan Relations," 2.

<sup>197</sup> This quotation is from the presentation of Prof. Nissim Otmazgin during the "International Symposium on the Occasion of Sixty Years of Diplomatic Relations" held between 7-9 May 2012. Prof. Otmazgin delivered this speech themed as "Japan and Israel: Regional, Bilateral, and Cultural Perspectives" during Panel I: Japan and Israel in their Regional Contexts.

question since there is little research on Japan's cultural transmission to France.

While the present chapter will not elaborate on the recent developments of Japan's cultural diplomacy in France, the final stages of the Franco-Japanese cultural league will be the subject of the conclusive paragraphs and the chapter on the comparison.

For the present thesis, in this view, the argument will suggest the existence of the three waves of *Japonisme* approaching Franco-Japan relations during the Cold-War Era marking the second wave of *Japonisme*. However, it is also inevitable to state that this second wave of *Japonisme* during the post-war years was not as robust and impactful, and influential on the French mind as the first and third waves of it. The first reason is that Japan was hungry and had a high appetite to modernize its cultural and intellectual way of life during the Meiji Period and became influenced by the French values in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This influence was reciprocated by the waves of the Japanese art in *l'Art Nouveau* in France, constituting the current of *le Japonisme* of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The third wave of *Japonisme*—*néo-Japonisme*—enhanced *Japonisme* or simply *nso-Japonisme*—was understandably the mightiest Japanese influence in France for several reasons, such as globalization, the popularity of Japanese manga resulting in *Manfra*,<sup>198</sup> Internet, *otaku*<sup>199</sup> tourism<sup>200201</sup> by the cultural pilgrims surrounding the electric city, Akihabara, one of the 23 wards located in Tokyo, Japan, to name a few.

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<sup>198</sup> *Manfra* are French comic books (*bandes dessinées* in French) that draw inspiration from Japanese comic books (*manga*).

<sup>199</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary defines *otaku* as follows, “(In Japan) *otaku* is a young person who is obsessed with computers or particular aspects of popular culture to the detriment of their social skills.”

<sup>200</sup> Wikipedia defines *otaku* as “primarily male fans of *manga*, *anime* and computer games, and *otaku* tourism refers to the broader touristic behavior patterns of these fans of *otaku* subculture with a very strong and particular interest in their favorite series, characters or games.”

<sup>201</sup> Okamoto, “Otaku Tourism and the Anime Pilgrimage Phenomenon in Japan,” 9.

#### 4.1 Japanese gaze in France: Inspiration through similarities

Japan and France have maintained amicable relations throughout history, which officially began with the signing the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Trade on 9 October 1858. Today, the website of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (*Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères* in French) describes the relations between the two countries as a very fruitful one to the extent that the characterization of the Franco-Japanese associations goes as an excellent partnership.<sup>202</sup> Exchanges and cooperation, to this date, are increasing in almost all political, economic, scientific, and cultural fields between the two countries. The two nations maintain a positive image of each other. The Japanese especially admire French culture, and likewise, many French people are attracted to the Japanese culture. Both nations have also been supportive of one another. For instance, France had initially supported the Tokugawa reform attempt during the last years of the shogunate, and during the Meiji period, law, art, and culture relied on close relations with France.

There is something in common between the two cultures. It may be the eagerness to pursue cultural sophistication to the end.<sup>203</sup> For instance, *chadō* (tea ceremony) and the manner of drinking French wine is argued to contain the same spirit according to Monji.<sup>204</sup> It is infrequent to come across any other culture, nation, or people, for instance, other than the French and the Japanese who put so much effort into drinking a beverage, either wine or tea. The love for exquisite and

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<sup>202</sup> MOFA, “*Feuille de Route sur la Coopération Franco-Japonaise pour Ouvrir de Nouveaux Horizons entre la France et le Japon dans le Cadre du Partenariat d’Exception (2019-2023)*.” <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000492473.pdf>

<sup>203</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, “*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*” <https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

<sup>204</sup> This quotation is from the lecture by Mr. Kenjiro Monji, the former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region” during the Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region at the French National Assembly in Paris on September 22, 2014. This quotation is originally in French yet translated by the author into English.



extravagant culture—or high and elite culture—is evident in the Japanese and French cases. The former Ambassador of Japan to France, Kenjiro Monji, states that an organization titled *Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*<sup>205</sup> exists in France whereas, in Japan, the ardent protectors of *sake* gather under the project the *Sake Samurai*. The *sake* culture was in the process of disappearing when Japan imagined an exchange-oriented body of trade—similar to the brotherhood of *Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*. The idea was to restore the image of Japan’s traditional beverage,

The *sake* culture of Japan was in the process of disappearing when the Japanese imagined a new body of trade—a bit like the Brotherhood of the Knights of Tastevin (*Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin*). The idea was to restore the image of traditional alcohol.<sup>206</sup>

Japan and France share many ideas about art and cuisine<sup>207</sup>. France has considerably influenced Japanese cuisine, *Washoku*. In France, it is *mangas* that make Japan known, and some *mangas* have episodes from the history of France as a backdrop (*La Rose de Versailles*, and more recently *Nodame Cantabile* and *Les Gouttes de Dieu*).<sup>208</sup> Both Japan and France are famous for embracing their traditional and contemporary culture. Franco-Japanese amity goes beyond cultural relations, signifying that the two countries are strong allies in security, economy, and politics. The present chapter, however, attempts to unveil Franco-Japanese *histoire de l’amour*.

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<sup>205</sup> The Fraternity of Knights of the Wine-Tasters’ Cup (*Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin* in French) is an exclusive bacchanalian fraternity of Burgundy wine connoisseurs.

<sup>206</sup> This quotation is from the lecture by Mr. Kenjiro Monji, the former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region” during the Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region at the French National Assembly in Paris on September 22, 2014. This quotation is originally in French yet translated by the author into English.

<sup>207</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, “*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*”

<https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

<sup>208</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, “*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*”

<https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

#### 4.2 History of Franco-Japanese cultural relations: From *ukiyo-e* to *manga*

During the Japan Program by the Foundation for Strategic Research (*FRS, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* in French), Junichi Ihara, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to France since December 2019, commented on Franco-Japanese relations. Ambassador Ihara expressed that “Japan and France are bound together by an ‘exceptional partnership,’ making the two countries each other’s essential strategic partners.”<sup>209</sup>

Indeed, the history of cultural exchanges between France and Japan is among the most ancient and most profoundly rooted in history. Starting with the first wave of *Japonisme*, the cultural relations between both countries have proven to remain robust ever since the first wave of *le Japonisme*. Since then, the receptions of the Japanese culture in France have evoked positive feelings. Today, Paris functions as a second version of Tokyo with *Maison de la Culture du Japon à Paris* (House of Culture of Japan in Paris), *Kioko* (Japanese grocery store), Little Tokyo, *Kodawari Ramen*, *Kodawari Tsukiji*, *Palais de Tokyo*, *Institut Japonais*, and countless Japanese restaurants offering the most exquisite gastronomy experience as well as museums exhibiting Asian and Japanese arts and crafts such as *Galerie Mingei* (Japanese art) and *Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet* (Asian art). Paris, today, is the best city to experience the Franco-Japanese love affair, promising probably the most robust gaze of Japan as a non-Japanese city.

The official diplomatic Franco-Japanese relations began on October 9, 1858, when Japan and France signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between France and Japan in Edo by Jean-Baptiste Louis Gros. With the opening of Japan to the

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<sup>209</sup> This quotation is from the interview of Mr. Junichi Ihara, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to France, titled “*France-Japon : 160 ans de relations diplomatiques* (France-Japan: 160 Years of Diplomatic Relations)” during the Japan Program by the Foundation for Strategic Research (*FRS, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* in French).

Western world, the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the intellectual and cultural establishment of Franco-Japanese relations after two centuries of isolation under the politics of *sakoku* and France's expansionist policy in Asia. The historical development of relations between two sovereign nations situated at opposite ends of each other and who knew almost nothing about each other. Establishing different social strata that make up the relational fabric between the two nations evolved according to the following process: first religious, then economic, followed by the military, and finally cultural. The basis of the Japanese civilization emerged thanks to the French system. The French did not only introduce Meiji Japan with military, economic, and industrial modernization. It also contributed tremendously to the legal system in Japan with the development of a legal code, manifesting its influence of the French Civil Code (*Code Napoléon*) on the Japanese Administrative Code.<sup>210</sup> Franco-Japanese relations since the Meiji Era have retained, to this day, the image of connections with essentially cultural content and marked by a reciprocally intellectual fascination. For the present thesis, this chapter will solemnly focus on the bi-national cultural relationship fostered by Japan's cultural diplomacy missions in France during the Cold War era.

France is a cultural nation, just like Japan. Culture holds a prominent standing in France, and the country harbors one of the oldest cultural diplomacies in the world. Renowned for its assertive role and investments in its cultural policy, France is also one of the few countries that have relied on cultural diplomacy more than its other diplomatic tools. Since the first wave of *Japonisme*, Franco-Japanese relations have witnessed three waves of *Japonisme*, manifesting themselves in different

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<sup>210</sup> National Diet Library, "Modern Japan and France: Adoration, Encounter and Interaction - Part I: Japan's Modernization and France." <https://www.ndl.go.jp/france/en/part1/s1.html>

modes. On the one hand, a literature review on Franco-Japanese cultural connections reveals that there are only two waves of *Japonisme*, *le Japonisme* of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the *neo-Japonisme* of the New Millennium.

In the argument of William Fregonese of the University of Paris 2 (*Université Paris 2* in French) and Sciences-Po Lille and Kazunari Sakai of Kobe University, however, it is possible to encounter that Japan targeted France as a receiver of cultural diplomacy in the post-war period to rehabilitate Japan's international relations. A second *Japonisme*, which emerged in the post-war period, proposes a novel perspective as discussed in detail in the following paragraphs. Fregonese and Sakai bring along the second wave of *Japonisme* of the post-war, coinciding with the 1970s and 1980s when Japan's cultural diplomacy bloomed. For the present thesis, in this view, the argument will suggest the existence of the three waves of *Japonisme* approaching Franco-Japan relations during the Cold-War Era marking the second wave of *Japonisme*. However, it is also inevitable to state that this second wave of *Japonisme* during the post-war years was not as robust and impactful, and influential on the French mind as the first and third waves of it. The first reason is that Japan was hungry and had a high appetite to modernize its cultural and intellectual way of life during the Meiji Period and became influenced by the French values in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This influence was reciprocated by the waves of the Japanese art in *l'Art Nouveau* in France, constituting the current of *le Japonisme* of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The third wave of *Japonisme*—*néo-Japonisme-enhanced Japonisme* or simply *nso-Japonisme*—was understandably the mightiest Japanese influence in France for several reasons, such as globalization, the popularity of Japanese manga resulting in *Manfra*,<sup>211</sup> internet, *otaku* tourism by the cultural pilgrims surrounding the electric

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<sup>211</sup> *Manfra* are French comic books (*bandes dessinées*) that draw inspiration from Japanese *manga*.

city, Akihabara, one of the 23 wards located in Tokyo, Japan, to name a few.

It is plausible to begin by stating that among the three waves of *Japonisme*, the first *Japonisme* of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the *Japonisme* of the New Millennium have been the most consequential waves of *Japonisme*. As discussed in the following sections, the post-war rehabilitation process of Japan resulted in a more vulnerable cultural diplomacy in France during the Cold War period. In fact, the immediate post-war years, and the Cold War era, as discussed in the previous chapter on Japan's cultural diplomacy, witnessed the execution of Japanese cultural diplomacy initially in the United States since Japan was tremendously under the impact of American culture, way of life, and customs as a result of the seven-year Allied Occupation of Japan. Therefore, the United States constituted Japan's primary focus in the post-war. Japan's second focus was the Southeast Asian nations in the later post-war period. Japan was obliged to weave its magic through cultural diplomacy to make itself forgiven in the eyes of its former victims. Therefore, although France remained a strategic and vigorous cultural ally of Japan during the Cold War period, the cultural relations were not as strong as they were during the other two *Japonisme(s)* of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the New Millennium.

Fregonese and Sakai firmly believe three *Japonisme(s)* exist. However, the research conducted for the present thesis concludes that the general understanding suggests the existence of only two *Japonisme(s)*—as discussed in the literature of Franco-Japanese cultural relations—the first one during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the second one during the late 2010s. The reason why only Fregonese and Sakai suggest that there are two *Japonisme(s)* most likely emanates from Japan's less consequential cultural diplomacy in France during the post-war period. Japan still enjoyed the support and intellectual exchange with France during the post-war period.

One historical trauma in Franco-Japanese relations, which is often disregarded, took place during the occupation of the French Indochina by Japan (1940-45). The Japanese occupation of the French Indochina played a substantial role in the history of Franco-Japanese relations and, more broadly, in the history of Asia-Pacific. However, scholarly work has often neglected the impact of the occupation of the French Indochina by Japan on Franco-Japanese relations, its atypical side making it a challenging anomaly to analyze in the Pacific War. Indeed, the Franco-Japanese conflict during the Pacific War has been referred to as *séisme* (an earthquake) in Franco-Japanese relations.<sup>212</sup>

As France has been a cultural nation, which has proven the might of its culture, Japan had a ubiquity of principles and cultural assets to learn from the French *diplomata* to heal its post-war scars. The Ambassador of Turkey to Japan, Korkut Güngen, for instance, stated the following regarding (France's) cultural diplomacy,

The more you spread that the culture (of a nation) is rich and subtle, the more sympathy you will awaken. If you look at the history of national culture, you can see that France is always innocent. The world forgives the mistakes made by France and the French nation. People still adore French cinema, gastronomy, and way of life. Cultural diplomacy and a nation's culture create such an environment, and it provides you with a relative moral high ground. In addition, to the extent that you know someone, you do business with them, you go to that country and do business with that specific country through cultural diplomacy.<sup>213</sup>

Commenting on Ambassador Güngen's words above, it would not be wrong to claim that France is the country Japan has aspired to become throughout history. Even without Japan's love affair with France, the boosted potential to forgive nations as a

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<sup>212</sup> Michelin, "Un Séisme dans les Relations Franco-Japonaises: L'occupation de l'Indochine Française, 1940-41," 1.

<sup>213</sup> This statement by Ambassador Güngen is a result of a series of interviews conducted by the author of this thesis to discern the views of diplomats and cultural attaches as to the Japanese cultural diplomacy in Turkey. Ambassador Güngen showed the courtesy of expressing his thoughts on French cultural diplomacy.

contribution of their culture is prominently noticeable in the comparative illustration of, for instance, France and Germany. From its cinema to national gastronomy, its touristic sites to *Tour Eiffel*, I suggest that France will always bypass Germany in terms of cultural appeal. Jean-Luc Godard's movies, the endless artistic appetite of the French, and the melodic French language will render Paris the city of lovers. On the contrary, such an allegory is unheard of in the case of Berlin, the German language, or cinema. Not now, yet the German culture was important in the Avant Garde movement of the 1920s and 1930s along with the British culture.

Going back to Japan's high attraction to the French culture, it is evident that from national gastronomy to arts and cultures, language, tourism, *haute couture*, or the French Tech, the Japanese have long admired the French people and culture. To the extreme, the unreasonably high opinion of France developed by the Japanese culminated in the Paris Syndrome<sup>214</sup>, coined by Hiroaki Ota in the 1980s<sup>215</sup>, stemming from the disappointment on the part of the Japanese when realities of *la vie Parisienne* did not meet their expectations after the Japanese visited Paris.<sup>216</sup> However, it is not surprising to see that France has always been one of Japan's strongest and most permanent cultural allies. France lays an unearthed example to discern how Japan reconstructed its identity during the painful post-war years and a dichotomized global order with the cultural blocks of the West (the United States) and the East (the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).

As discussed in the chapter on Japan's cultural diplomacy, Japan could not entirely depend upon its geographically close neighbors such as South Korea, China,

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<sup>214</sup> Wikipedia defines Paris syndrome (*Syndrome de Paris* in French and *Pari shōkōgun* in Japanese) as "a sense of disappointment exhibited by some individuals when visiting Paris, who feel that the city was not what they had expected." The condition is commonly viewed as a severe form of culture shock.

<sup>215</sup> Wyatt, "'Paris Syndrome' strikes Japanese," 2.

<sup>216</sup> Wyatt, "'Paris Syndrome' strikes Japanese," 2.

and Taiwan that experienced frictions with Japan in the immediate post-war years. The remnants of Japan's imperial past in the national memories of its close neighbors would have prevented healthy cultural diplomacy that Japan could seek in its geographically close allies. In this view, the post-war period witnessed Japan's approaching its geographically distant but diplomatically close partners, primarily the United States, and towards the end of the 1970s, Southeast Asian countries. Nevertheless, the trade frictions resulting in the boycotting of Japanese goods in Thailand and the Nixon shocks of the 1970s forced Japan to reorient cultural diplomacy accordingly to save its image under the threatening perceptions of the Southeast Asian nations and the United States until the late 1970s and 80s. However, France, where Japan proved the efficacy of its international cultural exchange during *le premier Japonisme* (the first wave of Japonism), indeed, constituted a safe—although not primary—cultural ally. Japan had the opportunity to enhance and strengthen its standing in international relations through cultural diplomacy in France.

#### 4.3 *Le Japonisme*: The Japanese wave in Europe

##### 4.3.1 The first wave of *Japonisme*

The Japanese wave in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century is an inevitable historical milestone in Franco-Japanese cultural relations. France had drawn part of its modern artistic inspiration from Japanese art, mainly *le Japonisme*. As previously introduced, there are three generations of *le Japonisme*, which is indispensable to introduce briefly for the present research. The first wave of *Japonisme* emerged in the West—specifically in France—following the Third Paris International Exposition or Paris



World's Fair (1878 *Exposition Universelle* in French) held from May 6 in 1889 until October 31, 1889. Being Japan's first official art exhibition in Europe, the Third Paris International Exposition constitutes Japan's first cultural diplomacy mission in Paris—hence in France. Countless other cultural exchanges would soon follow this first step culminating in strong and amicable relations between France and Japan. The Third Paris International Exposition started to bear its fruits in France soon. Following Japan's first world exhibition experience, the art historian Louis Gonse published the first comprehensive editions on “Japanese art in two volumes titled *L'Art Japonais*<sup>217</sup> in 1883.”<sup>218</sup> In a similar vein, the founder of *L'Art Nouveau*, Siegfried Bing, became one of the most influential traders of the Japanese art in France, held plenty of exhibitions on Japanese art in France—mainly Paris, and started to publish “a richly illustrated art journal, *Le Japon Artistique*<sup>219</sup>, between 1888 and 1891.”<sup>220</sup> The Japanese wave in France was so prominent that it also influenced the impressionist artists of the period through *ukiyo-e*, Japanese woodblock prints. Although not perceived as part of the elite culture by the Japanese artists of the period in Japan,<sup>221</sup> *ukiyo-e* inspired the most prominent artists of the period, such as Monet, Degas, and Van Gogh. World's Fair of 1862 in London expanded dramatically with Japanese exhibits at the Paris World's Fairs of 1867, 1878, 1889, and 1900, rendering Japanese exports a commercial success.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> The Japanese Art in English.

<sup>218</sup> Gonse, *L'art Japonais*, 19.

<sup>219</sup> The Artistic Japan in English.

<sup>220</sup> Artsper Magazine, “A Closer Look: The Influence of Japanese Art on Western Artists.”

<sup>221</sup> Artsper Magazine, “A Closer Look: The Influence of Japanese Art on Western Artists.”

<sup>222</sup> Artsper Magazine, “A Closer Look: The Influence of Japanese Art on Western Artists.”

#### 4.3.2 *Le Néo-Japonisme*: Japan's second turn to France

The second wave of *Japonisme*, also referred to as *néo-Japonisme*, proposed by Pierre-William Fregonese of the University of Paris 2 and Sciences-Po Lille and Kazunari Sakai of Kobe University, took place in the 1950s and 1960s. As discussed in the previous chapter, the 1960s witnessed Japan's evolution into a cultural nation. During this period, France and Japan embarked on a robust partnership in international relations as two cultural nations. *Néo-Japonisme* took the traditional Japanese culture—also referred to as appealing to the masses—at its center. Uncharted means of expression of the Japanese, post-war Americanization, economic boom Japan underwent, and access to new materials, techniques, and know-how culminated in a more advanced Japanese understanding of art. Hence, the Japanese wave once again surrounded the West, especially France, during this period but not as strong as was the case during the first *Japonisme*. The reason was that Japan also abstained from employing cultural diplomacy in its Asian—both East and Southeast—neighbors during the immediate post-war years (the 1950s and 1960s). Finally, the third wave of Japanism, *néo-Japonisme-enhanced Japonisme*, as proposed by Fregonese and Sakai, has become the showcase of the most robust *Japonisme* throughout Franco-Japanese cultural relations. However, the real *néo-Japonisme-enhanced Japonisme* started to take place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As the word enhanced suggests, globalization, advanced technology, the end of the Cold War, the bipolar global order, interconnected cultural associations, and ease of intercultural communication of the 21<sup>st</sup> century rendered Japan's cultural diplomacy in France more prominent than ever witnessed in history.

It is evident that the robust and progressive cultural exchanges both countries enjoyed over the years signify that France will remain the most solid and recognized

cultural companion of Japan. For instance, the 1990s was the “lost decade” of Japan’s cultural diplomacy when Japan-passing replaced the epithet of Japan-bashing.<sup>223224</sup> Nonetheless, 1997 marked the “Year of Japan in France” and the inauguration of *pop-culture* (The House of the Culture of Japan in Paris) as a Japanese cultural center in Paris. Likewise, 1998 marked the “Year of France in Japan.” In 1998 only, “around four hundred events took place across Japan to celebrate France, the French culture, and its people.”<sup>225</sup> In other words, Japan’s lost decade in terms of cultural diplomacy was no loss at all when it came to France. Even when Japan experienced the burst of its bubble economy and stagnation, cultural diplomacy in France demonstrated the opposite trajectory. In France, even the most turbulent years of the Japanese economy after the burst of the Japanese asset price bubble in the 1990s did not prevent Japan’s robust and strategic cultural diplomacy. The New Millennium was—and currently is—no different in the enhanced cultural coalition between the two countries. The 2000s have been home to increasing partnership in Franco-Japanese cultural relations and Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France.

#### 4.4 Japan’s *bunka gaikō* in France in the Cold War era

Just like the Cool Japan Initiative is about enhancing Japan’s economy as well as Currently, the Cool Japan Initiative aims to enhance Japan’s economy and promote creative content industries employing Japanese culture abroad. In parallelism with the relations between culture and economy, Japan’s economic miracle exemplified

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<sup>223</sup> Cooney, “No More Passing,” 2.

<sup>224</sup> Kevin Cooney, in his article titled “No More Passing” published in *Asia Policy* states that “In the late 1990s, Japanese foreign policy experts argued that Japan was experiencing a phenomenon that they called “Japan passing,” in which the country was being passed over as no longer relevant.”

<sup>225</sup> The Japan Times, “Statue illumination kicks off ‘Year of France’ event.”

by the Flying Geese Pattern had a positive impact on the Franco-Japanese cultural relations during the Cold War. The emerging markets in Japan with the economic and industrial advancements Japan experienced concocted an idea of the Japanese aesthetics and Japan as an aesthetically alluring country, again stimulating Japan's potential to retain gaze (*le regard* in French) as oriented in the previous chapter. The ultimate inspiration for the French was a result of two issues. First, the endeavors of Japan to present its serene and peace-loving culture, such as *chadō* and *ikebana*, constructed an aesthetic, cultural identity.

The table below reveals the cultural endeavors between Japan and France during the post-war period. Since the present thesis aims to unveil Japan's cultural diplomacy during the post-war period in France—and later in Turkey—it will solemnly focus on the attempts by the Government of Japan, hence, Japan Foundation as the primary cultural diplomacy agent during the post-war period. Nevertheless, the table can still provide insight into Franco-Japanese post-war cultural relations. It is evident in the table below that the cultural flow from Japan to France—and vice versa—remained dynamic, and Japan did not remain an insular nation in cultural relations—separated from the rest of the world. As discussed in the following subchapters, the visits to Japan upon the invitation(s) from the Japan Foundation and the exhibitions constituted a crucial method of cultural diplomacy of Japan during this period. The ultimate goal was evidently to allow foreign and non-Japanese speaker intellectuals to Japan and allow them to understand Japanese culture, society, and traditions as an outsider. This information would be invaluable upon the visitors' return to their home country as potential cultural ambassadors and disseminate their observations about Japan to the rest of the world. Such a strategy comprised post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy in France.

Table 8. Cultural Relations Between Japan and France in the Post-War Period<sup>226</sup>

1950	Arimasa Mori traveled to France as one of the first French government-sponsored fellows in the post-war
1951	Shuichi Kato traveled to France for a research fellowship The <i>Chanson Café Gimpari</i> opened
1952	Marcel Carné's <i>Les Enfants du Paradis</i> released in Japan
1953	Aro Naito published the translation of <i>Le Petit Prince</i>
1956	Shuichi Kato published <i>Zasshu Bunka</i> Japan's admission to the United Nations
1959	French government returned the <i>Matsukata</i> Collection to Japan
1960	Jean-Luc Godard's <i>À Bout de Souffle</i> released in Japan
1963	Alain Delon visited Japan
1964	The Tokyo Olympic Games
1966	Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir visited Japan
1970	The Japan World Exposition, Osaka 1970 Roland Barthes published <i>L'empire des signes</i> The fashion magazine, <i>an · an Elle Japon</i> was launched TAKADA Kenzo debuted in the Paris Collection
1972	Paul Bocuse visited Japan Okinawa's reversion to Japanese administration Riyoko Ikeda's comic, <i>The Rose of Versailles</i> was started
1975	Close down of the Ikuno Mine Mitsuharu Kaneko published <i>Nemure Pari</i>
1974	Takarazuka Revue Company performed <i>The Rose of Versailles</i> for the first time
1975	Shuichi Kato published <i>Nihon Bungakushi Josetsu</i> (A History of Japanese Literature) The Rambouillet Summit
1986	The Sumo Stand in Paris
1987	Katakura Industries closed down the Tomioka Silk Mill
1990	OTOMO Katsuhiro's comic, <i>Akira</i> became popular in France

<sup>226</sup> It is significant to emphasize that the French visitors are the famous elite of France, which signifies that Japanese cultural diplomacy targeted elites rather than masses. It contradicts with Japanese cultural diplomacy in France today, which appeals to the masses through pop-culture, *manfra*, and Japanese electronic consumer goods. Table 8 can also be found in the Appendix E on page 202.

#### 4.4.1 Claude Lévi-Strauss' visit to Japan

Until the establishment of the Japan Foundation in 1972, Japan was in the process of letting relations cool down by promoting its serene culture. In a similar trajectory, the legitimization of Japan's cultural diplomacy did not take place until the inauguration of the Japan Foundation in 1972. The same is true for Japan's cultural diplomacy in France. Japan's most solid cultural companion until the 1970s was the United States, and Japan did not seek an active or assertive cultural diplomacy during this period. Therefore, the following paragraphs will concentrate on the events launched by the Japan Foundation. One of the projects that the Japan Foundation launched during this period was a series of talks delivered by the famous French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss in Tokyo, Japan when the Japan Foundation invited Lévi-Strauss to Japan in 1977. Lévi-Strauss expresses his feelings upon learning the invitation by the Japan Foundation stating in the book that, "That idea had not occurred to me. Then a wonderful invitation from the Japan Foundation arrived in 1977, almost like a bolt out of the blue. And I said to myself: now finally I'm going to see Japan, which I've thought about off and on my whole life!"<sup>227</sup>

Lévi-Strauss came to Tokyo for a series of seminars and observations that would grant the famous anthropologist an opportunity to observe the Land of the Rising Sun in his comparative cultural anthropology studies. This invitation turned out to be the beginning of other visits by Lévi-Strauss to Japan. The anthropologist visited the country five times between 1977 and 1988 to observe Japanese culture and civilization. The invitation of Lévi-Strauss to Japan may not resonate with a direct investment of cultural diplomacy in another country—in this case, France—such as inaugurating a culture center or funding an exchange project. However, the

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<sup>227</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 141.

tormented Franco-Japanese relations during Japan's invasion of the French Indochina and Japanese-German Alliance<sup>228</sup> in World War II necessitated a new Japanese perception in the eyes of the French. In other words, there was a need for a new foundation, a baseline for Japan to reaffirm in the eyes of the French Government—and the people—that it was reconstructing its national and cultural identity in Europe.

The visits made by the anthropologist to Japan culminated in his posthumous book titled *The Other Face of the Moon*, published in 2013, which was a compilation of his writings based on his observations of the Land of the Rising Sun. *The Other Face of the Moon* is an end product of a project by the International Research Center for Japanese Studies to discuss “the place of Japanese culture in the world.” The book begins with the words, “What we find in this volume is a Lévi-Strauss in love with Japan.” The first idea greeting us in the expressions of Lévi-Strauss in his pivotal work, *The Other Face of the Moon*, is that the West, indeed, has a lot to learn from the Japanese civilization. This sentence itself is echoing in the minds of a French anthropologist and intellectual, giving the signals that the love affair between France and Japan is a profound one. During the Cold War period, Lévi-Strauss firmly believed that Japan's uniqueness resulted from the fact that the country was a mold between ancient and contemporary culture and a mix of civilizations. Lévi-Strauss insinuated that the essence of the Japanese culture consisted of the Ancient Chinese traditions, influencing Japan tremendously, the European enlightenment that Japan absorbed throughout the Meiji Restoration, and the United States as the cultural influences of Japan during the post-war period. The three phases of Japan's cultural sophistication to Lévi-Strauss constructed the unique Japanese cultural

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<sup>228</sup> “Tripartite Pact,” agreement concluded by Germany, Italy, and Japan on September 27, 1940, one year after the start of World War II.

identity. In this view, coinciding with Japan's economic miracle, Lévi-Strauss deduced from his observations that Japan occupied a unique place among world cultures. The traditional cultural elements utilized by Japan through cultural diplomacy charmed Lévi-Strauss' intellectual observations tremendously. The Japanization of these three cultural influences was so potent that Japan acquired a remarkable position preserving its native and ancient cultural traditions such as *Jōmon* pottery and incorporating other cultures by Japanizing them. However, this Japanization did not mean that Japan blunted other cultural influences, either. Japan's appreciation of the sophisticated cultures of the respective periods and its nativist tradition rendered the Japanese culture (*Nihon Bunka*) a unique culture. Hence, Japan's cultural potential was an incontestable anthropological fact. The role of Lévi-Strauss as one of the cultural ambassadors—not in the political but intellectual context—of Japan in France is inevitable to introduce to understand how France perceived Japan during the post-war years intellectually.

According to Lévi-Strauss, when juxtaposing the East and the West and Western cultures, it is evident that the “Japanese culture occupies a unique place.”<sup>229</sup> Acknowledging Japan's cultural reception from Asia in the ancient times, Lévi-Strauss underlines that the cultural relations and exchange between Japan and Europe are rooted deeply in history and originates in early times, signifying that *Japonisme* indeed is not a new cultural, or historical phenomenon. Then why is Japanese culture still so unique and unmatched? Lévi-Strauss responds to this question by unveiling Japan's unparalleled ability filter its cultural borrowings elaborately without losing its unique cultural essence. In this sense, the core of the Japanese culture remains so untouched and firm that it “has not lost its specificity.”<sup>230</sup> So much so that, Europe,

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<sup>229</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 40-41.

<sup>230</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 40-41.



and America can find their traces in Japan, yet in a transformed and Japanized manner. Lévi-Strauss concludes that today (signifying the 1970s yet which applies to today as well), “Japanese culture offers the East the model of social health and the West that of a mental hygiene, whose lessons it behooves those countries, borrowers in their turn, to take to heart.”<sup>231</sup>

Accepting Japan’s aggressive past, Lévi-Strauss praises Japan for not forgetting its past and building upon it, which has rendered Japan a country where tradition meets the future. In this sense, negligence or forgetting is irrational, nor will it solve any problems regarding one’s national identity. Therefore, Japan is doing what it should do by building a civilization upon its history, which, eventually, generates an identity that has so much to teach the West. These ideas are what Lévi-Strauss accentuates throughout his book. Japan does not destroy its past, and its love for nature is also worth appreciating and admiring. The author presents Japan as an inherently harmonious culture by juxtaposing Japan’s past aggression to its admiration for nature and harmony. Lévi-Strauss states that “as one of the reasons—that, as soon as the French spirit learned something about the Japanese, it felt in harmony with their spirit,” mentioning Balzac’s thoughts about the wonders of the Japanese art. To Lévi-Strauss, the Japanese cultural flow had its birth in France.<sup>232</sup>

Lévi-Strauss states these while acknowledging that it is indeed complicated to penetrate any culture fully if one was not born and raised within that particular culture. In this sense, he accepts that culture is incommensurable, and it is challenging to place any culture (including Japanese) among world cultures. Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss understands that his gaze on Japan may remain superficial as an outsider and a non-Japanese speaker. All these factors may render Lévi-

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<sup>231</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 40-41.

<sup>232</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 40-41.

Strauss' assessment of the Japanese culture invalid. To him, to make an evaluation of a culture valid, one has to refrain from an extreme love or admiration for that culture, which he defines as "magnetic attraction." In this sense, one should not ask more from anthropology by accepting that knowing a culture from inside is a privilege for the natives. Ironically, Lévi-Strauss cannot do it. A powerful gaze of Japan filled with love is present throughout the book. One superiority and charm of the Japanese culture lies in the fact that unlike the West, where myths and present life is divided with gulf, Japan unites its past and present through temples scattered around the cities where it is plausible to have a sightseeing experience with tour buses. Temples around skyscrapers enabling to experience culture within the vibrant atmosphere generate an exceptional Japan, "Japan, perhaps alone among nations, has until now been able to find a balance between fidelity to the past and the transformations brought about by science and technology."<sup>233</sup> What is more striking is that the uniqueness of Japan is not only present compared to the West but also in any other culture. The emphasis on Japan's ancient culture is also present in *The Other Face of the Moon*, for Lévi-Strauss approaches Japanese culture not as a mere observer but as an anthropologist. Therefore, a strong feeling and need for tracing Japan's ancient history are inevitable in Lévi-Strauss' analysis. Another significant factor that deepens Lévi-Strauss' research is that Japan's isolationist and insular tendencies in the past render it even more unique among world cultures. How come such a remote, far, and insular country can manifest the world's probably the most impressive civilization today? In this view, Lévi-Strauss repeats the notion of mysterious Japan. Japanese miracle is visible not only in its economy but also in culture—even ancient myths. Completing his analysis, Lévi-Strauss concludes the homogeneous texture of

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<sup>233</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 135.

Japanese society, suggesting that Japan was, in fact, a land as a possible hub for mingling and mixing different cultures, languages, and communities, which Japan's geographical location in the Far East prevented. Yet this insularity enables "alternation between borrowings and syntheses, syncretism and originality, the best way to define Japan's place and role in the world."<sup>234</sup>

*Shibui*, Japanese aesthetics, to Lévi-Strauss, is an indispensable component of the Japanese culture and tradition, from *Jōmon* pottery to contemporary Japanese culture. Japanese aesthetics have evolved uniquely; Japan has always added onto what already existed to its sense of aesthetics. Lévi-Strauss defines the unique culture of Japan thanks to Japan's replacing one with the upcoming culture and rendering them Japanese—or Japanizing them—even when imported from other cultures. Japan never nostalgically wants to return to the past since it does not lose track of its history even when it evolves culturally. Japan harmonizes the old and the new successfully, rendering its culture wholly distinctive. As an example, he gives the Tale of Genji (*Genji Monogatari* in Japanese) comparing it with the novels by Jean-Jacques Rousseau written seven centuries later or the Tale of Heike (*Heike Monogatari* in Japanese) to Chateaubriand's *Memoirs from beyond the Grave* of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Is Japan seven centuries ahead of France? That is not directly what Lévi-Strauss wants to convey. However, he underscores that Japan developed a mesmerizing and profound culture centuries earlier than the West and that "there can be no doubt about the identity and originality of a country whose music, graphic arts, and cuisine display characteristics unlike any other."<sup>235</sup> However, to Lévi-Strauss,

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<sup>234</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 18.

<sup>235</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 52.

Japanese art is an artless one. It is the art of imperfections. There is no overdoing in creating the *shibui* of Japanese art and culture; it is the “art of the imperfect.”<sup>236</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Franco-Japanese relations seen by the Japanese ambassadors

##### 4.4.2.1 Symposium: “The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region”

The former Ambassador of Japan to France, Kenjiro Monji, delivered a speech on the role of Japanese cultural diplomacy in French-speaking countries and addressed Japan’s forthcoming cultural diplomacy in the National Assembly of France in Paris on 22 September 2014. During the symposium titled “Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region,” Monji presented his thoughts on the role of Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France and Francophone countries. Monji divided his speech into five principal themes. The themes were Japanese public diplomacy, Japan’s soft power, Pop-culture Diplomacy as an illustration of public diplomacy, Cool Japan Initiative, and the relations between Japan and Francophone countries.

Analyzing Ambassador Monji’s speech is crucial, which underlines the significance of Franco-Japanese cultural relations and the role of French literacy (hereafter referred to as *francophonie*, its French equivalent) in cultural diplomacy. As discussed in the following sections, Monji concluded his speech during the symposium by underscoring the significance of Japan’s cultural diplomacy and the importance of *francophonie* in Franco-Japanese relations. The following paragraphs include excerpts from Monji’s speech in French, which I translated into English. As introduced in the previous chapter, Japan’s Pop-culture Diplomacy goes back to 2004 when MOFA established the Department of Public Relations for Cultural

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<sup>236</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Other Face of the Moon*, 95-149.

Exchanges and Cultural Cooperation. Monji states that Japan's cultural diplomacy still remains in the Japanese zone. For instance, Japanese inward-oriented nature of Japan's governmental bureaus challenges the outreach of Japan's cultural diplomacy to the globe. Since it is difficult to find an exact equivalent of this term in English, Monji states that it is plausible to handle Japan's Pop-culture Diplomacy within the realms of both public and cultural diplomacy. The ultimate goal behind the establishment of this office was to familiarize other nations with Japan and enhance the image of Japan abroad. Highlighting the significance of and difference between the private and public sectors, Monji reinstates that cultural diplomacy is a diplomatic tool beyond the government-to-government level and influences people at the personal citizen's level. What is striking in Ambassador Monji's speech is that he stated the concept of influencing and leading public opinion gains momentum in foreign policy. With this goal in mind, Monji proposed that France and francophone countries, in general, will remain a strong potential for Japan's increasing endeavors of cultural diplomacy. At the same time, and although it is plausible to observe the recent recovery of the Japanese economy, the image of Japan in the world is in relative decline after two decades of stagnation. In addition, in line with the growing importance of emerging cultural nations, such as the People's Republic of China and South Korea, it is growing more significant than ever for Japan to reaffirm its standing in international relations. Monji, therefore, demonstrates that he is a firm believer in Japan's potential to reaffirm its cultural power via cultural diplomacy that will lead to economic recovery. Monji affirms that Japan's cultural prospect is proven in the data of a BBC survey that demonstrates Japan's positive global image despite the economic stagnation it has suffered from for the last decades. During his speech, Monji reinstates that Japan's cultural diplomacy is growing so powerfully

that several ministries and administrative bureaus allocate budgets to launch new projects:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)
- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT)
- The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI)
- Agency for Cultural Affairs
- Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and
- Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO).

Beside governmental effort, people at the personal citizen level has also been present in Japan for the international promotion of Japanese culture. Furthermore, the cooperation to promote Japan to the rest of the world is not only between governmental bureaus, but it is also present between the private and public sectors. In this view, Monji underlines that public-private collaboration is pivotal in Japan's global standing as a cultural nation. Furthermore, Japan's *bunka gaikō* will not remain merely in the hands of the Government of Japan to execute cultural diplomacy with the heightening importance of the private sector exporting creative content industries. Monji underlines the significance of Japan's pop-culture diplomacy and soft power, ardently believing that the appeal that Japanese pop-culture has received in France and other francophone countries lays a solid foundation for Japan to strengthen its cultural might. Public-private collaboration with the French gaze in Japan, to Monji, will culminate in incremental flow into the country. During his tenure as Ambassador, Monji expresses that he had had the impression that Japan's cultural diplomacy is potent to become even stronger (in France) in the upcoming days. Among the manifestations of the Japanese impact on

contemporary French perception is the influence of the Japanese cuisine (*washoku*) on the French cuisine, the number of Michelin-starred restaurants in Japan, the cooperation between Japan and Paris-based UNESCO in Japan's heritage conservation policies, the correlation between *sake* and the French wine demonstrated by the example of Sake Samurai and Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin. Monji draws parallelism between France and Japan. "Even that UNESCO is headquartered in Paris proves the cultural might of the French Government," Monji states and continues, "Japan has a lot to learn from France."<sup>237</sup>

When it comes to the francophone world, in general, and countries other than France, Monji underlines the significance of the African continent. At this point, the function of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), as Monji suggests, also has a pivotal role in establishing a cultural base in the francophone world. For instance, May 2008 witnessed the occasion of the TICAD IV. The government documents prepared for the TICAD IV concerning the cooperation between the Government of Japan and the International Organization of the Francophonie (*OIF, l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* in French) defined the objective of this document as to reinforce the dialogue the cooperation between Japan and OIF. In this sense, in the future, Japan's cultural diplomacy is likely to transcend the borders of France, and the Government of Japan will probably work in the same mentality and synergy to add value to the interconnected cultural actions.

In May 2010, Tokyo and the twenty-three members of OIF launched an occasion. The event was home to culture days and cultural events held at universities

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<sup>237</sup> This quotation is from the lecture by Mr. Kenjiro Monji, the former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled "The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region" during the Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region at the French National Assembly in Paris on September 22, 2014. This quotation is originally in French yet translated by the author into English.

and high schools (*lycées*). During the events, both Japan and members of the organization conveyed a message highlighting the significance of the Francophone culture. The consul, in this view, aims to make the French language a tool for defending linguistic and cultural diversity in a world where there is a constant threat to these values. The chapter on comparison discerns the African potential in Japan's cultural diplomacy. However, the role of Francophone Africa, to Monji, is pivotal in the *francophonie* policies constituting some policies in Japan's cultural diplomacy targeting France and other *francophone* countries. I suggest that it may stem from the eagerness of Japan to counter China's dominance and monopoly in Africa both economically and culturally. France and Japan have worked together and collaborated in humanitarian missions, specifically against AIDS and underdevelopment in African countries: Djibouti, Madagascar, Uganda so far. Africa is also crucial for Japan to counter China's (not only economic but also) cultural hegemony.<sup>238</sup> If there is a love affair between Japan and France, there is a similar relationship between China and Africa—more in the economic and investment-related sense. However, China's ascending soft power is also an inevitable reality in the region. Government of Japan's missions, such as “We are Tomodachi,”<sup>239</sup> and its economic partnership with other countries in African investments (such as Turkey) unveil how Japan's cultural diplomacy will go beyond the French borders. In this view, Monji firmly believes that the upcoming years will bear fruitful results in Franco-Japanese cultural diplomacy.<sup>240</sup> The ardent *manga* readers in France—

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<sup>238</sup> This quotation is from the lecture by Mr. Kenjiro Monji, the former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region” during the Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region at the French National Assembly in Paris on September 22, 2014. This quotation is originally in French yet translated by the author into English.

<sup>239</sup> “We are Friends” in English.

<sup>240</sup> This quotation is from the lecture by Mr. Kenjiro Monji, the former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “The Role of Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region” during the Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy in the Francophone Region at the French National Assembly in Paris on September 22, 2014. This quotation is originally in French yet translated by the author into English.



*manfra*—Japan’s increasing presence in the pop-culture market in France topped with Africa’s growing potential as an investment hub provide all the rationale for Japan to reorient its cultural diplomacy in France and the *francophone* world in general. A conceivable Franco-Japanese partnership in Africa can aid Japan to challenge China’s omnipresence in the region, especially assuming the French influence that long existed in sub-Saharan African countries.

#### 4.4.2.2 France-Japan: 160 years of diplomatic relations

A more recent event unveiling the prospects of Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France is the interview titled France-Japan: 160 Years of Diplomatic Relations (*France-Japon : 160 Ans de Relations Diplomatiques* in French) organized by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI, *l’Institut Français des Relations Internationales* in French). The interview between Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and President of IFRI, and Masato Kitera,<sup>241</sup> Japanese Ambassador to France was a sideline of the Asia Center of the French Institute of International Relations (*Le Centre Asie de l’Institut Français des Relations Internationales* in French) conference on November 22, 2018, with the title “160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of France-Japan Relations: A New Strategic Partnership.” On this occasion, IFRI brought together many experts to discuss this political and strategic partnership, its results, the challenges to be met, and the opportunities for future cooperation. During the event, Thierry de Montbrial, founder, and the president of IFRI, interviewed Masato Kitera, Ambassador of Japan in France. Kitera began his words by communicating the significance of the relations between France on the international scene. “We talk

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<sup>241</sup> Mr. Masato Kitera, former Ambassador-designate of Japan to France and former Ambassador of Japan to China, received on June 6, 2016, the insignia of Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honor from the hands of Mr. Thierry Dana, Ambassador from France to Japan.

a lot about an exceptional partnership, but now our relations have become so intense in all domains of diplomacy that we can now call one another our ‘natural partners. It just comes naturally at the moment.’”<sup>242</sup> Embarking on the constantly changing world trends in cultural diplomacy and international relations in general, Ambassador Kitera insinuated that there is a plethora of roles played by nations in this world. The tasks and responsibilities shouldered by governments have augmented even more in number and differed in nature compared to the world of the past. In this sense, Kitera extrapolated that the genuine originality of the Franco-Japan alliance stems from the fact that France and Japan have a ubiquity of shared values and interests to pass on one another. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the values extended to constructing an international and global society. Community, freedom (of speech and expression), human rights, identity, and democracy have become the pivotal agenda in international relations and constitute the shared norms and values that France and Japan will play in global society both individually and as allies. Nations merely relying on hard power cannot realize their goals further as long as they disregard the global values of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this view, for Kitera, the role of Japan and France becomes increasingly priceless.

Montbrial asked Ambassador Kitera to compare current Franco-Japanese relations to 18 years ago, when Kitera spent six months in Paris as a researcher at IFRI, concerning the differences and the level of progress. Kitera stated the contacts between the Prime Minister of Japan and the President of the Republic of France. Along with the presidential and prime ministerial level, Kitera also opined that, in less than 20 years, the bilateral dialogue, exchanges, and state of connectedness

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<sup>242</sup> This quotation is from the interview of Mr. Masato Kitera, former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “France-Japan: 160 Years of Diplomatic Relations (*France-Japon : 160 Ans de Relations Diplomatiques*)” organized by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI, *l’Institut Français des Relations Internationales* in French) by Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and President of IFRI.

between the two countries have also changed dramatically. “Cultural exchanges, without a doubt, showed an upward trajectory whereas the cooperation between both Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense of Japan and France countries intensified.” Furthermore, Kitera clarified that the intensity of exchanges is at an entirely different level than 18 years ago,

There, I say when I return to Tokyo, I believe that there is a tremendous possibility of a partnership between the two countries and, I fathom since the first contact of work with Japan, the relations have been ardently increasing in all senses. Today, if we are to realize the objectives of Japanese diplomacy or the diplomacy of (*Monsieur*) Abe, it is inevitable to cooperate and delve into a deeper dialogue with (*Monsieur*) Macron. There is a weighty possibility of cooperation between these two gentlemen and countries.<sup>243</sup>

Stating that the first contact in terms of collaborative research and analysis with Japan became evident in France with *Quai d’Orsay* 45 years ago, Montbrial emphasized that the exceptionally formal Franco-Japanese relations have evolved in a more personal level is exceptionally phenomenal.

The type of relationship that both governments have, for instance, has encountered a transformation that is virtually inconceivable on the human level, which is also especially meaningful. France’s massive diplomatic and political background, Abe-Macron linkages, or the affinities between the diplomats of the two governments are consequential. However, now in the contemporary world, people have also evolved into (cultural) ambassadors and representatives. The essence of personal connections, accordingly, not only between political and diplomatic authorities but also individuals are climacteric ingredients with beneficial outcomes.<sup>244</sup>

Ambassador Kitera responded by stating that it is a great privilege for him to come back as an ambassador. I also believe that the relationships between the Japanese and French at the personal citizen’s level impact the relations of interest. However, I

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<sup>243</sup> This quotation is from the interview of Mr. Masato Kitera, former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “France-Japan: 160 Years of Diplomatic Relations (*France-Japon : 160 Ans de Relations Diplomatiques*)” organized by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI, *l’Institut Français des Relations Internationales* in French) by Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and President of IFRI.

<sup>244</sup> This quotation is from the interview of Mr. Masato Kitera, former Ambassador of Japan to France, titled “France-Japan: 160 Years of Diplomatic Relations (*France-Japon : 160 Ans de Relations Diplomatiques*)” organized by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI, *l’Institut Français des Relations Internationales* in French) by Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and President of IFRI.

fathom both French and Government of Japans and the people of the two nations will continue to improve the way governments handle the issues of the global society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### 4.5 Cultural blossom between Japan and France in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Before concluding the chapter on the Cold War cultural relations between France and Japan, it is inevitable to introduce the recent anniversaries and milestones occurring in Franco-Japan relations. Examining the history of Japan's cultural diplomacy in France, Japan started to establish its image abroad through its unique traditional culture. *Ukiyo-e*, Japanese prints influenced French paintings and gave birth to the Impressionism school in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Madame Butterfly*, composed by Giacomo Puccini, has helped create an exotic image of Japan for a long time. *Fujiyama* and *Geisha* have constituted stereotypical images of the archipelago for foreigners who have not exposed themselves to Japan's gaze. In this view, the French have been fascinated by Japanese cultures like *chadō*, *ikebana*, *haiku*, Zen Buddhism, and *sumo*.

##### 4.5.1 Jacques Chirac's love of Japan

The former—and late-President of the Republic of France, Jacques Chirac, was a big fan of *sumo*, *kabuki*, and *noh* theater. Visiting the Land of the Rising Sun more than forty times in his official capacity and private, Chirac's ardent passion for Japan and the Japanese culture manifested itself in cultural diplomacy. Japan's initiative to present the *Premium Imperiale* Cultural Awards annually by a member of the Japanese imperial family on behalf of the Japan Art Association was a manifestation of France's deep cultural appreciation of Japan.<sup>245</sup> Beginning from the 1990s, France

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<sup>245</sup> Mitsui, "Jacques Chirac, the French President Who Loved Japan, Dies at 86."

was an eager trade partner involved in international trade with Japan. The French appetite for business and economic partnership with Japan fostered by the cultural exchange probably stemmed from Jacques Chirac's policy towards Japan in the 1990s and 2000s. The French president has made no less than forty visits to this country, more than other French presidents. France, during this period, launched the "*Le Japon, c'est Possible*"<sup>246</sup> Export Promotion Campaign aimed at encouraging exports to the Land of the Rising Sun. Over the period 1993-2004, the amount of trade between the two countries increased by 50%, with Japan becoming France's ninth-largest customer.<sup>247</sup> Currently, France ranks third in terms of investments in Japan.<sup>248</sup>

#### 4.5.2 Japanese popular culture in France

Franco-Japanese *amour* has been impeccably deep and phenomenal. With Japan's turn towards popular culture through the Pop-culture Diplomacy and the launching of the Cool Japan Initiative, the role the Japanese *manga* plays in France is giant. In major French cities like Paris and Strasbourg, stalls full of *manga* and Japanese comics are ample in bookstores. In fact, in many countries, and France, students want to study the Japanese language to read *manga* in Japanese. In addition, Japanese popular culture, especially *manga*, plays an exceptionally significant role in Japanese diplomacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An article in *Le Figaro* states that, in 2007, 4,314 comic books were published in French-speaking Europe and that 40.39% of

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<sup>246</sup> MOFA, "Visit to Japan by Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic of France." <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/france/relations.html>

<sup>247</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, "*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*" <https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

<sup>248</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, "*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*" <https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

the published works are Franco-Belgian albums compared to 43,12% of manga.<sup>249</sup>

Sales value of comic titles sold in France is 591 million euros while the number of comic titles sold in France is 53 million copies. The top *manga* volume in France is *Solo Leveling, Vol.1 (Dubu)*.<sup>250</sup> Obviously, people possess an image of Japan, depending on their knowledge of Japanese culture. However, all these elements of Japanese culture help produce a positive impression of Japan at the personal citizen's level. Such a cultural persuasion is what constitutes Japan's Soft Power. As Güngen affirms, when Japan needs the validation and support of international audiences, their image of Japan will influence global citizens to take a favorable stand towards Japan. Today, it is even possible to see that *sushi* is being served at the Algerian National Day reception in Strasbourg.<sup>251</sup>

#### 4.5.3 Japonismes 2018 and La Saison de la France au Japon

On October 9, 2008, Japan and France celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between France and Japan, which is the origin of diplomatic relations between the two countries. France and Japan were home to a plethora of events. The Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg organized a traditional puppet theater called *Bunraku* in March, and the festival of Japan "Japan Week" in November in Strasbourg. A decade later, October 9, 2018, marked the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between France and Japan and the year of the third wave of *Japonisme* with "*Japonisme 2018*" cultural season to deepen the

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<sup>249</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, "*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*"

<https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

<sup>250</sup> Statista Research Department, "Manga in France-statistics and facts."

<sup>251</sup> Consulate-General of Japan in Strasbourg, "*La Diplomatie Culturelle du Japon—Le Manga joue un rôle important dans la diplomatie japonaise.*"

<https://www.strasbourg.fr.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000326163.pdf>

mutual understanding between two nations further. For instance, the “Beauty of Japan” Comprehensive Project Advisory Panel, the exhibition in Paris *Japanism 2018: Souls in Resonance* (*Japonismes 2018: Les âmes en resonance* in French) and the French Season in Japan 2021-2022 (*Season de la France au Japon 2021-2022* in French) is one recent development marking a pivotal step in Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France. Franco-Japanese relations have evolved in a surprising trajectory as well. In fact, currently, it is France who receives inspiration from Japan’s cultural diplomacy.

France has realized that promoting its elite, national and traditional culture does not suffice to execute cultural diplomacy in an intertwined and multilayered cultural globalization thanks to the internet and information technology. Hence, France maintains that it has to stand out and reach out to the mass audiences—not just the elites—by investing in the modernization of contemporary French culture. At this point, Japan, as a country providing a unique example of its traditional and popular culture in the employment of cultural diplomacy, has become a role model for the French Government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Taking Japan’s Pop-culture Diplomacy as an example, France is now turning its attention towards enhancing and employing its popular culture and attempting to construct a Pop-culture Diplomacy like Japan. Furthermore, non-governmental agents and the private sector have grown more assertive and prominent in executing Japan’s cultural diplomacy, again, thanks to globalization. Especially the Cool Japan Initiative proves that cultural diplomacy can no longer merely rely on the public sector, and the inclusion of the private sector into national cultural diplomacy is indispensable. For instance, the section on cultural diplomacy in Japan’s recent releases of the Diplomatic Bluebook such as the one released in 2017 is home to discussions revolving around the public-private

partnership between Japan's creative industries and the Government of Japan.<sup>252</sup>

Exporting the creative content industries through public-private collaboration has prompted the primordial focus of and the principal agenda in French cultural diplomacy. Briefly, the country long aspired by Japan has now commenced taking Japan as an example. One thing, however, is indisputable. Franco-Japan relations—not only in economy, security, politics, and strategy but also in culture—will evolve in a more strategic and influential conjuncture with the heightened importance of cultural diplomacy in Japan's policy agenda. The cultural relations fostered by Japan's cultural diplomacy policies in France will continue to grow and evolve with the globalized network of cultural connections.

#### 4.6 Robust Japanese cultural diplomacy in France

France was not the primary partner of Japan to execute its cultural diplomacy during the post-war period. Instead, the Land of the Rising Sun focused on the United States and Southeast Asia to reconstruct its identity. However, Japan sent and invited envoys—its cultural diplomacy was more invitation-oriented—to observe the Japanese culture, arts, society, language, and identity and disseminate it on the international scene. Japan's post-war cultural diplomacy in France constructed the shared Franco-Japanese image drawn through the cultural exchanges beginning with the first Japanism. Lévi-Strauss' visits and art exhibitions surrounding France during the post-war period not only transmitted Japan's culture overseas but also enabled an ecosystem for Japan to reconstruct its national and cultural identity. Central themes such as aesthetics, harmony, nature-loving, and combining the traditional past with the innovative future, we learn, have granted Japan the elements it could promote to

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<sup>252</sup> MOFA, "Diplomatic Bluebook 2017."  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2017/html/index.html>



the globe. Japan could evolve into an aesthetic, cultural nation with a sense of aesthetics (*shibui* in Japanese) as understood in the words of Lévi-Strauss. The 21<sup>st</sup> century constitutes the right moment for the two countries to project to the whole world the shared image of countries of great tradition and culture, of which Japan is a renowned member.

Second, the image of an economically advanced Japan was the final step in establishing the ultimate perception of Japan in the French eyes. Japan was becoming a country where aesthetic and serene traditional cultural elements—appealing to the elites—were equipped with economic advancement, which aggravated Japan’s potential to become a cultural inspiration and attraction in France immensely. Therefore, there were two underlying strategies in Japan’s employing robust cultural diplomacy in France. The first one is the first wave of *Japonisme* that had long ago established a foundation in Franco-Japanese culture partnership. The second one, on the other hand, Japan’s economic miracle attracted the French to receive Japan’s cultural diplomacy. In this view, post-war Japan granted France this sumptuous, elite, captivating, high culture that the Government of Japan was more than willing to promote during the post-war era. The shared, refined tastes of both cultures, in this view, culminated in a strategic cultural partnership that healed Japan’s scars and allowed it to reconstruct its identity in the international scene. The present chapter, therefore, proves the argument of the present thesis, which suggests that cultural diplomacy is a rehabilitative instrument in international relations by unearthing Japan’s cultural diplomacy in France during the post-war period. It will not be wrong, however, to state that Japan focused more on France in the 1970s and 1980s during the Cold War period.

## CHAPTER 5

### BUNKA GAIKŌ IN TURKEY: AMITY RISING FROM TRAGEDY

Japan and Turkey have had an amicable and supportive relationship throughout history. However, this supportive relationship has originated from a series of historically tragic events, enabling the foundation of cultural relations on an emotion rather than a realistic or strategic basis. To this date, the tragic events bonding the Japanese and Turkish people together throughout history has led analyses of Japan-Turkey relations to remain within the framework of romantic discourses rather than realistic ones.<sup>253</sup> Both countries have engaged in leveraging activities for the other during times of crisis, as briefly discussed in the following sections. In this sense, it is possible to argue that Japan and Turkey lack a solid strategic partnership in cultural relations. Furthermore, the lack of sustainable and organized cultural diplomacy of Japan in Turkey prevents Japan from benefiting from opportunities to which Turkey can operate as access.

In this view, the present chapter analyzes Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey during the post-war era. The analysis suggests that Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey has vast room for more strategic international cultural policies to render Japan-Turkey cultural relations steadier and more effective, to retain a more powerful gaze in Turkish residents. However, the chapter does not suggest that Japan has not implemented effective cultural diplomacy in Turkey during the post-war period. The present chapter analyzes Japan's *bunka gaikō* in Turkey in three sections after introducing Japan-Turkey relations briefly. The first section will include the analysis of *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* written by Bozkurt Güvenç

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<sup>253</sup> Pehlivan Türk, "Turkish-Japanese Relations: Turning Romanticism into Rationality," 1.

upon an invitation to Japan by the Japan Foundation in 1977 to observe the Japanese culture and society. This section will reveal how Prof. Güvenç, a foreign cultural observer, perceived Japan, and the Japanese culture as nonnative by providing a neutral and objective insight to the Turkish readers. Similar to the invitation of Lévi-Strauss by the Japan Foundation to Japan, Japan Foundation also invited the cultural anthropologist, Bozkurt Güvenç, who was a non-Japanese speaker, to Japan in 1977 as a promoter of Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. Secondly, the analysis of the 2015 movie "125 Years Memory" (Ertuğrul 1890 in Turkish and Kainan 1890 in Japanese) will reveal the narrative of Japan-Turkey relations as one of the latest products of Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. The analysis of the movie story also unveils how the friendship and compassion between Japan and Turkey deepened in the account of two dramatic events in history. Finally, the interviews with Japan's cultural attaches to Turkey and Turkey's current ambassador to Japan—all conducted by the author of the thesis—unearth the present situation of Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. The interviews also disclose what Japan's strategic plans and goals are for the future of Japanese cultural diplomacy in Turkey.

### 5.1 Tracing the history of Japan-Turkey cultural relations

The first contact of the Japanese with Turkey took place towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the Ottoman Empire. The identity construction phase that Meiji Japan was undergoing during the respective period resonated with what the Ottoman Empire was experiencing with the Imperial Edict of Reorganization (*Gülhane Hatt-ı Şerif* or *Tanzimât Fermânı* in Turkish) in 1839. Both countries were constructing a national and cultural identity while importing the modern aspects of the Western world and protecting and preserving their traditional and cultural characteristics.

Both had tolerated the humiliation of unequal treaties imposed by Western powers. In this sense, the support mechanism took off long before Japan-Turkey cultural relations started developing. For Turkey, Japan was another country stuck between the East and the West, experiencing a similar dichotomy in constructing a national identity. For Japan, Turkey was a country with similar cultural aspects and was somehow left behind despite its relative geographical proximity—compared to Japan—to European countries or the West in general. In this view, it is plausible to start by suggesting that subconsciously, Japan and Turkey were in a similar situation, suffering from identity confusion. Perhaps due to the similar experience that both countries persisted in, Japan-Turkey relations have witnessed constant supportive actions on both countries' part. Again, conceivably, this may be the reason why Japan-Turkey relations are referred to more as friendship—or amity in some cases—than as mere relations to underscore its supportive nature.

The most momentous milestone in the history of Japan-Turkey relations occurred, without a doubt, on September 16, 1890, “when the Turkish frigate Ertuğrul hit a reef and sank off the coast of Wakayama in Japan.”<sup>254</sup> The Japanese managed to rescue only 69 sailors and officers out of the initial 609.<sup>255</sup> Later, two Japanese corvettes took the surviving Ottoman sailors and officers back to Istanbul. Ever since the sinking of the Ertuğrul Frigate, Japan-Turkey amity intensified. The unfortunate incident has been the most memorable and substantial symbol of Japan-Turkey cultural relations although they were not inherently cultural like Franco-

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<sup>254</sup> Mercan, “Ertuğrul Frigate: Symbol of Turkish-Japanese Friendship: Frigate Carrying 609 Sailors Sank off Coast of Wakayama Prefecture in 1890.”

<sup>255</sup> Figure disputed.

Japanese relations. The tragedy has been home to references such as “goodwill born of disaster.”<sup>256</sup>

Defining Japan-Turkey relations as warm, friendly, and cooperative, now late, Solmaz Üneydin (1942-2010), the former Ambassador of Turkey to Japan, stated that the sinking of the Ertuğrul Frigate and the rescuing of the rest of the crew by the Japanese constitutes a milestone and turning point in Japan-Turkey relations. To Üneydin, the sinking of the Ertuğrul Frigate constructed this “strong base on which the mutual understanding and friendly relations between Turkey and Japan began to develop, bringing them to their excellent level at present.”<sup>257</sup>

While the official diplomatic relations between Japan and Turkey began in 1924 when Japan recognized the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Turkey established the first Turkish mission in Japan in 1925. Following establishing the official diplomatic relations between the two countries, another event happened towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which the movie claims as providing Turkey with the much-needed opportunity to pay its debt to Japan and the Japanese at a severely critical time.<sup>258</sup> This crisis culminating in enhancing the Japan-Turkey friendship took place in 1985. The Republic of Turkey, under Turgut Özal’s administration, responded positively to Japan’s call for help to evacuate Japanese citizens in Tehran during the Iraq-Iran War in 1985. Thanks to this crisis, ironically, the Japan-Turkey friendship improved further, and the cooperative nature of the relations proved their might once again. Japan-Turkey relations have continuously grown more resolute with global crises and hardships throughout history.

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<sup>256</sup> Murakami, “The Sinking of the ‘Ertuğrul:’ Japan and Turkey Mark the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Tragedy.”

<sup>257</sup> A speech by (late) Mrs. Solmaz Üneydin, the former Ambassador of Turkey to Japan on the commemoration of the 82<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey.

<sup>258</sup> This is the claim of the movie, which is a debatable view, it cannot be proven that Özal had such a view.

In the 1980s, Turkey enjoyed foreign direct investments after opening up to the rest of the world following the government's adoption of liberal financial policies under the Özal administration. First economic, then cultural and political measures found their place in Japan-Turkey relations, transforming the friendship and amity between the two countries into a more strategic partnership fostered with the beginning of the New Millennium. Upon the Prime Minister of the time, Süleyman Demirel's visit to Japan in 1992, the Turkish-Japanese Foundation was established in March 1993 as a publicly beneficial legal entity under Prof. Cafer Tayyar Sadıklar. Former Japanese Ambassador and the then Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, Atsuko Toyama's requests to the Japanese institutions such as the Japan Business Federation, Keidanren, for financing bore its fruits. The financial support from Japanese business organizations allowed to complete the construction of the Turkish-Japanese Foundation Cultural Center resulting in its inauguration on May 3, 1998.<sup>259</sup> The year 2003 was celebrated as the "Turkish Year in Japan," 2010 as the "Japan Year in Turkey," and 2019 as the "Turkish Culture Year in Japan." In 2013, Japan-Turkey relations evolved into a strategic partnership, and according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Turkey, "keep developing rapidly ever since through high-level visits."<sup>260</sup> It is evident that Japan-Turkey cultural relations will enjoy a more established cultural connection.

The current Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu is an ardent lover of Japan also fond of the Japanese language. As a symbolic appreciation of Çavuşoğlu's endeavors and contributions to Japan-Turkey bilateral relations, the Government of Japan awarded the Foreign Minister with Grand Cordon of the Order of Rising Sun.

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<sup>259</sup> Turkish-Japanese Foundation, "History."

<http://www.tjv.org.tr/tr/hakkimizda/tarihce/>

<sup>260</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, "Relations between Türkiye and Japan."

<https://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-japan.en.mfa>

The presence of Çavuşoğlu contributes indispensably to Japan-Turkey relations. Both countries favor each other. Especially Turkey's admiration for Japan is inevitable. The supportive friendship rising from historical tragic events will undoubtedly evolve into a more strategic cultural partnership. However, at present, the ultimate challenge Japan-Turkey relations face is that the narrative of Japan-Turkey cultural relations spin around romanticism, as Pehlivan Türk puts forward. What both governments need, however, is a realistic approach to enhancing bilateral relations by moving beyond the romantic and emotional narratives. There is room for development and especially for a rational and strategic plan to improve Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. Through cultural diplomacy, Japan-Turkey cultural relations should transcend beyond narratives filled with romanticism and instead evolve into a strategic partnership to render cultural association between the two countries more robust.

## 5.2 Bozkurt Güvenç's visit to Japan and *Nihon Bunka*

Prof. Güvenç was a leading anthropologist who published numerous works on society and culture. The late academic was a science and culture person who founded the anthropology department at Hacettepe University. He was promoted to associate professor in 1969, professor in 1977, and retired in 1993. Güvenç focused on the problems of people, culture, education, and change in his research. He was also appointed as the Prime Ministry Undersecretary of Culture by the then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit in 1974. Prof. Güvenç was a leading anthropologist who published numerous works on society and culture. One of his pivotal works is *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka*, written in Turkish, which is a collection of Güvenç's observations of the Japanese society and culture during his several visits to Japan and

many months he spent in the country. To date, *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* is the most exhaustive testimony of the cultural observation of Japan written in Turkish, which does not adhere merely to academic narratives but concentrates on day-to-day experiences of the Japanese with their historical backgrounds. It is a must-read for those who would like to obtain a first-hand account of the Japanese society and culture written by a Turkish anthropologist. This section, therefore, will analyze Güvenç's take of the Japanese culture as a cultural ambassador who disseminated Japanese values in Turkey through *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka*. Throughout the book, Güvenç emphasizes Japan's enormous potential to draw attraction through its unique culture which is exceptionally significant for the present thesis. Güvenç accentuates Japan's potential to transcend beyond the five senses and the notion of *shibui*, aesthetics as previously introduced, which underlines Japan's unmatched potential to rehabilitate its international relations and image through cultural diplomacy in the before the Pop-culture Diplomacy era. The following sentences are the translation of Güvenç's observations on the harmonious and peaceful nature of the Japanese topped with the Japanese values such as honestly, ultimate service (*omotenashi* in Japanese), altruism (*omoiyari* in Japanese), and others to unveil how the perception of the Japanese identity in the eyes of an outsider from Turkey.

No one cheats the tourist; no one takes tips. Everyone tries to help the tourist with a smiling face. The tourist spends most of his time on the road, in the bazaar, in the market, and at dinner. S/he makes a little tour of the area, watching a few Matsuri. (Tourist) cannot afford tickets for concerts, does not possess enough money for more expensive shows. The tourist who despairs art immerses himself or herself in entertainment world and rests only when he or she is tired. They must have heard that Tokyo has rich (expensive) amusement (nightlife) during their travels. They see and learn as much as they can afford. Finally, the tourists' enthusiasm becomes weak for not being able to experience every single cultural item. They return to their country with the hope and wish to come again at the first opportunity.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 111.



The expression “with the hope and wishes to come again (to Japan) at the first opportunity” Güvenç uses to describe the feelings of an overall tourist as a gazer of Japan underscores Japan’s potential to retain gaze. Even during a simplistic travel experience and when the tourist does not have a lot of money—therefore, cannot afford a luxurious voyage—Japan does not cease to mesmerize the sightseer (the gazer). Therefore, the tourist can only think of going back to Japan as soon as possible to discover the undiscovered, explore the unexplored upon returning to their home country. Although these sentences greet the reader on the 111<sup>th</sup> page, Güvenç’s central observation is how Japan never ceases to amaze its gazers is omnipresent throughout the book. The potential readers of *Japon Kültürü* would finish the book with strong positive feelings about Japan and start taking Japan as a role model (country) if they had not started yet. *Japon Kültürü*, throughout its chapters, has the potential to render Turkish readers’ perception of Japan more buoyant, confirming the rehabilitative disposition of cultural diplomacy. Therefore, it is plausible that the Japan Foundation’s invitation of Prof. Güvenç to Japan was a correct decision and strategic initiative.

Quoting Murakami (1980), Güvenç highlights the reconstruction of Japanese identity. Concerning the Japanese dichotomy of constructing a cultural existence between the East and the West, Güvenç challenges existing ideas on Japan’s modernization and suggests that Japan has always been the most civilized among the world’s nations despite falling behind the technological and scientific developments during the closed country, or chained country, *sakoku*<sup>262</sup> period. Güvenç suggests that Japan emerged as a more harmonious and civilized country than Western

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<sup>262</sup> *Sakoku* (closed country or chained country) policy is the isolationist foreign policy implemented by the Tokugawa shogunate from 1603 to 1868 for 265 years, limiting the relations between Japan and other foreign countries severely.

civilizations Underlying the peaceful and democratic development policy Japan adopted following the World War II through the Yoshida and Fukuda Doctrine(s). Furthermore, Japan's cultural potential, to Güvenç, was already and always more powerful than Western cultures. Japan merely needed to improve itself in scientific developments. However, to Güvenç, Japan was already as civilized as the Western world, if not more. In this view, Güvenç presents Japan as an extraordinary country with unique cultural potential. Güvenç's observations included that the Japanese had the most balanced diet, the cleanest clothes, the best education, the best sports, and the pride of being the healthiest nation. These aspects signified Japan's unparalleled civilization. The harmonious attributes included:

- a youth that has never served in the military,<sup>263</sup>
- ordinary defense expenses invested instead in economic projects,
- the recreated middle class with radical arrangements made in the distribution of income and land,
- and a more advanced level of equality between working women and men than in Western countries.<sup>264</sup>

One striking aspect of Güvenç's observations is that considering the period when *Japon Kültürü* was written and published, the mesmerizing aspects of Japan functioned more than serving merely as a cultural diplomacy tool. Instead, Güvenç presents Japan as the role model Turkey should look up to and from which it can learn tremendously. In this sense, it is plausible to discern that Güvenç's work goes beyond being Japan's cultural promotion tool. It functions as a guideline for Turkey's future,

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<sup>263</sup> Güvenç, here, refers to Japan since the end of World War II.

<sup>264</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 248.

In reality, there is no Japanese miracle; the Japanese have national qualities that seem suitable to explain their extraordinary success. These are diligence, self-sacrifice, bearing the tax burden faithfully, meeting national difficulties, fulfilling the state's wishes, being prudent and thrifty, pinching and scraping, producing more and consuming less, saving nationally. such as participating, not refraining from self-sacrifice for education, etc. (Ozak, 1978: 250-68).<sup>265</sup>

It is possible to discern an aspiration to the Japanese discipline and values since Güvenç presents Japan as the higher norm. A delightful analogy is traceable through Güvenç's words when he positions *samurai* culture as a noble warrior art without touching upon *samurai* culture as a reminder of Japan's wartime aggression. While Güvenç, for instance, emphasizes the sacred nature of the *samurai* swords, he never approaches samurai sword *samurai katana* (in Japanese) as a symbol of Japanese imperialism.

Aggression becomes nobility in Güvenç's perception, which he reveals by stating that the Japanese say that the way of the sword (*kendō* in Japanese) and war games will enhance the male personality while believing that traditional female arts such as *ikebana* and *chadō* also suit the female characteristics. Sewing *kimono*, writing beautifully, knitting, growing a garden, and cooking are also considered arts to practice throughout life.<sup>266</sup> The male-female distinction of the Japanese traditions and arts present a new perception of the Japanese culture. However, male personality does not signify any aggression. Therefore, Güvenç introduces the reader to Japanese culture through rose-filtered glasses. Glorifying Japanese culture and comparing it with that of the West, Güvenç unveils Japanese philosophy. Juxtaposing *samurai* garments and chevaliers, Güvenç unearths that *samurai* garments are to intimidate and gain the victory but not destroy. Hence, *samurai* garments still represent Japanese aesthetics. To Güvenç, *samurai* clothes are glorious, while the garments of

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<sup>265</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 420.

<sup>266</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 347-351.

the knights of the Middle Ages are cheap, rough, stiff, and plain. Tokugawa Japan becomes the superior one.

Güvenç praises Japan's cultural conservatism despite structural and functional changes throughout *Nihon Bunka*. There is also praise of Japanese understanding of *shibui* and uniqueness to retain gaze, which creates a striking similarity to the ideology of Lévi-Strauss. To Güvenç, every Japanese craft, tradition, and experience is aesthetic. His understanding of Japanese aesthetics, beauty, neatness, and hospitality is substantial throughout his observations. In Japan, everything is an art. Even hosting guests in a traditional Japanese inn (*ryokan*), which Güvenç narrates based on his adventure of staying at a Japanese *ryokan*, is art. Spending nights at Japanese guesthouses is an unmatched and unique experiences that cannot be encountered in another geography, putting Japan at another dimension. Simplicity in art conceals the complexity of human character. The Japanese aesthetics and art contain beauty even within the sadness of nature represented by "the pathos of things "*mono no aware*," paralleling the Japanese philosophy with that of Yunus Emre and drawing similarities between the two cultures. Quoting the famous Japanolog Sir George Sansom, he underlines the essentiality of the aesthetic nature of even the Japanese language by stating that "Anyone who does not read [Japanese] script cannot grasp the Japanese aesthetic [sense of beauty]," again referring to *shibui*.<sup>267</sup> It lies in the disposition of the Japanese thanks to their ancestors, referring to the *Wa* Country.

Cultural elements throughout history such as the Japanese pottery from the Jōmon Period, the tea ceremony master Nomura Ninsei's tea bowls (*chawan* in Japanese) from Kyoto, the art of the tea ceremony, and *ryokans* are all reflections of

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<sup>267</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 287.

Japanese aesthetics. The most exquisite and permanent remnants of the traditional culture are still present in Japan, a nation that preserves its tradition like no other country, notwithstanding not claiming this idea in the *Nihonjinron* sense. In the Land of the Rising Sun, anything is art and more importantly, culture. Therefore, Güvenç's perception and thoughts on Japanese aesthetics maximize Japan's prospect to retain the gaze of Turkish readers. The Japan that Güvenç presents is not worth yet a must-visit for the readers to expose themselves to such an emphatic rendition of aesthetics and, more remarkably, to discover them. Yet the Japanese practice their art masterfully without exaggerating it by nature thanks to their intrinsically harmonious nature. The importance and priority of aesthetics in the Zen tradition by turning to yourself, be one, and whole with mother earth is predominant throughout the book. Furthermore, the Japanese do not overdo to rehearse their customs, which can also be hosting a guest at a *ryokan*. They are austere, uncomplicated, yet not puritanical. Japan is a land of artless art, which explains why cultural and creative industries in Japan are best.

The most crucial problem of the West is the "cultural vacuum" arising between rapid technological development and social change. Japan has not fallen into such a vacuum; it has preserved and even developed its cultural values. According to another similar criticism, it is said that the Japanese are good at imitation and insufficient in creativity. [...] The art environment is undergoing significant structural changes in interaction with Western culture and industrial technology. Some explain why there is no "culture vacuum" in Japan with creativity in art. The Japanese, who interpret the West successfully in the phonetic, plastic, performing, and visual arts, on the other hand, have again started to become interested in their traditional arts and crafts.<sup>268</sup>

*Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* also provides insight regarding the parallelism between the Japanese and Turkish cultures. The most striking aspect of the cultural similarity between the two "eastern" countries, according to Güvenç, is the collectivism vs.

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<sup>268</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 421-426.

individualism of the West. The thought of the individual for the Westerner, the sense of “we” for the Japanese person, cognition is essential; it is the condition of existence. The feeling of “us” arises from family unity, develops among relatives and neighbors, and is maintained between colleagues and co-workers.<sup>269</sup> Juxtaposing the Eastern and Western thought, he compares his interpretation of Japanese belief of “We are a family. Therefore, we are” to Descartes’s “*Cogito ergo sum* (I think. Therefore, I am).”<sup>270</sup> Cultural similarities, as introduced, come into play in the different sections of the book. Güvenç first likens Japan’s collective nature to that of Turkey. It is plausible to comment on Güvenç’s drawing parallelism with Japanese and Turkish cultures attempting to introduce Japan as a relatable community despite its geographical distance to Turkey. At certain section of the book, the reader harbors the feeling that “We are not so different after all.”

One example is the concept of *chū*, which can be described as loyalty, devotion, fidelity, faithfulness) and *on*, which can be described as favor, obligation, debt of gratitude. Here, the notion of *chū* arises from the inexhaustibility of a debtor’s ten debts. Since the debtor cannot pay the ten debts, the debtor has to be faithful and respectful throughout their life. Benedict (1966) calls this inexhaustibility “one ten-thousandth” of their ten-debt.<sup>271</sup> It is a sense of indebtedness similar to the “mother right” in Islamic-Turkish culture: “Even if a person took their mother to Hajj forty times, they would still not be able to pay away to their mother.” It is debatable if loyalty is that significant in the Turkish mindset and spirit. However, Güvenç, through references and attributes to the notion of loyalty in both Japanese and Turkish cultures, does not only analyze Japan’s concrete

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<sup>269</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 70.

<sup>270</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 406.

<sup>271</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 406.

cultural elements but goes beyond them by also delving into the spiritual attributes of the Japanese culture and society and draws parallelism between Japanese and Islamic-Turkish (spiritual) components. To Güvenç, Turks and the Japanese are similar to one another. They are loyal, respectful, and thoughtful of their seniors. They remain grateful for the good deeds others conduct for them and live up to (mainly) seniors' expectations. It is plausible to liken the notion of *chū* to Turkish respect to the seniors (*büyükçe saygı* in Turkish) and *on* to gratitude (*vefa borcu*, *minnettarlık* in Turkish). Once again, it is debatable, especially in the contemporary Turkish society, whether these notions are applied or felt sincerely by the Turkish people. However, Güvenç, in his work, does not take a step back and insists on the cultural similarities between the two cultures.

Another minor reference to the resemblance between the two eastern cultures is thick Japanese noodle made from wheat flour (*udon* in Japanese) and a type of Turkish soup, *şehriye çorbası* in Turkish, which can be translated as vermicelli soup into English. Although *udon* and *şehriye çorbası* are indeed not inherently similar grain products, Güvenç associates one with the other to present more cultural parallel between Turkish and Japanese gastronomical cultures. Therefore, it is also plausible to conclude that Güvenç, in some parts, overdoes associating Japanese culture with the Turkish one. However, one perpetual theme throughout the book is the love of Turks for the Japanese. The Turkish people's admiration and infatuation for the Japanese comprise the prominent subtext of *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka*, which Güvenç masterfully recapitulates in a witty anecdote,

#### My Favorite Turkish Wit

At the *sake* table, I told several jokes to the Japanese surrounding me. The jokes were adaptations of Turkish or Western humor. When someone liked the joke and laughed at it, the rest joined and laughed as well. But wherever I told the following joke, everyone in the room immediately enjoyed it and laughed:

Question: Do Turks like the Japanese?

Answer: There are those who like it and those who do not.

Question: Who does not like it? What did we do to them?

Answer: Not because you did something to them, but because you did not.

Those who do not like are furious for not inviting those people to Japan!<sup>272</sup>

Probably the most straightforward negative comment by Güvenç on the Japanese culture concerns *manga*. *Manga*, Japanese comic books as previously introduced, to Güvenç, is not a respected art form. The following excerpt from *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* unveils how Güvenç regards *manga* and why he does not respect it. The quotation demonstrates a significant contradiction with the world cultures, which organize even festivals, events, and exhibitions for *manga* and ardent *manga* fans throughout the world. Therefore, Güvenç's not considering *manga* as a genuine art form.

There is a comic book industry called “*manga*.” The Japanese publish specific colorful picture novels for every class, age, gender, which amounts to 70 weekly or monthly publications, 16 for children and 54 for adults! The average circulation of each illustrated novel is 7 million, with a total circulation of 500 million. A commercial magazine publishing, the *manga* seems to be of little general knowledge and artistic value. However, in the face of this commercial publishing of low cultural significance, there is another reputable and widespread type of magazine publishing. There are 1800 kinds of professional, art, and science magazines, each of which has an average of over a million copies. The total circulation of these monthly or weekly magazines is over two billion, or four times the circulation of *manga*. (Condon and Kurata 1976: 116-18)<sup>273</sup>

*Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka*, written by Bozkurt Güvenç upon his visit to Japan for six months as a sociological observant of the Japanese culture, traditions, customs, way of life and society, is an excellent product of Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. As a foreign (Turkish) observer who does not speak Japanese, Güvenç observes Japan and critiques the Japanese culture from a positive perspective, illuminating how Japan is and encouraging Turkish readers to visit the country one

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<sup>272</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 311.

<sup>273</sup> Güvenç, *Japon Kültürü*, 295.



day. As mentioned in Güvenç's joke at one of the Japanese bars, *izakaya*<sup>274</sup>, where he was drinking the traditional Japanese alcoholic beverage, *sake*, and enjoying his evening with other Japanese, the only reason why some Turks were not particularly fond of the Japanese was that the Japanese had not invited them to Japan yet. Güvenç does not narrate Japan's aggression by mentioning it. *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* does not include Japan's wartime period as a militarist, expansionist, and ultranationalist empire. Even *samurai* garments, conversely, transform into warrior clothes representing Japanese aesthetics. Japan emerges as a peaceful nation pacifist in its constitution and global politics yet active—even assertive—in economic development, economic aid, and infrastructure building as well as cultural values. According to Japanese belief, there cannot be a more unhappy and unproductive person than someone who has everything and values nothing. Social education helps people draw a life path and show progress on that path to follow throughout life which is cultural (hobby) lesson, called *okeikogoto* in Japanese, in terms of practice, taking lessons, self-education, and development throughout life. The passion of Japanese for constant improvement, self-learning, discipline, punctuality, work ethics, and respect transform Japan into a role model in the eyes of international audiences, such as Turkey. Therefore, the only bad thing about Japan in the Turkish perception is not having visited it. Japan is a land beyond worth visiting; it is a role model that Turkey should look up to and learn from tremendously, a perception still valid in the Turkish mindset today.

After reading Güvenç's pivotal work, his readers will most probably want to visit Japan. The image in their minds about Japan will be a positive one. They may want to do something regarding Japan, Japanese, or the Japanese culture. They may

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<sup>274</sup> *Izakaya* is a type of informal Japanese bar that serves alcoholic drinks and snacks.

also want to begin taking Japanese lessons, improve their Japanese skills and become a bridge between the two countries one day. These possibilities all contribute to Japan's internationalization, *kokusaika*, its prospect to retain gaze and exert its soft power through cultural diplomacy. Therefore, Japan Foundation's initiative to invite Güvenç to Japan as a cultural and sociological observer was, indeed, a strategic and logical decision for *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* is among the fundamental pieces on the Japanese culture despite its rather old publication in 2002. Twenty years later, the book holds its value as an ultimate and comprehensive guideline to Japan and Japanese culture.

Japan's cultural diplomacy was a rehabilitative tool overhauling Japan's post-war identity. In this view, Güvenç's book is a masterfully written instrument for Japan to reconstruct its image in the Turkish perception. Japan was trying to rise from its ashes in the aftermath of World War II. It was busy reconstructing its national and cultural image rather than exerting soft power in international relations. If handled as a tool for identity reconstruction, Japan executed consequential cultural diplomacy through the invitation of Güvenç to the Land of the Rising Sun. Considering the current perception of Japan, Japanese culture, and people, the parallelism observed in Güvenç's expressions, and the present image of Japan in the Turkish mindset suggests that the positive image Japan attempted to construct in the eyes of the rest of the world has been evident during the post-war period.

### 5.3 *Kainan*: 125 Years of Memory

125 Years Memory (Ertuğrul 1890 in Turkish and *Kainan* 1890 in Japanese<sup>275</sup>) is a Japanese-Turkish co-production historical and dramatic movie directed by

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<sup>275</sup> *Kainan* means "accident at sea; sea disaster; shipwreck."

Mitsutoshi Tanaka. While the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Ertuğrul Film Partners in Japan supported the production, Mars Distribution in Turkey undertook its distribution. The cast of the film includes names such as “Seiyou Uchino, Kenan Ece, Shioli Kutsuna, Alican Yücesoy, Yui Natsukawa, Uğur Polat, Yuki Yoshi Ozawa, Mehmet Özgür, Deniz Oral and Tamer Levent.” Politicians such as Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, his wife Sare Davutoğlu, and Minister of Culture and Tourism Mahir Ünal attended the premiere released on December 25, 2015. The movie consists of two parts. The first part tells the story of the Ottoman frigate Ertuğrul, which sank in Japanese waters in 1890, and the efforts of the Japanese to save the ship’s crew. The second part narrates the rescuing and evacuation of more than 300 Japanese citizens stranded in Iran with the threat of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq War in 1985 upon the order of the then Prime Minister Turgut Özal through a flight of Turkish Airlines. The movie Ertuğrul 1890 describes Turkish-Japanese relations as a mutually supportive and as a sincere friendship that lasted for years. The central theme of Ertuğrul 1890 is how two countries, whose paths did not cross because of a strategic cultural unity but a series of historical tragedies, granted support to each other. In this regard, Ertuğrul 1890 also reiterates the idea that Japanese-Turkish relations are of a nature of friendship that includes mutual support arising from disasters.

### 5.3.1 Part I: The Ertuğrul Disaster

At the beginning of the movie, there is the perception that the Ottoman Empire saw the Empire of Japan as a spiritual alliance against the Western (European) powers considering the unequal treaties. Therefore, the reputation of the Ottoman Empire and their perception by the Western powers depend on this expedition. Some scenes

refer to cultural similarities between Japan and Turkey. On the one hand, the Japanese villagers from Wakayama celebrate the birth of two babies by drinking *sake*. On the other hand, the Ottoman Crew in Ertuğrul Frigate celebrates the news of the newborn son of one sergeant by playing a gourd-shaped Turkish stringed instrument, *saz* in Turkish, and singing Turkish folk songs. Both the Japanese and Turks laugh for the same joy when one Turkish and one Japanese baby are born and crying and lamenting for the same painful experience when most of the crew pass away and show the level of empathy the Japanese show for the Ottomans. Emotions do not have borders, cultures, and nations. These scenes convey that both cultures share joyful moments in their unique manners. Both the Japanese and Ottoman soldiers share the same joys, emotions, and feelings. In this view, the first scenes of Ertuğrul 1890 draw the cultural parallelism between the two countries.

Similar to Güvenç's book, the movie tells its viewers that the Japanese culture consists of altruism, sacrifice, respect for all nations regardless of ethnicity or nationality. In one dialogue, when the Japanese find out that the wounded crew is not of Japanese origin, the doctor immediately states that "It does not matter where they are from," signifying the unimportance of their nationality and background. Shintaro, a young Japanese villager, jumps into waves to save those who have not washed ashore. Helping, supporting, being thoughtful of others (*omoiyari* in Japanese) and the supportive attitude of the Japanese are prevalent throughout the movie. It is plausible to include that the director aimed at adding some neutrality to the script. There is another Japanese doctor in the village—relatively—individualistic and selfish who did not want to help the crew voluntarily due to its unpaid nature at the beginning. Therefore, the movie does not aim to present the Japanese as a perfect

people and Japan as a flawless country but attempts to highlight the supportive nature of the Japanese through *omoiyari*.

Cultural symbolism and valuing Japanese tradition and customs are also prevalent in the movie. In the introductory scenes, the viewers see traditional Japanese cultural elements such as *geishas*<sup>276</sup> the villager men adore, the *kimonos* that the *geishas* wear, the dances they do to entertain their customers. Without delving too much into Japanese cultural elements, the stereotypical Japanese traditions and visual culture of Japan that first come to mind greet the viewers. However, the parallelism between the two cultures remains clear. Feelings and emotions are the same; the only difference is how different cultures experience them through their customs and traditions (men-to-men folk singing and *geishas*' dances to entertain the male audience. Other cultural symbols include the sun and crescent accessories to symbolize Japanese-Turkish friendship, a sun placed on the crescent's curvier side, and a Japanese baby doll wearing *kimono*. The viewers see that the crew was returning home with traditionally crafted souvenirs. For example, the lieutenant of the Ottoman crew commands the naval officers to throw their belongings into the boilers while the frigate is sinking. One officer takes the Japanese baby doll in his hands, kisses it while sobbing sadly, and throws it into the boiler unwillingly, constituting a heartbreaking scene. The value given to one's culture (in this case, Japanese) is visible in the movie through the culturally powerful script.

The cultural symbolism through religious items is present in the movie as well. For instance, after the disaster of sinking the Ertuğrul Frigate along the coastline of Kushimoto, the Japanese villagers with the surviving crew members

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<sup>276</sup> *Geishas* are a class of female Japanese performing artists and entertainers trained in traditional Japanese performing arts styles, such as dance, music and singing, as well as being proficient conversationalists and hosts.

bury the dead bodies with the prayers of the *imam*. What is most striking in this scene is that Japanese priests also accompany them to show they share the remorse of the crew. The imam prays for the deceased and recites the first surah of the Quran, *Al-Fatiha*. While the burial ceremony takes place, it constitutes heartbreaking. Yet, at the same time, this scene creates heartwarming scenes since both the Japanese and the Turks share the same emotions, feelings, and remorse for the deceased, although they barely knew them. The villagers lament for the Ottoman martyrs, understand their values, and even clean and maintain the remnants of the martyrs so that their families will not see the bloodstains and dirt on the worn-off garments, shoes, and clothes and become devastated. The film illustrates collectivist and altruistic characteristics of Japanese society for both Turkish and international viewers.

According to a news piece from Milliyet Newspaper, which is a Turkish newspaper, Kiyoharu Kirk Ura, the producer of the film and the President of non-profit organization Ertuğrul Foundation for Peace in the World, stated that the descendants of the Japanese villagers who rescued the wounded took part in the film voluntarily. Ura expressed that he often comes to Turkey and is interested in olive oil production in Ayvalık, adding that he attaches great importance to Turkish-Japanese friendship because he was born in Kushimoto. Ura said, “I was born here. My great grandfather told my grandfather, and he told my father about the sacrifices of the Turks. I grew up listening to your bravery and heroism. I attach great importance to the shooting of this film to tell the unique bond of the two countries not encountered in other countries in the world. We all acted in the movie with the same emotions as our ancestors 125 years ago. I also took part in Ertuğrul, whose influence I could not get rid of all my life. I proudly portrayed a villager shouting, “We have to save more

Turks, hurry up,” when Turkish soldiers came to the beach and ran to the wounded “because my grandfather did that,” he added.<sup>277</sup>

### 5.3.2 Part II: Evacuating Japanese citizens from Tehran

The second part of Kainan 1890 is relatively shorter than the previous one and includes less storytelling. While the first part depicting the sinking of the Ertuğrul Frigate gives the viewer the impression that they are indeed watching a movie, the second part is more like a documentary. The second part, as introduced, narrates the evacuation of the Japanese people from Tehran during the Iraq-Iran War in 1985 by Turkish Airlines. Since the second part is shorter in duration, there are fewer scenes to analyze. However, some scenes reveal crucial details about the perception of the Japanese by Turks and vice versa.

In the introductory scenes of the second part, it is plausible to observe the desperateness of the Japanese since they cannot flee Iran due to the security concerns on the part of the Government of Japan to send a rescue flight to Tehran, Iran. “Our country has abandoned us” is one repeating sentence prevalent in the initial scenes. The Japanese are frustrated, bewildered, and disappointed because they have no choice but to rely on Japanese airlines to return to their country, which is impossible due to the fullness of the international flights to Japan. They call the Government of Japan to send a rescue flight to Iran to evacuate the Japanese citizens there. However, the government does not send any rescue planes to Iran due to security concerns and not to endanger more lives. Feeling abandoned, the Japanese become hopeless in the face of nearing air attack by Saddam Hussein. An officer working at the Turkish Embassy in Iran offers to forward their concern to the government bureaus in

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<sup>277</sup> Milliyet Newspaper, “Ertuğrul Filminde Torunlar Oynuyor.”

Ankara. The then Prime Minister accepts to send a second rescue flight to Iran. Then, the events unfold.

The first interesting point that can unveil information as to the perception of the Japanese by Turks is the remembrance of the sinking of Ertuğrul Frigate in Wakayama, Japan, and the rescuing of the survivors in the Ottoman Crew by the Japanese. Japan's help one hundred years ago is still vivid in the perception of both the Japanese and Turkish while plans of asking the Turkish Government for a rescue flight to Japan are circulating. Furthermore, the Turkish officer working at the Turkish Embassy makes the viewers feel that Turkey was, in fact, seeking an opportunity to reciprocate Japan's heartfelt help in the Ertuğrul Frigate disaster. The feeling of indebtedness (*on*) that the Turkish people feel towards the Japanese manifests itself when Özal accepts to send another rescue flight to Japan and when all captains of Turkish Airlines volunteer to fly to Iran despite the risk of not being able to return to Turkey given the air raid. When asked who volunteers, all captains raise their hands without hesitation, indicating that the Turkish people harbor *omoiyari* as the Japanese do. Therefore, this is Japanese fiction as there is no such *on* in Turkish culture. It Japanizes the rescue.

The second striking scene of the movie contradicts slightly with the image of the Turkish people conveyed in the initial stages. When the massive crowd of Turkish citizens at the airport does not initially accept to give their seats to the Japanese and choose a land route instead, the Turkish officer becomes obliged to convince them otherwise. Hence, similar to the individualistic medical doctor, this scene adds a neutral layer to the movie and presents Turkish people as both selfless and selfish by demonstrating the ones who resist the proposal that the Japanese should get on the second plane and return to their home country. The Turkish



officer's efforts to convince the Turkish people bear results and the Japanese people board the plane. The main argument during these scenes is that "They helped us a century ago, and we should reciprocate their goodwill right here and now."

Therefore, remembrance, indebtedness and gratitude (*vefa borcu* in Turkish and *on* in Japanese) are present in the perception and memory of both Turkish and Japanese people.

The movie *Ertuğrul 1890* is not an inherently cultural diplomacy initiative by the Government of Japan. However, the film perfectly unveils how the perception of Japan-Turkey relations evolved in a hundred years' time. The encounters of Turkey and Japan in the face of disasters and hardships, based on the film, have shaped the relations between both countries, which will transcend centuries. In this view, the fate of Japan-Turkey relations will be bound by mutual support, help, and gratitude, *on*, that will lead to more selfless actions in the future of the relations between the two countries. The movie may also lead to conclusions that it is overemotional, propaganda, or sided, demonstrating only one side of the coin by representing Japan-Turkey relations as merely positive, emotional, and supportive. One thing is inevitable that *Ertuğrul 1890* can add to the romantic narrative of Japan-Turkey relations, as Pehlivan Türk states. Therefore, one criticism for the movie is the overemphasis and concentration on the past of Japan-Turkey relations through romanticism and emotional lenses. It is plausible to deduce that the overemphasis of the shared tragedies in the history of Japan-Turkey relations can be harmful to strategic cultural diplomacy in Turkey, analyzing Japan-Turkey relations from a cultural diplomacy perspective. Enhancing Japan-Turkey relations and maximizing its potential requires a more strategic and realistic approach to strengthen the cultural connections between Japan and Turkey by boosting the image of Japan in Turkey

and rendering the country more known, recognized, and understood through more objective lenses. Japan-Turkey cultural relations, therefore, need more than fate, destiny, and tragedy. They prerequisite planning, strategy, and realistic approaches to rendering Japan's cultural diplomacy more resolute in Turkey to shift the perspective of Japan from being mere "Japan which helped Turkey and shared our pain."

#### 5.4 Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey: Interviews with diplomats

The present section will focus on the interviews conducted by diplomats to trace the past and discern the future of Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. I conducted interviews with Mr. Korkut Güngen, Ambassador of Turkey to Japan, and Mr. Yuta Nagamura, the Second Secretary of Politics and Culture of Japan to Turkey, to whom I extend her most sincere gratitude for taking the time to contribute to my research and this thesis. The interviews I conducted with the two distinguished diplomats aimed to discern how Japan's cultural diplomacy and the factors surrounding it have evolved in the eyes of diplomats. The idea of perception of the Japanese by the Turkish people and vice versa constituted one of the main themes of the responses by the diplomats. One idea resulting in the conclusion of the thesis was that to execute strategic and robust cultural diplomacy, both the target culture (as a potential gazer) and the source culture, gazee (one who is gazed at or observed) have to know one another well. Therefore, knowledge of a country's cultural heritage by other nations makes a nation proud, open to others, and willing to engage in cultural exchange constituted one of the pivotal items of the interviews. The following paragraphs will elaborate on the responses by the diplomats (interviewees). However, it is plausible to state before delving into the answers by the diplomats that making a culture

known abroad most healthily and sustainably possible is the first step and an indispensable ingredient of successful cultural diplomacy.

The interview questionnaire included six questions, which consisted of:

- i. Question: How would you evaluate the cultural diplomacy initiatives that Japan has carried out in Turkey so far?
- ii. Question: Japan, like other countries, is a country that has an appetite for attracting foreign direct investment. Is it possible to say that Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey today aims at attracting foreign investments?
- iii. Question: When we look at the effects of cultural policy on international relations, do you generally agree with the presentation of investment results as long-term rather than short-term?
- iv. Question: Do you believe that policies focused on cultural diplomacy can help establish harmonious international relations in the long run?
- v. Question: The intense political disagreements among China, South Korea, and Japan increase. Besides geopolitical conflicts, China and South Korea also gained momentum with their cultural diplomacy. What role do you think Turkey plays in Japan's foreign policy in these geopolitical, historical, and national memory disputes?
- vi. Question: What are your plans/foresight for the future Japanese-Turkish cultural exchange? What kind of cultural policy should Japan follow in Turkey?

#### 5.5.1 Interview with Mr. Korkut Güngen

Ambassador of Turkey to Japan, Korkut Güngen started his words, stating that he has been in Tokyo, Japan, since March 2021. Underlying that upon his arrival to Japan, he discovered the significance of Japan's previous periods and its reflections

on today. What kind of cultural policy does Japan follow at the moment? What are the said and unsaid? What does Turkey see when it looks at Japan? Japan is a nation that developed with the Meiji Restoration in the aftermath of the *shogunate* period. We see that it overlaps with the identity construction phase that the Ottoman Empire underwent. Why did Japan need to do this? As a result, certain factors that formed the cultural identity of Japan emerged. The perception of identity and the defensive reflex Japan adopted stemmed from Japan's forced opening up to the Western world. While constructing a cultural and national identity as a result of the westernization and modernization movement, the perception of the West is enormously significant in the Japanese perception. Therefore, it is no surprise that Japan's cultural diplomacy encompasses France now. Why do the West and Japan position themselves? Discerning Japan's positioning in global politics during the Meiji years is significant to understand what Japan aims to achieve through its cultural diplomacy today. In this view, it is possible to say that Japan has been seeking to position itself since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which manifests itself in Japan's cultural diplomacy. From the perspective of Turkey, we can say that the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars had historical reflections on Turkey. Moving onto how Turkey and Japan perceive one another, Güngen states that Turkish people harbor an ardent love for Japan in Turkey. However, he also adds that it is necessary to analyze the reality and elements well while doing it (loving Japan). Turkey is a developing country. On the other hand, Japan is a developed country with outstanding infrastructure. Both countries are Asian countries. In World War II, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki evoked sympathy in the Turkish people. Marshal-Tōgō Heihachirō's leadership in the Russo-Japanese War evoked admiration in Turkey. So much so that Halide Edip Adivar became so influenced by

the leader that she named her son Togo. The famous Turkish poet who has never stepped a foot in Japan, Mehmet Akif Ersoy's poem titled *Japonlar* (The Japanese in English) complimenting Japan, and the Japanese, and other factors mentioned above are all indications of admiration for the Japanese by the Turkish people. However, as Dündar states, "It is possible to say that there is sometimes an extreme Japanese sympathy between the intellectuals and the public in Turkey. The compliment shown by the Turkish society to Japan and the Japanese has not been formed on correct and realistic foundations."<sup>278</sup>

On the other hand, there is still room for more interest in Turkey from the Japanese side. Therefore, there are two issues regarding perception of Turkey in Japan and perception of Japan in Turkey to analyze. The first one is that the Turkish people adore and admire the Japanese. Nevertheless, the Turkish people put Japan at a very unreachable place in a very superficial manner and without an in-depth analysis of Japan and Japanese culture. Secondly, those who favor Turkey exist. Yet the majority of the Japanese people do not know much about Turkey, whose awareness is to increase if Japan is to render Turkey one of its cultural diplomacy targets.

The significance of the Ertuğrul disaster in the formation of Japan-Turkey relations is inevitable. In this sense, culture has always constituted an element of soft power as a remarkably influential concept in Japan's international relations and foreign policy. Japan's soft power is also mightier and more consequential than military power, especially in the Information Age. As introduced in the previous chapter on France, Güngen summarizes, "No matter what you do, people will love you if you have robust soft power and cultural diplomacy." One of the most striking

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<sup>278</sup> Dündar, "Türk Milliyetçilerinin Japonya Algısına Bir Kaynak Olarak Mehmet Akif'in Mısralarında Japonya ve Japonlar."

points Güngen touches upon is the inclusivity of Japanese culture. In other words, Japan's ability to incorporate a plethora of elements into its (popular) culture renders its soft power limitless and infinite. For instance, although technology is a universal phenomenon, Japanese technology is unique with Sony Walkman, Nintendo, Sega Corporation also attracts more Japanese lovers globally. It is beyond doubt why Japan has started to be referred to as "Titan of Soft Power" or "the Land of the Rising Soft Power." Not only technology but also traditional culture does constitute Japan's soft power. Among the examples Güngen provides are *budo*, *sumo*, *sudoku*, and other traditional cultural elements. Güngen summarizes Japan's cultural diplomacy as the other Japanese miracle, this time, not economic but cultural with the integration of Japanese culture into foreign policy as a diplomatic tool. To realize this, Güngen reaffirms, one needs consciousness about Japan, see the country with open eyes and understand its dynamics.

Güngen states that Japan gives exceptional importance to cultural diplomacy and estimates that the components of cultural diplomacy will evolve with, for instance, the ministerial office allocated for the Cool Japan Project. Reinstating that Japan has a minister responsible and funds for cultural diplomacy, Güngen foresees that Japan is attempting to bring cultural diplomacy to the forefront of its international relations and foreign policy, which forms Güngen's general approach to the future of Japan's cultural diplomacy. Güngen also envisions that Japan's cultural diplomacy affects politics, economic relations, and diplomacy. Therefore, the country will concentrate more on cultural diplomacy in the upcoming years. One estimation suggests that more subfields of Japanese cultural diplomacy, such as technology, economy, and creative content industries, can be the subject of an

establishment at the governmental or ministerial level(s). However, for the time being, Japan will continue focusing on cultural diplomacy.

Upon the interviewer's question on how Japan views Turkey, Güngen, in parallelism with the previous statements, thinks that Japan looks at Turkey in a limited yet rational manner. Japan's perception is based on more realistic and concrete data. Approaching the topic from different angles, Güngen also underlines that Japan's view of Turkey depends on political developments. He gives examples such as Turkey-US relations, how the US views Turkey, and Turkey's relations with the EU. Besides, from an economic point of view, Güngen underscores what kind of impact oil and gold have on the Middle East geography is significant. How Turkey's positioning in the Middle East politics shapes Japan's benefits depending on the position of Turkey in the region is crucial. Finally, Güngen mentions that Japan and Turkey share a common interest in pan-Asianism. Furthermore, the effect a neo-Pan-Asianism can create in their China-oriented policies revolving around the Uyghur Issue.

Regarding the cultural connection between Japanese and Turkish cultures through Japan's cultural diplomacy, Güngen states that there are certain elements that Japan has successfully promoted, or at least disseminated in Turkey that have increased more literate and positive perception towards Japan. For instance, Japanese youth power is strong in Turkey, and a considerable percentage of it is cultural. J-pop, video games, and pop-culture elements are all part of the youth culture disseminated in Turkey through pop-culture festivals such as COMiKON Istanbul, which is a pop-culture festival that has been held every year since 2017 and offers more activities than you can keep up with its jam-packed program and training on animation, comics, manga, game design, illustration, cosplay, science fiction cinema,

fantasy literature and many more.<sup>279</sup> Another representation of positive feelings towards Japan is the culture of *bushido*. Güngen states that business ethics and *samurai* morality evoke sympathy in Turkey, whereas the *samurai* culture, warrior traditions, and feudal Japanese culture trigger hostilities with the Korean and Chinese public and politicians in international matters. Overall, Güngen suggests that Japan's quest for balance in international relations is not an easy task, which endeavors to maintain the level it has reached.

As final two points, Gürgeç, similar to Güvenç, puts forward the idea that Shintoism and Buddhism—as the two main religions in Japan containing and harboring the elements of harmony—may be the source of today's harmonious cultural diplomacy. Therefore, the evolution of Japan's soft power may range from the tranquil Buddhist and Shintoist traditions to Kawaii Diplomacy, both innocent, serene, peaceful, and harmless. Hence, the influential power of Japanese soft power through cute cultural elements may have originated in Japan's *Zen* traditions. The final point Güngen elaborates on is the influence of the British on the Japanese culture when the British started campaigns that donated English books to a great extent to the Hibiya Library & Museum and Waseda University. Therefore, he suggests that there was also solemn cultural communication with England as food for thought and future research. The full interview with Ambassador Güngen can be found in the Appendix A on page 185.

#### 5.5.2 Interview with Mr. Yuta Nagamura

When asked to evaluate the cultural diplomacy initiatives that Japan has carried out in Turkey so far, Nagamura commented that, in general, it is plausible to state that

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<sup>279</sup> COMiKON Istanbul website.



the image of Turks towards Japan is impressive. The surveys conducted by the Japanese Consulate and Embassy in Turkey demonstrate that the rate of those who responded that the “relations between Turkey and Japan are very good” is around 90%. However, we can say that the two peoples know very little about one another. For example, Turks remember Japan with stereotype concepts such as “samurai,” “sushi,” and “technology.” On the other hand, the Japanese only come across concepts such as “ice cream,” “kebab,” and “The Middle East” about Turkey. The Turkish side knows more about the “Ertuğrul Frigate Disaster,” which formed the basis of friendship between the two countries, but unfortunately, I had never heard the Japanese talk about it when I was in Japan. In my opinion, there are countless things we need to do between the two countries to allow them to get to know each other. It is necessary not only to organize the “*Wadaiko*” concert but rather to create a strategic and appealing story. For this reason, we need to mutually coordinate actors at various levels such as the state, NGOs, private companies, universities, artists, and influencers by the two countries in an inclusive way. Cultural diplomacy is not just one-sided; I think it should be reciprocal or multilateral.

Regarding the foreign direct investments and cultural diplomacy as a tool to attract such investments, Nagamura stated by confirming first that Japan is also a nation trying to encourage foreign direct investment. The Government of Japan also carries out cultural diplomacy towards Turkey with this goal in mind. At the same time, Japan aims to increase Japan’s direct investment in Turkey. Japanese press members in Turkey also play an important role in arousing Japanese interest in Turkey.

When we look at the effects of cultural policy on international relations, Nagamura agrees with the long-term nature of cultural diplomacy yet also adds that

this nature of cultural diplomacy should not mean abstention from investing in it. Just as a company's decision to invest in a country should be shaped on a long-term strategy rather than a short-term one, governments also should evaluate cultural policies in the long term. Nagamura states that even in the case of a short-term economic fluctuation in the future, governments should investigate the potential of the following periods for cultural diplomacy thoroughly. According to Nagamura, cultural diplomacy aims to win the people of another country, win their admiration, and prepare a suitable ground in the international arena. Nagamura also states that policies focused on cultural diplomacy can help establish harmonious international relations in the long run. Similar to Ambassador Güngen, Nagamura believes that Japan has a very robust soft power, specifically since Japan makes a lot of effort for international peace and stability in this regard.

Political conflicts continue arising among China, South Korea, and Japan. Besides geopolitical disagreements, China and South Korea now counter Japan thanks to their cultural diplomacy gaining momentum. When asked about Turkey's role in Japan's foreign policy in these geopolitical, historical, and national memory disputes, Nagamura stated that generally speaking, the probability of conflict between neighboring countries is higher than in distant nations. Acknowledging that there are some problems between Japan and its neighboring countries, Nagamura reinstated that, at the same time, economic and cultural relations between Japan and neighboring countries are very active. Japan has always been trying to resolve problems peacefully through dialogue. Cultural diplomacy is significant for increasing the accuracy and credibility of a country's policy. In this sense, Nagamura affirms that Turkey is an immensely critical country for Japan, both economically and geographically. Because Turkey's relations with countries such as Europe,

Africa, and Central Asia are very intense, if Japan wants to invest in those regions, it is more strategic and rational to partner with Turkey first. At the same time, countries such as China and South Korea are active in those regions. Demonstrating Turkey's trust in Japan by partnering with Japan in cultural and economic fields will increase the credibility of Japan's policy.

Finally, regarding the future Japanese-Turkish cultural exchange, Nagamura underscores that the close feeling of the Turkish people to Japan and their admiration for the Japanese society should be made more concrete and realistic. At this point, he gives the first signals of a new initiative that the Government of Japan will launch in Turkey, "We are trying to prepare a concrete cultural strategy involving various actors." "The year 2024 coincides with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of diplomatic relations between the two countries. We will have the opportunity to evaluate the history and future of friendly relations. We want to ensure that the Turkish people know Japan better by communicating the values that Japan attaches importance to, such as peace, human rights, democracy, contribution to global problems, the rule of law and respect, and harmony, at various levels and with actors." The full interview with the Ambassador Güngen can be found in the Appendix B on page 192.

### 5.5 A more strategic Japanese cultural diplomacy in Turkey

The first thing worth mentioning is that Japan and Turkey are not aware of one another in a profound manner. Both countries, indeed, know the cultural stereotypes about each other. While it is mainstream Japanese cultural elements that come to the mind of Turkish people, Turks adore and admire the Japanese, yet not in a rational way since their knowledge of the country is rather superficial. This superficiality and

knowledge gap is—frankly put—an opportunity to enhance Japanese-Turkish cultural relations through Japan’s cultural diplomacy in Turkey. This way, the Turkish people can get to know Japan, the Japanese people, language, culture, and society more rationally and analytically. It is no coincidence that Japan has started to include Turkey more into its cultural diplomacy agenda, which Nagamura confirms stating that they are preparing for a special cultural project for 2024, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official diplomatic relations between Japan and Turkey. Turkey is an indispensable partner of Japan, not just simply for cultural diplomacy but also for the economy. One of the (urgent yet strategic) needs to institutionalize and legitimize Japan’s cultural diplomacy in Turkey is establishing a culture house in Turkey by the Government of Japan. Unmistakably, the foundation of such a house can be a fruit of a joint project of the Government of Japan and private companies, NGOs, universities, and others, as Nagamura suggests. The depth of perception and level of knowledge of one country in the other is unfortunately not enough in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As we are nearing the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japan-Turkey relations, it is interesting why Turkey, a geopolitically and historically important partner of Japan, still lacks a culture house. As the present thesis shall briefly discuss in the conclusion chapter, there are a plethora of culture houses established by the Government of Japan across the world. Therefore, the lack of a cultural institution on Japanese culture also correlates with the cultural and knowledge-related gap that the citizens of both countries currently undergo. In this view, the next step in enhancing Japan’s cultural diplomacy in Turkey, perhaps, should start with establishing a culture house inaugurated by the Government of Japan.

## CHAPTER 6

### RECIPROCAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND UNREALISTIC ROMANTICISM

The sixth chapter of the present thesis, as discussed above, will concentrate on the comparison between France and Turkey to discern how Japan's cultural diplomacy differed in the two countries. To begin with, it is evident that the chapter on France and Turkey included similar subchapters. Both consisted of analyses of a work written based on the observations of a non-Japanese speaker foreign (cultural) anthropologists of Japan. These works are, to remind the reader, *The Other Face of the Moon* by Claude Lévi-Strauss, and *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* by Bozkurt Güvenç. Both chapters also included interviews with Japanese diplomats. The mere difference is that I did not interview the Japanese Ambassadors to France personally and discovered the interviews through my research. In addition, the chapter on Turkey included the interview with the current Ambassador of Turkey to France, Mr. Güngen. Therefore, the present has successfully established a base to compare Japan's cultural diplomacy between the two countries parallelly by comparing the components of each chapter.

The main conclusion based on the comparison of the two chapters reveals that perception of Japan's newfound identity as a cultural nation was the single most significant element of Japan's cultural diplomacy in the post-war era. In the aftermath of World War II, Japan could not concentrate on exerting its soft power since it was too weak a nation to produce creative cultural content due to its defeat in World War II. Instead, Japan concentrated on its perception. How the international audience perceived Japan constituted the primary concern of the role of culture in

Japanese foreign policy, shaping Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy. In this view, the following paragraphs will elucidate on the attempts of the Japanese to reconstruct its identity in France and Turkey with a comparative outlook.

The most significant difference constituting the grandest gap in the perception of Japan in the Turkish mind—as Secondary Secretary Nagamura underscored—is that the Turkish people do not genuinely know Japan, the Japanese people, and the Japanese culture and society. In France, nevertheless, Japan’s cultural diplomacy bore results effectively, which has enabled the French to immerse themselves deeply in the Japanese culture, arts, and society. Today, France makes the second country where Japanese manga is the most popular. The French travel agencies organize “popular culture pilgrimage” tours for ardent Japanese pop-culture fans in France, who can expose themselves to the undying gaze of *Akihabara*, the neighborhood in Tokyo, and discover venues specializing in Japanese *manga*, *anime*, and video games. However, the Turkish admiration for Japan and the Japanese does not come with in-depth knowledge and analysis of the country. The present thesis suggests this lack of understanding stems from Japan’s relatively weak cultural diplomacy in Turkey during the post-war period. In fact, Güvenç’s *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* reveals an endless admiration for the Japanese based on Güvenç’s years-long research and observations. As Pehlivan Türk states, the one-dimensional admiration for the Japanese and Japan by the Turkish people necessitates going beyond romantic discourses such as the sinking of the Ertuğrul Frigate. While there is nothing wrong with commemorating the history of Japan-Turkey relations with the Ertuğrul Incident, the romanticism of the connections prevents Japan from outlining a strategic plan to exert Japanese cultural diplomacy in Turkey. Overreliance on the tragedy of Ertuğrul—which, according to Nagamura, the Japanese know much less

than Turks—can inhibit more investments. In other words, Japan-Turkey cultural relations harbor nostalgic romanticism with an overreliance on past affinities.

### 6.1 Structural differences in historical connections

One reason why Franco-Japanese and Japan-Turkey relations differ extendedly in cultural terms, I suggest, is how both nations came to connect in history. As introduced in the subchapter on the development of Franco-Japanese cultural relations, France started recognizing Japanese culture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the first wave of *Japonisme*. However, the most remarkable Japanese-Turkish historical encounter resulted from a disaster, the sinking of the Ertuğrul Frigate. The initial Japanese cultural and social contact with the two cultures may have culminated in a structural difference in perception. France came to know Japan through its art, and the impact of Japanese art in Art Nouveau is indispensable. Therefore, the foundation of Japanese culture in France differed tremendously from the historical perception in Turkey stemming from the Ertuğrul Incident.

Recently, diverse organizations on Japanese culture have emerged in Turkey, such as Japan-Izmir Intercultural Friendship Association (JIKAD) in Izmir, Turkish Japanese Foundation Culture Center (TJV) in Ankara, and Japan Culture and Information Center in Istanbul and the Japanese Studies Association (JAD) has a plethora of publication on Japan, located in the three major cities in Turkey. However, the recent establishment of these organizations took place either by the Turkish Government or private funding. The institutionalization of Japan's cultural diplomacy remains underdeveloped in Turkey. Unquestionably, Japan's long-time friend needs indispensably for a more robust and official cultural center whose agenda the Government of Japan will designate, such as *Maison de la Culture du*

*Japon à Paris* in France. In this view, it should be possible to break the nostalgic cycle of Japan-Turkey cultural relations and add to the currently developing economic and political partnership between the two countries. Inevitably, a structural difference between the history of Japan- France and Japan-Turkey relations roots in the history. Through the inauguration of such a cultural center by the Government of Japan, the narrative of Japan-Turkey relations revolving around the romantic discourses can evolve into a more strategic partnership. Pehlivan Türk suggests this regarding the enhancement of Japan-Turkey economic and political collaboration.<sup>280</sup> This thesis proposes that the structural nostalgia rooted in Japan-Turkey relations necessitates a more fundamental institutionalization, presenting this issue from a cultural point of view.

Another significant outcome to mention regarding the institutionalization of Japanese cultural diplomacy in Turkey is that it can deepen the knowledge of Japan in the Turkish perception, and Turks can go beyond simply admiring the Japanese (culture) without indeed knowing much about the depths of the culture and country. For instance, pop-culture, the culture center in Paris established by the Japanese culture, exhibits cultural activities such as Japanese cinema, theatre, artworks, cookery classes, and more at the heart of Paris thanks to its intense schedule updated every week/month/year. In this sense, as Nagamura firmly stated, a similar intensive project in Turkey can aid Turkish citizens to become exposed more to the Japanese culture. Until then, however, the perception of Japan in the minds of Turkish people will likely remain superficial except for a handful of students with a sincere interest in Japan and willing to learn Japanese. It is plausible to shift Japan's perception as the admired, miraculous country—based on superficial information—can transform

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<sup>280</sup> Pehlivan Türk, "Turkish-Japanese Relations: Turning Romanticism into Rationality," 3.



into a more neutral, objective, and most importantly, analytical knowledge of Japan that can allow a more intellectual command of the country.

## 6.2 Lévi-Strauss and Güvenç's perceptions of Japan

The present subchapter will elaborate on the different observations and perceptions of Japan and the Japanese culture by Lévi-Strauss and Güvenç with their reflections on *The Other Face of the Moon* and *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka*. Firstly, it is worth mentioning that Güvenç's collection of his discoveries regarding the Japanese culture has culminated in an exceptionally comprehensive manuscript on Japan. Today, even though two decades have passed since the first publication of the book, it is implausible to encounter another (anthropological) book describing Japanese culture so profoundly and with in-depth analysis. Evidently, it is possible to analyze Güvenç's *Japon Kültürü / Nihon Bunka* in a more detailed way since Güvenç's volume is almost five times longer than that of Lévi-Strauss. On the other hand, *The Other Face of the Moon* introduces the readers to more scientific and academic knowledge regarding the roots of Japanese culture. It also relies heavily on Japanese mythology to track the origins of modern Japanese culture. In this sense, it is possible to liken Lévi-Strauss' *The Other Face of the Moon* to the two volumes of *Sources of Japanese Tradition* by William Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, Arthur Tiedemann. Güvenç's *Japon Kültürü*, however, functions more like a guideline for those who would like to have day-to-day yet profound knowledge of Japan.

Güvenç's *Japon Kültürü*, however, serves more as a guideline for those who would like to have daily yet detailed information on Japan. *Japon Kültürü* is less scientific, academic, and at certain sections, satirical, redounding the book more literary. For someone with little or no prior exposure to Japan or the Japanese culture, Güvenç's

*Japon Kültürü* is easier to read, and it provides the reader with more in-depth and bountiful data, observations, and information regarding Japan's cultural and national identity in the post-war period. However, similar to Lévi-Strauss, Güvenç also traces the history of modern Japanese culture by adding mythic and mythological elements to provide more analytical insight to the reader.

When it comes to the content of the two books, a common theme that comes up often in both works is *shibui*, the aesthetic nature of the Japanese culture. In arts, architecture, gastronomy, and cultural elements, both authors underscore the significance of the aesthetic components of the Japanese culture with *shibui* as discerned in the related chapters. In this sense, as stated, Japan Foundation's initiative to invite these two non-Japanese speaker anthropologists to Japan was a strategic and on-point decision since both authors disseminated Japan as giving radical significance to aesthetics. Japan's principal goal was to shift its image in the international scene to a peace-loving and harmonious country with peaceful attributes. Güvenç never mentions Japan's wartime aggression. Instead, he presents Japan as a nation that has always been peaceful by associating Japan's peace-loving nature with the *Wa* Country. To Güvenç, aesthetics, harmony with nature, and peace-loving are intrinsic characteristics of Japanese culture. Therefore, *shibui* greets us in each chapter, discussing a different aspect of Japanese culture. On the other hand, Lévi-Strauss handles Japan's aesthetic-loving nature differently. Evidencing the robust Franco-Japanese cultural relations and the impact of the Japanese culture on *l'Art Nouveau*, Lévi-Strauss analyzes aesthetics from an artistic point of view and approaches *shibui* in a more anthropological sense. Another difference is that Güvenç embodies *shibui* through his on-site experiences in Japan, while Lévi-Strauss conceptualizes it through more abstract historical information by presenting Japanese

mythology. Both authors firmly argue that one of the most fundamental aspects of Japanese culture is its aesthetics. In brief, Japan constructed a peaceful image in the international scene, which epitomized itself in both manifestations of Japanese culture in both France and Turkey. The only contrast is that the French dissemination analyzed Japanese aesthetics in a systematic, analytical, and intellectual way. In the Turkish case, the appreciation of *shibui* remained as an extravagant admiration.

Perhaps one reason for the superficial yet passionate admiration that the Turkish feel towards the Japanese culture, Güvenç's volume works like a manifestation of how Japan has achieved all. The prevalent concept throughout the book is, indeed, is how it should be the ideal country that Turkey should look up to, take as an example and from which it can learn tremendously. It can actually lead to a misjudgment on the part of the Turkish readers regarding the Japanese culture, projecting it as a flawless and one-dimensional (only positive) notion. Therefore, Güvenç's objectivity and neutrality are questionable. Likewise, the objectivity of the image Güvenç projected regarding Japan for Turkish readers is equally problematic. We do not get to witness Japan's wartime aggression. Neither can we unearth Japan's negative aspects. The only criticism Güvenç makes about Japan is a Japanese *manga*, claiming that it is of no artistic value. Indeed, Güvenç does not allow the readers to evaluate Japan objectively thanks to his merely positive and appreciative reflections on Japanese culture. However, *The Other Face of the Moon* provides the reader with a more intellectual and analytical evaluation of Japanese culture despite being a much shorter and condensed volume. There is also one ironic comment by Lévi-Strauss' throughout *The Other Face of the Moon*. Lévi-Strauss, in the first paragraphs of his book, affirms that until the invitation came from the Japan Foundation, hence the Government of Japan, he had not planned to travel to Japan

and remained simply an outside observer of Japan and its culture. Indeed, he never intended to visit the Land of the Rising Sun. Lévi-Strauss even confesses his particular distance towards the Japanese culture. However, when hearing the invitation, Lévi-Strauss states it was what he had been waiting for for years, creating a dichotomy and making the reader question Lévi-Strauss's sincerity. His distance and neutrality contrast with Güvenç's ardent passion and radical admiration for Japanese culture.

One final note is that while Güvenç constantly attempts to draw parallelisms between the Japanese and Turkish cultures throughout his pivotal work, Lévi-Strauss compares and contrasts Japan to France—chiefly in terms of arts and culture. In this sense, Güvenç's striving to transmit the idea that "We may seem different, yet we are very similar" is dominant throughout the book. Güvenç, as a cultural ambassador, wants the reader to adore Japan, think that Turks and the Japanese are inherently similar, and both cultures give tremendous significance to values such as respect (to the elderly), gratitude/thankfulness, and altruism. Therefore, the culture resonance Güvenç creates perfect cultural diplomacy to reconstruct Japanese identity in Turkey. A reader will likely obtain positive views on Japan after reading the book even though—for instance—they are aware of Japan's wartime aggression during World War II. Secondly, in the case of a reader unknowledgeable about Japan's war atrocities, will most likely start becoming curious about Japan and want to visit the country as soon as possible. Finally, Güvenç commits to paper his observations of Japan by ultimately serving the purpose of cultural diplomacy, considering that cultural diplomacy targets masses at the personal citizen's level. In this view, what distinguishes Güvenç from Lévi-Strauss is his manifestation praising the Japanese

culture. Lévi-Strauss' apprehension stems from an academic pursuit to trace the intellectual history of Japan and tie it to modern Japanese culture.

## CHAPTER 7

### JAPAN'S CULTURAL EXISTENCE IN GLOBAL POLITICS: PITFALLS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Throughout the course of this study, I have strived to shed light on to Japan's identity reconstruction through incorporating traditional and aesthetic Japanese culture into Japanese foreign policy and utilizing cultural diplomacy as a rehabilitative and constructive foreign policy instrument. In this view, I have analyzed Japan's cultural diplomacy applications in France and Turkey between 1952-1989, more specifically during the Cold War, the period when Japan's cultural diplomacy started to be more active in the international agenda. The argument driving my analysis has been that Japanese cultural diplomacy before the Soft Power era remains undiscovered and barely touched through academic studies. Furthermore, the pronounced tendency to simplify Japanese cultural diplomacy as Pop-culture Diplomacy with Cool Japan elements made me research the past of Japanese cultural diplomacy and how Japan embellished its diplomatic agenda through traditional and serene cultural elements to emerge as a cultural nation. In this direction, analysis itself has focused on the Cold War Period and the popular and traditional discourses in Japanese cultural diplomacy agenda—as the most important tool in healing Japan's imperialist and expansionist image during the post-war period and approaching France as an aesthetic nation through the analytical framework of Japan's international cultural policies in France and Turkey.

The analysis itself has differed from the existing literature in three keyways, which has produced the results that emerged from this study. First, the period of focus was between the years 1952 and 1989, marking the period after the end of the

Allied Occupation of Japan and before Japanese asset price bubble period, referred to as “the lost decade” of Japanese cultural diplomacy. The periodical focus, I believe, is extremely significant in understanding the dynamics and fluctuations in Japanese cultural diplomacy. Most of the scholarly work on Japanese cultural diplomacy focus on the periods after 1990s, with a special attention on the New Millennium.

However, it is also equally crucial to lean towards Japan’s less active cultural diplomacy before globalization to discern the identity reconstruction attempts by the Government of Japan and how culture transformed into a principal means of this endeavor. It is also significant because it is during this period when we witness Japan’s evolution into a cultural nation under Ōhira Administration, which lays the foundation of today’s Japan as a soft power superpower and cultural exporter.

Second, theories in analyzing cultural diplomacy, such as Michel Foucault’s *le regard* (gaze) and Onuf’s Constructivism, have been a novel attempt, providing an alternative to Joseph S. Nye’s Soft Power which have produced much of the studies on the subject. The resulting analysis has been able to both introduce the reader with a novel theoretical framework and to respond to the question “How Japan’s cultural diplomacy can be analyzed besides Soft Power?” Furthermore, through the application of intellectual criticisms such as *le regard* and Said’s Orientalism, the discussion on the Japanese cultural diplomacy has been moved from the constraints of analyses bound strictly by diplomacy, political science and international relations and also approached cultural diplomacy from a cultural point of view. I paid great attention to produce the best thesis by bringing novel approaches and discourses in cultural diplomacy studies to both contribute to the existing literature and cultural diplomacy studies in general. It is, I believe, imperative to handle cultural diplomacy

with an interdisciplinary approach as even the name of the discipline is a combination of culture and diplomacy.

Third, there has hardly been scholarly analysis on Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey. The historical quagmire of Japan-Turkey cultural relations needed enlightenment and explanation, which I have striven to provide through this course of study. The first case country, France, is also important in unveiling how Post-war Japanese cultural diplomacy in France were inspired from *le Japonisme* of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and paved the way for today's mighty Franco-Japanese cultural relations. The comparison of France and Turkey is also one original approach which I aimed at introducing to the reader, for while Japanese cultural diplomacy is strong in France and the gaps and blind spots still exist regarding to what extent Turkey has been able to receive from Japan culturally.

There have been a number of important findings through the course of this study, expanding our understanding how Japan reconstructed its identity during the post-war period and rehabilitated its image in international relations. First, the lack of a cultural house inaugurated by the Government of Japan is a crucial subject to touch upon, which this thesis unveiled. Although a cultural house in Turkey exists with the name Turkish-Japanese Foundation, the Government of Japan is not affiliated with this cultural house, which creates a problem with regards to the legitimacy of Japanese cultural diplomacy in Turkey. This problem could be—and in this study, were—remedied by the inauguration of a new cultural house established by the Government of Japan just like the Japan House(s) inaugurated in 2017 and 2018 in São Paulo, Los Angeles, and London. Second, Japanese cultural diplomacy can be understood not only as a politically significant organizations but also as an identity (re)construction tool with differentiation, modality and adaptability achieved through



divergent Prime Ministers, policymakers, and reactions from international audience. In each stage—the modality of Japan’s cultural diplomacy is important to understand to comprehend how significant cultural diplomacy for Japan to win the hearts and minds of the masses after Japan’s imperialist inter-war years. Japanese cultural diplomacy had different policy leanings, with differences in approach to international relations, foreign policy, and cultural reactions. Moreover, each turmoil brought their different policy leaning to the fore in their agendas when Japan’s priority was to heal its image in international relations and global politics.

Third, it is possible to see that Japan reaped the benefits of its cultural diplomacy where it laid legitimate and concrete foundations which can be seen in Japan’s footsteps in France starting with the first wave of *Japonisme* in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the end of World War II, it is obvious to see Japan hard at work in constructing cultural bases all across the globe with a special focus on its historically close allies. Today, Japanese popular culture surrounds Southeast Asia while the United States and the United Kingdom are home to more resolute and concrete cultural establishments. In a similar vein, the international reactions toward Japanese cultural diplomacy have transformed into more positive and welcoming feelings from the epithets such as “banana Japan” or “Japan-bashing.” In this view, it is possible to conclude that Japan has become successful in reconstruction its identity globally.

Fourth, in addition to having reconstructed its identity through cultural diplomacy, Japan has also started to utilize its culture as a soft power tool and emerged as a “Soft Power Superpower” as Watanabe and McConnell put it. In this sense, the footsteps of Japan’s cultural might transcended beyond the aesthetic Japan and moved towards a Cool Japan that contributes heavily to Japan’s GDP/GNP and

renders the country as a global cultural attraction. The Land of the Rising Sun is also the Land of the Rising Soft Power and according to Kyle Cleveland, Japan is currently the coolest country on earth.

Fifth, this coolness of Japan is not only cultural. As stated, Japanese culture has become an economic source for the Government of Japan, which raises the question “How soft is soft power?” This is also because the more attractive one’s culture is, the mightier that country can be economically. In this sense, Japan’s cultural diplomacy has gone beyond the cultural realms and contributes to the country through several benefits such as tourist influx, brain drain, highly skilled workers, globalization, and internationalization of professional sectors and academic and revitalizing Japanese identity and multiculturalism.

Sixth, with regards to the comparison of Japanese cultural diplomacy in France and Turkey, it is also plausible to see that Japan is receiving the outcome of its international cultural policies in both countries. While in France, the political economy and soft power of Japanese cultural diplomacy are increasing, also creating new industries in the French market besides *manfra*. More and more Japanese restaurants are being opened in France, especially in Little Tokyo of Paris. Furthermore, the *otaku* pilgrims heading to the French tourism agencies do not only contribute to the French economy and encourage new tourism markets but also grow the incremental flow into Japanese economy. The intellectual level of Japanese perception and knowledge is much higher in France as well.

When we go back to Turkey, the unrealistic and romantic admiration to Japan, the Japanese and the Japanese culture manifest itself in the expressions of both Ambassador Güngen and Nagamura Sensei. The need for a more concrete and legitimate cultural diplomacy strategy, such as the establishment of a culture house,

is inevitable in the case of Turkey to improve Japan-Turkey relations as well as to render Japanese cultural diplomacy in the Eurasian and the Middle Eastern geopolitical and geo-economics sphere.

Finally, there is no doubt that Japan's cultural diplomacy will continue to be an indispensable foreign policy instrument and play a prominent role in augmenting Japan's soft power, internationalizing Japan, and fostering the Japanese economy. In a similar vein, the post-Covid society, the impact of the pandemic, and Japan's border policies on Japan's internationalization oblige Japan to devise a novel cultural diplomacy strategy. Turkey's soft power is also increasing. Turkey can trace the footsteps of Japan's identity reconstruction methods and role-model Japan's multilayered and multi-agent cultural diplomacy by diversifying the actors of Turkish cultural diplomacy, fostering its public-private partnership (PPP), and employing a combination of traditional and popular culture. Finally, my research conducted in Japan can enable the communication of the Japanese values, ideas, and foreign policy objectives to the Turkish community more effectively and encourage further research on Japan's cultural diplomacy and soft power in Turkey.

As a final thought, I would like to point out three areas of further study, which would expand on what has been done here and improve our understanding of Japanese cultural diplomacy and its future. One area of further study concerns the relationship between the public and private sectors. Although Japan has started to incorporate the private sector more and more into its cultural diplomacy sphere, there is still much room to improve Japan's public-private partnership (PPP) to render Japanese cultural diplomacy more resolute in international relations. East Asian nations such as South Korea and China have been countering Japan through their cultural diplomacy implementations and soft power. In this sense, it is equally

significant to underline the role of South Korean and Chinese private industries in enhancing cultural diplomacy. Similarly, the level of private sectors and industrial involvement are equally significant to discern Japan's marketing mechanism and the representation of Japanese identity in the global market.

The second area of further study concerns the study of the multilayered and multi-agent nature of Japanese cultural diplomacy. Besides industrial and private-sector inclusion, the Government of Japan also incorporates three different ministries into its cultural diplomacy, which are MOFA, MEXT and METI as well as the cultural agencies and bureaus devoted to publicity and cultural diplomacy of the said ministries. In this sense, the Japanese model of cultural diplomacy can be analyzed as the flagship model for cultural diplomacy considering its efficacy and influential nature. In this sense, further study on how Japan manages internal balance and authority can reveal invaluable information with regards to the future of Japanese cultural diplomacy and how the practice can be improved further as a soft diplomacy mechanism as well.

The third area of further study concerns the combination and evolution of the traditional and popular Japanese cultural discourses in Japan's cultural diplomacy. As the country "where tradition meets future," unveiling the dynamics of the multilayered cultural components of Japanese cultural diplomacy is equally crucial in discerning Japanese cultural diplomacy model. Today, Japan has not given up its traditional culture while increasing its might through popular culture. To the contrary, the revitalization of traditional culture in diplomacy has been on the Japanese agenda for quite a while. In this sense, unearthing the balance between traditional and popular cultural discourses of Japanese cultural diplomacy would also

add another layer onto the analysis that has been done here, by demonstrating the multilayered attributes and diverse sources of Japanese cultural power.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW WITH MR. KORKUT GÜNGEN

AMBASSADOR OF TURKEY TO JAPAN

Question 1: How would you evaluate the cultural diplomacy initiatives that Japan has carried out in Turkey so far?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: Following my arrival in Japan, I discovered the significance of Japan's previous periods and its reflections on today. What kind of cultural policy does Japan follow at the moment? What are the said and unsaid? What does Turkey see when it looks at Japan? Japan is a nation that developed with the Meiji Restoration in the aftermath of the shogunate period. It overlaps with the identity construction phase that the Ottoman Empire underwent. Why did he need to do this? As a result, certain factors that formed the cultural identity of Japan emerged. The perception of identity and the defensive reflex Japan adopted stemmed from Japan's forced opening up to the Western world. While constructing a cultural and national identity as a result of the westernization and modernization movement, the perception of the West is enormously significant in the Japanese perception. Therefore, it is no surprise that Japan's cultural diplomacy encompasses France now. Where do the West and Japan position themselves? Discerning Japan's positioning in global politics during the Meiji years is significant to understand what Japan aims to achieve through its cultural diplomacy today. In this view, it is possible to say that Japan has been seeking to position itself since the end of the 19th century, which manifests itself in Japan's cultural diplomacy. From the perspective of Turkey, we can say that the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars had historical reflections on Turkey. Moving onto how Turkey and Japan perceive one another, Turkish people

harbor an ardent love for Japan in Turkey. However, it is necessary to analyze the reality and elements well while adoring Japan.

Question 2: Japan, like other countries, is a country that has an appetite for attracting foreign direct investment. Is it possible to say that Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey today aims at attracting foreign investments?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: Turkey is a developing country. On the other hand, Japan is a developed country with outstanding infrastructure. Both countries are Asian countries. In World War II, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki evoked sympathy in the Turkish people. Marshal-Tōgō Heihachirō's leadership in the Russo-Japanese War evoked admiration in Turkey. So much so that Halide Edip Adivar became so influenced by the leader that she named her son Togo. The famous Turkish poet who has never stepped a foot in Japan, Mehmet Akif Ersoy's poem titled *Japonlar* (The Japanese in English) complimenting Japan, and the Japanese, and other factors mentioned above are all indications of admiration for the Japanese by the Turkish people. However, DüNDAR states that "It is possible to say that there is sometimes an extreme Japanese sympathy between the intellectuals and the public in Turkey. The compliment shown by the Turkish society to Japan and the Japanese has not been formed on correct and realistic foundations," referring to DüNDAR's, "Türk Milliyetçilerinin Japonya Algısına Bir Kaynak Olarak Mehmet Akif'in Mısralarında Japonya ve Japonlar." From another point of view, there is still room for more interest and investment in Turkey from the Japanese side. Therefore, there are two issues regarding the perception of Turkey in Japan and Japanese perception in Turkey to analyze. The first one is that the Turkish people adore and admire the Japanese. But the Turkish people put Japan in a very unreachable place in a very

superficial manner and without an in-depth analysis of Japan and Japanese culture. Secondly, those who favor Turkey exist. Yet the majority of the Japanese people do not know much about Turkey, whose awareness is to increase if Japan is to render Turkey one of its cultural diplomacy targets. The significance of the Ertuğrul disaster in the formation of Japan-Turkey relations is evident.

Question 3: When we look at the effects of cultural policy on international relations, do you generally agree with the presentation of investment results as long-term rather than short-term?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: Culture has always constituted an element of soft power as a remarkably influential concept in Japan's international relations and foreign policy. Today, Japan's soft power is mightier and more consequential than military power, especially in the Information Age. No matter what you do, people will love you if you have robust soft power and cultural diplomacy. One of the most striking points is the inclusivity of Japanese culture. In other words, Japan's ability to incorporate a plethora of elements into its (popular) culture renders its soft power limitless and infinite. For instance, although technology is a universal phenomenon, Japanese technology is unique with Sony Walkman, Nintendo, Sega Corporation attracting more Japan lovers globally. It is beyond doubt because Japan has started to be referred to as "Titan of Soft Power" or "the Land of the Rising Soft Power." Not only technology but also traditional culture does constitute Japan's soft power.

Among the examples are *budo*, *sumo*, *sudoku*, and other traditional cultural elements. Japan's cultural diplomacy, in this sense, is the other Japanese miracle, this time, not economic but cultural with the integration of Japanese culture into foreign policy as a



diplomatic tool. To realize this, one needs consciousness about Japan, see the country with open eyes and understand its dynamics.

Question 4: Do you believe that policies focused on cultural diplomacy can help establish harmonious international relations in the long run?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: Japan gives exceptional importance to cultural diplomacy and estimates that the components of cultural diplomacy will evolve with, for instance, the ministerial office allocated for the Cool Japan Project. Reinstating that Japan has a minister responsible and funds for cultural diplomacy, Japan is attempting to bring cultural diplomacy to the forefront of its international relations and foreign policy, which forms a general approach to the future of Japan's cultural diplomacy. I envision that Japan's cultural diplomacy will continue affecting politics, economic relations, and diplomacy. Therefore, the country will concentrate more on cultural diplomacy in the upcoming years. One estimation suggests that more subfields of Japanese cultural diplomacy, such as technology, economy, and creative content industries, can be the subject of an establishment at the governmental or ministerial level(s). However, for the time being, Japan will continue focusing on cultural diplomacy.

Question 5: The intense political disagreements among China, South Korea, and Japan increase. Besides geopolitical conflicts, China and South Korea also gained momentum with their cultural diplomacy. What role do you think Turkey plays in Japan's foreign policy in these geopolitical, historical, and national memory disputes?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: In parallelism with my previous statements, I think that Japan looks at Turkey in a limited yet rational manner. Japan's perception is based on more realistic and concrete data. Approaching the topic from different angles, I also want to underline that Japan's view of Turkey depends on political developments that can be seen in the examples such as Turkey-US relations, how the US views Turkey, and Turkey's relations with the EU. Besides, from an economic point of view, what kind of impact oil and gold have on the Middle East geography is significant. How Turkey's positioning in the Middle East politics shapes Japan's benefits depending on the position of Turkey in the region is crucial. Japan and Turkey shared a common interest in Pan-Asianism. Furthermore, the effect a neo-Pan-Asianism can create in their China-oriented policies revolving around the Uyghur Issue.

Question 6: What is your foresight for the future of Japanese-Turkish cultural exchange?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: Regarding the cultural connection between Japanese and Turkish cultures through Japan's cultural diplomacy, there are certain elements that Japan has successfully promoted, or at least disseminated in Turkey that have increased more literate and positive perception towards Japan. For instance, Japanese youth power is strong in Turkey, and a considerable percentage of it is cultural. J-pop, video games, and pop-culture elements are all part of the youth culture disseminated in Turkey through pop-culture festivals such as COMiKON Istanbul<sup>281282</sup>. Another representation of positive feelings towards Japan is the culture

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<sup>281</sup> COMiKON Istanbul is a pop-culture festival that has been held every year since 2017 and offers more activities than you can keep up with its jam-packed program and training on animation, comics, manga, game design, illustration, cosplay, science fiction cinema, fantasy literature and many more.

<sup>282</sup> COMiKON Istanbul website.

of *bushido*, a moral code concerning samurai attitudes, behavior, and lifestyle. Business ethics and *samurai* morality evoke sympathy in Turkey, whereas the *samurai* culture, warrior traditions, and feudal Japanese culture trigger hostilities with the Korean and Chinese public and politicians in international matters. Overall, Japan's quest for balance in international relations is not an easy task, which endeavors to maintain the level it has reached. As final two points, Shintoism, and Buddhism—as the two main religions in Japan containing and harboring the elements of harmony—may be the source of today's harmonious cultural diplomacy. Therefore, the evolution of Japan's soft power may range from the tranquil Buddhist and Shintoist traditions to Kawaii Diplomacy, both innocent, serene, peaceful, and harmless. Hence, the influential power of Japanese soft power through cute cultural elements may have originated in Japan's *zen* traditions. The final point is the influence of the British on the Japanese culture when the British started campaigns that donated English books to a great extent to the Hibiya Library and Museum and Waseda University. Therefore, there was also solemn cultural communication with England as food for thought and future research.

Question 7: Why has Japan not established a cultural center similar to the cultural center, *Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris*, founded in France in 1997 in Turkey, and would you foresee such a plan soon? What kind of cultural policy should Japan implement in Turkey?

Ambassador Korkut Güngen: I think it is necessary to look at the 100-150-year of Japanese history in this regard. The position and influence of the US before and after World War II is known. As far as I can see, England is a model country for Japan in many areas. France has a trace in this country, especially in the cultural field, maybe

more. These are all countries that Japan looks up to and aspires to become in the future. In terms of orientation, Japan must be perceived and remembered within the same frame as them, an aspiration mindset still applying today. Naturally, there is no reason why Japan will not establish an institute within the framework you mentioned in Turkey. As the Ambassador of Turkey to Japan, I could not look forward to it more. Our current historical friendship relations have the baseline to strengthen the connections and make them more robust. However, I believe that Turkey is in a different position from the above three countries from Japan's perspective. These three countries seem to have a special place in the Japanese perception and mindset. As a final point, we can raise the question whether Turkey should be the fourth country for Japan after the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to Japan. Or why not Iran or Iraq?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW WITH MR. YUTA NAGAMURA

SECOND SECRETARY OF POLITICS AND CULTURE OF JAPAN TO  
TURKEY

Question 1: How would you evaluate the cultural diplomacy initiatives that Japan has carried out in Turkey so far?

Cultural Attaché Yuta Nagamura: In general, it is plausible to state that the image of Turks towards Japan is impressive. The surveys conducted by the Japanese Consulate and Embassy in Turkey demonstrate that the rate of those who responded that the “relations between Turkey and Japan are very good” is around 90%. However, we can say that the two peoples know very little about one another. For example, Turks remember Japan with stereotype concepts such as “samurai,” “sushi,” and “technology.” On the other hand, the Japanese only come across concepts such as “ice cream,” “kebab,” and “The Middle East” about Turkey. The Turkish side knows more about the “Ertuğrul Frigate Disaster,” which formed the basis of friendship between the two countries, but unfortunately, I had never heard the Japanese talk about it when I was in Japan. In my opinion, there are countless things we need to do between the two countries to allow them to get to know each other. It is necessary not only to organize the “*Wadaiko*” concert but rather to create a strategic and appealing story. For this reason, we need to mutually coordinate actors at various levels such as the state, NGOs, private companies, universities, artists, and influencers by the two countries in an inclusive way. Cultural diplomacy is not just one-sided; I think it should be reciprocal or multilateral.

Question 2: Japan, like other countries, is a country that has an appetite for attracting foreign direct investment. Is it possible to say that Japan's cultural diplomacy in Turkey today aims at attracting foreign investments?

Cultural Attaché Yuta Nagamura: Japan is also a nation trying to encourage foreign direct investment. The Government of Japan also carries out cultural diplomacy towards Turkey with this goal in mind. At the same time, Japan aims to increase Japan's direct investment in Turkey. Japanese press members in Turkey also play an important role in arousing Japanese interest in Turkey.

Question 3: When we look at the effects of cultural policy on international relations, do you generally agree with the presentation of investment results as long-term rather than short-term?

Cultural Attaché Yuta Nagamura: When we look at the effects of cultural policy on international relations, I agree with the long-term nature of cultural diplomacy yet also adds that this nature of cultural diplomacy should not mean abstention from investing in it. Just as a company's decision to invest in a country should be shaped on a long-term strategy rather than a short-term one, governments also should evaluate cultural policies in the long term. Even in the case of a short-term economic fluctuation in the future, governments should investigate the potential of the following periods for cultural diplomacy thoroughly.

Question 4: Do you believe that policies focused on cultural diplomacy can help establish harmonious international relations in the long run?

Cultural Attaché Yuta Nagamura: Cultural diplomacy aims to win the people of another country, win their admiration, and prepare a suitable ground in the

international arena. Policies focused on cultural diplomacy can help establish harmonious international relations in the long run. In this sense, Japan has a very robust soft power, specifically since it makes a lot of effort for international peace and stability in this regard.

Question 5: The intense political disagreements among China, South Korea, and Japan increase. Besides geopolitical conflicts, China and South Korea also gained momentum with their cultural diplomacy. What role do you think Turkey plays in Japan's foreign policy in these geopolitical, historical, and national memory disputes?

Cultural Attaché Yuta Nagamura: Political conflicts continue arising among China, South Korea, and Japan. Besides geopolitical disagreements, China and South Korea now counter Japan thanks to their cultural diplomacy gaining momentum. When asked about Turkey's role in Japan's foreign policy in these geopolitical, historical, and national memory disputes, Nagamura stated that generally speaking, the probability of conflict between neighboring countries is higher than in distant nations. Acknowledging that there are some problems between Japan and its neighboring countries, Nagamura reinstated that, at the same time, economic and cultural relations between Japan and neighboring countries are very active. Japan has always been trying to resolve problems peacefully through dialogue. Cultural diplomacy is significant for increasing the accuracy and credibility of a country's policy. In this sense, Turkey is an immensely critical country for Japan, both economically and geographically. Because Turkey's relations with countries such as Europe, Africa, and Central Asia are very intense, if Japan wants to invest in those regions, it is more strategic and rational to partner with Turkey first. At the same

time, countries such as China and South Korea are active in those regions.

Demonstrating Turkey's trust in Japan by partnering with Japan in cultural and economic fields will increase the credibility of Japan's policy.

Question 6: What is your foresight for the future of Japanese-Turkish cultural exchange?

Cultural Attaché Yuta Nagamura: First of all, the close feeling of the Turkish people to Japan and their admiration for the Japanese society should be made more concrete and realistic. At this point, I can give the first signals of a new initiative that the Government of Japan will launch in Turkey. We are trying to prepare a concrete cultural strategy involving various actors. The year 2024 coincides with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of diplomatic relations between the two countries. We will have the opportunity to evaluate the history and future of friendly relations. We want to ensure that the Turkish people know Japan better by communicating the values that Japan attaches importance to, such as peace, human rights, democracy, contribution to global problems, the rule of law and respect, and harmony, at various levels and with actors.

Question 7: Why has Japan not established a cultural center similar to the cultural center (*Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris*) founded in France in 1997 in Turkey, and would you foresee such a plan soon? What kind of cultural policy should Japan implement in Turkey?

Turkish-Japanese Foundation in Turkey was established to promote Japanese culture as a cultural center. The difference with the cultural center in France is whether it is financially dependent on the Japan Foundation. However, the Government of Japan



or the Japan Foundation does not have a direct affiliation with the Turkish-Japanese Foundation. Besides, being far from the city center in Ankara causes a disadvantage, and of course, it needs further activation and engagement in cultural policies. The Japan House, on the other hand, is a project that has just started and is currently located in only three cities around the world. Although there is no concrete road map in Turkey at the moment, I think there is a possibility that the Government of Japan will establish a culture house in Turkey in the future.

## APPENDIX C

### WALTER'S COMPONENTS OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

The arts including films, dance, music, painting, sculpture
Educational programs such as universities and language programs abroad
Exchanges (scientific, artistic, educational)
Literature (the establishment of libraries abroad and translation of popular and national works)
Broadcasting of news and cultural programs
Gifts to a nation, which demonstrates thoughtfulness and respect
Religious diplomacy, including inter-religious dialogue
Promotion and explanation of ideas and social policies

## APPENDIX D

### THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JAPAN FOUNDATION (1970s)

1973	Started Japan Foundation Fellowship Program
1973	Established the Japan Foundation Awards
1974	Commenced Training Program for Japanese Language Teachers Abroad
1974	Started quarterly publication of <i>Kokusai Koryu</i> (International Exchange)
1975	Published the first issue of An Introductory Bibliography for Japanese Studies
1975	Released the first report of Survey on Japanese-language Education Abroad and found approximately 78,000 Japanese-language learners overseas
1977	Held the first Noh theater performance in the Middle East Invited French cultural anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss
1978	Dispatched a sport team to six Asian countries for the first time, having gathered a total of 200,000
1979	Sent a Kabuki troupe to China – the first cultural exchange project under governmental auspices

## THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JAPAN FOUNDATION (1980s)

1983	Started broadcasting of TV skits for Japanese-language learners Yan and the Japanese People overseas
1984	Held the first Japanese-Language Proficiency Test External link overseas. Taken by 4,473 in 19 cities in 14 countries
1986	Published English version of <i>The Basic Japanese-English Dictionary</i> , followed by multiple language versions
1986	Exhibited “ <i>Japon des Avant Gardes 1910-1970</i> ” in France. Visited by 150,000

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JAPAN FOUNDATION (1990s)

1991	Started Abe Fellowship Program
1993	Published the first issue of <i>Japanese Book News</i>
1994	Held performances of a triple production of Noh, Bunraku, and Kabuki versions of “ <i>Shunkan</i> ” in Europe
1995	Exhibited “Asian Modernism: Diverse Development” in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand
1996	Organized Japan Pavilion at the 6th Venice Architecture Biennale, having won the International Prize Golden Lion for the best national participation
1996	Launched Asia Leadership Fellowship Program
1998	Published English translation of Shiba Ryotaro’s <i>The Last Shogun: The Life of Tokugawa Yoshinobu</i>

## THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JAPAN FOUNDATION (2000s)

2001	Co-hosted the first Yokohama Triennale 2001
2002	Launched “Future Leaders Forum: Japan-China-Korea”
2005	Invited Afghanistan potters for peacebuilding through culture
2006	Held a symposium and workshops “A Wild Haruki Chase: How the World Is Reading and Translating Murakami”
2006	Launched Long-term Invitation Program for Chinese High School Students External link (Chinese text only)
2006	Initiated Japan-US Dialogue for Cooperation in Reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina
2006	Invited young designers from five countries in Asia and held a joint fashion show with Japanese students
2007	Organized performing arts workshops for children in Aceh External link, Indonesia for peace-building through culture
2009	Held the first-ever Bunraku performance in Russia External link
2009	Found 3.6 million Japanese-language learners overseas
2010	Released “JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education 2010”
2014	Started the Asia Center Programs

## APPENDIX E

### CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND FRANCE IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

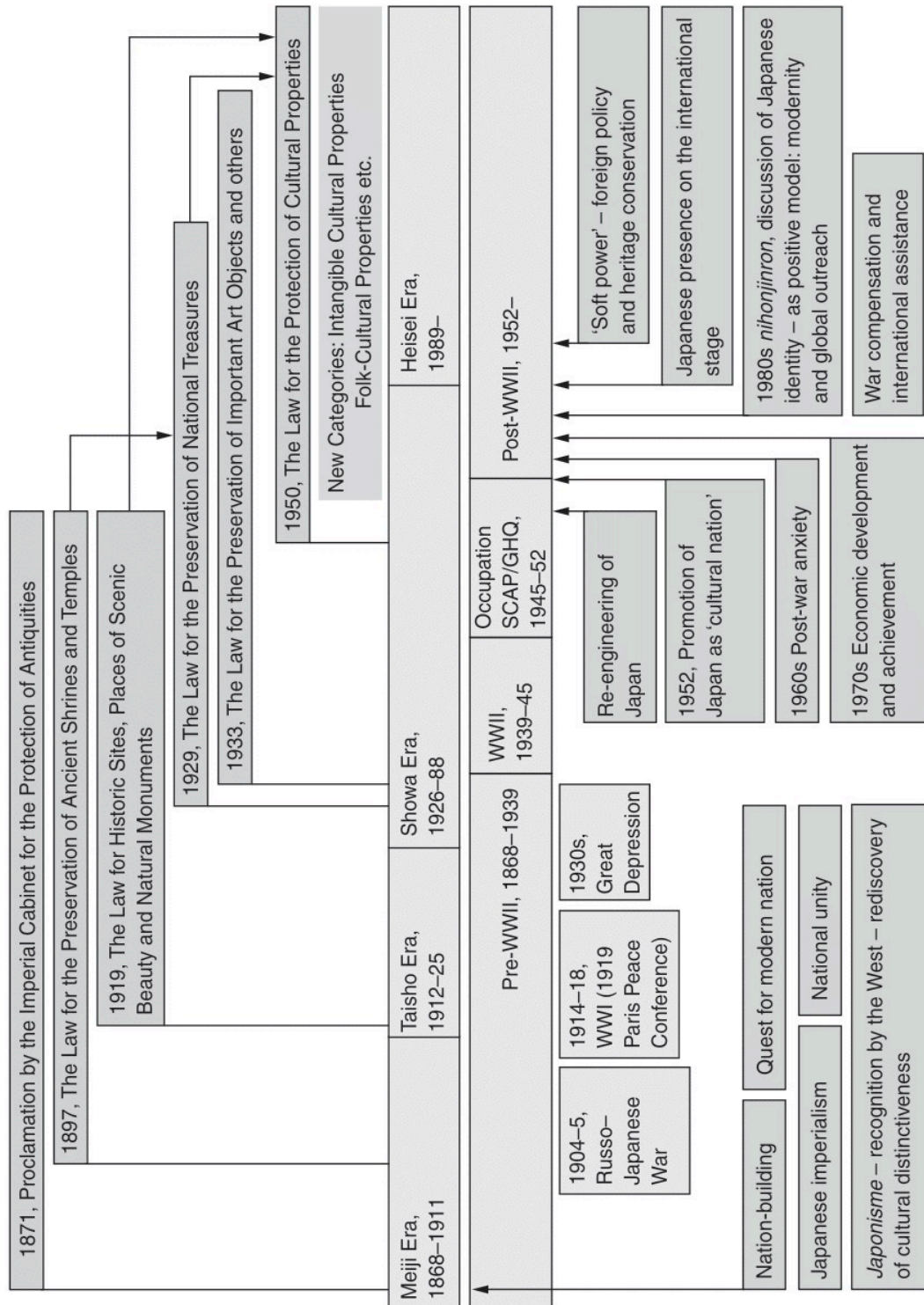
1950	Arimasa Mori traveled to France as one of the first French government-sponsored fellows in the post-war
1951	Shuichi Kato traveled to France for a research fellowship The <i>Chanson Café Gimpari</i> opened
1952	Marcel Carné's <i>Les Enfants du Paradis</i> released in Japan
1953	Aro Naito published the translation of <i>Le Petit Prince</i>
1956	Shuichi Kato published <i>Zasshu Bunka</i> Japan's admission to the United Nations
1959	French government returned the <i>Matsukata</i> Collection to Japan
1960	Jean-Luc Godard's <i>À Bout de Souffle</i> released in Japan
1963	Alain Delon visited Japan

1964	The Tokyo Olympic Games
1966	Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir visited Japan
1970	The Japan World Exposition, Osaka 1970 Roland Barthes published <i>L'empire des signes</i> The fashion magazine, <i>an • an Elle Japon</i> was launched TAKADA Kenzo debuted in the Paris Collection
1972	Paul Bocuse visited Japan Okinawa's reversion to Japanese administration Riyoko Ikeda's comic, <i>The Rose of Versailles</i> was started
1975	Close down of the Ikuno Mine Mitsuharu Kaneko published <i>Nemure Pari</i>
1974	Takarazuka Revue Company performed <i>The Rose of Versailles</i> for the first time
1975	Shuichi Kato published <i>Nihon Bungakushi Josetsu</i> (A History of Japanese Literature) The Rambouillet Summit
1986	The Sumo Stand in Paris
1987	Katakura Industries closed down the Tomioka Silk Mill
1990	OTOMO Katsuhiro's comic, <i>Akira</i> became popular in France



## APPENDIX F

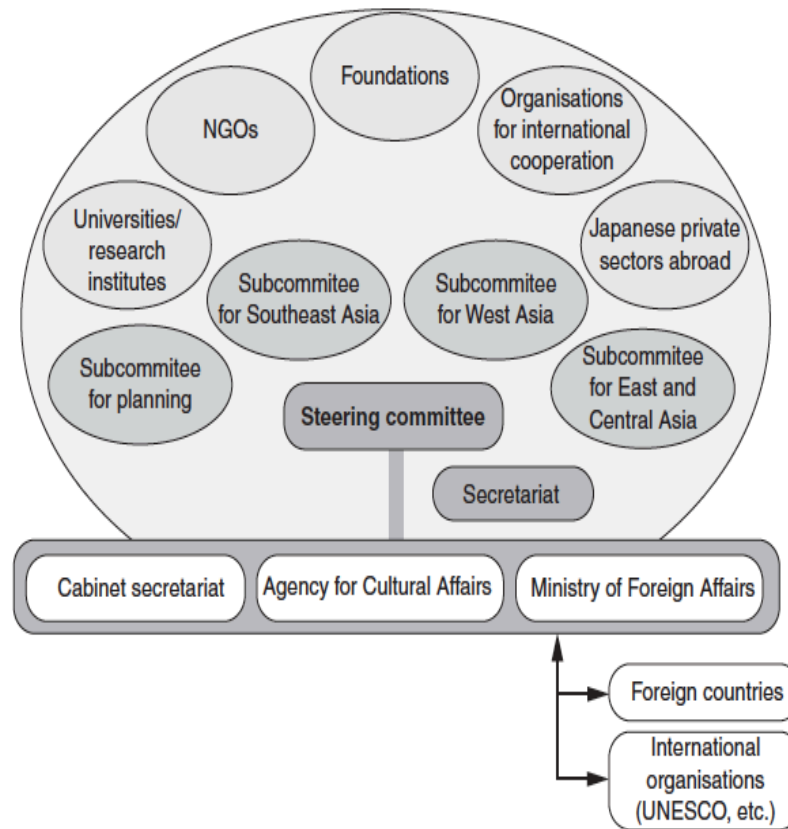
### DEVELOPMENT OF JAPANESE HERITAGE CONSERVATION SYSTEM, HISTORY AND JAPANESE IDENTITY<sup>283</sup>



<sup>283</sup> This ideogram is quoted from Natsuko Akagawa's book titled *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, Page 54.

## APPENDIX G

### ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF JCIC-HERITAGE<sup>284</sup>



<sup>284</sup> This organizational framework is quoted from Natsuko Akagawa's book titled *Heritage Conservation and Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: Heritage, National Identity and National Interest*, Page 100.

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