Heritage Conservation and Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy

Japan’s heritage conservation policy and practice, as deployed through its foreign aid programmes, has become one of the main means through which post-World War II Japan has sought to mark its presence in the international arena, both globally and regionally. Heritage conservation has been intimately linked to Japan’s sense of national identity, in addition to its self-portrayal as a responsible global and regional citizen.

This book explores the concepts of heritage, nationalism and Japanese national identity in the context of Japanese and international history since the second half of the nineteenth century. In doing so, it shows how Japan has built on its distinctive approach to conservation to develop a heritage-based strategy, which has been used as part of its cultural diplomacy designed to increase its ‘soft power’ both globally and within the Asian region. More broadly, Natsuko Akagawa underlines the theoretical nexus between the politics of heritage conservation, cultural diplomacy and national interest, and in turn highlights how issues of heritage conservation practice and policy are crucial to a comprehensive understanding of geo-politics.

*Heritage Conservation and Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy* will be of great interest to students, scholars and professionals working in the fields of heritage and museum studies, heritage conservation, international relations and Asian/Japanese studies.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors/Editors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A Japanese Company in Crisis</td>
<td>Fiona Graham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Japan’s Foreign Aid</td>
<td>David Arase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japanese Apologies for World War II</td>
<td>Jane W. Yamazaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Linguistic Stereotyping and Minority Groups in Japan</td>
<td>Nanette Gottlieb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shinkansen</td>
<td>Christopher P. Hood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Small Firms and Innovation Policy in Japan</td>
<td>Cornelia Storz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cities, Autonomy and Decentralization in Japan</td>
<td>Carola Hein and Philippe Pelletier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Changing Japanese Family</td>
<td>Marcus Rebick and Ayumi Takenaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Adoption in Japan</td>
<td>Peter Hayes and Toshie Habu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Ethics of Aesthetics in Japanese Cinema and Literature</td>
<td>Nina Cornyetz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Institutional and Technological Change in Japan’s Economy</td>
<td>Janet Hunter and Cornelia Storz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Political Reform in Japan</td>
<td>Alisa Gaunder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Civil Society and the Internet in Japan</td>
<td>Isa Ducke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Japan’s Contested War Memories</td>
<td>Philip A. Seaton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 15 | Japanese Love Hotels  
A cultural history  
*Sarah Chaplin* |
| 16 | Population Decline and Ageing in Japan  
The social consequences  
*Florian Coulmas* |
| 17 | Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity  
*David Chapman* |
| 18 | A Japanese Joint Venture in the Pacific  
Foreign bodies in tinned tuna  
*Kate Barclay* |
*Joseph P. Ferguson* |
| 20 | War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Post-War Japan, 1945–2007  
The Japanese history textbook controversy and Ienaga Saburo’s court challenges  
*Yoshiko Nozaki* |
| 21 | A New Japan for the Twenty-First Century  
An inside overview of current fundamental changes and problems  
*Edited by Rien T. Segers* |
| 22 | A Life Adrift  
Soeda Azembo, popular song and modern mass culture in Japan  
*Translated by Michael Lewis* |
| 23 | The Novels of Oe Kenzaburo  
*Yasuko Claremont* |
| 24 | Perversion in Modern Japan  
Psychoanalysis, literature, culture  
*Edited by Nina Cornyetz and J. Keith Vincent* |
| 25 | Homosexuality and Manliness in Postwar Japan  
*Jonathan D. Mackintosh* |
| 26 | Marriage in Contemporary Japan  
*Yoko Tokuhiro* |
| 27 | Japanese Aid and the Construction of Global Development  
Inescapable solutions  
*Edited by David Leheny and Carol Warren* |
| 28 | The Rise of Japanese NGOs  
Activism from above  
*Kim D. Reimann* |
| 29 | Postwar History Education in Japan and the Germanys  
Guilty lessons  
*Julian Dierkes* |
| 30 | Japan-Bashing  
Anti-Japanism since the 1980s  
*Narrelle Morris* |
| 31 | Legacies of the Asia-Pacific War  
The Yakeato generation  
*Edited by Roman Rosenbaum and Yasuko Claremont* |
| 32 | Challenges of Human Resource Management in Japan  
*Edited by Ralf Bebenroth and Toshihiro Kanai* |
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*Edited by Indra Levy* |
34 Language Life in Japan
Transformations and prospects
Edited by Patrick Heinrich and Christian Galan

35 The Quest for Japan’s New Constitution
An analysis of visions and constitutional reform proposals 1980–2009
Christian G. Winkler

36 Japan in the Age of Globalization
Edited by Carin Holroyd and Ken Coates

37 Social Networks and Japanese Democracy
The beneficial impact of interpersonal communication in East Asia
Ken’ichi Ikeda and Sean Richey

38 Dealing with Disaster in Japan
Responses to the Flight JL123 crash
Christopher P. Hood

39 The Ethics of Japan’s Global Environmental Policy
The conflict between principles and practice
Midori Kagawa-Fox

40 Superhuman Japan
Knowledge, nation and culture in US–Japan relations
Marie Thorsten

41 Nationalism, Political Realism and Democracy in Japan
The thought of Masao Maruyama
Fumiko Šasaki

42 Japan’s Local Newspapers
Chihōshi and revitalization journalism
Anthony S. Rausch

43 Mental Health Care in Japan
Edited by Ruth Taplin and Sandra J. Lawman

44 Manga and the Representation of Japanese History
Edited by Roman Rosenbaum

45 Negotiating Censorship in Modern Japan
Edited by Rachael Hutchinson

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From confrontation to global partnership
Edited by Jörn Keck, Dimitri Vanoverbeke and Franz Waldenberger

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Edited by Masako Gavin and Ben Middleton

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From the Cold War to the post-bipolar era
Oliviero Frattollilo

49 Sound, Space and Sociality in Modern Japan
Edited by Joseph D. Hankins and Carolyn S. Stevens

50 Japanese Femininities
Justin Charlebois

51 Japan’s Foreign Aid to Africa
Angola and Mozambique within the TICAD process
Pedro Amakasu Raposo
52 Internationalising Japan
Discourse and practice
Edited by Jeremy Breaden, Stacey Steele and Carolyn S. Stevens

53 Heritage Conservation and Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy
Heritage, national identity and national interest
Natsuko Akagawa
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Heritage Conservation in Japan’s Cultural Diplomacy
Heritage, national identity and national interest

Natsuko Akagawa
for mama, papa, tako, relatives and everyone who has had an impact on my life
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Contents

List of figures xiii
List of tables xiv
List of boxes xv
Preface xvi
Acknowledgements xviii
List of abbreviations xix

Introduction: heritage conservation in global and regional cultural diplomacy 1

1 Unpacking heritage: deconstruction and construction of heritage 8

2 National identity, nationalism and Japanese identity 28

3 The Japanese heritage conservation approach and authenticity 47

4 Japan in the global heritage context 79

5 Intangible heritage 115

6 Vietnam case study: Vietnam’s nationalist history and Japan’s Official Development Assistance to Vietnam 138

7 Vietnam case study: Can Chanh Palace and Nha Nhac Court Music in Hue 150

8 Conclusion: Japan a ‘cultural nation’? 182
Appendix 1 191
Appendix 2 196
References 197
Index 219
Figures

3.1 Development of Japanese heritage conservation system, history and Japanese identity 54
3.2 Schematic diagram of cultural properties 56
3.3 Ise Shrine precincts in 2013 76
4.1 Overview of ODA and new JICA 89
4.2 Organisational framework of JCIC-Heritage 100
4.3 Organisational chart of UNESCO activities 103
7.1 Plaque commemorating ‘the project for improving the surrounding area of My Son sanctuary’ 151
7.2 Structure in the Hue citadel destroyed during the Vietnam War 153
7.3 Main Gate (Ngo Mon) restored during 1990–2 156
7.4 Site of Can Chanh Palace 162
7.5 Framework of international cooperation between Vietnam and Waseda, Japan in Hue 165
7.6 Nha Nhac Theatre restored during 1998–2001 169
7.7 Nha Nhac performers 170
## Tables

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Three types of power</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Analysis of <em>Nihonjinron</em></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1a</td>
<td>Number of cultural properties listed by the National Government (as of 1 December 2013): Designation</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1b</td>
<td>Number of cultural properties listed by the National Government (as of 1 December 2013): Selection</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1c</td>
<td>Number of cultural properties listed by the National Government (as of 1 December 2013): Registration</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>ODA policy towards humanitarian security aid that became the focus for Prime Ministers Koizumi (2001–6), Abe (2006–7) and Fukuda (2007–8)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Japan’s Aid for the Complex of Hue Monuments</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1</td>
<td>Comprehensive table of all international assistance in and around the Complex of Hue Monuments</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2</td>
<td>Major universities involved in large-scale international cooperation for heritage conservation</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Boxes

1. Development of ODA in Japan 87
2. UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 109
3. UNESCO/Funds-in-Trust under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan 110–111
This book demonstrates how Japan’s heritage conservation policy and practice, as deployed through its foreign aid programmes, became one of the main means through which post-World War II Japan sought to mark its presence in the international arena, both globally and regionally. Japan’s involvement in heritage conservation has been intimately linked to its sense of national identity and that Japan’s national interest was reflected in its use of cultural heritage has been an important element in its self-portrayal as a responsible global and regional citizen. Building on its historically significant and distinctive approach to conservation and the rich scope of its national heritage protection system, Japan has developed a heritage-based strategy, which it has used as part of its cultural diplomacy, designed to increase its ‘soft power’ both globally and within the Asian region.

This focus on Japan’s use of cultural heritage as an element of its cultural diplomacy is contextualised by exploring the evolution of the heritage conservation movement in Japan since the Meiji restoration as well as Japan’s positioning in Asia prior to and after World War II and particularly following the end of the Cold War. 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. During Matsuura’s term in office, the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) (the ‘2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention’), was adopted. Seen in retrospect, the Convention represents Japan’s principal contribution to the global heritage system. It parallels the Nara Document on Authenticity, Japan’s main contribution to the international heritage discourse.

Regionally within Asia, and especially in East and Southeast Asia, many heritage sites with iconic value for national identity have received major heritage conservation funding from Japan. In this book, Japan’s involvement in cultural heritage conservation projects in Hue, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is used as a case study to examine in detail the role that heritage has played in Japan’s cultural diplomacy within the region. This case study, based on fieldwork undertaken in Japan, Vietnam and Thailand, reveals how Japan has contributed to the conservation of Vietnam’s heritage and shows that this was supported by the
Japanese Government as a form of cultural diplomacy. It also reveals how such practice impacted on the direction of Vietnamese official policies towards enhancing that nation’s cultural identity.

An examination of existing publications shows that a comprehensive study exploring the evolution of Japanese heritage conservation policy and practice in relation to Japanese national identity and foreign policy has not been undertaken. This study seeks to fill that gap. In an era where global cooperation has become increasingly important for humanitarian, security and economic reasons, Japan used its strength in the heritage field to allow it to exercise a significant degree of influence in its immediate region and also more generally in the evolving global discourse on the principles and practice of heritage conservation.

More broadly, the study establishes the theoretical nexus between the politics of heritage conservation, cultural diplomacy and national interest. Thus, it demonstrates that issues of heritage conservation practice and policy extend beyond the provenance of heritage practitioners, heritage policy-makers and scholars, to fall legitimately within the wider study of geo-politics. In addressing the political dimension of heritage as a key issue of contemporary concern in the field of heritage studies, this innovative integrated framework could therefore provide a model for an understanding of the role of heritage in other countries.
I am grateful to scholars, researchers, government officials, site managers and anonymous supporters in Thailand, Vietnam, Japan and elsewhere around the globe, whose cooperation, informal conversations and openness have always been my source of inspiration and insights that I could never capture from literature alone.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCU</td>
<td>Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>EIIHCAP</td>
<td>Establishment Initiative for the Intangible Heritage Centre for the Asia-Pacific</td>
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<td>FY</td>
<td>Fiscal Year</td>
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<td>HMCC</td>
<td>Hue Monument Conservation Centre</td>
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<td>ICHCAP</td>
<td>International Centre for the Intangible Heritage Centre for the Asia-Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICROM</td>
<td>International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property</td>
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<td>ICOMOS</td>
<td>International Council on Monuments and Sites</td>
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<td>IIWC</td>
<td>ICOMOS International Wood Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBIC</td>
<td>Japan Bank for International Cooperation</td>
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<td>JEXIM</td>
<td>The Export–Import Bank of Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japan International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>JNTO</td>
<td>Japan National Tourism Organisation</td>
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<td>LDP</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party</td>
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<td>MEXT</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology</td>
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<td>MOFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFUAJ</td>
<td>National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIK</td>
<td>Nippon Hoso Kyokai</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIT</td>
<td>Nippon Institute of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD-DAC</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>OSH</td>
<td>Outrage at state humiliation</td>
</tr>
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<td>OTCA</td>
<td>Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCAP/GHQ</td>
<td>Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers/General Headquarters</td>
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<td>SEAMO–SPAFA</td>
<td>Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPAB</td>
<td>Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings</td>
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<td>TICAD</td>
<td>Tokyo International Conference on African Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITAR</td>
<td>United Nations Institute for Training and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFUCA</td>
<td>World Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction
Heritage conservation in global and regional cultural diplomacy

To date, a comprehensive study exploring the evolution of Japanese heritage conservation policy and practice in relation to Japanese national identity and foreign policy has not been undertaken. This study therefore aims to fill that gap. It shows how Japanese heritage conservation policy and practice intersect with Japanese national identity and nationalism and how, in turn, these are linked to Japan’s national interest in providing a key element in its foreign policy and cultural diplomacy. It provides a comprehensive understanding of the historical background and nature of cultural heritage laws in Japan since the Meiji era and explains how this tradition of cultural heritage practice has been utilised in the operation of Japan’s cultural diplomacy. Referring to Joseph Nye’s (1990) concept of ‘soft power’, the study shows how heritage conservation has become a key component of Japan’s foreign policy strategy to strengthen its presence on the international stage as a form of soft diplomacy. More broadly, the study establishes the theoretical nexus between the politics of heritage conservation, cultural diplomacy and national interest. In providing a framework for examining the political dimension of heritage conservation, it is hoped that this innovative contribution to heritage studies will provide a model for identifying the role of heritage in other national contexts.

The focus of this study is contextualised through an exploration of the historical background of heritage conservation in Japan, Japan’s positioning in Asia after World War II and, more specifically, its positioning following the end of the Cold War. Locating Japan’s heritage policy within this historical context enables a clearer understanding of why and how heritage conservation has become one of the important means through which Japan deploys its foreign aid programmes to mark its presence in the international arena. It helps to highlight the mixed motivations for Japan’s involvement in heritage at the global and regional level. This includes not only commercial interests but also its aim is to be seen as a ‘good global citizen’ serving wider humanity by undertaking cultural works in support of the principles advanced by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The book explores and documents in some detail Japan’s involvement in the development of UNESCO policy and practice in the area of World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage as its major contribution to the global heritage
Introduction
discourse. More specifically, it focuses on Japan’s role in the discussion of the
Nara Document on Authenticity and subsequently on its important involvement
in the preparation of the legal instrument for the safeguarding of intangible
heritage or immaterial heritage, following the French term *patrimoine
immatériel*. It is argued that Japanese efforts not only contributed to elevating
global heritage discourse to a position where it became capable of accommod-
ating more complex and diverse forms of cultural heritage, but in doing so,
allowed Japan to fulfil its aspirations of playing a significant humanitarian role
in global affairs.

With the emerging global emphasis on the need for regional and international
cooperation, Japan’s international cultural policy has been designed to contribute
to the broader domain of economic development and security issues. Its cultural
diplomacy is interwoven with efforts to elevate Japan’s position in the region
through the use of heritage conservation funds and its technical expertise.

The book is thus concerned to show that much of Japan’s foreign policy and
the projection of its national identity abroad are interlinked with the practice of
cultural diplomacy. It shows that the issue of heritage conservation practice and
policy extends beyond the provenance of heritage practitioners, heritage policy-
makers and scholars, to legitimately fall within the wider study of geo-politics.

To this end, the case of cultural heritage conservation projects in Hue, Vietnam,
is employed to explore in detail the role of Japanese cultural diplo-
macy. In analysing this case, the study reveals how the mechanisms and pro-
tesses through which the Japanese government has provided support for heritage
conservation in Vietnam can be seen as an exercise of its ‘soft power’. At the
same time, it shows that the Japanese presence in the field of local heritage con-
servation has had an impact on the direction of Vietnamese national policies,
towards enhancing its cultural identity.

Vietnam was specifically chosen for the case study because Japan’s support
of Vietnam was the first occasion on which Japan moved away from its earlier
non-interference foreign aid programme policy. Far from being a policy of non-
intervention, in using Official Development Assistance (ODA), Japan has been
able to exercise a significant degree of influence over Vietnam’s development
policy and its judicial system. Within Vietnam, Hue was selected for study
because it was the first place in that country where Japan officially provided aid
to projects for safeguarding heritage, both tangible and intangible. Furthermore,
‘The Complex of Hue Monuments’ is the first World Heritage site in Vietnam
and the ‘Nha Nhac – Vietnamese Court Music’ in Hue is the first element to be
listed under the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention.

The example of Hue, therefore, also effectively allows one to observe how
Japanese aid for heritage conservation included support for safeguarding both
tangible and intangible heritage. The case study thus reveals not only the charac-
teristics of Japan’s cultural diplomacy in relation to heritage but also how its
own specific practice in heritage conservation, of which some aspects are now
reflected in World Heritage Operational Guidelines, are applied.

This study specifically seeks to answer the following questions:
1. How do Japanese heritage conservation policy and practice intersect with Japanese national identity, nationalism and national interest?

2. How did Japan make use of its heritage conservation expertise to become one of the major players in the international cultural heritage conservation field?

3. How has Japan’s use of heritage in its cultural diplomacy strategy influenced the development of ‘international best practice’ in the heritage field?

4. How has Japan contributed to heritage conservation in Vietnam, and how does this reflect the Japanese Government’s use of cultural heritage conservation activities as part of its cultural diplomacy in the region?

Existing literature on Japanese heritage and heritage conservation focuses mostly on technical aspects relevant to architectural conservation on specific case studies. As for Japanese heritage, the focus tends to be narrowly focused or form a part of ethnographic or anthropological studies. This book deals with issues related to architectural conservation, history, anthropology and political science, but from the perspective of heritage studies. In doing so it simultaneously addresses a notable absence in heritage literature in establishing a theoretical nexus through a study of heritage conservation between the politics of heritage conservation, cultural diplomacy, national identity and national interest.

Some elements of heritage discourse in Japan can be found embedded in general guides and reports on ‘cultural properties’, which are prepared by an official government body, the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan (文部省), also widely known by its Japanese name of Bunkacho. Although there are a number of publications that focus on Japanese nationalism as the core theme in Japanese studies (e.g. Tsurumi 1927; Maruyama 1953; Pyle 1971; Harootunian 1971; Morris-Suzuki 1995; Schmiegelow and Schmiegelow 1990; Lincicome 1999), Sandra Wilson has argued in Nation and Nationalism in Japan (2002:1) that ‘reference to the Japanese case is almost entirely missing from the contemporary theoretical literature on nation and nationalism’. It is also noticeable that there are very few publications on nationalism in Japan relating to the period of post-war occupation (1945–1952) or after the 1950s. This is in sharp contrast to the extensive critical studies of Japanese nationalism in the pre-World War II period. However, nihonjinron (日本人論), the post-war discussion on the nature of Japaneseess has become prominent since the 1970s and 1980s (see Miller 1982; Mieur and Sugimoto 1986; Dale 1986; Yoshino 1992, 1997). Befu Harumi (2001), an anthropologist, and Yoshino Kosaku (1992), interpret nihonjinron as a type of cultural nationalism.

Given the lack of substantive academic work in this area, therefore, I have had to rely on my own reading and analysis of Japanese government reports and documents, especially those from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Agency of Cultural Affairs and other official documents. The key sources upon which this discussion draws were located in the Diet Library of Japan and the National Museum of Tokyo.
4 Introduction

This official Japanese government documentation was used to establish an accurate record of stated government policies in the area of cultural heritage and their connection to other government policy areas, including foreign affairs. Wherever possible this information has been cross-referenced with other secondary sources in order to separate substantive policy from government propaganda. Such a detailed investigation of official records has not previously been undertaken.

Further understanding of the practice and use of cultural heritage was developed through site inspections in Japan. Fieldwork in Japan was conducted during visits to Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara. Further material was obtained by participation in a number of key meetings, seminars and conferences, including the Intergovernmental Meeting for Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Tokyo (2008) and the Heritage Conservation Seminar Series, also in Tokyo (2008).

Site inspections and the collection of information were conducted to further the understanding of the practice and use of cultural heritage in Vietnam. The case study of Vietnam was the result of a long-term field trip to Hanoi, Hue, Hoi An, My Son and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam and to Bangkok in Thailand, in January 2011. A number of written materials were kindly shared by the UNESCO Hanoi Office; the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism of Vietnam; the HMCC, Hue, Vietnam; the Hoi An Centre for Monuments Management and Preservation, Hoi An, Vietnam; and My Son site management, My Son, Vietnam, and a number of staff at the National Museums in the Ho Chi Minh City. Other written materials were collected during this field trip at the UNESCO Regional Headquarters in Bangkok; and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO–SPAFA) Archive Centre, Bangkok, with the cooperation of their staff and the local researchers.

In addition, much of the information and many of the insights upon which this book draws have been derived from numerous formal and informal personal communications developed through the course of this investigation. These sources are indicated in the text.

As a bilingual Japanese person who has studied and worked in Japan and abroad, gaining fluency in languages such as English and Portuguese, an understanding of Chinese and French, and a broad appreciation of international perspectives on national identity and heritage practice, I am well placed to examine these resources and investigate the issues from the perspective of both a Japanese insider and an informed outsider.

This book is organised into eight chapters. Chapter 1 sets out the key objectives, the background and significance of the topic, and the methodological and theoretical framework employed in the book. It brings together theories and literature from various fields in relation to heritage. The chapter begins with a discussion on the notion of heritage, its conceptual relationship to history and its historical links with nationalism and its role in the creation of identity. It considers how debates about globalisation underscore the importance of the links
Introduction

between heritage and the idea of collective identity and memory. It then proceeds to discuss the question of heritage conservation and authenticity, and the use of heritage in relation to tourism and as an element of cultural diplomacy.

Chapter 2 commences with an extensive discussion of national identity and nationalism. The chapter then proceeds to explore the relationship between nationalism and culture in Japan in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to show how much of the thinking in the post-war period reflects similar patterns evident in the pre-war era. Next it discusses Japanese nationalism and the exercise of its ‘soft power’ in international relations, which includes its cultural and educational programmes and how the idea of ‘Asianism’ has been disseminated. The chapter concludes with an analysis of how Japan has utilised the heritage and heritage conservation projects, the promotion of Japanese identity in economic development and the projection of Japanese nationalism through its expanding role in international affairs.

Chapter 3 presents the Japanese approach on heritage conservation in order to establish a clear understanding of the origins and history of the current system. The opening section introduces the ideas of machizukuri, ‘town making’ and furusato, literally meaning ‘native place’ or ‘hometown’. These concepts are used by the Japanese government to reconstruct the hometown image, and utilise the heritage landscape to influence Japanese people’s sense of identity and authenticity. The following section focuses on the issue of authenticity, discussed during the Nara Conference held in 1994 in Nara, and its relationship with Japanese conservation practice. Here, some misconceptions in relation to traditional and religious practice are discussed and the example of Ise Shrine is unpacked. The last section reflects the Japanese national system in relation to the question of authenticity in heritage conservation in general.

Chapter 4 explores how and why Japan began to engage in discussions and the practice of heritage conservation on the international stage using cultural diplomacy. The chapter begins by outlining the history of ODA to trace the shift over time in its direction and aims. It then discusses the forms of cultural aid and involvement in conjunction with and within UNESCO. The turning point for Japan was when Japan became the major donor to UNESCO following the withdrawal of the United States and the United Kingdom. In 1989, Japan first established the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust for use on World Heritage sites. Another capstone was the election of Matsuura Koichiro as the Director-General of UNESCO in 1999 with planned support by the Japanese government. This chapter demonstrates how Japan elevated itself in the international field of cultural heritage conservation while at the same time fulfilling its national interests and responsibilities as a global citizen.

Building on the discussions in Chapters 3 and 4, Chapter 5 discusses Japan’s involvement in, and the background to the adoption of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. This marked a further milestone in Japan’s influence on the evolution of an international heritage discourse. Together with the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was Japan’s major contribution to international discourse on the
protection of cultural heritage. Japan strategically funded and hosted projects and meetings, especially for the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, and pushed its way forward to mark its presence on the international stage in regard to the safeguarding of cultural heritage. In addition, issues related with the term ‘intangible’, criticism of the mechanism of the 2003 Intangible Heritage Convention and issues in the Japanese intangible heritage system are discussed here.

Reflecting various themes raised in preceding chapters, Chapters 6 and 7 provide a detailed examination of Japanese cultural diplomacy in the area of heritage conservation through a case study of Japan’s ODA in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Chapter 6 outlines the organisation of Japan’s ODA to Vietnam and summarises Vietnam’s nationalist history, focusing on twentieth-century links to Japan. This provides a background to the more recent relationship as well as situating the significance of Hue within Vietnamese history and contemporary understanding of its national identity. It is argued that the use of culture proved beneficial to the national interests of both countries. For the Vietnamese government, a focus on cultural heritage identified an important element to contribute to its development programme. For Japan, support for heritage conservation projects involving both tangible and intangible cultural heritage at the Complex of Hue Monuments (which during the course of aid programmes became a world heritage site) provided an ideal vehicle for its cultural diplomacy in the region. Chapter 7 proceeds to explore two cases, Can Chanh Palace and Nha Nhac court music in Hue, in detail, to investigate how such practice may have impacted on the direction of Vietnamese national policies towards enhancing Vietnamese cultural identity.

Chapter 8 consolidates the main arguments of each chapter and presents the conclusions arrived at by responding to the main research questions posed by this book. The chapter then summarises the implications of the study in the context of the main aim, which is to examine how Japan’s heritage conservation policy and practice at home and as exported abroad intersects with Japanese national identity, cultural diplomacy and global citizenship.

Cultural and linguistic note

Japanese personal names are conventionally written with the family name first followed by the given name. In this book, they are given in this Japanese order except where named individuals have adopted Western style (given name, followed by the family name). They are spelled in Romanised form followed by Japanese script in parenthesis where appropriate. Vietnamese language is written in Romanised or quoc ngu form and personal names are represented with the family name first followed by the given names. It is normal in Vietnam to address people by their final given name, rather than by their family name. Outside Vietnam, it is common for Vietnamese people to change the order of their names to conform to the Western order. Because of this complication, the Vietnamese names used in this book are written in the full Vietnamese form but
without the diacritical marks. Where documents emanating from Vietnam were originally written in the English language, I have used the original English but have shown corrections in square brackets where necessary to clarify the meaning. For long direct quotes, the original language is indicated.

Unless otherwise indicated, I have translated the quotations and references from Japanese language sources, except where an official English translation was available. I am also responsible for the interpretation or summary of the Japanese language content of sources used.
1 Unpacking heritage

Deconstruction and construction of heritage

In one of the most influential publications in the heritage field, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, David Lowenthal (1985:384–5) wrote:

Preserving material objects is not the only way to conserve a heritage. The great Ise Shinto temple in Japan is dismantled every twenty years and replaced by a faithful replica built of similar materials exactly as before. Physical continuity signifies less to the Japanese than perpetuating the techniques and rituals of re-creation; craftsmen trained in the old skills are themselves designated ‘Living National Treasures’ – prized exemplars of cultural heritage [...] The Japanese thus avoid the dilemma inherent in conserving objects – its ultimate impossibility. Everything we think of as ‘preserved’ is more or less altered; it is really the form that endures, not the substance. And most things are identified on that basis. A barrel whose original hoops and staves have all been replaced remains for us the same old barrel. Chemistry ceaselessly transforms the constituents of all artefacts, yet we go on seeing them as originals until their final dissolution: a building or a pair of shoes remains that building and those shoes from the moment of their making until the building falls into rubble, the shoes into rubbish.

William Coaldrake, Professor of Japanese Studies at the University of Melbourne and the first non-Japanese accepted as a member of the Kyoto Guild of Traditional master builders, opened his book entitled *The Way of the Carpenter* (1990:3) with the view that building is a cultural process that connects humans and physical material:

Three small, unassuming Japanese planes rest on my desk. The gift of a retired master carpenter, is [neither] larger than the span of my outstretched fingers, nor greater in width than the base of my thumb. Two are straight, one sweetly curved. The oak block of each plane is scarred with use, the cutting blade pockmarked with rust. In such objects John Ruskin may have glimpsed the romance of ruin but these tools evoke more than nostalgia for a disappearing craft. They form tangible links with the people and processes
of building in the past. They are not passive objects meant [for] casual perusal in a museum. They were the instruments of energetic mediation between man and materials in a world which has now all but disappeared. Pulled across a piece of wood, each of my planes still carves [its] distinct signature into the grain – a neat groove, a serrated path or a graceful arc. The true home of such tool is [neither] a desktop nor a display case but in the hands of a carpenter standing among the fresh shavings of a building site. They belong to the dynamic world of traditional Japanese building practice as an inseparable part of a way of work which is also a way of life. This is the Way of the Carpenter.

Gerald Vizenor, Professor Emeritus in American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, has written, ‘The Japanese would rather build a shrine as a traditional ritual than preserve a shrine, so the preservation of nuclear ruins is an ironic gesture. The ruins are true, beyond ritual preservation’ (Vizenor 2009:130).

I start with these quotations since they suggest both truths and misconceptions about Japanese conservation practice. There are interesting contrasts between these authors in how they interpret Japanese approaches to heritage conservation and culture. Lowenthal argues that because preserving material is an ‘ultimate impossibility’, the Japanese avoid what Lowenthal calls the ‘dilemma’. Although widely used, the Ise Shrine is not a suitable example to explain the Japanese approach to heritage conservation. The story of the Ise Shrine can be used to enlighten the process and practice for some buildings, but the Ise Shrine is an exceptional case. The reconstruction practice used there has a distinct meaning based on religious belief directly related to the Japanese indigenous religion, Shinto (see Chapter 3). By equating the examples of shrines and the Genbaku Dome (or Atomic Bomb Dome), the comment by Vizenor appears to misunderstand the meaning and purpose of traditional Japanese approach to heritage conservation. In contrast, Coaldrake illustrates the entire process of building as a continuous and living practice that links past to present.

Japan is one of the countries in Asia that has been consciously working on the protection of art works and monuments under national legislation since the nineteenth century and this has been the result of its own national initiative rather than that of a foreign colonial power or as an expression of a coloniser’s interests. A review of the evolution of Japanese heritage conservation policy indicates that it was initially a reaction against increasing exposure to Western society and a related concern as to how to define and project its national identity in the context of the Meiji era’s quest for nation building. Since then, laws related to the conservation of the arts and monuments have been added and amended to present and protect what authorities at that time believed constituted national culture.

However, the Cultural Property Law (文化財保護法), enacted in 1950, had a different character, as it was enacted by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers/General Headquarters (SCAP/GHQ), under which Australian, British,
Indian, Canadian, and New Zealand forces under SCAP were organised into a sub-command known as the British Commonwealth Occupation Force during the post-World War II occupation, and reflected the new Constitution and cultural policy imposed on Japan by the SCAP/GHQ. Although adapted from several pre-existing conservation laws related to conservation of arts and monuments, this new law introduced the term bunkazai (文化財, ‘cultural properties’), for the first time (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2001). This term effectively consolidated reference to all artefacts, monuments, historic places and natural heritage sites and other forms of heritage as one concept.

The Act also included under the term bunkazai the notion of intangible heritage, such as the performing arts and conservation techniques and skills. Celebration of this form of heritage had long been considered one of the unique aspects of Japanese culture and it was introduced into the new law as a category: Intangible Cultural Properties. Two other categories, Intangible Folk Cultural Properties and Traditional Techniques for Conservation of Cultural Properties, were added as amendments in 1954 and 1975 respectively. It is this unique feature of the Japanese approach to cultural heritage conservation that observers have identified as having enabled Japan to play a significant role in shaping the recent international conservation instruments. The two most celebrated interventions have been in the initiation of the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994) and the establishment of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention.

The need to focus on the issue of ‘authenticity’ emerged from a recommendation by the World Heritage Committee meeting in Santa Fe in 1992, and resulted in one of the most critical heritage conferences, the Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention, held in Japan’s former capital, Nara, in 1994. Japan had only ratified the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereafter World Heritage Convention) in 1992 but within two years it hosted the conference in association with the World Heritage Centre, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and the governments of Canada and Norway. Herb Stovel (2008:9), who was the Secretary General of ICOMOS (1990–3), President of ICOMOS Canada (1993–7), Director of ICCROM Heritage Unit (1998–2004), and one of the drafters of the Nara Document on Authenticity, has stated that the Nara Conference:

[was] the first effort in the 30 years since the Venice Charter to attempt to put in place a set of internationally applicable conservation principles […] while reflecting an important international consensus, [it also] marked the final stage in a move from belief in universal international absolutes, first introduced by the Venice Charter, toward acceptance of conservation judgements as necessarily relative and contextual.

Nevertheless, as he noted (Stovel 1995a:394), this possibility of defining such universal principles ‘without trivialising the cultural expressions or denying the
cultural values of non-central, non-conforming communities or groups’ needs to be debated.

The Nara Conference, however, had a more prosaic intention. As Stovel (2008:9) observed in a recent paper, the organisers:

wished simply to extend the range of attributes through which authenticity might be recognized, in order to accommodate within its mainstream Japanese conservation practices – namely the periodic dismantling, repair, and reassembly of wooden temples – so that Japan would feel more comfortable about submitting World Heritage nominations for international review.

The Nara Document thus paved the way to legitimising culturally embedded conservation practices for countries that have established traditional conservation systems, such as Japan. However, contrary to this intention, the document is sometimes criticised as having given licence to signatory states to do whatever is convenient (Stovel 2008:11).

The workshops, meetings and promotion in relation to UNESCO’s Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) (2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention) brought the idea of ‘intangible heritage’ to the attention of heritage practitioners around the world, as well as to academics in various fields (see Smith and Akagawa 2009:1–9). Since the Japanese government had exerted a strong influence on the promotion of this Convention, the protection of the intangible cultural properties under the Japanese national conservation system was widely publicised as well. The Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), and especially the Proclamation of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (1998), undoubtedly caught the attention of countries that did not have such a category as intangible cultural heritage in their national legislation.

Japan’s approach and conventional ‘Western’ international practice in the field of heritage conservation differed on two key issues: the concepts of and the practices related to authenticity and intangible heritage. It was in addressing these concepts, both central to its long tradition in heritage conservation, that Japan was able to institute major changes in the global heritage system.

Despite this recent and significant intervention by Japan in the global heritage conservation discourse, the practice of heritage conservation in Japan has not been explored in a comprehensive manner, either by Japanese or non-Japanese scholars. There are, of course, some notable exceptions such as Ito Nobuo (1995, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2007), Nishimura Yukio (1995, 2004), Knut Larsen (1994, 1995), Jukka Jokilehto (1999), Chester Liebs (1998) and Joseph Hajdu (2002). Most of these focus largely on Japanese architectural conservation practice and legal aspects. One of the reasons for this is the question of language, as most of the academic writing on heritage by Japanese scholars is written in Japanese. Moreover, the works consulted by foreign scholars have almost always been Japanese translations of foreign texts and thus the understanding of the international conservation philosophy tends to be refracted through the mirror of
their translators. These limitations sometimes create very complicated issues regarding interpretation and differences between Japanese and ‘Western’ perceptions.

Another issue complicating foreign understanding of Japanese heritage discourse reflects the extent to which elements of international practice, mostly originating in Europe, have been adopted in Japan alongside Japanese traditional practice. The Japanese conservation system is considered by the Japanese to be well embedded and incorporated into traditional practice and well developed to meet the local context. Therefore, what could be an ‘issue’ under the international framework may not be an issue for the cultural heritage society in Japan. There is also reluctance in Japan to challenge or to question the status quo. In one respect, this may reflect the fact that most of the conservation works have been carried out by the government, whose branches operate within a rigid bureaucracy in which interdepartmental communication is very poor and change is often very difficult to effect. Another reason, however, could be the lack of any discussion in Japan that links conservation policy, national identity, and historical background to the practice of Japanese cultural heritage. To date, discussion of these issues has not been explored in Japan and, given the linguistic and cultural complexities involved, exploration of these links has been almost entirely absent in English language literature as well. As Japan extends its role and influence in the global context, particularly through UNESCO, there has been a growing interest in understanding how Japanese cultural heritage policy and practice function.

**Framework**

This study explores the concepts of heritage, nationalism and Japanese national identity in the context of Japanese and international history since the second half of the nineteenth century. It investigates how Japanese identity is related to cultural heritage conservation policy and practice, and how this, in turn, is embedded in the practice of Japanese post-war diplomacy. It is based on an extensive theoretical framework that draws on current discourse in three main areas:

The discussion of these concepts will be traced in order to show how the Japanese historical and political background is related to the development of the country’s heritage conservation policies and practice and Japan’s involvement on the international stage. The concept of ‘soft power’ (Nye 2004a, 2004b, 2008; Melissen 2005; Watanabe and McConnell 2008) will also be reviewed as a basis for the analysis of recent Japanese foreign policy and its relation to heritage conservation practice.

More particularly, the book examines the concept of heritage as it developed in response to processes of modernisation, industrialisation and nationalism. By the nineteenth century cultural heritage seemed to offer elements of an idealised past that appealed to people who were disoriented and nostalgic (Brett 1996). It reflects on the use of heritage for nation building in the quest for a defining national character and culture, to show national distinctiveness and to establish ‘national identity’ in the context of an increasingly globalised world. Thus, here, heritage is seen as being inherently determined by political meaning. The book then takes this framework and explores the evolution of the concept of Japanese heritage conservation as a form of national policy from the Meiji era in the second half of the nineteenth century to post-World War II developments and into the twenty-first century.

This chapter explores issues central to an understanding of the theory and use of the concept of heritage to provide a theoretical context for the subsequent detailed study of Japanese practice. It examines the meaning of heritage in relationship to ‘history’, ‘national identity’ and ‘nationalism’ and the way it has been situated in discourses on tourism and cultural diplomacy. In the context of the theory/practice nexus, it examines the current debate around the concept of ‘authenticity’. The following chapter proceeds to further develop and examine the idea of national identity and nationalism before demonstrating how heritage discourse has been used to project Japanese identity abroad and is therefore seen as serving the Japanese national interest.

**Heritage and history: the selective use of the past**

The word ‘heritage’ has a clear relationship with the concept of inheritance: indeed the French word héritage is still used exclusively to mean ‘legacy’ (Howard 2003:6). One very simple way of describing heritage is to call it old, monumental and aesthetically pleasing. The notion of heritage has expanded and is often under debate to differentiate it from the concept of history. Without going too far into that debate, the view of ‘heritage’ discussed in this book is explored in the following discussion.

In 1908, Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886) described history as showing what really occurred in the past. However, contemporary understanding is that ‘history, although based on facts, is, strictly speaking, not factual at all but a series of accepted judgements’ (Barraclough 1955:14; also cited in Carr 1961:14). Edward Carr (1961:21) argues that ‘the facts of history do not exist until a historian creates them’, and went on to assert that history involves
interpretation and selection: ‘the past through the eyes of the present’. Taking these ideas, Tunbridge and Ashworth argue that ‘heritage’ makes similar assumptions and, as seen in its original definition, heritage is ‘determined by the legatee; all heritage is someone’s heritage and that someone determines that it exists’ (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996:6). It is thus, they continue,

a product of the present, purposefully developed in response to current needs or demands for it, and shaped by those requirements. It makes two sorts of integration links, both of which are determined by the present. The present selects an inheritance from an imagined past for current use and decides what should be passed on to an imagined future [...]. [H]istory is what a historian regards as worth recording and heritage is what contemporary society chooses to inherit and to pass on. The distinction is only that in heritage current and future uses are paramount, the resources more varied, including what historians would regard as historical, and the interpretation is more obviously and centrally the product that is consumed.

(Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996:6)

Thus history and heritage are both engaged in the selective use of the past for current purposes. Heritage is seldom neutral and can be used politically. Donald Horne (1984:1) argues that ‘reality does not exist in itself, we create it [...] each society and each age has a different version of what ‘reality’ might be’. As such, heritage is not only a construct but also a highly political construct that is appropriately called ‘contemporary use of the past’ (Graham et al. 2000:2). Lowenthal (1998:141) argues that the present is not just the inheritor of the past but ‘its active partner, reanimating the sleeping, excavating the buried, and reworking a legacy in line with present needs’. Thus, here, the notion of heritage is a ‘constructionist perspective which regards the concept as referring to the ways in which very selective past material artefacts, natural landscapes, mythologies, memories and traditions become cultural, political and economic resources for the present’ (Graham and Howard, 2008:2).

**Heritage as a process to construct identity**

As the territorial unit of the nation-state emerged in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in response to political, economic, cultural and scientific developments, the quest for a ‘national character’ became an integral part of the process of nation building. It needed a process of constructing identity and something that could be called ‘national’ heritage was seen as useful in that process (Graham et al. 2000:12). It is well known that many European countries in the mid-eighteenth century and the nineteenth century developed legal frameworks and bureaucracies for protecting their national heritage. According to Jukka Jokilehto (1999:16–18), development of the modern concepts of history and cultural heritage coincided in the second half of the eighteenth century, and had their roots in European cultural, scientific, political and economic developments.
During the French Revolution, the properties of the church and the monuments that represented former sovereigns were conceived as symbols of past oppression, becoming targets of destruction. At the same time, there emerged a consciousness of the value of these structures as a testimony of the past achievements of the people who now formed a nation.

Since the 1830s, the modern restoration movement led the way in heritage conservation in France with an emphasis on historicism in the second half of the nineteenth century. Brian Graham, Gregory Ashworth and John Tunbridge (2000:183) state that:

Indeed nationalism and national heritage developed synchronously in nineteenth-century Europe. The nation-state required national heritage to consolidate national identification, absorb or neutralise potentially competing heritage of social-cultural groups or regions, combat the claims of other nations upon its territory or people, while furthering claims upon nationals in territories elsewhere.

Lowenthal argues that conservation efforts are commonly couched in terms of some national legacy at risk (1998:25). The nineteenth-century quest for ‘national character’ was an integral part of the nation-building process. In this regard, Japan was no exception. Japan in the Meiji era (1868–1912) was also busy with ‘nation building’ and, in the age of European imperialism, was one of the few countries in Asia able to systematically develop national legislation to protect its art works and monuments from the nineteenth century.

Along similar lines, David Brett (1996:8) argues that heritage is ‘a product of the process of modernisation which, by eroding customs and expectations, forces us to re-articulate our sense of the past; even, in extreme examples, the experience of time itself’. The painful process of industrialisation was accompanied by an idealisation of the imagined pasts but this preoccupation with the past, Brett argues (1996:15), ‘could and did exist simultaneously with radical innovation, even in the same mind’. He concludes (1996:26) that it is:

no longer sufficient to describe the backward glance of nineteenth century culture as reactionary, escapist or anti-modern […] it is as integral to the experience of modernisation, […] as what appears to be its opposite. A modern culture […] is always Janus-faced, looking both backward and forward, never fully settled in the present.

In the process of modernisation, ‘traditional elements of cultural [culture] and behaviours have to be abandoned and unlearnt before the new mind set and ‘habitus’ can be established (Brett 1996:8). Here, Brett takes Pierre Bourdieu’s (1990) concept of ‘habitus’, which derives from cultural conditioning and is a socially acquired embodied system of depositions and/or predispositions. Predispositions include the habits, beliefs, values, tastes, bodily postures, feelings, and thoughts, which, Bourdieu argues, influence individuals to become who they are.
Unpacking heritage

Nationalism

Despite the attention of many scholars, the concept of ‘nation’ remains slippery. In his key work on ‘imagined communities’, Benedict Anderson (1991:3) writes that ‘nation, nationality, [and] nationalism [are] notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse’. Ernest Renan (1823–92), the French theorist whose work is said to have influenced Anderson, defined ‘nation’ as the desire of people to live together, or ‘avoir fait de grandes choses ensemble, vouloir en faire encore’ (having done great things together, to wish to do more) as he stated in a seminar lecture delivered at the Sorbonne in 1882 (Renan 1882:10). By contrast, in the early nineteenth century Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), known as the father of German nationalism, defined a nation as people sharing common characteristics such as language, race or an ethnic group. Fichte’s argument on the distinctiveness of the German people and his belief in the native superiority of its culture helped to shape German national identity throughout the nineteenth century and beyond (Fichte [1922] 1968; Moore 2009:1–2). The author of the book Encyclopaedia of Nationalism, Lois Snyder (1990:3) notes that ‘the term nation is fundamentally ambiguous’. In contrast, Anthony Smith (1991:14) specifically states that ‘[a] nation can be defined as a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members’. As for nationalism, he defines it as an ‘ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential “nation”’ (Smith 1991:73).

Initially, studies on nationalism have emphasised its intimate relationship with the development of nations and, in this context, the link between nation and the emancipation of the individual as citizen (Hayes 1926; Calhoun 1997:43–4). After World War I, scholars began to emphasise the danger of nationalism and to see nationalism as a threat to the freedom and rights of the individual (Vincent 1997:292–5). Carlton J. Hayes, in his Essays on Nationalism published in 1926 and dealing with contemporary nationalism, argued that the word ‘nationalism’ was being used to refer to two different things: first, ‘the process of establishing nationalities as political units’, and second, ‘the belief that one’s own nationality […] has such intrinsic worth and excellence as to require one to be loyal to it above every other thing’ (Hayes 1926:245). A few decades later, he concluded that nationalism was like a religion (Hayes 1960:43). In discussing the purpose of nationalism in the inter-war era, Gale Lowrie (1930:48) similarly claimed that it ‘promotes and protects something dearer to the hearts of the people than the wealth which is wasted in the support of the system of independent states’. This idea was widely shared by many economists, such as Frank Knight ([1935] 1999), at the Chicago School of Economics, who believed that humans naturally have a desire to be part of the nation. The assumption, however, that nationalism has little connection with economic matters was evidently contradicted by events after World War I, which saw nationalism played out through the erection of
Unpacking heritage

17

tariff walls and restrictions on international trade. Nationalism clearly plays an important role in both world politics and the economic sphere.

Another major theorist on nationalism around this period was Hans Kohn. His most influential book is *The Idea of Nationalism* published in 1944. One of Kohn’s influential ideas was concerned to distinguish between ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ nationalism. In the West, he believed, nationalism emphasises the principles of liberalisation and democratisation of states that portrayed the nation as a community of citizens. In the East, however, nationalism was linked with the idea of independence – in particular from European imperialism – and appealed to ethnic or language groups that saw themselves as communities (Kohn 1944). This essentially reflects the distinction Smith (1991:79–84) makes between nationalism in the ‘West’ and in the ‘East’ or in Asia.

Kohn (1939) also pointed to a shift in attitudes to nationalism at the time that enhanced the importance ascribed to ‘national language’ (see also Jacquin-Berdal 2002:9). Previously, language was rarely seen as a significant indicator of the existence of a distinctive and potentially autonomous community. But together with folklore and literature, language emerged to be seen as the foundation of cultural nationalism from which the ‘desire for the formation of a nation-state’ gradually emerged (Kohn 1939:1002). Nationalism in turn led to the use of a national language to enhance cohesion among the people of a nation, while other languages and dialects were pushed to the background. Although in general, nationalism meant a great love of one’s own country, he noted that all so-called national populations contained subgroups that were different in some cultural characteristics and unequal in terms of economic and political power. He warned that the nature of nationalism is often affected by a dominant group and could, therefore, frequently be influenced by propaganda. This political reality was dominated by both an ego-consciousness and a group-consciousness (Kohn 1939:1008). This meant that nationalism could be seen in both pessimistic and optimistic ways – as a threat to individual freedom and marginalised groups and yet a benefit to the nation as a whole.

Equally important in the early twentieth century in appreciating the pre-World War II debate on nationalism is the contribution of Marxism. Rosa Luxemburg, one of Marxism’s leading exponents, believed that ‘“the nation” as a homogeneous socio-political entity did not exist’ (1976:135). She argued that nationalism could play only a passive role and that although people in a nation were able to identify themselves within the nation, they did not necessarily share the same political identity or a similar agenda. Marxism rejected nationalism as a bourgeois capitalist project. Although the particular examples used by Marx and Engels were seen as Eurocentric (Blaut 1987; Munck 1986; Nimni 1991), Marxist political ideals contributed significantly in formative and ‘anti-colonial’ nationalist discourses in colonised countries in both providing its spokesmen with an international language of political discourse and in helping identify the nature of colonial oppression (Reid 2009:6; Smith 1991:82). In particular, Lenin’s revision of Marx’s theories revealing European imperialism as an extension of industrial capitalism focused on the right of oppressed peoples to struggle
for self-determination (Reid 2009:10). Blaut (1987) argues that Lenin’s idea was valid when considered in the context of an oppressed nation that needs to fight against the force of imperialism.

Together with liberal nationalist ideas of emancipation and citizenship, Lenin’s analysis of imperialism laid the groundwork for a critical understanding of colonialism that inspired the nationalist movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seeking independence, especially in Asia. Anthony Reid (2009:5–12) categorises the type of nationalism characteristic in colonised Asia as ‘outrage at state humiliation (OSH)’; that is, as a reaction to ‘the humiliations the state was seen to have undergone over two centuries at the hand of barbarians’ (2009:6). Following Smith’s ‘anti-colonial’ nationalism (Smith 1991: 82), Reid concludes that the core of nationalism in Asian countries that were colonised represents a complex intertwining of ‘ethnic nationalism’ and ‘anti-imperial’ nationalism.

Globalisation and identity

More recently nationalism and national identity have been widely discussed in relation to how they are affected by globalisation. Globalisation is generally seen as being ‘a social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly’ (Waters 2001:5). At the same time, ‘globalisation can engender an awareness of political difference as well as an awareness of common identity’ (Held 1992:32). Anthony Giddens (1990:64) emphasises the latter and sees globalisation as the ‘intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa’. He argues further that globalisation is a ‘dialectical process’ and that ‘local transformation is as much a part of globalisation as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space’ (1990:64).

Globalisation therefore is regarded as having had a significant impact on perceptions of nation, nationalism and national identity but also in increasing the need to represent national identity in international settings. Globalisation has seen the growing importance of international organisations, international migration, and the emergence of communities of migrated ethnic groups (Castles and Miller 1998), leading to building up ‘social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders’ (Basch et al. 1994:6). This process is usually called transnationalism. The increasing influence of international organisations and international migration has led to a requirement on the state to position itself politically and economically, and to seek its national identity in global terms.

One important consequence of globalisation is the growing cooperation within a sub-region, such as the European Union (EU) or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to enhance the competence of the region in various respects. Recently the possibility of establishing an ‘East Asian Community’, which includes Australia and New Zealand, as a trading community,
has been under discussion. Interrelationships among international, regional, national, and local levels create new issues regarding identity and cultural identity products (Robertson 1995; Holton 1998).

It has also been suggested that globalisation evokes a counter tendency. For instance, increased opportunity for travel has also led to a degree of cultural homogenisation as tourists increasingly tend to visit and perceive a place with preconceptions shaped by globalisation (see Logan 2002). George Hughes has argued that the need for tourist site managers to ‘communicate and provide a recognised level of service quality, at multiple destinations, […] is a significant factor in the increasing sameness of these locations, and the stereotypical and culturally homogenising effects on the touristic presentation of an area’s heritage’ (Hughes 1995:783). This issue becomes even more complex with the emergence of transnational communities. As culture is transmittable, when these immigrants and even tourists transmit their culture and in some cases even try to interfere or clash with the existing culture, conflicts among different groups can occur. This complexity is underlined by Robin Cohen (1997:175), who sees the shift of identity in a broader and more complex sense:

What nineteenth-century nationalists wanted was a ‘space’ for each ‘race’, a territorializing of each social identity. What they have got instead is a chain of cosmopolitan cities and an increasing proliferation of sub-national and transnational identities that cannot easily be contained in the nation-state system.

**Heritage and nationalism: creating and re-creating national identity**

Thomas Carretta and Malcolm Ree (1995) argue that the core idea of ‘identity’ comes from an assumption that one is different from another. Kjetil Tronvoll (1999:1055) argues further that ‘diversity in itself cannot generate identity, and in order to achieve this, to transform diversity into difference, there must be opposition: a significant other is needed’. William Logan, Michele Langfield and Máiréad Nic Craith (2010:6) describe this as ‘socio-psychological truth’, arguing that:

> [w]hen meeting peoples with cultures strange to us, we react too easily with hostility, rather than seeking to understand, accommodate, negotiate and compromise. Cultural diversity is, therefore, often the cause of conflict – or at least the excuse for it.

It can be said that the process of identifying ‘us’ from ‘others’ to establish the distinctiveness for collective identity as the nation is one of the functions of national identity. Of course, that would also mean that there is a process of ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’. The process is the same for ‘national character’ and/or ‘national culture’: when used for nation building they are celebrated to pursue a political aim. A sense of national identity provides a powerful means
Unpacking heritage

for defining and locating individual selves in the world, through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture. It is through a shared and unique culture that we define ‘who we are’ in the contemporary world. By rediscovering that culture, we ‘rediscover’ ourselves (Smith 1991:17).

Lowenthal (1998:2) argues that heritage is linked to feeling for the nation and is ‘the chief focus of patriotism’. This psychological approach posits that cultural heritage contributes to nation-state building on the basis of people’s consciousness and sub-consciousness. A related term, ‘cultural nationalism’, used by Yoshino Kosaku (1992:1), exhibits the aim of ‘regenerating’ the national community by creating, preserving or strengthening a people’s cultural identity when it is felt to be lacking, inadequate or threatened’. He further explains that the aim of cultural nationalism focuses on the ‘distinctiveness of the cultural community’ rather than on a representation of the state, which is the aim of political nationalism.

Tom Nairn (1977:348) points out that nationalism, by using the sense of heritage, leads societies to ‘propel themselves forward to a certain sort of goal (industrialisation, prosperity, equality with other peoples, etc.) by a certain sort of regression – by looking inwards, drawing more deeply upon their indigenous resources, resurrecting past folk-heroes and myths about themselves and so on’. As a result, cultural heritage conservation is frequently used to service the political and economic strategies of a country or city. The ‘image’ of a place is, therefore, generally considered to be a key resource in arousing the collective memory and nostalgia of its inhabitants. Therefore, the image of cultural heritage, extracted from a certain part of history, often appears in marketing campaigns, interpretation, and even in the recreation of national identity. Michael Pretes (2003:127) gives the example of the United States, which had no ‘American’ archaeological sites. In contrast to the clear national identity associated with such heritage sites as Borobudur in Indonesia or the Pyramids in Egypt, a site such as Mount Rushmore was re-created as an American archaeological site. Mount Rushmore, with sculptures of four presidents’ visages, has become a well-known tourist spot with an average of 2.5 million visitors annually. According to Lyn Spillman (1997), this reflects the idea of nationalism, showing how cultural production promotes the value of the society, or, as Pretes (2003:18) describes it, how ‘the sharing of a common spectacle helps transcend sub-national difference’. Eric Hobsbawm (1983:1–5) argues that ‘invented tradition’ is a process as it extends the idea of the political use of heritage.

Cultural heritage can be used to enhance the feelings of people toward their nation. In other words, it helps to construct people’s attachment to the nation. Nicolas Shumway (1991:xii) claims that ‘the guiding fictions of nations cannot be proven, and indeed are often fabrications as artificial as literary fictions. Yet they are necessary to give individuals a sense of nation, peoplehood, collective identity, and national purpose’. However, as Barbara Bender (1993:3) argues, heritage is ‘never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate it and contest it. It is part of the way identities are created and disputed, whether as an individual, group or nation state’. For heritage, meaning that presents value gives
a reason that one is selected while another is not. It is the meaning that regulates motive and practice by helping determine rules, norms and conventions.

Heritage conservation and authenticity

As will become more evident in the course of this book, the question of authenticity became a key issue in contrasting Japanese and Western traditions of heritage conservation. The following sections briefly examine the emergence of heritage conservation, the idea of authenticity and its relevance to heritage tourism.

The modern conservation movement emerged in Europe in the early nineteenth century (Jokilehto 1999). The systematic listing of cultural heritage in France began in 1837, focusing on historic buildings and archaeological sites. In the United Kingdom, the British Archaeology Association was established in 1844. The English art critic, John Ruskin (1819–1900) was critical of the consequences of the industrial revolution and modernisation. Among English scholars at the time, both Ruskin and the textile designer, artist and writer, William Morris (1834–96), paid great attention to material authenticity. As pioneers of the Arts and Crafts Movement, they established the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in 1877, based on their advocacy of ‘repair, not restoration’ (Brett 1996:22). A few years later, in 1882, the Ancient Monument Protection Act was passed. The emphasis in England during this period was on ‘the question of historic time and authenticity in relation to the original object, and the impossibility to reproduce an object with the same significance in another historical-cultural context’ (Jokilehto 1986:8). Ruskin paid particular attention to the problem of the degree of intervention, believing a heritage site should be kept the way it was discovered and as undisturbed as possible. Thus, he saw reconstruction as the destruction of heritage significance.

Subsequently, this school of thought became deeply embedded in European conservation philosophy. The theory of the Austrian art historian, Alois Riegl (1858–1905), and the Italian critic and historian, Cesare Brandi (1906–88), was based on ‘a critical historical evaluation of the work of art in its aesthetic, historical and use values’ (Jokilehto 1986:4). These perspectives are largely enshrined in the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964).

The early idea of authenticity in relation to tangible heritage can be seen in SPAB’s ‘Manifesto’ ([1877] 2009). The Manifesto clearly shows a concern over the degree of intervention, as Morris stated,

It is for all these buildings, therefore, of all times and styles, that we plead, and call upon those who have to deal with them, to put Protection in the place of Restoration, to stave off decay by daily care, to prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof by such means as are obviously meant for support or covering, and show no pretence of other art, and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands; if it has
become inconvenient for its present use, to raise another building rather than alter or enlarge the old one; in fine to treat our ancient buildings as monuments of a bygone art, created by bygone manners, that modern art cannot meddle with without destroying.

In France, the architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–79) was a prominent advocate of restoration. For him, ‘to restore a building is not to preserve it, to repair, or build; it is to reinstate it in a condition of completeness that could never have existed at any given time’ (quoted in Hearn 1990:269). Viollet-le-Duc argued that ‘every portion removed should be replaced with better materials and in a stronger and more perfect way’ (quoted in Hearn 1990:275). Heritage conservation, in other words, was the window of opportunity for conducting interpretative work. One of the places where Viollet-le-Duc carried out restoration work was the southern French fortified city of Carcassonne and his restoration work was considered as one of the most significant aspects of this site when it was designated as a World Heritage site in 1997 (UNESCO 2011a).

In Japan, Okakura Kakuzo is considered to be one of the pioneers of the conservation of art objects and paintings in the Meiji era. Okakura worked with Ernest Fenollosa, and became a well-known critic of the trend toward Westernisation. With his colleagues, he established the Nihon Bijyutsuin (Japan Art Institute) for the purpose of conserving and repairing traditional Japanese art objects and paintings. Later, he became the first Asian curator for the Japanese and Chinese collections at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. His thoughts on pan-Asianism are expressed in the book The Ideals of the East (Okakura 1903). Okakura’s contribution to heritage conservation efforts in Japan is discussed further in Chapter 3 of this book.

**Heritage, authenticity and the ‘use’ of heritage tourism**

Heritage tourism has become one of the important areas of study for both tourism and heritage studies. Heritage tourism focuses on the socio-economic use of a cultural asset in tourism (Fyall and Garrod 1998). In this context, authenticity usually is seen as an important attribute by scholars as well as tourists: a point first raised by Dean MacCannell in 1973. Some scholars, including MacCannell (1973) but also Bruner (1991) and Steiner and Reisinger (2006) have argued, however, that the authenticity claimed in relation to heritage tourism sites is often ‘invented’ or staged to meet the needs of visitors and their hosts.

In the 1980s and 1990s the issues regarding authenticity and ‘staged authenticity’ (MacCannell 1973) were explored at length (for example, Boynton 1986; Pearce and Moscardo 1986; Cohen 1988, 1989; Littrell 1990; Littrell et al. 1993). MacCannell (1973:593) noted that the first tours were religious pilgrimages and that the similarities between the pilgrimages of the past and contemporary heritage tourism are not merely organisational but also motivational: both are quests for an authentic experience. Moreover, in as much as the
religious pilgrimage was about the confirmation of a religious identity through connection with an historical site, the connection between ‘the past’ and ‘identity’ has continued to be seen by many scholars as central to heritage tourism (for example Handler 1986; Lowenthal 1985; Venkatesh 1992; Kellner 1995). Steiner and Reisinger (2006:309) believed that ‘people look to the past to identify and understand themselves’. For this reason, visitors to a heritage site commonly ‘do perceive the experiences they have as authentic and seek authenticity’ (Moscardo and Pearce 1986:473).

This ‘need for authenticity’ to be central to heritage and heritage tourism has been explained in sociological terms as being closely related to the impact of modernity on society (see for example, Trilling 1972; Berger 1973; and Cohen 1988). Erik Cohen (1988:373), for instance, argued that since ‘modern society is inauthentic, […] the quest for authenticity [has] […] become a prominent motif of modern tourism’. More generally, in recent times, the familiar cultural environment has experienced a ‘significant change in [the] economic, social, political and cultural climate’ (Hughes 1995:781), as a result of what is generally referred to as globalisation, and so a stable sense of the identity of a place has taken on increased importance.

Alison McIntosh and Richard Prentice (1999) suggest that, due to increasing urbanisation and migration, Western societies have generally lost their sense of identity and people have tended to depend increasingly on cultural representations, such as museums and historical parks, and the interpretation of their significance by professionals. In the interaction between the visitor and the museum expert, issues about the selection of memories or nostalgia become entangled or in conflict with the notions of authenticity employed in the museum by experts such as curators and ethnographers (Trilling 1972; Cohen 1988).

The question of ‘authenticity’ has increasingly been applied to the heritage object and the experience of its perception on the part of the consumer. Although the clarification provided by such experts helps to shape the ‘socially constructed nature of the concept’, as Cohen (1988:374) argues, it is always difficult to tell whether the touristic experience is authentic. Tourists tend to believe that what they perceive is authentic, as it fulfils their desire, even if it is a pseudo-event.

Authentic experiences, or engaging in non-ordinary activities, enable tourists to feel that they have escaped from their ordinary lives (Handler 1986; Wang 1999). Carol Steiner and Yvette Reisinger (2006:302) notes that ‘personal or social existential authenticity can be manifest in more diverse tourist situations than object authenticity does’. Clare Fawcett and Patricia Cormack (2001:9) conclude on the basis of several case studies that not all sites ‘define the authentic as the real or irreproducible. Rather, they construct authenticity by framing what they believe is true’. In other words, ‘the production of authenticity is dependent on some act of (re)production’ (Taylor 2001:9). Others (for example, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Moscardo and Pearce 1986; Cohen 1988; Crick 1989; Fawcett and Cormack 2001; Taylor 2001) have similarly argued that authenticity is negotiable and can even be re-created. Malcolm Crick (1989:65) wrote that ‘cultures are invented, remade and the elements reorganized’.

Unpacking heritage 23
The question of authenticity, therefore, particularly as it has developed in the context of heritage tourism, has focused on its functional role to suggest that concepts of the ‘authentic’ and the ‘inauthentic’ ‘are neither mutually exclusive nor definitively bounded categories, and are both capable of performing the same work in representing, creating, and performing the past and the present of any community defined through practice’ (Knox 2008:259). Gordon Waitt (2000:836), for instance, has stated categorically that ‘representations of the “authentic” past cannot be divorced from particular belief and knowledge systems’. This idea will be taken up later in this thesis in relation to Japan’s use of the term.

Heritage, soft power and cultural diplomacy

As well as being increasingly considered in relation to tourism, heritage conservation has also become an element in international diplomacy. Joseph Nye (1990) coined the term ‘soft power’ to describe the use of cultural discourse and practice in international relations. In a subsequent book, Nye defined ‘soft power’ as ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments’ (Nye 2004a:31). That is, although power is usually thought of in terms of command and coercion and is commonly understood in terms of the exercise of military and economic force, Nye argues that power can equally be expressed through the ability to attract and influence the opinion of others. He thus sees it as including propaganda but going beyond this to embrace ‘image, public relations and ephemeral popularity’. The primary avenues through which ‘soft power’ is played out are ‘an actor’s values, culture, policies and institutions’; it is through these that an actor is able to attract or repel others to ‘want what you want’.

Thus, while both ‘hard’ power and ‘soft’ power are related to the ability to achieve one’s goals, there are differences in the spectrum of behaviours and resources employed. While hard power is the ability to control or to order what others do, soft power is ‘getting others to want the outcomes that you want’ (Nye 2004a:5) and entails the ability to shape what others want. While hard power may rest on coercion and inducement, soft power may rest on attraction. While hard power uses force, sanctions, or payments, soft power uses the intervention of institutions, and the attractions of culture, values, and policies. Nye (2004a:8) thus writes:

[I]n international politics, the resources that produce soft power arise in large part from the values an organisation or country expresses in its culture, in the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies, and in the way it handles its relations with others.

Within the arena of foreign relations, ‘soft power’ is commonly exerted through ‘cultural diplomacy’. Cummings (2003:1) defines this as ‘the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in
order to foster mutual understanding’. In other words, culture is a set of values that can be promoted and shared by others, and thus it can lead to desired outcomes. The uses of cultural diplomacy have been widely discussed in the United States since World War II, and a number of programmes have been launched. However, this policy seems to have sharply decreased after the end of the Cold War. Since 1993, budgets have fallen by nearly 30 per cent, staffing has been cut by about 30 per cent overseas and 20 per cent in the United States, while dozens of cultural centres, libraries and branch posts have been closed (Sablosky 2003:1). Since public diplomacy greatly affects the number of academic and cultural exchanges, a decline in the number of academic and employee cultural exchanges has also been observed (Centre for Arts and Culture 2004). It has been during this time of contraction in the United States that Japan has increased the exercise of its cultural diplomacy, most notably by playing an important role in international heritage conservation.

Since their introduction into the diplomatic and political vocabulary, these ideas of ‘soft power’ and ‘cultural diplomacy’ as an alternative to military and economic force have gained wide currency (Watanabe and McConnell 2008: xvii). Of course, the concept of ‘soft power’ is not new. The ancient Chinese strategist Sun Tzu (孫子), a philosopher and military strategist and author of The Art of War (孫子兵法) around the sixth century BC, based his idea on the concept of ‘best to win without fighting’ (不戰而屈人之兵, 善之善者也) (Watanabe and McConnell 2008: xvii). Admiral Togo Heihachiro, who led Japan in the Russo–Japanese war, is known to have been an ardent reader of The Art of War, which, according to Zoku Nihongi (続日本紀, Japanese History Part II), was first introduced and applied in Japan’s wars around AD 760. Edward H. Carr (1939), writing on international relations before World War II, asserted that power over opinion was as important as military and economic power. Hans Joachim Morgenthau ([1948] (1967)) pointed to the significance of the intangible sources of power that underpin the impact of diplomatic activity. This is available to a nation in its international relations and is associated with ‘soft power’. Nevertheless, it was Nye’s work that helped to establish a base for the contemporary discussion of this concept and its relevance to heritage conservation.

Nor has Nye’s concept of soft power gone without criticism. One critic, the British historian Niall Ferguson (2003:12), believes that ‘the trouble […] [with] soft power is that it’s, well, soft’. Nye maintains, however, that ‘soft power does not depend on hard power’ but he has admitted (Nye 2004a:25) that ‘sometimes [they] reinforce and sometimes interfere with each other’. Nye cites the example of the United States, which attempted to create a worldwide positive image of itself as contributing to the good of all. Nevertheless, the military missions of the United States also generated unfavourable opinions of the United States and Americans in most of the Muslim countries (Pew Research Centre for the People and the Press 2004). Consequently, ‘Anti-Americanism has increased in recent years, and the United States’ soft power – its ability to attract others by the legitimacy of US policies and the values that underlie them – is in decline as a result’
Unpacking heritage

By way of contrast, Nye (2004a) gives the example of Norway as a country that was active in peace making in many areas including the Philippines, the Balkans, Colombia, Guatemala, Sri Lanka and the Middle East. In return Norway gained a prominent position at international meetings and negotiating tables. At the (1994) Nara Conference, for instance, Norway was one of only three nations to make a major contribution to the conference. Although this was in part due to the fact that Norway was active in heritage conservation on wood structures, its presence can also be seen as an effort to make its voice heard and to play a role in the international community in the increasingly prominent domain of global cultural heritage conservation.

Bringing the concept into the Japanese context, in a recent interview with Agence France-Presse (AFP) after the Tohoku Earthquake in 2011, Nye predicted that:

> though the tragedy is immense, this sad event shows some of the very attractive features of Japan, and thus may help their soft power [. . .]. In addition to the sympathy it will engender, it shows a stable, well-mannered society that was as prepared for such a disaster as any modern country could be, and which is responding in a calm and orderly way.

(quoted in Tandon 2011)

This suggests that a part of Japan’s ‘soft power’ is based on cultural characteristics and behaviour, as well as on its scientific and technological strength, all of which have been developed and cultivated over the years.

In summary, power exercised in international relations consists of three major types: military, economic and soft power (Nye 2004a) (see Table 1.1). Through these types of power, a country wins favour with other countries, achieves its desired outcomes, and shapes others to want what it wants.

| Table 1.1 Three types of power |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| **Behaviours** | **Primary currencies** | **Government actions** |
| Military power | Coercion | Threats |
| | Deference | Force |
| | Protection | |
| Economic power | Inducement | Payments |
| | Coercion | Sanctions |
| Soft power | Attraction | Values |
| | Agenda setting | Culture |
| | | Education |
| | | Building institutional capacity |
| | | |
| | | Propaganda |
| | | Public diplomacy |
| | | Bilateral and multilateral diplomacy |

Source: Author adopted from Nye (2004a:31).
Another concept related to ‘soft power’ is ‘nation branding’, a term coined by Simon Anholt in 1996. Anholt’s (2007:xii) original idea was that the reputations of countries are not so different from that of the brand images of companies and products. As such, it has been realised that international trade companies and products play a key role in presenting a nation’s image. According to Fan (2008b), Japanese motor and electrical appliance companies such as Toyota, Honda, Sony and Panasonic are important contributors to that country’s economic power while, at the same time, projecting the image of Japan and influencing other countries not only in economic but also in cultural and social terms. As a result, Fan (2008a:157) argues that this sort of power should be seen as ‘national branding’ rather than soft power, as ‘nation branding provides a more focused, culturally unbiased and more useful approach to creating international influence in the world’. Jan Melissen (2005:20) sees nation branding as ambitious and holistic, while Hlynur Gudjonsson (2005:285) argues that:

nation branding occurs when a government or a private company uses its power to persuade whoever has the ability to change a nation’s image. Nation branding uses the tools of branding to alter, confirm or change the behaviour, attitudes, identity or image of a nation in a positive way.

His argument is that governments can use the technique of branding but cannot be branded.

Summary

This chapter has established the theoretical bases that underpin this book. The next chapter extends the theoretical discussion examined here to consider the question of national identity and nationalism in relation to Japan. Chapter 2 is an extensive discussion of the issues of national identity, nationalism and specifically examines these issues in relation to Japanese national identity. Chapter 3 then discusses the traditional Japanese approach to heritage conservation and the question of authenticity. Chapter 4 documents Japan’s involvement in international heritage legislation and its influence on the broader discourse in relation to global heritage. Chapter 5 examines the question of intangible heritage which, it is argued, has been central to the Japanese approach to heritage conservation and in terms of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, represents Japan’s principle contribution to global discourse on heritage together with the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994). Chapters 6 and 7 examine a case study of Japan’s involvement in shaping heritage policy and practice in one of the Asian countries, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Chapter 8 summarises the thesis and draws a conclusion.
2 National identity, nationalism and Japanese identity

Introduction

Heritage is often used to portray the identity of a group of people or a nation. When exploring the notion of ‘heritage’ one cannot avoid involving issues of ‘national identity’, ‘nation’ and ‘nationalism’ in the discussion, as the concepts are interrelated. Having examined the discourse on heritage and nationalism in Chapter 1, this chapter begins with a discussion of the existing discourse on national identity and examines more recent debates on the question of nationalism. The chapter then proceeds to explore the relationship between nationalism and culture in pre-World War II Japan in order to show the extent to which post-war thinking reflects similar patterns to those that existed in pre-war discussions. The following section deals with post-war Japanese nationalism by examining what it is to be Japanese, or what is understood by the term ‘Japanese’. This is widely known and referred to by the term nihonjinron. The chapter then discusses the relationship between Japanese nationalism and the exercise of soft power that includes culture and education, and how the idea of ‘Asianism’ has been disseminated (Lincicome 1999). The chapter shows how Japan has utilised heritage for its post-war development, the promotion of Japanese identity in economic development, and the projection of Japanese nationalism through its expanding role in international affairs.

National identity

National identity is one of the key elements in raising nationalist feeling and in identifying the abstract boundary of the nation. Within the prism of the collective personality and a distinct culture, national identity helps to define and locate selves in the world (Smith 1991:17). According to Martin Evans (1996:33), ‘national identity is produced through a process of negation, the creation of a coherent sense of self through explicit rejection and denials’. In a related sense, Richard Jenkins (1997:23) has argued that national identity is linked to the categorisation of the groups that tend to emerge where there are inequalities. Moreover, he states that ‘social categorisation in particular is bound up with power relations and relates to the capacity of one group to successfully impose
its categories of ascription upon another’. It can be said that such categorisation inherently divides ‘us’ from ‘others’, leading subsequently to ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’.

One of the important aspects of national identity is the way in which a nation is presented. When national identity is identified by the state, it can portray not only the character of the nation but also the interest of the nation. Anthony Smith (1991:15), one of the most influential theorists on the subject of what ‘nation’ is, emphasises the function of national identity as an important element in the construction of nation:

National identity and the nation are complex constructs composed of a number of interrelated components – ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political. They signify bonds of solidarity among members of communities united by shared memories, myths and traditions that may or may not find expression in states of their own but are entirely different from the purely legal and bureaucratic ties of the state. Conceptually, the nation has come to blend two sets of dimensions, the one civic and territorial and the other ethnic and genealogical, in varying proportions in particular cases. It is this very multidimensionality that has made national identity such a flexible and persistent force in modern life and politics, and allowed it to combine effectively with other powerful ideologies and movements, without losing its character.

He divides its functions into their ‘external’ and ‘internal’ objective consequences (Smith 1991:16). The external functions are territorial, economic and political (and include the legal aspect). Smith (1991:16) then goes on to explore the term ‘nation’, which he sees as defining ‘social space within which members must live and work, and demarcate an historic territory that locates a community in time and space’. This can also provide individuals with ‘sacred centres’, objects of spiritual and historical pilgrimage, which reveal the uniqueness of their nation’s ‘moral geography’. The internal functions include the ‘socialisation of the members as “nationals and citizens”’, which is achieved through a ‘compulsory, standardised, public mass education system’, and the instilling of devotion in the nation to the distinctive, homogeneous culture that the state authorities wish to see flourish (Smith 1991:16; see also Gellner 1983).

Language has been commonly perceived as embodying a national character and as evidence of the existence of the nation. Even a language such as English, which has achieved widespread international usage, still retains its specific national characteristics when used in its home societies of the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and Australia. Thus language plays an important role in nation-state building, and efforts to establish a national official language through a centralised education system clearly underpin this idea. Emphasis on a standardised national language within a country may, as a consequence, lead to the gradual demise of minority languages. The promotion of a national language abroad can therefore be associated with fostering a national image. For this
reason, many countries, including Japan, support cultural and language centres abroad, and provide generous incentives for foreigners to study their language.

Another key component in identifying national identity is the role of history, memory and myth. A frequent comment regarding national history is whether it is factual or invented (Munslow 1997; Jenkins 1995). David Archard (1995:478) critically observes that ‘historians do presume and have consistently presumed the existence of nations in their constructed narratives’. In contrast, John Gillis (1994:5) argues that ‘identities and memories are not things we think about but things we think with. As such, they have no existence beyond our politics, our social relations, and our histories’.

**Recent discussion on nationalism**

Theories on nationalism based on a notion of ‘primordialism’, which sees ‘nations as ancient, natural phenomena’ (Hayward et al. 2003:330), came under increasing criticism after World War II as a result of a global emergence of nations resulting from decolonisation and in the face of pressures created by the Cold War. The later studies on nations and nationalism expanded to include areas such as religion, ethnicity, social solidarity, modernisation and culture (Smith 1983:26–33).

Anthony Smith, an influential contributor to this discussion, has proposed the theory of ‘ethno-symbolism’ or historical ethno-symbolism (Smith 1986, 1998, 1999) to support his view that a strong relationship exists between the formation of nations and ‘ethnic cores’. Smith (1986:22–31) identifies six elements of ‘ethnic nationalism’ (emphasis added): collective names, a common myth of descent, some shared history or set of traditions, a distinctive shared culture, usually including language or religion, an association with a territory, either present or past (through one of its sacred sites or centres rather than its boundaries), and a sense of solidarity. This approach is closely linked to the idea of collective memories and culture of ethnic groups. Smith (1999:9) notes:

> For ethno-symbolists, what gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories, traditions and symbols of ethnic heritages and the ways in which a popular living past has been and can be rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias.

Another leading scholar of nationalism since the 1980s is Ernest Gellner. He links nationalism to culture and the major changes that occurred in the modern era resulting from industrialisation. For Gellner, nationalism only emerged when a culture and an economy developed to a certain level that was not necessary in agrarian society. Thus nationalism occurred to meet the needs of a new industrial society, using ‘a fairly monolithic education system [and] a shared culture, and a literate sophisticated high culture’ (Gellner 1983:140). His assumption is that industrialised society introduced inequalities that would cause a nationalist political movement to develop. However, Smith (1998:37) criticises this as a misapprehension of the association between nationalism and industrialisation.
National identity and nationalism

Other notable recent scholars who have influenced the discourse on nationalism include Benedict Anderson, Tom Nairn and Eric Hobsbawm. Anderson’s work emphasises the influence of socio-economic change on cultural change but takes a different view of the relationship between modernity, sovereignty and the nation to that of Gellner. In his renowned book, *Imagined Community*, Anderson (1991:6) argues that ‘nation’ is:

\[\text{[A]n imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion [...] [I]n fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined.}\]

Anderson’s terminology of ‘community’ brings us back to the time before industrialisation when individuals in a community were more engaged with each other. Therefore, in such face-to-face interactions, nostalgia and memory play an important role in shaping the state of mind of the members in the society. He wrote: ‘it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love and often profoundly self-sacrificing love’ (1991:141). He also emphasises in particular the way nationalism spread across the world in the modern era through the printing press and media dissemination.

Another writer who shares some ideas with Anderson is Nairn whose work has been heavily influenced by Marxism. He has situated the origin of nationalism in the modern era in the context of the inequalities created by the spread of capitalism. In his view (1977:340):

\[\text{real, uneven development has invariably generated an imperialism of the centre over the periphery; one after another, these peripheral areas have been forced into a profoundly ambivalent reaction against this dominance, seeking at once to resist it and to take over its vital forces for their own use.}\]

Nairn’s analysis of the opposition to the new nationalism in Eastern Europe and some other cases led him to conclude that nationalism contains both positive and negative aspects. He wrote (1997:63) that while ‘political and economic nationalism is, very generally, a good thing [this] does not mean that there are no blots, excrescences or failures on the increasingly nationalised map of the world’.

Another seminal writer on the subject of nationalism who should be mentioned is Eric Hobsbawm. Hobsbawm agrees with Gellner’s definition of nationalism as ‘primarily a principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent’ (Gellner 1983:1), and points to the influence of contemporary phenomena of nationalism such as democratisation, state building and language construction that emerged in the nineteenth century as of particular importance (Hobsbawm 1992). Drawing on Marxist thinking, Hobsbawm’s emphasis has been on the political dimensions of the relationship between social
class and the nation. This emphasis can be clearly seen when he describes the relationship between nation and the class of people:

If we accept that class consciousness in practice had a civic-national dimension, and civic-national or ethnic consciousness had social dimensions, then it is likely that the radicalisation of the working classes in the first post-war Europe may have reinforced their potential national consciousness.

(Hobsbawm 1992:145)

Citing the case of the French Revolution, for example, Hobsbawm (1992:88) concludes that ‘a revolutionary concept of nation [was] constituted by the deliberate political option of its potential citizens’.

Other writers, including Michael Mann, Anthony Giddens, John Breuilly and Paul Brass, have argued that the rise of the nation-state was a critical part of the process of modernity. Mann (1996) has noted that the political movements in Europe during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that led to the formation of nations were triggered by several factors, including competition and conflict among the states. For Giddens (1985), nationalism was primarily a psychological phenomenon. He defines nationalism as ‘the cultural sensibility of sovereignty, the concomitant of the co-ordination of administrative power within the bounded nation-state’ (1985:219). Nationalism in Breuilly’s mind is ‘associated with the development of specifically modern kinds of political action’ (1996:134). He sees ideology as necessarily subjected to politically significant ways, as it needs coordination, mobilisation and legitimisation. This means that nationalism needs to put together diverse political interests in an acceptable way. Like Mann, Giddens and Breuilly, Brass (1991:8) describes a close relationship between nation and modernity, defining it as a ‘modern phenomena inseparably connected with the activities of the modern centralising state’. Nationalism for Brass was not something that naturally emerges as in the primordialism approach but a ‘social and political construction’ created in order to protect the political and economic benefit of the groups. Thus a nationalist movement in this sense is frequently led by elites or influential people in the society.

Finally, in contrast to most writers on this subject, Elie Kedourie (1993:141) contests the assumption that nationalism originates from some innate or historical process. He basically challenges Marxist understanding of history and nationalism and in his (1993:141) view, ‘it is very often truer to say that national identity is the creation of a nationalist doctrine than that nationalist doctrine is the emanation or expression of national identity’.

Japanese nationalism and culture

Nationalism in Japanese discourse has been discussed in somewhat different ways from those in Europe. Comparing Japanese and Western nationalism, Matsumoto Sannosuke (1971:51) has identified some of these different points. First, Japan has always looked at itself as a country with an advanced civilisation, and
thus ‘Japanese nationalism was never able to encompass universalism (i.e. internationalism)’. Second, Japan has always had a bureaucratic system based on ‘government by consent’, meaning in fact that the society has always been directed by people at the top level. Lastly, whereas nationalism in the context of European nation-states and the United States represents a sense of humanity, Japanese nationalism was based on ‘self-perpetuation and self-expansion of the nation-state itself […] and Japan’s national consciousness was originally generated by her fears and anxieties of the outside world’ (Matsumoto 1971:53).

In the Meiji era (1896–1912), the term *bunmei kaika* (文明開化, ‘civilisation and enlightenment’), was widely used and its meaning was principally accepted as referring to ‘the achievements which flowed from the European scientific and industrial revolutions’ (Morris-Suzuki 1995:763). The origin of the Japanese word for ‘culture’ is seen to derive through two words combined with two Chinese characters respectively: *bunka* (文化) and *bunmei* (文明), literally meaning ‘culture’ and ‘civilisation’. According to Tessa Morris-Suzuki both words began to be widely used during the *Meijiishin* (明治維新), the Meiji Restoration (or Revolution) by ‘Japan’s Westernisers’, such as Nishi Amane, to explain their plan for the transformation of Japanese society (Morris-Suzuki 1995:762–763). Around the mid-Taisho Era (1912–25), the term *bunka* came to be understood as meaning culture, as used in English. Before that, the definition of *bunka* did not coincide with the English. Although *bunka* eventually came to be used as culture, there were debates as to its differences from the concept of culture as used in Western philosophy. For example, Yanagita Kunio (柳田國男) (1875–1962), known as the father of Japanese native ethology, defined *bunka* as ‘a national level phenomenon and as a mixture of old and new’ (cited in Morris-Suzuki 1995:768). Thus, it did not need to coincide with the European sense of culture, and since *bunka* has its own meaning, Yanagita argues that this term should remain in use in debate within the Japanese context (Yanagita 1964).

At the same time, the question of the validity of Western academic discourse arose in Japanese society. From the late nineteenth century, Japanese scholars have struggled to shape that framework to an understanding of Japanese society. The major issue at the time was how to define ‘being Japanese’ or ‘Japanese-ness’. This situation subsequently led to debate among Japanese scholars on what constituted Japanese culture. In the 1920s Tsurumi Yusuke (鶴見 祐輔) (1927:30–31) explained that, ‘The 60 years of modernisation gave Japan some confidence in herself. She began to look at the occidental cultures in their proper setting and began to question.’ But he went on to ask, ‘Have we not something in our own culture and civilisation to enrich the world stock of human achievements?’ Most of the literature regarding Japanese nationalism falls into this period or the earlier Meiji era.

The development of nationalism is recognised as one of the major themes of modern Japanese history. Kenneth Pyle (1971) identifies six possible approaches that have been taken in the study of Japanese nationalism. The first he identifies as the ‘idea approach’. This focuses on the transmission of an idea, diffusion,
34 National identity and nationalism

and the development of nationalism from one individual or group to another, as described in classical studies by Hayes, Kohn, and others (1971:6).

The second approach he describes as the ‘functional or social communications approach’. This approach is best exemplified in the work of Karl Deutsch. In his book, Nationalism and Social Communication, Deutsch (1966:97) argued that ‘the ability to communicate more effectively, and over a wide range of subjects, with members of one large group [rather] than with outsiders’ is the core of nationalism. In line with this focus on the dynamics and the process of the development of nationalism rather than the ideological content, Ronald Dore has examined the effect of education in Japan since the Tokugawa Era and concludes this would have enhanced people’s empathy for the nation (Dore 1965). Subsequently, the influx of Westerners and their civilisation during the Meiji period drew Japanese attention to their own culture and created a way of defining the Japanese character (Pyle 1971:8).

The third approach, which Pyle defines as the ‘structural approach’, focuses on traditional social groups and their role in the development of nationalism. This approach sees the development of Japanese nationalism as strongly linked to the hierarchy and the group mentality of Japanese society (Benedict 1946; Bellah 1957). This social hierarchy came with various obligations, which generally required an expression of loyalty to the Emperor depending on the local and regional ties (Smith 1959:205). David Potter (1962:931) pointed out that ‘sectionalism may be an emergent nationalism (in the Meiji period) which has not yet matured’. This invisible structure survived in post-war Japan, as Ivan Morris (1960:58) argued, because of ‘the highly personal basis of their loyalties’.

The fourth approach, the ‘interest theory’, posits that nationalism is used to serve the interests of the elite, particularly those in government. This approach has been mostly adopted by historians drawing on Marxist ideas. While the structural approach may be useful for the early Meiji era, the ‘interest approach’ better reflected new elements in the twentieth century when ‘the government made use of education, the media, and the armed forces to inculcate the nationalist orthodoxy’ (Pyle 1971:11). Morton Grodzins wrote in his book The Loyal and the Disloyal (Grodzins 1956):

> [P]opulations are loyal to the nation as a by-product of satisfactions achieved within non-[national] groups, because the nation is believed to symbolise and sustain these groups. From this point of view, one is loyal not to [the] nation but to family, business, religion, friends. One fights for the joy of his pinochle when he is said to fight for his country.

(quoted in Pyle 1971:11–12)

This fitted well with the explanation of the nationalist sentiment in Japan where ‘self-gain had to be rationalised with reference to the nation’ (Maruyama 1969:6–7).

The ‘strain theory’, Pyle’s fifth approach, highlights the rapid change in society and the physiological ‘strain’ caused by the social dislocation resulting
from the uneven pace of development between social sectors (Pyle 1971:12). This view appeared to apply directly to Japanese history when the introduction of modern technology brought a particular level of stress to modern Japanese life as it shifted from an agrarian to an industrial society, from which a kind of nationalism emerged. Based on this perspective Clifford Geertz (1964:54) saw nationalism as providing ‘a symbolic outlet for [the] emotional disturbances generated by social disequilibrium’. Dore (1967) used the main character of a novel, Inaka Kyoshi (‘A Country School Teacher’, 1909), by Tayama Katai (田山花袋) as an example to explain how nationalism in this context emerges as an ‘internal pressure caused by the excess of awakened aspiration’ (quoted in Pyle 1971:13). Under this approach, nationalism can be considered to be a consequence of the processes of social change.

Pyle’s final approach, the ‘cultural approach’, sees nationalism as a result of cultural disorientation. In this sense it focuses on ‘cultural disruption and dislocation rather than socio-psychological strain’ (Pyle 1971:14). This approach recognises the importance of rapid social change as in the ‘strain approach’, but also incorporates the impact of cultural disruption and dislocation. One early study conducted by Watsuji Tetsuro (和辻哲郎) and others identified the cultural tensions generated by Western ideas, industrialisation and bureaucratisation as a key influence in shaping nationalist sentiment (Pyle 1971).

Some scholars, including Maruyama Masao (丸山真男), a political scientist, have argued that nationalism ended after World War II. Maruyama, in his work Nihon no nashonarizumu (‘Japanese nationalism’, 1953), observed that Japanese nationalism had completed a cycle of life – birth, maturity, and decline – before the post-war period (Yoshino 1992). However, it could be argued that Japanese nationalism continued, but had to change its form from the cultural, political and military values of the pre-war era to the cultural and economic approaches that emerged after World War II. 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 (文化国家) or peace-loving, cultural nation (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950).

Given this formal renunciation of the past, it could be argued that the emphasis on the use of cultural heritage can be seen as an effort to interpret, promote, re-create, exhibit and disseminate a new national identity through a definition of the nation’s heritage. Strategically this was important for a country such as Japan since after World War II, there was no longer a central concept of imperialism to define the direction of the nation. Hence there was a demand for new meanings and concepts to help explain what Japan had become and where it was heading.

However, during the Occupation (1945–52), a paradox became apparent. The selection of cultural property that was supposed to present ‘national culture’ was supervised by the ‘other’, that is, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers/General Headquarters (SCAP/GHQ). A number of items listed under the Law for Conservation of Art Objects and Monuments were taken off the list, as they were perceived as portraying ‘ultra-nationalism’, or in other words, were not conducive to the new national culture that the occupation force wanted to
promote. After the war, all the artwork and paintings that portrayed war were confiscated by the SCAP/GHQ and collected in an undisclosed place. Later, some of these confiscated art objects were sent back to Japan on ‘unlimited term lease’, meaning that, to this day, Japan has not regained the ownership of those artworks.

The period from the 1960s to the 1980s was formative in the reconceptualisation of the ‘new’ post-war Japan. In the 1960s, Japan was beginning to move on from the confusion and extreme poverty of the immediate post-war years. The agony and frustration of the aftermath of the war can be seen in the literature (for example Mishima Yukio (三島由紀夫; 1925–70), Bunka boueiron (‘In the Defence of Culture, 1969’), and in the statements of various social movements that arose at this time. The struggle in the 1960s, for example against the renewal of the US–Japan Security Treaty, is commonly known as the Anpo movement. Led by intellectuals including prominently Maruyama Masao, the Anpo movement’s ideological struggle for Japan’s own ‘true democracy’ was the largest popular protest in Japanese history. Its supporters believed that the realisation of Japan’s post-war modernist trajectory was frustrated by the United States military-backed state power politics (Iida 2002). Another radical movement in the late 1960s was the gakusei undo, or student revolution. Influenced as student movements around the world at the time were by anti-Vietnamese War sentiment, this movement gained little public support and had almost no effect on popular opinion. The majority of Japanese recognised by then that the power of the United States and of its own elite politicians was far beyond reach of the influence of the majority, which left people with a deep sense of disappointment and powerlessness (Iida 2002).

**Nihonjinron**

After a number of ‘shocks’ in the early 1970s, such as President Nixon’s overtures to China in 1971, which signalled a sharp policy change in the United States and the steep rise in oil prices in 1973, the Japanese economy finally staged a dramatic recovery by the late 1970s. This success appeared to foster renewed ‘Japan-bashing’ in foreign media and the negative stereotyping of the Japanese character, such as its being focused only on economic interest, as an explanation for Japan’s evident economic success (Befu 2001). At home, discussion about the concept of nihonjinron (日本人論) or a discussion of Japanese-ness, became increasingly apparent in the late 1970s and the 1980s coinciding with Japan’s domestic and international economic success. In the 1980s, as US–Japan economic relations deteriorated, the nihonjinron discourse began to ‘nurture nationalist/exclusionist inclined arguments that made stringent demands regarding Japan’s cultural autonomy in the world’ (Iida 2002:165).

The discourse of nihonjinron had its predecessor in the idea of kokugaku (國學), or national learning, which was prominent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. At that time, the Japanese identity discourse was geared towards contrasting Japan with China. Scholars such as Kamo no Mabuchi (賀茂真淵;
1697–1796) and Motoori Norinaga (本居宣長; 1730–1801) emphasised the distinctiveness of Japanese culture from that of China (Befu 2001). In the Meiji era with the end of seclusion, Japan had begun to look more to the West and nihon-jiron then began to be considered in terms of Japan’s relation to the ‘West’. For some other scholars, such as Nitobe Inazo (新渡戸稲造; 1862–1933), these efforts to define the uniqueness of Japan appeared to have preserved the institutional structures and values derived from the European values of the medieval period. As a result, many aspects of Japanese distinctiveness, for instance, had been compared with outdated European traditions or non-Western modernised values (Nitobe [1900] 1968).

Befu Harumi, an anthropologist, sees nihonjinron as an ethnic identity, so it is possible to see nihonjinron ‘as a phenomenon common to other cultures’ by considering it as ‘a cultural phenomenon to be subject to anthropological analysis, just like shamanism, kinship structure, or ethnicity’ (2001:13). He shares this view with Yoshino Kosaku (1992, 1997) and defines nihonjinron as a type of cultural nationalism (2001). In this regard, Befu (2001) notes that claiming the uniqueness of Japan was frequently referred to in response to criticisms from Westerners.

Befu (1984) cites the work of Umesao Tadao (1974) who argued that within Japanese civilisation there is a parallel existence of washiki and yoshiki, that is, of distinct ‘Japanese’ and ‘Western’ cultural styles respectively. Umesao’s clear division of the two forms of civilisation illustrated the fact that while acknowledgement was made of Japanese culture and foreign Western culture, other cultures received far less attention or were considered insignificant. In other words, as Befu (1984:61) comments, the discourse on Japanese civilisation ‘denies or at best minimises the significance of the imprint of Chinese civilisation’ (1984:61). He points out that the history of Japan shows that traditional Japanese culture has been influenced by Asian cultures rather than Western culture, though it was argued that the predominance of the influence of Western culture could be seen in more recent years. Nevertheless, the belief in the purity of Japanese culture persists. This is encapsulated in the concept of ‘nihonron, a genre of Japanese intellectual writing on Japanese cultural identity’ (Befu 1984:61) that focuses on the uniqueness of Japanese culture and the characteristics of its social structure.

Befu (2001) asserts that post-war nihonjinron became popular because ‘the use of previous symbols of national identity and pride was made problematic by World War II and that nihonjinron moved into this relative identity vacuum’ (2001:86). With its defeat in World War II, Japan was prevented from using important symbols of national identity such as a national flag and national anthem. Thus, nihonjinron served as the symbol of a person seeking national and cultural identity. After World War II, displaying the national flag was not entirely banned but severely restricted. Once the occupation army left, the use of the national flag and anthem was not fully supported by people even within Japan. In fact, typical national symbols such as the national flag and national anthem of Japan were not officially endorsed until 1999. Even to this day, many Japanese people do not always feel comfortable using the national flag for fear of being seen as extreme right wing or ultranationalist.
Other core element of the discussion on Japanese identity in defining the difference between Japanese and Western society have been the concepts of oyake and watakushi, which translate as ‘public’ and ‘private’. According to Befu (1984:64),

Traditionally, Japanese culture has placed the ‘public’ ahead of the ‘private’. Societal and communal interests took precedence over the needs of individual members. This contrasts with Western social philosophy, where individual interest occupies a paramount place in society, and an individual’s rights are protected by the constitution or the legal system.

In modern Japanese life, it is generally supposed that aspects of Western lifestyle largely appear in the public area, while the private sphere tends to remain thoroughly Japanese (1984:64). Such Western influences on public life include clothing, food, music, shelter, and the legal system. However, Befu argues that “the “Western” lifestyle has not only dominated “public” places but has also invaded the “private” areas” (1984:65). According to his analysis, this then has led to the emergence of cultural identity as an issue of concern to social commentators, and thus has become the starting point for literature regarding Japanese cultural identity.

In summarising this situation, Befu (1984) concludes that the popularity of nihonron in post-war Japan represented an expression of concern for the declining national distinctiveness, and that nihonron would most likely continue for as long as Western culture dominated the Japanese public sphere. Other writers on nihonjinron in the 1980s and 1990s such as Roy Andrew Miller (1982), Ross Mouer and Sugimoto Yoshio (1986), Peter Dale (1986) and Yoshino Kosaku (1992, 1997) have been more critical of the phenomenon of nihonron, defining nihonjinron literature as ‘works of cultural nationalism concerned with the ostensible “uniqueness” of Japan in any aspect, and which are hostile to both individual experience and the notion of internal socio-historical diversity’ (Dale1986:n.p.). Dale (1986) sees nihonjinron as a tool to shape social and political uniformity. He argues that ‘nihonjinron arose from a severe, defensively combative endeavour to overcome a diffuse sense of inferiority to the West’ (1986:176). He therefore sees psychological isolation as the principal concept of nihonjinron, leading to an excessive effort to construct self-image and national identity (1986). He points out (1986:17) that the concept of nihonjinron has guided the way Japanese were supposed to think and perceive themselves. As such, it has been instrumental in shaping the sense of national identity, ideas in that sense leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy. It has contributed to Japan’s national unity, for which disseminating Japanese knowledge has become an essential tool.

Dale further observes that the emphasis that several Japanese scholars in the 1970s had placed on the importance of Japanese language programmes and cultural centres abroad represents an extension of this perception. He explains that nihonjinron ‘assumes that culture itself precedes and determines existence:
economic frictions with the outside world are reduced to unfortunate clashes in
cultural style’. Thus, according to Dale’s analysis, the extension of a Japanese
cultural presence abroad is seen as a key factor in promoting Japan’s economic
competitive position internationally.

Dale has been critical of the impact of *nihonjinron* because he sees it as
imposing a Japanese collective identity on the individual. He writes that ‘the
*nihonjinron* not only entraps people with a contrived discursive tradition to insu-
late the social structure from effective critique, but also militate against the
emergence of an autonomous and individual search for identity’ (Dale 1986:21).
In this sense, *nihonjinron* is seen as having affected the mindset of the Japanese
people to be group-oriented, which also inevitably impacts upon the expected
presentation of national identity, including through cultural heritage. Dale’s
argument can be tabulated in the following way (see Table 2.1).

**Japanese nationalism and soft power: connecting culture,
education and heritage**

Among the most influential scholars of the Meij era in popularising Western civ-
ilisation in Japan was Fukuzawa Yukichi (福沢諭吉; 1835–1901) who is
regarded as one of the founders of modern Japan in the Meiji era. One of his
main principles, the importance of education, is discussed in his most famous
series of books, *Gakumon no Sususme* (‘An Encouragement of Learning’), pub-
lished between 1872 and 1876. Fukuzawa believed in the importance of educating
the Japanese in Western and other new ways if Japan was going to be able to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dominant mode</th>
<th>Inferior mode</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1945–60</td>
<td>Western cultural ascendency as ideal model</td>
<td>Japan a feudal backwater of outmoded traditions</td>
<td>Shame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese uniqueness consists in primitive values and institutions not to be found in the ‘rational’ West</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960–70</td>
<td>Attempts made to compare and relate the two categories. Growing doubts about Japanese uniqueness. Character of the ‘West’ conjoined with tentative reappraisals of certain values in old Japan</td>
<td>Mixed feelings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese uniqueness seen to bear comparison with former values and institutions in the West. They may be anachronistic, but they embody certain values, which are not to be sacrificed but rather transformed</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1970–</td>
<td>Reascendancy of native traditions as absolutely unique</td>
<td>Ideas and institutions that are wholly alien to the essential style of Japanese culture are to be avoided</td>
<td>Honour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese uniqueness conceived properly as something <em>sui generis</em>, and as an exemplar for the outside world</td>
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</tbody>
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resist European imperialism. His thinking inspired nationalists in other parts of Asia, such as Phan Boi Chau (1867–1940) in Vietnam (see Chapter 6).

In the pre-World War II period, the nationalist agenda was incorporated in the educational curriculum and was represented extensively in academic writing. Sawayanagi Masataro (澤柳政太郎, 1865–1927), a renowned Japanese educator and bureaucrat during the Meiji and Taisho eras, urged ‘the adoption of “Asianism” as the new doctrinal foundation of Japan’s post-[Great War] education’ (Lincicome 1999:353). Sawayanagi argued that the adoption of ‘Asianism’ was necessary to support Japan’s ambition of playing a leading role among Asian countries in ‘liberat[ing] Asia from the White Peril and promot[ing] peace and happiness in the region’ (Lincicome 1999:353). Sawayanagi (see Lincicome 1999:353) considered ‘Asianism’ to be inspired by minzokushugi (‘ethnic dogma’) and to serve three educational functions:

1. Since Japan was the only Asian nation capable of bringing about Asia’s liberation and advancement, ‘Asianism’ would provide the Japanese people with the kind of shared mission that is necessary to foster a healthy nationalism at home.

2. ‘Asianism’ would inspire the Japanese people to overcome their infatuation with the West and their disdain for their fellow Asians, especially the Chinese and Koreans, leading to better relations with China and more effective colonial administration in Korea.

3. ‘Asianism’ would encourage the Japanese people to acquire greater knowledge of Asian civilisation, which is a prerequisite for Japan to contribute to ‘world culture’ (sekai no bunka) by acting as a bridge between the Orient and the Occident.

Sawayanagi (1976:376–83 in Lincicome 1999:353) argued that the educators who wanted to use militarism and morality as the basis of post-World War I education were shortsighted and did not consider the long-term needs of Japan. He saw that the war would only produce victims on both sides with a considerable waste of lives and money. He argued that practical reforms were needed so that, while continuing to demonstrate loyalty to the Emperor, people were better prepared to live and work abroad to contribute to the maintenance of Japan’s position as an economic, cultural and scientific leader in Asia and throughout the world.

The idea of Japanese nationalism was deeply embedded in the education system, with the government exercising tight control over curricula and textbooks in the pre-World War II period (Lincicome 1999:341). One of the reasons that a sense of nationalism came to be so universally accepted throughout the country was that it gave the common people a meaningful social identity (Lincicome 1999:357). However, beyond that, Sawayanagi had a vision that Japan, with its knowledge of Asian civilisation, could contribute to ‘world culture’ (see Lincicome 1999:353). Before World War II, then, culture was central to a sense of Japanese nationalism and imperialism and this heavily influenced the politics.
and philosophical debates of the time. As Tsurumi (1927:29) stated at the time, the ‘aspiration of Japan is comparatively simple. She wants to be a great nation.’

The new Constitution of Japan in 1947, largely drafted by the SCAP/GHQ, aimed to eliminate everything considered to be indicative of ultra-nationalism and militarism. The preamble of the Constitution states that ‘Government is a sacred trust of the people, the authority for which is derived from the people, and the benefits of which are enjoyed by [the] people’ (Japanese Official Gazette, 3 November 1946, quoted in Quigley 1947:867). However, in reality the idea of ‘the public’ still focused on the government rather than the Japanese people. This is because the role of the government, in the minds of most Japanese, is inherited from the time when the Emperor signified Japan. For this reason, perhaps, the concept of ‘government as being the country’ is stronger in Japan than in other countries. Until the end of World War II, imperial and religious properties were acknowledged as forms that represented the national identity. As the role of the Emperor was primarily perceived as a ‘moral, not a political ruler’ (Quigley 1947:868) these heritage sites were frequently used as a basis to guide the moral conduct of the people and to justify perpetrating war. When political power shifted to the governmental body, this sentiment towards authority continued.

After World War II, with the country ruled by SCAP/GHQ, nationalism became a topic to be avoided by the people because of its strong militaristic image. Cultural properties were divested of any association with the idea of imperialism. Consequently, according to Ivan Morris (1960:39), recognised as one of the leading scholars of Japanese studies of his generation following World War II, ‘Japanese nationalism was released from the central force that had until then controlled it and was automatically dispersed into its original sources, namely the family, the villages, and small local groups’. This phenomenon was effectively utilised well when the government began to attend to the conservation and revitalisation of traditional farmhouses and furusato, hometown (see Chapter 3).

Others have interpreted the ‘new nationalism’ of the post-war era differently. Harootunian (1971:62) was less optimistic, seeing the post-war nationalism as being largely ‘defined by the fears and anxieties of intellectuals, who achieved maturity before the war and who have kept close vigil on its location since 1945’. Matsumoto (1971), on the other hand, argued that post-war Japanese nationalism could be seen in two ways. Firstly, it represented a shift from the pre-war concept reflecting a concern for deepening national unity and expanding the country, to a focus on sustaining the search for developing a leading role for Japan on the international stage. This was visible as the country hosted international events, such as the Tokyo Olympics (1964) and the Osaka Expo (1970). Secondly, it was accompanied by a shift in the mindset of people from one of dependence upon public solutions for enhancement of their living standards to one based on individual effort.

In a more recent approach, Fujiwara Kiichi (2006:145) has argued that post-war Japanese nationalism has re-emerged:
In the past two decades, there has emerged a widespread trend to reclaim the glory of Japanese history that has been supposedly suppressed and distorted by a combination of pressures from neighbouring countries abroad and leftist campaigns at home.

He has further argued that nationalism has re-emerged as a result of the dispute that began in 1982 following the Chinese and Korean uproar over the accuracy of Japanese history textbooks regarding Japan’s wartime actions, together with the official visit made by Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Hirofumi to the Yasukuni shrine in 1983. The Yasukuni shrine was established by the Meiji Emperor initially for the souls of those who died during the civil war (Boshin Senso), as a place where their spirits would be elevated to the immortal legacy of the Japanese nation (Fujiwara 2006:151). After World War II, with the separation of Shintoism and the state, the Yasukuni shrine became a private religious institution. Later, subsidised by the government, the shrine commemorated the spirits of all Japanese soldiers, including those considered as war criminals. This initially triggered a strong reaction within Japan ‘on the grounds that a state subsidy of Yasukuni was reminiscent of the past state-sponsored Shintoism which had suppressed other religions’ (Fujiwara 2006:151). This remains an issue to be debated within Japan.

**Japanese identity, heritage and development**

Until the 1980s and prior to the economic downturn, the whole country was engrossed in economic growth and the pursuit of a modern lifestyle. Many historic structures were demolished or removed to make way for new developments. Although the Japanese government valued some cultural properties for their historical and artistic significance such designated properties were considered remote from the daily life of the common people. However, a number of important cultural properties were conserved and safeguarded according to the guidelines of the Law for the Protection of Cultural Property (hereafter 1950 Cultural Property Law) by the Japanese government and SCAP/GHQ, enacted in 1950. While it could be said that cultural heritage conservation at this point was able to contribute to retention of Japanese cultural identity, it had little to do with the patriotic feeling of the people or economic integration into an increasingly urban environment.

After World War II, attention to cultural heritage in Japan was gradually broadened to include vernacular architecture. Traditional farmhouses were designated as commemorating the country’s rural past (Ehrentraut 1993:262). According to Article 4 of the 1950 Cultural Property Law, being designated as national heritage imposes on the owner of a property the duty of opening the place to the public. One result of this was to elevate the demand for domestic tourism. Since then, traditional farmhouses have become a major tourist attraction in the Japanese domestic tourism market bringing about a significant change from the religious pilgrimages that were popular before the war (Kitagawa 1987). This
phenomenon can be understood if one considers the changes that occurred within Japanese society after the war. While the bombed cities were being rebuilt, sometimes leaving no trace of the previous urban landscapes, Japanese people needed to identify with the remnants of the past that could be acknowledged as representing their national identity or roots, and this need was met by vernacular architecture. Commenting on Japan’s domestic tourism, Nelson Graburn (1983:63) argued that the Japanese sought ‘nostalgic confirmation of the cultural landscape’. This increase in tourism led to a wide range of presentations and conservation of sites in ways that have perhaps differed from the Western understanding of conservation principles such as authenticity.

For many Japanese people, theme parks based on cultural heritage and the relocation of historic buildings were welcomed as a way of reminiscing about the past by gazing at historical imagery and remnant features. Morris-Suzuki (1995:772) concludes that the present Japanese culture is ‘an ironic result of the enormously rapid process of change which has transformed every aspect of the Japanese lifestyle – housing, clothes, transport, working habits, leisure, language – over the past hundred years’. The resultant search for Japanese culture as ‘a means of escaping the grasp of the modern Western worldview’ (1995:775) tended to be an expression of an effort to find a personal identity. In some ways, this could be seen as a continuation of the attempt to grapple with the dualism between West and East, which emerged out of the difficulty in applying Western science to the study of Eastern societies that was central to the discourse on nationalism in the pre-war period. An example of this dualistic view is by the renowned scholar, Kunihiro Masao (1976:280), who maintained that:

Dualism still persists in the West. Even when groping for a third road of synthesis, the two-way contrast is used as the point of departure. For instance, atheists in the West are different from their counterparts in Japan, and the same is true of agnostics. They probe intensely within themselves to ask whether God exists or not.

In this period of rapid economic development and urbanisation, the Japanese government effectively began to utilise its cultural heritage to reinforce the desired image of Japanese identity in a period of rapid economic development. Shifting its attention to traditional vernacular culture, in particular to the conservation of traditional farmhouses, it began to address a large number of ordinary Japanese people’s quest for nostalgia and reminders of a disappearing past (see Chapter 3). This idea was also applied to Japan’s cultural diplomacy, where ODA was used to support development through the cultural grant aid scheme (see Chapter 4).

**Heritage conservation through cultural diplomacy**

Japanese nationalism was built upon a strong sense of a common cultural heritage that has existed from early times and has provided an enduring and
National identity and nationalism

cohesive basis for nationality (Pyle 1971:7). This has been supported by the designation of cultural properties under Japan’s national legislative system (see Chapter 3). After World War II, Japanese nationalism continued but changed its form. One of the strongest approaches to nationalism has been expressed in the international arena through cultural diplomacy, particularly by providing international assistance for conservation projects. This has enabled Japan to acquire a prominent role in international relations.

In the 1980s, Japan achieved worldwide economic status. In seeking a leading role on the international stage, Japan began to act as one of the major donors for developing countries. This involved Japan putting a considerable amount of funding into conservation works in other Asian countries, and providing financial assistance for cultural heritage conservation through international organisations such as UNESCO. By working particularly through UNESCO whose policy is specifically to ‘shape national heritage policy […] [and] to create legal instruments for the cultural heritage’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004:61), Japan has raised its visibility and influence over international policies.

Japan has been trying to establish a leading role in Asian countries since it opened up the country to the outside world in the Meiji era. As the review of Japanese history above has indicated, since that time Japan has closely scrutinised the West but has had difficulty in incorporating Western philosophies in their entirety into the fabric of social and cultural traditions. Thus it is possible to portray Japanese intervention and promotion of its tradition of heritage conservation practice in international conservation projects as an expression of nationalism. The incorporation of Japanese heritage conservation practice into the Nara Document on Authenticity, for example, can therefore be seen as one of the first efforts by an Asian nation to be internationally recognised in the heritage field.

Since this initial breakthrough and the eventual popularity of the Nara Document on Authenticity, especially within the international heritage community, Japan has been active in many aspects of international heritage practice. The training workshops organised at the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) are also a way of disseminating the ideas and methods of the ‘Japanese way’ in participating countries. ACCU is a non-profit organisation seeking to operate across Asia and the Pacific region, and its activities are in line with the principles of UNESCO, working for the promotion of mutual understanding and cultural cooperation (ACCU 2009). This also portrays Japan as a country that wishes to take a leading role in human resource development in Asia and the Pacific nations, and again, this is in line with the foreign policy of the country. The Hiroshima United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) established in 2003, is another place where workshops for heritage practitioners and members of foreign governments are organised, supported by generous invitation packages (see Chapter 4).

Japan has also been very active in promoting and placed considerable effort to push for the adoption of the UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (‘2003 Intangible Heritage Convention’) in 2003 and the
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2005. These are now considered by the Japanese government to be the diplomatic legacy and achievement of Matsuura Koichi, the Japanese Director-General of UNESCO from 1999 to 2009.

Support for Matsuura has been clearly stated as part of the Japanese government’s strategic approach, as can be seen in the statement made by the Numata Sadaaki, Press Secretary for Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo:

Japan has decided to put up His Excellency Mr Koichi Matsuura, currently Ambassador of Japan to the French Republic, as a candidate for the next Director-General of UNESCO and to formally solicit the support of other countries. We have taken this decision with the aim of taking the lead in reevaluating and reforming UNESCO, which is the sole international organisation that deals with cultural affairs, and it is our intention to make our utmost efforts in the election campaign.

(MOFA 1998, Official English translation)

The involvement of Japan in the formulation of the legal instruments developed by international organisations such as UNESCO could be well explained by Sakai Naoiki’s critical view (1989:105) on Japanese identity:

Japan is defined as a specific and unitary particularity in universal terms: Japan’s uniqueness and identity are provided insofar as Japan stands out as a particular object in the universal field of the West. Only when it is integrated into Western universalism does it gain its own identity as a particularity. In other words, Japan becomes endowed with and aware of its self only when it is recognized by the West […] [I]nsistence on Japan’s peculiarity and difference from the West embodies a nagging urge to see the self from the viewpoint of the other. But this is nothing but the posing of Japan’s identity in Western terms, which in turn establishes the centrality of the West as the universal point of reference.

Central to the Japanese approach to heritage conservation has been the emphasis placed on intangible heritage, which is perhaps epitomised by the practice of kabuki. Performed by prestigious and traditional families, kabuki is designated as ‘important intangible cultural property’. However, the local kabuki, known as ‘farmer kabuki’ and performed by villagers, is designated as ‘Intangible Folk Cultural Property’, as it is considered to be folk performing arts. This complexity not only exhibits the types of heritage but also the social class that the heritage belongs to. In most cases, it is high-culture kabuki that is exhibited to foreigners or toured around the world portraying the national culture. Thus high-class culture, which portrays the image of sophisticated culture, is selected for dissemination on the international stage while the use of local culture frequently focuses in domestic tourism because it is nostalgic and closer to the sentiments sought in the imagined memories of hometowns. This perception of heritage as
related to privilege and high living standards appears to have been accepted by the Japanese people and is the approach taken in Japan’s use of heritage as part of its soft diplomacy in the region. In this sense, for example, the nomination of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (the Genbaku Dome) as a World Heritage site was a new and rare case in Japan.

The basic approach to protecting intangible culture in Japan, depending on the category of the intangible cultural property concerned, is to recognise the person who possesses the skill, technique and knowledge to create that object or performance. Ito Nobuo (2003a:n.p.), the internationally noted Japanese architectural conservation expert, states that the essence of the protection of intangible cultural heritage in Japan is not the heritage itself but ‘efforts to hand intangible culture down to posterity’. This is enshrined in the approach of the Intangible Heritage Convention, which ‘seeks to sustain a living, if endangered, tradition by supporting the conditions necessary for cultural reproduction’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004:53) (see Chapters 3, 4 and 5).

As discussed in the above sections, Japan has increasingly utilised approaches and technologies for Japanese heritage conservation as a basis for its cultural diplomacy. Therefore, the extent to which Japanese conservation practice seeks to retain traditional conservation practice and to disseminate it to other countries through financial and technical intervention and other forms of cultural diplomacy can be considered as part of a nationalist strategy as well.

Summary

This chapter began with a discussion of national identity and discourse on nationalism, both of which are essential for an understanding of the notion of heritage and how it is used. The crucial discourse in relation to post-war nationalism is *nihonjinron*, which has its origins in the *kokugaku* that was developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The chapter then revealed that the post-war discussion on the relationship between culture and nationalism had similar patterns to that of the pre-war period and the growing emphasis on culture. With Japan’s commitment to becoming a ‘cultural nation’ following World War II, it can be argued that the pre-war idea of ‘Asianism’ has been disseminated through cultural diplomacy and the exercise of the ‘soft power’ of Japan in the post-war period.

The next chapter will describe the Japanese cultural heritage approach in detail, from its initial conception in the Meiji era through to how it currently relates to the formation and construction of the national identity of Japan. The chapter then focuses specifically on understanding authenticity in Japanese heritage discourse and the significance of the Nara Conference on Authenticity, which marked Japan’s presence in the global heritage discourse and as a good global citizen.
3 The Japanese heritage conservation approach and authenticity

Introduction

The primary intention of the Nara Document on Authenticity was to recognise the significance of cultural diversity that exists in time and space, the different ways in which heritage is conceived and protected in different cultural contexts, and the importance of respecting the community that generated the heritage. This document is also commonly seen as recognising cultural differences between East and West as reflected in approaches to heritage conservation. In Japan, documented evidence for how the conservation of something precious has been approached can be found from as early as the Nara period (AD 710–) (Ito 1999). The concept of conservation is therefore deeply embedded in Japanese history, culture and tradition.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the Japanese national approach to heritage conservation in order to establish a clear understanding of the origins and history of the current system and the practice of cultural heritage in Japan. It then discusses Japanese systems of presenting the past, in particular the concepts of machizukuri (town making) and furusato (hometown) used by the Japanese government in utilising heritage landscape to influence people’s sense of identity. The reconstruction of a hometown image and identity of Japanese people appropriated along with heritage conservation projects are then discussed. The third section focuses on the issue of authenticity as discussed during the 1994 Nara Conference held in Nara, Japan and incorporated in its outcome in the form of the Nara Document on Authenticity, and its relationship to Japanese practice. The last section of this chapter reflects on the Japanese national system in relation to the question of authenticity in heritage conservation in general.

The Japanese heritage conservation system

The origin and history of the Japanese cultural heritage conservation system

When the conservation movement in Japan first began during the Meiji era (1896–1912), its objective was to strengthen national identity by protecting
Heritage conservation and authenticity

cultural properties and objects and limiting their export overseas. The early years of the Meiji era formed a transitional period, moving from the feudalistic Shogunate government to the formation of a centralised nation with a constitutional monarchy. The Meiji Restoration (or Revolution) resulted in the establishment of a new government in 1868 and the opening up of the nation to the outside world. Simultaneously it saw the adoption of the Japanese indigenous religion, Shinto, as the national religion. The government’s intention was to use Shinto as a basis for unifying the nation and this was influenced by some scholars who strongly differentiated Shinto, as the native religion, from Buddhism as ‘foreign’. Although it was not the intention of the government to abolish Buddhism, this generated a movement called haibutsu kishaku (廃仏絶教, literally, a movement to ‘abolish Buddhism and destroy Siddhârtha Gautama’), which undermined the prestige of traditional Buddhist establishments. Buddhist properties around the nation were destroyed and Buddhism in Japan was irreparably damaged (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950; Agency for Cultural Affairs 2001).

The Meiji government moved to protect what were seen as significant national cultural properties. The first act was the enactment of the Protection of Antiquities Order issued in 1871. Initially, this law listed only 31 moveable objects, and immovable heritage was not included (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950; Nishimura 1995). It was at this time that there was much interest in Japanese art in Europe and the United States as the West became acquainted with Japanese culture following the opening up of Japan through trade in economic and cultural goods. Japanese art objects shipped out to Europe and the United States inspired Western artists, designers, collectors and people with a passion for art. This interest came to a head with the exhibition of Japanese art to the world market at the 1878 Exposition Universelle (The Third Paris International Exposition or Paris World’s Fair) (Segi 1980). As a result of this exposure, European and American artists appropriated Japanese styles, describing this use with the French term Japonisme. It was partially as a result of the popularity of Japanese art overseas that large quantities of art objects and paintings were taken out of Japan, and this raised concern about the loss of cultural property in Japan.

A few years after the initial protective legislation was introduced, the Meiji government developed a grant-in-aid programme to support the preservation of historic Shinto shrines. Also included were Buddhist temples that had been damaged or neglected as a result of the haibutsu kishyaku movement or were in poor condition owing to natural decay. By 1894, 539 shrines and temples had received a grant for ‘maintenance’ and this helped to restore their functions (Nishimura 1995:176).

In 1897, the Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples (古社寺保存法) was promulgated, focusing on the architecture of shrines and temples as well as the treasures they possessed, especially those that were considered to be important historical symbols or which served as models of art (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950). The law introduced the terms ‘National Treasures’
Heritage conservation and authenticity

Heritage conservation and authenticity

(国宝) and ‘Special Protected Buildings’ (特別建造物). The legislation made explicit that these should (1) manifest Japanese history; (2) be of exemplary architectural importance, distinguished by their fine workmanship; or (3) be associated with important events, such as visits by the Emperor (Nishimura 1995:177; Takeuchi and Kishida 1950). This official government support also led to the foundation of several important arts schools, such as the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (東京美術学校) in 1887, which was the first fine arts academy to be established in Japan. Another was the Japan Institute of Fine Arts in 1898 (日本美術院), which is still in existence today and known as the Institute of Fine Arts National Treasure Repair Centre (財団法人美術院国宝修理所). It is currently located in Kyoto and affiliated with the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bijyutsuin 2009).

One of the pioneers of the conservation of traditional Japanese arts at this time, and a founding member of these early conservation institutions, was Okakura Tenshin (岡倉天心; 1863–1913). Okakura and the co-founders of Nihon Bijutsuin, Yokoyama Taikan (横山大観; 1868–1958) and Hashimoto Gaho (橋本雅邦; 1835–1908), were very much involved in the conservation and repair of traditional works of art, religious sculptures and paintings. Okakura had studied under Ernest Francisco Fenollosa (1853–1908), an American who was invited as a professor by the Tokyo Imperial University (now the University of Tokyo), and one of a number of important educators invited to Japan during the modernisation period in the Meiji era. During his appointment, he assisted in the founding of the Tokyo Fine Arts Academy, the Imperial Museum (acting as its Director in 1888) and assisted in drafting the Law for the Preservation of Temples and Shrines (enacted in 1897). He returned to Boston and became a curator of Oriental Arts at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. He later converted to Buddhism, and changed his name to Tei-Shin. He also adopted the name Kanō Yei-tan Masanobu (Chisholm 1963).

In 1904, as a result of this relationship with Fenollosa, Okakura was invited to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts as a curator of Oriental Arts. In 1910, he became the first Asian person to become head of the Asian art section. In Japan he has come to be acknowledged as a pioneer who recognised the importance of cultural heritage conservation in Japan. In the West he is best known as the author of a number of books written in English intended to introduce Japanese culture to a foreign audience. These include The Ideas of the East (London 1904), The Awakening of Japan (New York, 1904), and The Book of Tea (New York 1906). These publications are known to have influenced a number of philosophers in western countries (Benfey 2003). At a time when the influences of Western modernity were flowing into Japan and other Asian countries, it was Western scholars in particular who responded to his proposition, ‘Asia as one’, which he first developed in his book The Ideas of the East in 1904. On his death in 1913, the New York Times (5 September 1913:9) wrote effusively about the years he had devoted to Asian art in the United States, and his presentation of Japan to the West was widely recognised and recorded.

From the turn of the century, interaction between Japanese and Western intellectuals continued to influence the field of Japanese cultural heritage, following
In 1919, the Japanese government enacted the Law for the Preservation of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty and Natural Monuments (Tennen Kinen-bustu) to protect both the built and natural environment from the impact of burgeoning economic development, such as the construction of roads, railways and factories. The notion of Tennen Kinen-bustu, a translation of the German term Naturdenkmal, was first introduced by Miyoshi Manabu (1862–1939), and became influential in the Japanese intellectual world. Miyoshi, a professor who had studied botany in Germany, was strongly influenced by the nature conservation movement there as propounded by the society, Der Deutschen Bund der Heimischutz, established in 1904. Its distinctly nationalist-tiling agenda resonated well with the site conservation movement in Japan at that time, which also placed an emphasis on patriotism (Nishimura 1995; Miyoshi 1927).

The 1919 legislation introduced the concept of meisho (名勝) – that is, renowned sites commonly known as ‘Areas of Scenic Beauty’ – explicitly as a reaction to the rapid changes being made to the landscape. Included in the concept of meisho were sites associated with popular poems or scenes depicted in paintings and scenic spots. It was thus applied to both natural and man-made landscape elements explicitly linked to representations of Japanese identity, such as parks, gardens, bridges, riverbanks, embankments, trees, flowers and animals.

Two further pieces of legislation prior to World War II completed the legislative framework for the protection of Japanese cultural heritage. In 1929, the original 1897 Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples (古社寺保存法) was amended to become the Law for the Preservation of National Treasure (国宝保存法). This law increasingly reflected the general trend towards patriotism that was being experienced across the nation at the time. Subsequently, the 1933 Law for the Preservation of Important Art Objects and Others (重要美術品等保存に関する法律) expanded the scope and elements of protection that were not covered by the term ‘national treasure’ under the 1929 Law.

Legislative action in the field of heritage protection continued after World War II. In 1950, the Cultural Property Law (文化財保護法) was enacted as a response to the 1949 fire at the Golden Pavilion, part of the Horyuji Temple in Nara prefecture. The incident at the Horyuji Temple had considerable impact on both the government and the people of Japan as this temple was considered to be one of the most significant in the nation (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950; Agency for Cultural Affairs 2001). This law consolidated in the one place all the categories of cultural properties that had previously been protected under different regulations, and introduced new categories such as Intangible Cultural Properties (無形文化財) and Buried Cultural Properties (埋蔵文化財). In this law, the word ‘protection’ was applied instead of ‘preservation’ for a number of reasons. The core aim of this law, which is still in use today, was to protect rather than just to preserve the cultural properties. The Law conveys this meaning by its increased emphasis in comparison with previous laws on the katsuyou (活用), officially translated into English as the ‘utilisation’, of cultural properties. It also
conveyed to the general public the important concept of ‘protecting’ and looking after the cultural properties of the people (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950).

This legislation was passed in 1950 when Japan was under the SCAP/GHQ occupation, a period extending from 1945 until the independence of Japan was restored in 1952. During the occupation, the new Constitution was drafted and adopted, a major task in re-engineering the legislative system of the country. Its declared aim was the reconstruction of Japan according to the occupier’s understanding of ‘democracy’. The 1950 Cultural Property Law was an integral element in this process of drafting and adopting a new Constitution. It was drafted under the supervision of SCAP/GHQ, which wanted to ensure that revisions in this area of legislation also eliminated elements of ultra-nationalism, militarism and any political agendas related to the Emperor. During wartime the Emperor, who was regarded as a direct descendent of *kami* (神), the Deity who created the divine nation *Nippon* (日本, Japan), was a key symbol for the nation, and heavily employed in campaigns to engender patriotic support for the war. Eliminating this concept of him as a deity-like figure from national sentiment was therefore considered important. During the occupation, 377 historic sites related to the Meiji Emperor, which had been designated under the Japanese heritage legislation of the 1930s, had this designation cancelled in 1948 by order of the General Headquarters of the Allied Forces (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2001).

The end of the war was officially marked by the Treaty of San Francisco (San Francisco Peace Treaty), and the Japan Security Treaty, signed in 1951. John W. Dower, a prominent historian and Professor of History at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, noted in his book, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (1999), that these two treaties determined Japan’s post-war relationship with the United States and the international community. In that same year, in 1951, Japan joined UNESCO, an act that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered as ‘Japan returning to the international community’ (MOFA 2009).

During the time of occupation, both the media and film industries were strictly controlled. Any reflection of ultra-nationalism and militarism was prohibited and a large number of American films were imported to introduce Japanese people to the lifestyle known as the ‘American dream’. The Japanese people, who had lost everything during the war, including family members, homes and pride, and who had everything they believed in turned upside down, now found it vital to look towards a new future. As a result, acquisition of a ‘Westernised’ lifestyle became a status symbol, something to aspire to in terms of achievement and fashion. The media’s successful portrayal of the ‘American dream’ ensured that it also became the dream of the Japanese people (see Chapter 4). Such portrayals, along with reforms to the national education curriculum, gradually worked to erode the more extreme feelings of patriotic nationalism amongst the Japanese people. The public moral focus was now on becoming respectful citizens who worked hard for a better society.

With recovery after the war securely tied to the economic agenda of the United States, Japan rushed into an era of rapid economic development,
industrialisation and urbanisation. In this process, the idea of conserving the built heritage was regarded as the antithesis of development. Nevertheless, morally and legally, it was not possible to demolish the physical structures entirely and the official government designation of important cultural properties continued. Buildings that were so designated received effective protection. Those buildings, on the other hand, that the authorities did not deem to be important, had no protection. This was particularly true of historic structures located in prime urban locations, which were seen as obstructing essential city development. Another common argument supporting the demolition of old structures was the need to comply with contemporary safety regulations and building codes to mitigate any tragedy occurring as a result of natural disasters such as earthquakes.

To keep up with the pace of this changing society, the 1950 Cultural Property Law was amended in 1954 to introduce the notion of Folk Materials (民族資料) along with a system for documenting Intangible Folk Materials. In 1968, The Agency for Cultural Affairs, Bunkacho (文化庁) was established to succeed the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties (文化財保護委員会) and put in charge of the designation and conservation of cultural properties.

In 1975, the heritage legislation was revised yet again. Two of the categories were developed and expanded, namely Buried Cultural Properties and Folk Cultural Properties (民俗文化財), and two new categories were added, namely Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings (伝統的建造物群) and the Protection of Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties (文化財保存技術) (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2001, 2011). Under the Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings category, unless individual buildings, particularly non-traditional ones, were designated under another category, alterations could be carried out providing the purpose was to ‘improve’ the townscape. The legislation allowed buildings to be ‘remodelled or rebuilt under the “shuukei-tailored scenery” guidelines drawn up by the local government’ (Nishimura 1995:180).

Originally, the term shuukei (修景) had been applied specifically with reference to landscaping and gardening. However, in recent years, the word has commonly been used in the context of urban planning for the harmonising of the townscape by the adoption of design guidelines. These guidelines can range from reference to colour and the design of buildings to street furniture, etc. Here, however, it is evident that the process of creating a desired townscape has been configured through the establishment of guidelines by the authorities in consultation with the general public in accordance with the municipal order for urban planning.

In a 1996 amendment, Registered Cultural Properties (登録文化財) for Structures (建造物) was added to the existing heritage legislation. This ‘registered system’ is differentiated from the existing ‘designated system’. The aim was to cover non-designated properties that were nevertheless considered to be of significance. Whereas ‘designated’ properties come under strict controls regarding their modification and use – which strictly prohibited undertaking any alterations
to their existing state or removing them from the country without permission from the national government – ‘registered’ properties are subject to relatively relaxed controls. It is commonly said that the introduction of this category was inspired by the system used in some European countries.

In 2004, three major additions to the existing heritage categories were added: Cultural Landscape (文化的景観) in response to the introduction of this heritage category into the UNESCO World Heritage system; Folk Techniques (民俗技術) under Folk Cultural Properties; and Fine Arts and Applied Crafts (美術工芸品), Tangible Cultural Properties, Tangible Folk Cultural Properties (有形民俗) and Monuments (記念物) under Registered Cultural Properties (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2011).

The registration system aims ‘at [the] voluntary protection of cultural properties by their owners (cultural properties other than those designated by the national or local governments), thereby complementing the designation system’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:30). As can be seen from the numbers in Table 3.1c, the registration system has been popular for buildings. This is possibly because the structures generally take up more land area and the system of registration provides more flexibility in how this category of property is treated, allowing properties, for instance, to be used for other profit-making development purposes. However, other categories, such as Works of Fine Arts and Crafts, and Tangible Folk Properties, are less popular. One of the staff members in the Fine Arts division admitted that he felt less convinced about including items under the ‘registration’ category, because of its flexibility (comment made at a closed seminar by Agency for Cultural Affairs staff member, 15 August 2009). This raises some questions as to the effectiveness of this category (see Figure 3.1).

Since the 1950 Cultural Property Law was enacted, some new categories have been added and others amended. The most recent system relating to heritage conservation is the Law on Maintenance and Improvement of Traditional Scenery in Certain Districts (Historic Town Development Act) (地域における歴史的風致の維持及び向上に関する法律 (歴史まちづくり法)), initiated jointly by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Agriculture, and promulgated in 2008. Under this system, the national government certifies plans by localities aimed at maintaining and improving favourable environments, where buildings of high historic value and activities rooted in the local history of the people and their traditions can interact, and these designated sites are given priority support. This measure is considered to be ‘community development as localities utilising historic and cultural features’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2011:42). This initiative shows that physical infrastructure, townscape, tourism, heritage, and agricultural landscapes are the ingredients for the development and revitalisation of historic areas or to re-create an historic city.
Figure 3.1 Development of Japanese heritage conservation system, history and Japanese identity (source: author (2013)).
Heritage conservation and authenticity

The current system for the protection of cultural properties

The Agency for Cultural Affairs (2010:30) describes the importance of protecting cultural properties as follows:

Cultural properties are essential to accurately understand the history and culture of Japan, and they also form the foundations for its future cultural growth and development. It is extremely important to appropriately preserve and utilise such cultural properties, which are the heritage of the Japanese people.

Japanese cultural properties are divided into six categories: Tangible Cultural Properties, Intangible Cultural Properties, Folk Cultural Properties, Monuments, Cultural Landscapes, and Groups of Traditional Buildings. In addition, there are two special categories of selected cultural properties: Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties and Buried Cultural Properties. Among these categories, three of them (Intangible Cultural Properties, Intangible Folk Cultural Properties, and Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties) are considered as intangible cultural heritage. The Schematic Diagram of Cultural Properties is shown in Figure 3.2 and a summary of the number of cultural properties listed by the national government is shown in Tables 3.1a, 3.1b and 3.1c.

The conservation and ‘utilisation’ of designated cultural properties are carried out by the Agency of Cultural Affairs through various means. These include conservation projects, disaster prevention projects and acquisition from private owners. Since 2003, the annual budget of the Agency of Cultural Affairs has exceeded 100,000 million Yen (US$854.7 million equivalent\(^1\)). In the fiscal year of 2010, the Agency’s budget was 102,024 million Yen (US$1,172.7 million equivalent\(^2\)).

The 1950 Cultural Property Law defined Tangible Cultural Properties as ‘cultural products that possess high historic, artistic and academic value for Japan’ and include: (1) Buildings and Structures, and (2) Works of Fine Arts and Crafts, such as pictorial crafts, sculptural works, calligraphy, classical books, palaeography, archaeological artefacts and historic materials (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:33). As of 1 December 2013, 2,406 Buildings and Other Structures were designated, including 218 National Treasures, as well as 3,105 Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty and Natural Monuments, including 172 in the ‘Special’ categories. As for the work of fine arts and crafts, the designation began in 1897 when the Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples was enacted (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:35). As of 2013, 10,524 objects, including 871 National Treasures, have been designated.

Intangible Cultural Properties are defined as ‘stage arts, music, craft techniques, and other cultural products, which possess a high historical or artistic value for Japan’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:36). The Agency for Cultural Affairs designates and recognises the individual, collective or group. Annual subsidies totalling 2 million Yen per year are given to the individual or group.
Figure 3.2 Schematic diagram of cultural properties (source: author, adopted from Agency for Cultural Affairs (2011:31)).
### Table 3.1a Number of Cultural Properties Listed by the National Government (as of December 2013): Designation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Cultural Properties and National Treasures</th>
<th>Important Cultural Properties</th>
<th>National Treasures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and Other Structures including National Treasures (Subtotal)</td>
<td>2,406&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>218&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works of Fine Arts and Crafts including National Treasures</td>
<td>1,987</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paintings</td>
<td>2,676</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sculptures</td>
<td>2,439</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts</td>
<td>1,893</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calligraphic works and classical books</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient documents</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeological artefacts</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>10,524</td>
<td>871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important Cultural Properties (Total)</td>
<td>12,930&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1,089</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monuments (Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments)</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Especially important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic Sites</td>
<td>1,721</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places of Scenic Beauty</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Monuments</td>
<td>1,008</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monuments (Total)</td>
<td>3,105&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual recognition (holders)</th>
<th>Collective recognition (groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important Intangible Cultural Properties</td>
<td>Item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft Techniques&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important Intangible Cultural Properties (Total)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folk Cultural Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important Tangible Folk Cultural Properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

1. This figure includes 4,607 structures.
2. This figure includes 266 structures.
3. The number of Important Cultural Properties includes National Treasures.
4. The number of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments includes Special Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments.
5. The number of individual recognitions under Craft Techniques has dropped from 43 in 2011 to 39 in 2013, corresponding to the number of people designated under Craft Techniques has dropped from 60 to 55.
6. This number includes holders with multiple designations.
holders who possess the relevant skills or crafts for the purpose of training their successors and to hold public performances. The individual holder is commonly known as a National Living Treasure (人間国宝), a term that is not official under the Law but that has become widely used at home and abroad. Collective recognition is given when the designated intangible cultural property requires two or more specialised performers, such as in the case of Bunraku (puppet theatre). As of 2013, there were 78 individual holders and 26 group/collective holders.

As it is the individual skill that is identified in cases of ‘individual designation’, this designation terminates when the holder – the skilled person – passes away. Reflecting Japan’s ageing population, the number of individual skills under the category of Craft Technique is declining, dropping from 43 in 2011 to 39 in 2013, corresponding to the drop in the number of ‘skill holders’ listed from 60 to 55 over the same period.

Folk Cultural Properties are defined as being ‘indispensable for understanding the transition in the daily lives of the Japanese people’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:37). Folk Cultural Properties include both tangible and intangible cultural properties, such as manners, food, clothing, annual events, folk performing arts and folk techniques. As of 2013, there were 213 Tangible Folk Cultural Properties and 281 Intangible Folk Cultural Properties.

The Monuments consist of three categories, Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments. As of 2013, there were designated 1,721 Historic Sites, 376 Places of Scenic Beauty, and 1,008 Natural Monuments. The monuments are as defined overleaf (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:38).
Heritage conservation and authenticity 59

1 Shell mounds, ancient tombs, sites of palaces, sites of forts or castles, monumental dwelling houses, and other sites that possess a high historic or scientific value in Japan;

2 Gardens, bridges, gorges, seashores, mountains and other Places of Scenic Beauty that possess a high artistic or aesthetic value in Japan;

3 Animals, plants, minerals and geological features that possess a high scientific value in Japan.

Cultural Landscapes are ‘landscapes formed by people’s lives or work in a given region and the climate of the region in question [is] indispensable for understanding the lives and work of the Japanese people’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:39). Selection is based on a proposal from a prefectural or municipal government. The first Cultural Landscape, Omi-hachiman in the Shiga Prefecture, was designated in 2006. Since then, 38 areas across the country have been selected as Cultural Landscapes.

The category Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings was first recognised in the amendment of the 1950 Cultural Property Law in 1975. The intention was to extend the protection area that consisted of ‘historic cities, towns and villages, including castle towns, post-station towns, and towns built around shrines and temples and other areas of historic importance throughout Japan’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:40). Its categories are, villages (mountain villages, fishermen’s villages, farming villages, island villages); streetscape of post towns (post towns); streetscapes related to the seaport; Streetscapes of merchant structures (merchant town); streetscapes related to industry (historic industrial town, sericulture or silk farming towns, salt-farming towns, candle-making towns, ceramic towns, mining towns, lacquer towns, brewery towns, scutching plant towns); streetscapes centred around shrines and temples (town in front of a shrine or temple, temple town, monastic town, shrine town); and streetscapes consisting of teahouses (recreational quarters); streetscapes of samurai residences (castle towns, samurai quarters). As of 2013, 104 Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings have been recognised.

The category Techniques for the Preservation of Cultural Properties was established under the amendment of the 1950 Cultural Property Law in 1975. The selection is based on ‘traditional techniques or skills that are indispensable for the conservation of cultural properties and require protection’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:41). Thus the holders or preservation groups of traditional techniques are recognised and provided with necessary financial assistance. Moreover, the holders and their skills, such as the technique of producing handmade Japanese paper, are disseminated through various kinds of activities (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:41). As of 2013, 52 individuals and 31 groups are recognised under this system (see Table 3.1b for summary).

Lastly, Buried Cultural Properties were considered to be ‘direct evidence of our predecessors’ lives and valuable common historical properties that vividly speak of our history and culture’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:41). As of 2011, about 460,000 ruins are officially recognised in Japan. Such places are
Heritage conservation and authenticity commonly discovered when construction works or large-scale development projects take place. When the objects are found, the person who found the object must report to the police unless the owner is known. Then the prefectural board of education will decide whether further investigation is needed.

The responsibilities of the national government, the local government, and other administrative organisations and owners are set out under the framework of the 1950 Cultural Property Law below (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010:32). National government responsibilities (overseen by the Agency of Cultural Affairs) are:

- Legislating for the protection of cultural properties.
- Designating, selecting and preserving important cultural properties and registering cultural properties that particularly require utilisation (structures).
- Providing instructions, imperatives and recommendations regarding the administration, restoration, and public display for the benefit of owners and administrative organisations of designated cultural properties and similar properties.
- Issuing regulations concerning alterations to the shape of designated cultural properties, injunctions to restore their original form and similar actions, export restrictions.
- Assisting owners and administrative organisations regarding the administration, restoration, public display, etc. of designated cultural properties and similar properties.
- Assisting local public entities regarding the transfer of cultural properties to public ownership.
- Establishing special tax measures regarding designated cultural properties and related matters.
- Establishing and operating facilities open to the public (such as museums and theatres) and research institutes for cultural properties.

Local government responsibilities are as follows:

- Issuing ordinances for the protection of cultural properties.
- Designating, selecting and preserving important cultural properties (excluding those designated by the national government).
- Providing instructions and recommendations regarding the administration, restoration, and public display for the benefit of owners and administrative organisations of designated cultural properties and similar properties.
- Assisting owners and administrative organisations regarding the administration, restoration, public display, etc. of designated cultural properties.
- Establishing and operating facilities for the conservation and public display of cultural properties.
- Promoting local activities to enhance the protection of cultural properties, such as activities for the study, protection, or transmission of cultural properties.
Heritage conservation and authenticity

- Serving as the administrative organisation for the administration, restoration, etc. of cultural properties designated by the national government.

The responsibilities of owners and administrative organisations are listed below:

- Notifying transfer of ownership, loss or destruction, damage, change in location, and so forth concerning cultural properties designated by the national or local government.
- Administration and restoration of cultural properties.
- Public display of cultural properties.

At each level, the responsibility for ensuring public access or display is clearly stated. Public access is part of ‘utilising’ the designated properties. Only in the case of properties that are privately owned is it commonly the role of the Agency of Cultural Affairs to discuss and negotiate the arrangements for public access and presentation.

Conservation practice and the ‘use’ of cultural heritage

The ‘use’ of cultural heritage has in recent years come under scrutiny in Japan, especially from infrastructure- and development-related government departments and from business leaders, who perceive the conservation work consuming significant budget resources without much direct financial return. A common response in a number of seminars and forums organised by the Agency of Cultural Affairs, the National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, and heritage professionals in Japan has been on the ‘use’ of cultural heritage; that is, discussion of how to make more ‘practical’ use of heritage places and objects, as well as of the skills and methods needed to enable their adaptive reuse. Thus, current Japanese heritage discourse is somewhat distant from the more theoretical discussions typical of the heritage discourse in the West or as reflected in English language literature, as found, for instance, in the works of L Smith (2006) and Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000). Linking heritage with tourism and even with construction works has become one of the avenues through which heritage rehabilitation and maintenance work has been undertaken in Japan. This is promoted by the Agency for Cultural Affairs as ‘conservation in use’ (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2011:8), which means the conduct of heritage conservation by using such buildings or places. This includes reconstruction activities at archaeological sites.

The ‘utilisation’ of cultural properties, defined by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, includes interpretation and presentation to the public and the establishment of museums, theatres, and other public facilities and centres for cultural properties research (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2011:5). Some examples of ‘utilisation’ are listed in their promotional materials, for instance the case of the traditional technique for Tango Fuji Textile Spinning and Weaving Folkways in Kyoto. Here the emphasis is on the introduction of short courses organised by...
the Tango Regional Museum, enabling local people to better appreciate and take an active part in developing interpretation programmes (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2011:9). Another example given is the Onaka Ancient Village Remains historic site adjacent to the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Archaeology, where a number of activities are organised throughout the year for citizens and schools. The activities range from the restoration of ancient houses to bead making, the ancient way of cooking, and the experience of a night in one of the restored traditional-style houses (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2011:8). Likewise, Crafts Techniques are presented annually at the Japanese Artistry and Beauty Exhibition: ‘Important Intangible Cultural Properties and the people who sustain them’.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs (2011:10) explains that:

The purpose of the [Japanese Artistry and Beauty] exhibition is to raise understanding of cultural properties protection among the Japanese, through a broad-ranging display of ceramics, weaving, dyeing, lacquer work, and other traditional craft techniques that have been designated as ‘Important Intangible Cultural Properties’, along with tools and materials for production which are indispensable for the expression of these craft techniques, which have been specially selected as ‘Conservation Techniques for Cultural Properties’.

At the same time, touring exhibitions and performances overseas have also been encouraged. Exhibitions, such as ‘Art of the Samurai: Japanese Arms and Armor, 1156–1868’, held at Metropolitan Museum of Arts in the United States, and regular touring performances of Nohgaku, Ningyo Joruri Bunraku, Kabuki, and Gidayubushi have also been presented overseas.

For a long time, keeping old buildings in a prime location was considered to be a burden on the development and financial growth of the nation. As a result, the relocation of traditional structures such as farmhouses and shop houses, and renowned buildings or parts of them, has frequently been undertaken as a compromise between development and the quest to keep the structures. This approach was particularly common in the 1960s to 1970s in the period of Japan’s rapid economic development. This was also the time when a number of traditional thatched roof houses were demolished, relocated or sold to be used as restaurants and coffee shops, to make way for the construction of dams in response to the increasing need for electricity. One prominent example of this was Meiji Mura, Meiji Village, a privately owned outdoor museum where many historic structures were relocated. One of the important buildings was the Teikoku Hotel or Imperial Hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, commissioned in 1916. The Imperial Hotel, which was originally in the centre of Tokyo but demolished in 1968, had its entrance hall relocated to Meiji Mura and reconstructed. Wright was inspired by the East to design this building, using Ooya stone, the local material. At the time some Japanese commissioners thought Wright would produce a building of ‘pure Western’ style. However it turned out to be a fusion of East and West and the building later became one of his most famous works.
Some of the other structures in this *Meiji Mura* are designated as cultural property. This shows that the focus has tended to be on maintaining the structure but not necessarily the original function, location or the social context of a building. The structures displayed at *Meiji Mura* are entirely detached from their original use and people.

There are two methods of government funding for revitalisation programmes related to heritage conservation in Japan – the *machizukuri*, literally meaning ‘city/town making’, and the *furusato*, literally meaning the ‘hometown’ revitalisation programme. The *machizukuri* can relate to the ‘utilisation’ of non-built forms, such as festivals and performances, which in some cases are linked with the physical revitalisation of an historic area in projects, under local planning ordinances. This is seen as an example of bottom-up action in which tourism development often becomes one of the major objectives. Often such projects are part of an overall strategy of comprehensively revitalising historic precincts of a city. The *furusato* revitalisation scheme that the government has promoted typically comes with an image of rural landscapes and traditional houses. However, these forms of ‘revitalisation’ projects have become of increasing concern, especially to anthropologists, since this kind of intervention affects natural change (for example, Iwamoto 2007). A common concern that has been expressed with regard to revitalisation programmes is that these often involve a re-creation, often quite separate from the traditional or normal course of life, and can be manipulated to portray a prescribed or desired image of the heritage. Another concern is the exploitation of festivals that used to be for the community, but whose meaning and form have now changed to meet the demands of tourism (Iwamoto 2007). Conversely, others have argued that change is unavoidable as it is the nature of life and that, if no action is taken, some of the cultural elements could disappear altogether.

**Conservation and ‘use’ of cultural heritage in machizukuri**

Urban conservation became a matter of official interest when the ‘Groups of Historic Buildings’ concept was included in the revision of the 1950 Cultural Property Law in 1975. In Japan, this is referred to as *machizukuri*, which according to Nishimura Yukio (2005:2), a Professor at the Department of Urban Engineering at the University of Tokyo, currently president of ICOMOS Japan and one of Japan’s leading scholars in heritage conservation, literally means:

town making, *mach* and *zukuri*, creating physical space as well as [a] human network in [the] local community. [The] Japanese word, *Machizukuri*, has a subtle nuance of soft-oriented [self-oriented] bottom-up community planning activities and/or hand[s]-on community design towards the betterment of the environment.

It was introduced in the 1960s and gradually became effective throughout the country by the 1990s.
Heritage conservation and authenticity

The *machizukuri* movement of the 1960s and the 1970s was seen as an expression of unrest over the deteriorating environment that had resulted from rapid economic and industrial development. With massive construction and large-scale developments, people started to be aware of the loss of traditional structures and townscapes. The protest against the demolition of historic wooden houses subsequently led to the urban conservation movement known as *Machinami Hozon*, for the conservation of townscapes (Nishimura 2005:n.p.).

In 1992, the decentralisation movement began with an amendment of the City Planning Act, and planning authorities were established within the prefectural and local governments. In brief, the amended Act empowered the local planning authorities to create a local plan based on the opinions of local people. This responsibility was shifted to local government in 2000, after the Non-Profit Organisation Law was passed in 1998. As a result, recent legislation has given local government, residents, and non-profit organisations the ability to take part in the city planning processes.

Urban conservation in Japan is meant to be a joint effort between the national government and local bodies. Though the ongoing *machizukuri* movement gives local bodies the opportunity to create local plans, there is still an issue regarding bureaucracy and transparency. The well-known urban planning theorist, John Friedmann (2005:212), observes that:

> It is true that Japanese municipalities can now pass *Machizukuri* ordinances, but not being a part of the traditional hierarchy of government, empowered neighbourhood groups (called councils) are principally engaged in lobbying local authorities or using moral suasion with property developers.

(Friedmann 2005:212)

Nevertheless, this concept has been developed into a Law on Maintenance and Improvement of Traditional Scenery in Certain Districts (Historic Town Development Act) (地域における歴史的風致の維持及び向上に関する法律 (歴史まちづくり法)). This has been promulgated since 2008 by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Ministry of Agriculture (Agency for Cultural Affairs 2010). The concept remains a significant factor in the field of urban planning and design.

Furusato (ふるさと) and Japanese heritage

Furusato, literally meaning old village, native place or hometown, is another relevant concept that helps to understand Japanese values. *Furusato* can be referred to in various ways. These can include nostalgia for traditional landscapes and the environment of a society. In 1988, Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru, with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), adopted a *Furusato Japan* programme aimed at remodelling the country. He argued that:
With the 21st Century in sight, Japan should build a society that is more open to the world by connecting the results of its economic development with real affluence and comfort for its people. It will also build a creative and vigorous cultural nation and create a *furusato* (spiritual home) for its people.

(MOFA 1988a)

Jennifer Robertson (1988:494), an American anthropologist and a Professor at University of Michigan who lived in Japan for over two decades, comments that ‘*furusato* [was] one of the most popular symbols used by Japanese politicians, city planners, and advertisers’ (1988:494). She writes further (1988:504) that the idea of *furusato* links strongly to nationalism:

*Furusato Japan* constitutes a synthesis of nativism and nationalism. In the case of nativism, nostalgia embodies a profound rejection of externally imposed identities. With respect to nationalism, nostalgia is or influences the style in which nationness is imagined.

Another anthropologist, Adolf Ehrentraut (1989:151), who was a Professor at University of Windsor and specialised in political ideology and Japan, wrote that restored vernacular houses:

are the visual focus for the cognate set of symbols and symbolic activities revolving around the concept of *furusato*, one’s home or native village, which is documented in the ubiquitous local history museums and celebrated in folksong and dance and the assorted annual town and village festivals.

However, while *furusato* was promoted to, and adopted by, the Japanese people, some other scholars argued that it was a kind of propaganda. The anthropologist Fukasaka Mitsusada, for example, comments that:

[T]raditional patterns of life and thought are no longer possible, because Japan is no longer geographically isolated from the international community. Agriculture is no longer the basis for the Japanese economy, because Japan’s once beautiful nature has been destroyed by pollution and urbanisation, and the traditional culture has been completely commercialised.

(quoted in Wagatsuma 1975:330)

Adolf Ehrentraut (1989:158) also points out that ‘the post-war movement in Japan to conserve rural domestic architecture as heritage conforms in broadest outline to the pattern set earlier in Western societies […] to serve dominant class interests on both the local and the national level’. It is evident that nostalgia is embedded within the word *furusato* and the *furusato-zukuri* (*furusato*-making) project. Robertson (1988:511–512) points out that a *furusato-zukuri* project
Heritage conservation and authenticity

‘represents both an acknowledgement of change, insofar as it constitutes a reaction to post-war changes, and an attempt to control change by restoring a sense of socio-cultural continuity with respect to that which is perceived to verge on the discontinuous’. As such, furusato revitalisation projects have tried to compensate for the anxiety of the Japanese over loss and nostalgia, as seen when Ehrentraut (1989:156) cites Nelson Graburn’s comment that Japanese tourists ‘seek nostalgic confirmation of their cultural landscape’. David Lowenthal (1985:4) argues that, ‘If the past is a foreign country, nostalgia has made it the foreign country with the healthiest tourist trade of all’.

At the local level, a number of traditional village activities, such as festivals, folk music performances and dances, have been ‘recently invented or newly revived as recreation for domestic tourists’ (Robertson 1988:509), and this has been incorporated into the presentation of furusato areas. As a result, the re-created rural landscapes and restored vernacular houses have become a source of identity, and give a sense of belonging to the home country that is the established perception of Japanese people towards their heritage of a rural landscape with vernacular houses. ‘For many Japanese people, the “real” countryside is an awesome place’ (Hendry 2000:217). At the same time, the revitalisation of matsuri (祭り, ‘festivals’) can be ‘exotic’ even for domestic tourists. It can also bring back, consciously or unconsciously, the native religion, which, in many cases, cannot be separated from the traditional culture of the nation. Therefore, to some extent, the Furusato Japan project has functioned to re-create or re-establish Japanese identity both in physical form and in the mind of Japanese people.

This conscious creation of image and its effects have been measured in the Japan Broadcasting Cooperation (NHK) surveys of Japanese over the last quarter of a century. According to the most recent result available, in 2008, 87 per cent answered ‘yes’ to the question: ‘I have a sense of closeness/warmth when I see old temples and rural farm houses’ (NHK 2008). This same question has been asked regularly since 1973 when NHK started the survey, and the percentage of ‘yes’ responses to this question has consistently been between 83 and 88 per cent (NHK 2008:3). In the same cluster of questions, 96 per cent answered ‘yes’ for ‘Glad to be born in Japan (as Japanese)’: this number has fluctuated between 91 and 97 per cent.

The Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) conducts a regular survey asking international visitors what has motivated them to visit Japan. The results of the survey (JNTO 2009) are as follows:

Question: What do you expect to see or do in Japan? (n=7,495)
(Multiple answer)

1 Enjoy Japanese food 58.5%
2 Enjoy shopping 48.5%
3 Enjoy Onsen (hot spring) 43.4%
4 Enjoy natural landscape/rural landscape 41.8%
5 Enjoy historic landscape/monuments 37.6%
As the content of the survey and the numbers show, the importance of visual presentation, heritage conservation, and the protection and creation of rural and historic landscapes and monuments is incorporated in development policy.

Ehrentraut (1995:233) comments that ‘heritage is simply good business’ and explains that:

[R]econstructed castles and outdoor museums alike create a community of economic interests that embraces not only such major corporations as the construction firms, transportation companies and resort hotel chains interested in the development of a region’s touristic infrastructure, but also various medium and small businesses, including the pensions, restaurants and souvenir stores as well as their suppliers in the local cottage and service industries, who all depend on the tourist trade for their livelihood.

Jennifer Robertson (1997:105), however, comments that ‘native place making is an ironic euphemism for development projects which actually facilitate the disappearance of the quintessential furusato landscape […]’. Native place-making programmes thus facilitate loss even as they compensate for the ontological anxiety of loss.’ Moreover, Hendry’s comments (2000:153) on Japanese tourism show that ‘visitors do not necessarily make a distinction between museums and theme parks in Japan’. He points out (2000:155) the different concept of theme parks, and the perception of people that ‘English and Americans generally view theme parks as being commercial, fun, and constructed with little regard or care towards authenticity […] While they are mostly commercial, some are philanthropic too; and while they aim for fun and enjoyment, many clearly also provide education’. As Lowenthal writes (1985:4), ‘people love nostalgia and firmly believe that what is old is necessarily good’.

The legacy of this Furusato Japan policy can be still seen today as part of government policy in various aspects, such as cultural policy and social welfare. In the late 1980s, Japan also began to be more involved in heritage conservation projects by using cultural diplomacy and international assistance programmes. This is taken up in Chapter 4.

**Authenticity in relation to the Japanese national system**

Under the Japanese national system, the categories relating to the subject of UNESCO World Heritage are mainly buildings, groups of buildings, and landscapes. In this section, the Japanese national system for heritage conservation since its creation is analysed with a focus on the notion of authenticity, which is very important in the UNESCO World Heritage system. The aim is to see the changing relationship between the Japanese national system and international doctrine.

The early laws for cultural heritage protection, such as the Protection of Antiquities Order, and the Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples, focused on maintaining the function of the structures. This was similar
Heritage conservation and authenticity
to what Jokilehto (1986:7) described as being the early practice in Europe, where ‘the essence of “restoration” was oriented towards keeping intact the function of the monuments’.

The Law for Preservation of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty and Natural Monuments, enacted in 1919, aimed to protect both the built and natural environment from the impact of economic development. Under this law, a category such as Places of Scenic Beauty placed significance on the setting and its integrity, and was, to some extent, comparable to that used in the UNESCO World Heritage Operational Guidelines. The category Places of Scenic Beauty can also be seen as an early form of the idea of cultural landscape.

The 1897 Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples was amended to the Law for the Preservation of National Treasures (1929) and the Law for the Preservation of Important Art Objects and Others (1933). The two laws strongly reflected society and the direction of the government at that time, and great emphasis was placed on the context. During the several years prior to World War II, cultural properties were used more as the vehicles for propaganda for nationalism and what symbolised nation at that time; that is, the Meiji Emperor and the former emperors.

Under the current 1950 Cultural Property Law, the approach to building conservation in Japan, as discussed earlier, basically conforms to the principles of the Venice Charter and at the same time maintains the application of traditional methods. As for the category Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings, which is still currently used, the emphasis was and is on townscape rather than single buildings. To some extent, attention is also placed on the ‘setting’. However, the setting is maintained or re-created through the use of the design guidelines. Other methods such as shuukei are used to harmonise the townscape according to design guidelines. The emphasis is on the setting and context, although the overall authenticity of the design and material for non-traditional structures in the area is necessarily a focus of the conservation effort. In this category, the visual integrity is highly regarded.

The discussion above suggests that, while the Japanese national system developed to some extent under the influence of ideas from Europe and the United States, it evolved from the Meiji era, when there were different aims and motives for heritage protection. Consequently, when Japan signed the World Heritage Convention in 1992 some important issues of contention arose. The Japanese heritage conservation practice was perceived as not meeting the international principle and condition of universal value, namely ‘authenticity’. This divergence of views was to lead to a turning point in World Heritage discourse – the Nara Conference held in Nara, Japan, in 1994.

UNESCO world heritage view of authenticity and the Nara Document on Authenticity

The issue of authenticity and its practical application for heritage conservation is an ongoing discussion among experts and practitioners. The Nara Conference,
Heritage conservation and authenticity

which resulted in the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), was an important step in advancing the discussion on authenticity.

For a long time, international heritage practice was largely governed by the principles of the Venice Charter (1964). The aim of establishing this Charter had been to define a common responsibility in safeguarding heritage monuments and sites of World Cultural Heritage for future generations in ‘the full richness of their authenticity’. Since 1992, a series of international symposia and meetings have been held to discuss the methods of restoration that involve dismantling and reconstruction.

In November 1992, the ICOMOS International Wood Committee (IIWC) organised its eighth international symposium and meeting in Nepal. The conference was significant for two reasons. First, it aimed to address a key question concerning the protection of wood, an issue first raised by Noguchi Hideo, then Chief of the UNESCO Division of Cultural Heritage. He had proposed an international conference to develop measures to ‘conserve wood on the one hand, [while] on the other hand [meeting] UNESCO’s objectives’ (Noguchi 1992:18). Second, the conference was also significant because of its location. Nepal was selected in response to a report by Roland Silva, the president of ICOMOS at that time, which called on ICOMOS to organise meetings in locations other than in Europe and North America (Larsen and Marstein 1992:7). At this conference, Watanabe Katsuhiko made a presentation on the restoration project of the I-Baha-Bahi in Nepal. The preparatory research for a third project had commenced in 1979, undertaken by Fujioka Michio, an architect from the Nippon Institute of Technology (NIT) Research Mission, Japan (Watanabe 1992:130) and the restoration work had been carried out between November 1990 and 1993, supported by the Mombusho International Scientific Research Program. In this conference, Noguchi Hideo (1992:18), Head of UNESCO Heritage Unit, proposed to hold an international conference during 1994–1995 and this eventually led to an agreement to hold an international conference regarding the concept of authenticity in Japan.

The Nara Conference 1994

The Nara Document on Authenticity was the result of the meeting of 45 leading experts in the field of conservation from 26 countries. The goal, according to Knut Larsen (1995:xi), from Norway and the author of Architectural Preservation in Japan (1994), was ‘to clarify the application of “the test of authenticity” to World Heritage nominations by revising and extending the definition of the various aspects of authenticity’. The conference was hosted by the Japanese government and co-sponsored by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICCROM, ICOMOS and the governments of Canada and Norway.

The term ‘authenticity’ seems to have first appeared in the Venice Charter and was included in the ‘Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention’ (Operational Guidelines) in the late 1970s as one of the measures by which to judge the outstanding universal value of the places nominated as World Heritage. The test of authenticity at that time, under the
Heritage conservation and authenticity

Operational Guidelines, was comprised of four aspects: design, material, workmanship and setting. In the early 1990s, the World Heritage Committee focused on authenticity ‘as a key area in need of further study within the application of the Convention’ (Stovel 1995b:xxxiv).

One of the reasons for re-examining the concept of authenticity was that the idea and definition of heritage had been gradually broadened and the paradigm had been shifting since the Venice Charter was originally drafted. In the 1990s, Stovel (1995b:xxxiv) characterised this shift as a widening to ‘include the “representative” as well as the “best”, the “ordinary” as well as the “monumental”’.

Another reason for re-evaluation was the difficulty experienced in applying the concept of ‘universality’, as it became increasingly apparent that the criteria on how to evaluate a ‘place’ and the judgement regarding ‘value’ could differ significantly according to the local context. This concern was clearly reflected in the preface to the proceedings, which stated that ‘The conference greatly benefited from being held in Japan, a culture often unfairly seen by the West as paying little or no respect to historic materials’ (Larsen 1995:xii). The argument was further underscored by visits during the conference to Horyu-ji (a 1,300-year-old wooden temple), Kasuga Taisha, and the Heijo Palace Site. These visits enriched the debate and understanding of the need to respect local differences, in this case because of the significance of wood conservation and maintenance in the context of Japanese cultural heritage conservation.

Stovel (1995b: xxxv), explained that:

The Japanese feared that their practice of periodically dismantling significant wooden structures would possibly be seen as unauthentic if judged from within a Western framework. [...] In fact, their fears were legitimate; levels of understanding of Japanese heritage and its conservation outside Japan are relatively low.

Stovel emphasised (1995b:xxxvi) that the Nara Document was not a replacement for previous doctrines regarding authenticity:

[T]he intent was not to exclude or give priority to some forms of expression, but simply to ensure professional judgements remained open to different perceptions of values, to different conceptions of ‘appropriate’ treatment in relation to value, in different cultural settings, in different heritage contexts.

He further explained (1995:394) that ‘it is easy to become pre-occupied with the authenticity of traditional Japanese approaches to conservation of wooden buildings’. The key question was whether ‘it [was] possible to define [the] universal principles which lie at the essence of our conservation endeavours, without trivialising the cultural expressions or denying the cultural values of non-central, non-conforming communities or groups?’. He advocated a dialogue, to ‘re-examine basic assumptions in a context in which heritage conservation can be seen to have truly global importance, and be guided by truly global precepts’.
Such a dialogue, he argued, would recognise that ‘the Japanese deserve credit for their courage in putting these issues before us to think of the validity of the universal principles’. This was a discussion that was not only of concern to the Japanese: rather it highlighted the fact that discussion about heritage had been predominantly carried out amongst European stakeholders and had not sufficiently accounted for global cultural diversity. This is and has been a fundamental issue that should have been addressed.

Post-Nara Conference and impact

After the Nara Conference, other conferences on authenticity were held. For example, ICOMOS European conference, Authenticity and Monitoring, held between 17 and 22 October 1995, at Cesky Krumlov in the Czech Republic, was organised to bring together national views on the issue of authenticity. The Declaration of San Antonio (1996) was the result of discussion by the ICOMOS national committee from the Americas. In 2000, the Great Zimbabwe meeting was organised by the World Heritage Centre to discuss authenticity and integrity in the African context. Each meeting reflected on the heritage context in its respective region, for example the urban heritage in Europe, and the cultural and natural settings in Africa.

The InterAmerican Symposium held in 1996 had focused on the dynamics of heritage. The Declaration of San Antonio (1996) first reviewed the relationship between authenticity and identity, history, materials, social value, stewardship and economics. In the general recommendation, it asks:

That a process be established that will help to define and protect authenticity in the material legacies of our diverse cultural heritage, and that will lead to the recognition of a broad range of significant resources through the comprehensive and specific evaluation of cultural value, the administrative context, and the history of the site.

(Declaration of San Antonio, section C1b)

(For further details, see US/ICOMOS, InterAmerican Symposium on Authenticity in the Conservation and Management of the Cultural Heritage, at the Getty Conservation Institute, San Antonio, Texas 1996.) Meanwhile the Australian Burra Charter (1999) and its ‘Burra Charter Process’ were seen to serve as a possible model for this process. The Burra Charter does not use the word ‘authenticity’; instead, a ‘place’ is assessed based on the ‘cultural significance’, or ‘cultural heritage value’ (Australia ICOMOS 1999:2).

Since its inception, the Nara Document on Authenticity has influenced conservation philosophy by recognising the significance of the different contexts of heritage. A wide range of conservation philosophies has subsequently emerged since the mid-1990s and as a result, it has generally been accepted that ‘there are no absolute rights and wrongs’ (Hill 1995:18) and ‘[t]here are no “goodies” and “baddies”, but there are skilful and unskilful solutions to the repair of old
buildings’ (Burman 1995:4). This echoed the advice proffered more than 60 years earlier and republished ten years before the Nara Conference by Albert Powys, author of Repair of Ancient Buildings and secretary of the SPAB from 1912 until his death. Powys believed that conservation should have ‘no dogmatic rules’ ([1929] 1981:3), as ‘no fixed rule can be set up to be followed invariably’ and that ‘Each case must be considered on its own merits’. Jokilehto (1996:71) picked up this argument, asserting that:

The Nara Document underscores the importance of the cultural context for heritage conservation and compels us to link judgments of authenticity to a variety of sources of information that permit elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage.

Article 13 of the Nara Document demonstrates the expansion of the definition of authenticity in the following words:

Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of these sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The use of these sources permits elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage being examined.

The essence of the Nara Document was eventually acknowledged in the 2005 revision of the Operational Guidelines. This revision also added the requirement of ‘Integrity’ for cultural properties, which previously was mainly required for natural and mixed properties. The Operational Guidelines adopted in 2008 sought to reflect further the evolving new concept and experience. Paragraph 82 of the Operational Guidelines, in the section on ‘Integrity and/or authenticity’, includes the attributes needed to test authenticity (UNESCO 2008). They are described as follows. Depending on the type of cultural heritage and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural value (as recognised in the nomination criteria proposed) is truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- form and design;
- materials and substance;
- use and function;
- traditions, techniques and management systems;
- location and setting;
- language, and other forms of intangible heritage;
- spirit and feeling; and
- other internal and external factors.
Among these attributes, ‘spirit and feeling’, which clearly belong to the intangible heritage realm, are explained in Paragraph 83 thus:

Attributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical application of the conditions of authenticity, but nevertheless are important indicators of character and sense of place, for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity.

(UNESCO 2008)

This clearly flows from the Nara Document, where one of the attributes that had been highlighted was attention to intangible heritage. This concept has since received considerable attention, both in the global heritage system and in nations around the world, particularly as a result of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (see for example, Smith and Akagawa 2009; Ruggles and Silverman 2009; Kono 2009). The Convention was also adopted with strong support from the Japanese government, as explained in Chapters 4 and 5. One of the reasons for this was that Japan is one of the few countries that had incorporated intangible cultural heritage protection into its national heritage legislation, and had done so for more than half a century. Intangible heritage, by its very nature, is a constant process of ‘re-creation’ and ‘reproduction’. The conventional concept of authenticity in the heritage field that conveys the idea of fixed and defined origins failed to embrace the essence of this idea of heritage. In the draft of the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral Heritage of Humanity, therefore, the word ‘authenticity’ was removed (Aikawa 2009).

**Authenticity and its limitation in the Japanese environmental context – is it ‘East’ versus ‘West’?**

Over recent decades, Japan has been disseminating its conservation approaches to the international community. Ito Nobuo (2002:16), one of the key figures in architectural conservation in Japan, expressed the difficulty of applying the Western concept of authenticity to Japanese conservation:

We Asian experts in charge of conservation works were much embarrassed with this method of minimum intervention. We thought that we have had other ways of conservation and should keep the essence of these ways even in future. We were much troubled.

Asserting an ‘Asian’ perspective, Ito emphasised (1995:41) that Japan had developed its own legal and administrative systems for heritage conservation that were relevant elsewhere in Asia, including in countries formerly colonised by Western powers that had been instructed at the ‘hand[s] of European suzerains’. His position reflected the assertion commonly made in Japan of its link with the rest of Asia and the importance of the projection of its interests through culture into the region. Another Japanese observer, when commenting on the
Heritage conservation and authenticity

treatment of the Japanese position at the conference, later recalled that ‘The Japanese heritage practitioners were [verbally] bullied as if our practice was not acceptable and [therefore] wrong’ (mentioned at a seminar held in Tokyo on 20 August 2009).

One of the initial concerns expressed at the Nara Conference by Japanese heritage professionals regarding the concept of authenticity was the issue of language. The representatives from Japan stated that the Japanese language, like many other Asian languages, does not have a word that would convey the same meaning as ‘authenticity’ (Ito 1995; Inaba 1995). Thus, it is difficult for many Asian people to understand this concept. What can be found in the Japanese language is the concept of ‘genuineness’ and ‘reliability’ (Ito 1995:36). Kanaseki (1995:338) gave an example of an archaeological site, where ‘“authenticity” is applicable to the case as a tangible monument […] [but where] intangible and unsubstantial existence detected in the archaeological trench might be equally “authentic”’. A similar idea with regard to maintaining the intangible or spiritual quality of heritage could also be applied to the historic landscape (Kondo 1995:339).

Several factors shaped the argument regarding the concept of authenticity, and at the same time created confusion about Japanese conservation practice. These included the environmental issues, the decay of material and the perceptions regarding reconstruction work. Wood is one of the major materials of cultural heritage in Asia but it is more vulnerable to the ravages of the environment (Ito 1995:43). Ito argued that ‘dismantling and reassembling are necessary for cultural heritage in Asia’. He explained that such intervention would be made only when needed, based on how people think heritage conservation ought to be carried out. He wrote that:

[W]e dismantle only when it is really necessary […]. The aim of repair and restoration is to bring the building back to a neat condition again. I hope you understand that Japanese people appreciate old but neat state of buildings.

(Ito 1995:43)

In Japan, the traditional way of understanding the environment and cultural beliefs can be seen through conservation philosophy for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. For example, some festivals related to beliefs from Shinto, the Japanese indigenous religion, can be easily identified. However, some people may not regard such practices as part of religious activity since they are already part of their living tradition and embedded in their daily life.

The origins of heritage conservation can be found in the concern to protect temples and shrines in Japan. For instance, providing offerings to build or rebuild a religious structure is considered a donation and part of the tradition, especially in temples and shrines. For Buddhists, spiritual and meaningful spaces are to be well maintained and to be kept clean, which equally means keeping the mind clear and clean. To show respect, people may engage in maintaining the space in different ways and donation is one of them. The perception of
Heritage conservation and authenticity

reconstruction could also relate to religious beliefs, especially for Buddhists. The concept of mujyo in Japanese, anitya in Sanskrit, or ‘impermanence’ in English, is one of the essential doctrines in Buddhist teaching. This means that nothing ever stays the same; all phenomena are in a constant state of flux. Thus, one lifetime is just a period of time towards nirvana, or the unconditioned mind.

This raises some philosophical contradictions regarding the ‘living practice’, which is intangible, and the desire to keep the physical aspect of the structures. In the case of Vietnam, Philip Taylor (2007:33) observes that:

the gaudy renovation of ancient temples and pagodas by pilgrims who seek to make merit conflicts with the desire to conserve them as cultural heritage. Competition by the nouveau riche in the refurbishment of temples calls forth anxious comments about the loss of identity and disordering of tradition.

From the point of view of heritage practitioners, it would be ideal if such donations were used for conservation projects that the heritage practitioner could agree to, but this may not always happen. In the local context, such as in Japan or in Vietnam, it is generally accepted that the aspiration of the donor/patron needs to be heard and if that is to renovate or to add elements, this should be allowed to take place as far as is acceptable within the protocol of the temples or shrines. Alternatively, administrators of such temples or shrines may need to persuade donors/patrons to allow their donation to be used for conservation, but this would constitute a change to traditional practice.

In addition to the prominence of religious and spiritual institutions, Suzuki Hiroyuki (1995:399) believes the key foundation of Japanese culture is its agricultural civilisation. He argues that ‘every activity in daily life and the way of being in Japanese society is cyclical and repetitive, and the way of place-making and concepts of space are different from those of Western countries’. Traditional life is therefore related to the four seasons of the year, and the idea of maintaining a wooden construction also reflects the cycle of time. For example, wooden houses are organic and have a life cycle that is part of the life cycle of the people who use and live in that building. The way of life and the maintenance of the houses are all embedded in the daily life and way of living. Suzuki (1995:399–400) further explained that ‘this cycle and repetitive maintenance maintains the essential living heritage [and] it must be recognised that through these cyclical activities or repetitive maintenance, the living essence of cultural heritage was formed and kept’. Thus if the life cycle of the building was to be stopped, it would lose the genuine aspects of the entire system. This same principle in relation to vernacular structures would not be so different from that found in other parts of the world.

Among the wooden buildings in Japan, the reconstruction of the Ise Shrine is one of the most well-known cases. The Ise Shrine is often understood as epitomising the Japanese principle of conservation through reconstruction. Some people think further that all-important wooden buildings in Japan are treated in
Heritage conservation and authenticity

the same manner. In fact, reconstruction here is a religious activity that represents only part of an entire cycle: impermanence and renewal are integral elements of the spiritual meaning that constitutes the Ise Shrine. The entire reconstruction of the Ise Shrine is, in fact, an exceptional case that is not commonly found with other religious buildings.

The Shrine is regarded as the residence of kami (deity) and every 20 years, the deity moves from its existing structure to a newly constructed structure. This practice, which in the West would be referred to as ‘reconstruction’, in Japanese is Shikinen sengu or Jingu Shikinen sengu (式年遷宮 or 神宮式年遷宮) or periodic move of kami (deity) to the new residence. Therefore Shikinen sengu involves a 20-year cycle of dismantling and reconstructing new buildings on the site adjacent to the old buildings using traditional methods and highly skilled traditional craftsmanship. This practice traditionally involves communities from all over the nation and entails not just the careful consideration of materials but also a meticulous repetition of traditionally ascribed processes. Thus, in the process of cyclical reconstruction of the Ise Shrine in Japan, the question of ‘authenticity’ is central both to the selection of new material and the processes involved in reconstruction itself, and condensed in every act and every element integral to the process (for a detailed account see Akagawa 2014a). The most recent Shikinen sengu was in 2013, the sixty-second, counting from the first in the year 690 (Figure 3.3). The entire cost, including the past eight years of preparation, could be up to US$585 million.

Figure 3.3 Ise Shrine precincts in 2013 (photo by author, November 2013).
Heritage conservation and authenticity

Other shrines and temples may have their own cycles, and what looks like maintenance may carry a particular meaning or reason as to why some activities take place at certain times of the day or year. In terms of maintenance, cleaning also carries a meaning as to why and when it has to be performed. All procedures lead to the maintenance of a place, but not all are intentionally trying to conduct conservation work. The blend of both can lead to misunderstanding or perhaps be seen as being conducted in an inadequate manner, which in some cases may seem to go against modern conservation theory.

Ito (2002:16) noted that the Principles for the Preservation of Historic Timber Structures (1999) adopted by ICOMOS at the 12th General Assembly in Mexico, October 1999 are a ‘beautiful modification of the Venice Charter’. He observed that this international document is more flexible and practical, and shows appropriate concern for structures made of timber. Taking the example of Horyuji, major restoration works and some minor works have been carried out since it was built, as considered to be the necessary natural response at various points in the life of a wooden structure. The Japanese system traditionally requires documentation for every single step, and any alteration requires supporting documents, drawings, photographs, etc., and needs permission from the advisory council and the higher authority. On this basis, Knut Larsen (1994:125–126) argued, the methods applied in Japan for historic buildings are in fact in full accord with Article 11 of the Venice Charter.

Although the Japanese approach to conservation work appears contrary to Western protocols, historically similar ideas have been expressed and practised in Europe in the past. The approach of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, for instance, who advocated the idea of restoring a building to its ‘complete’ state, seems to share some of these ideas. While at times such restoration was based more on conjecture than ‘authenticity’, for example his restorations of Notre Dame in Paris and Carcassonne (‘Historic Fortified City of Carcassonne’) in France, much of his restoration work was based on a study of other buildings of the same type. As Ito (1995:43) explained, for the Japanese, the intention of making things ‘complete’ is not an opportunity to conduct interpretative work but is part of the process of understanding a place. Where restoration work was based on conjecture it was carried out according to the best knowledge available at the time; if reconstruction were based on conjecture, this would be clearly stated in the related documents and interpretation. How much conjecture is applied in ‘understanding’ a place remains an issue. Nevertheless, the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs firmly states that its practice does follow the principles of the Venice Charter, and in every conservation project, original materials are retained as far as possible.

Summary

The Japanese heritage conservation movement started with the end of seclusion, when foreign influences coming into Japan aroused interest in protecting Japanese cultural identity through conservation efforts. At the same time, the heritage
Heritage conservation and authenticity

system was also influenced by Western scholars and by the idea of restoration. The Nara Conference on Authenticity, organised by the Japanese government and some other countries, marked a milestone in the discussion of authenticity, which for years had been taken for granted by practitioners and left out of the critical discourse. This effort attracted heritage practitioners in other countries to the Japanese heritage conservation approach and to the notion of intangible cultural heritage. Later these two concepts came to be considered Japan’s two major ideological contributions to global heritage theory and practice. This chapter argues that in retrospect, the Nara Conference, although it may not have been its original intention, opened up a new avenue to acknowledge cultural diversity rather than to maintain an apparent East versus West dichotomy.

The next chapter discusses Japan’s engagement in the international heritage system and critical discourse. It examines why and how heritage conservation projects came to be used as a means of cultural diplomacy. The national interest in cultural diplomacy is addressed, incorporating an historical overview of ODA, which started initially with the post-war reparation programme for Asian countries.

Notes

4 Japan in the global heritage context

Introduction

This chapter discusses why and how Japan began to engage in the development of a critical discourse and practice in heritage conservation on the international stage through cultural diplomacy. It examines the relationship between Japanese foreign policy and policy on international cultural heritage conservation. A clear indication of the new direction in policy came in 1988 during the term of Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru. With its economy growing and pressure from the international community for it to involve itself in international affairs, Japan commenced a firm policy to direct foreign aid to projects on heritage conservation and culture. This movement, which occurred in an era of globalisation and fierce economic competition, can be summed up as an effort to utilise Japan’s ‘soft power’ in its relations with other countries.

The chapter first offers an overview of why and how Japan began to address culture in the context of foreign policy. It then moves on to outline briefly the history of ODA in order to indicate the direction and aim of ODA in general and the strong shift towards humanitarian goals from the early 2000s onwards. It shows that cultural aid through ODA significantly increased from the late 1980s onwards and that countries in the region, especially ASEAN countries, have become the strategic focus of this assistance. The second section elaborates on the origin of ODA, demonstrating that, while it evolved from the post-war reparation programme, Japan managed to find its way to achieving its own interest by providing foreign aid. The chapter then proceeds to examine the funding mechanism of cultural grants by means of ODA and the institutional vehicle, the New Japan International Cooperation Agency (New JICA). The next sections of the chapter address the most recent developments, including the establishment of the Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for [the] Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad (2006), implemented to reinforce and coordinate the heritage conservation carried out by Japan, and the establishment of a number of new institutes that reflect the aims of the Law, including the aim to increase the focus on the Asian region.

The subsequent sections discuss the forms of cultural aid and Japan’s involvement in conjunction with and within UNESCO, to see how Japan began to assert
its influence in the international heritage conservation arena. UNESCO’s heritage conservation activities had two phases: firstly, international campaigns for the safeguarding of the heritage of mankind, conducted by the Division of Cultural Heritage in the Culture Sector, and, secondly, after the 1972 Convention, the World Heritage system, with its own secretariat, the World Heritage Centre, created in 1992. Internationally, Japan had become the major donor to UNESCO following the withdrawal of the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1980s. There are two UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust today that are specifically dedicated to heritage protection, namely the Fund for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage, established in 1989, and the Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, established in 1993. Other Funds-in-Trust are currently administered through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as ODA. Details are discussed in the later section. Apart from this financial assistance, Japan has actively engaged with the international community and has initiated UNESCO projects as part of ongoing ‘cultural diplomacy’. The capstone to this engagement was the election of Matsuura Koichiro as Director-General of UNESCO in 1999.

Foreign policy and culture

After World War II, Japan rejoined the international community in 1951 by ratifying the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Subsequently, Japan focused its effort on post-war reconstruction, restoring relations with other countries especially in Asia, and improving its position in the international community. In terms of its engagement in cultural diplomacy, Japan became a member state of UNESCO in 1951 at the sixth UNESCO General Conference and five years later joined the United Nations. At the 1951 Conference, Maeda Tamon (前田多門), former Minister of Education (1945–1946) and Japan’s chief delegate at that time, 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’ (NFUAJ 2011).

With Japan presenting itself on the international stage as a peace-loving country and a pacifist nation, engaging with UNESCO and its agenda for advancing education, science and culture was clearly one of the best channels for it to establish a stake in the international community. It also fitted well with Japan’s self-definition after World War II as bunka-kokka (文化国家, ‘Cultural Nation’). However, it was not until the 1980s that Japan emerged as one of the leading players in international cultural diplomacy through its rapidly expanding cultural assistance, which included financial and technical aid for heritage conservation. The turning point came when Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru (竹下登) articulated a specific cultural diplomatic agenda for the first time during his visit to London in 1988. This became known as his ‘international cooperation initiative’ and constituted one of the key elements in realising the policy of ‘Japan contributes to the world’ (MOFA 2009a, 2011a). Prior to this, international cultural
assistance had been largely unstructured, and administered in a rather ad hoc manner, usually in response to requests.

Prime Minister Takeshita noted in his 1988 London speech that ‘culture’ would be one of the pillars for Japanese foreign policy.

Japan’s diplomacy for the past year or so has been aimed to create ‘a Japan Contributing to a Better World’ by strengthening its basic position as a member of the Western community of nations and of the Asia-Pacific region and by recognizing deeply its increased international responsibility and role. Concrete measures to attain the goal are referred to as the ‘International Cooperation Initiative’.

(MOFA 1988b:n.p., official translation)

To realise this aim, the Prime Minister promoted his International Cooperation Initiative during successive subsequent visits abroad. This initiative comprised three new elements: strengthening cooperation for peace, enhancing ODA and promoting international cultural exchanges (MOFA 1988b). In the following year, 1989, in line with the initiative of the Prime Minister, the Japanese government established the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage. Since the 1990s, this initiative has been extended by the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, whose role has been to organise cultural property seminars for participants throughout Asia. The seminars have been aimed at providing opportunities for training and research in heritage conservation including issues in relation to administrative structures, human resources and technical aspects.

Following World War II, the basic structure of Japan’s security and national defence policy had been based on the US–Japan bilateral agreement. However, after the Cold War, ‘multilateralism’ was increasingly favoured as the foundation of a post-Cold War international regulatory framework (Clark 2001:168). Talks on multilateral regional security initiated by Japan began to emerge in the early 1990s, with Japan taking the initiative in proposals to establish an Asian Regional Security framework.

Further, the passing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Cooperation by the National Diet (Japanese Parliament) in 1992 was a significant milestone in Japan’s growing involvement with global security issues, since this enabled Japan to participate in medical assistance, refugee repatriation, infrastructural assistance and election monitoring. Until then Japan had occupied an ‘anomalous position of being an economic superpower without wielding the political and military power ordinarily conferred by wealth’ (Brown 1994:430). Eugene Brown (1994:441) noted that after the Gulf war the ‘elite consensus that “Japan must do more internationally” [was] now being implemented in a form that few predicted prior to 1990’. However, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution imposed strict limits on Japanese defence activity, specifically prohibiting Japan from being involved in a direct combat role. In this context, it is therefore important to note that, in the 1990s, Japan was strengthening contacts within the
Asian region through its ODA and cultural involvement, and in this way was consolidating its use of ‘soft power’ in the Asian region.

In a speech in 1992 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi (宮澤喜一) pointed to the importance of sub-regional cooperation between Japan and the United States, as well as Asian countries, for the security of Asia and the Pacific region (MOFA 1992:n.p.). In 1993, Prime Minister Miyazawa, seemingly in reaction to the humiliating jibe by the international community that Japan was engaged in ‘cheque-book diplomacy’, declared Japan’s specific commitment to cultural exchange and cooperation:

In deepening [the] overseas understanding of Japan and promoting further [the] internationalisation of Japan, the international cultural exchange plays an increasingly important role. In particular, a further expansion of Japan’s contribution in the field of cultural exchange and cooperation is indispensable for correcting the rather distorted image of Japan which is mainly focused on its economic aspects. Therefore, the Government of Japan places importance on such aspects [as] cultural exchanges.

[...] In order to promote international cultural exchanges and cultural cooperation, the second ‘Advisory Group on International Cultural Exchange’ (headed by Chairman Akito Arima) was set up in October 1993, which is to submit a set of new recommendations to the Prime Minister by the end of March 1994.

(MOFA 1993a:n.p., official translation: author’s emphasis)

In the same year, during a visit to an ASEAN meeting in Bangkok, the Prime Minister assured the audience that:

with rapid economic and social change, we shall not let our distinctive culture slip away. Rather it is our responsibility to transmit it to the next generation and thus, this is our contribution for the enrichment of World Culture. We have been contributing to conservation works in relation to Sukhothai in Thailand, Borobudur in Indonesia and Angkor in Cambodia, and this region is full of important cultural properties and diverse traditional arts.

(MOFA 1993b:n.p., author’s translation from the Japanese)

He went on to announce Japan’s intention to organise an International Expert Meeting for each country to promote further international cooperation (MOFA 1993b).

This focus on the importance of supporting cultural heritage conservation was reiterated in the Diplomatic Bluebook (1993a), an annual report by the MOFA on foreign policy and activities. This listed several directions, which included funding through existing Funds-in-Trust for Tangible Cultural Heritage. The ‘dispatching and inviting’ of experts in heritage conservation was also envisaged for the training of local experts as a crucial element in the preservation of
cultural heritage. In addition, cooperation to restore Japanese traditional artwork abroad using Japanese restoration techniques was also included. In 1993, to further promote the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Properties, the Japanese government established its Funds-in-Trust for UNESCO for the ‘preservation of non-tangible cultural assets’. In November of the same year, Japan hosted an international conference on the preservation and promotion of traditional cultures in East Asia, in Tokyo (MOFA 1993a). These funds are officially named ‘The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage’.

This significant commitment to international heritage conservation demonstrated clearly that Japan had moved steadily from passive to active membership of the international heritage conservation fraternity as the basis of its cultural diplomacy. This was particularly significant in relation to ASEAN countries. Japan had been supporting the concept of ASEAN since its inauguration, primarily as a security and trade bloc. However, as the international community was becoming more interdependent, the importance of cultural exchange to improve mutual understanding between countries and to reduce the potential for conflict was reiterated in a statement on foreign policy by Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo (小渕恵三) in 1998. Further, he emphasised that support for ASEAN countries was based on the fact that Japan had a special role as an Asian nation, possessing similar values to those of people in other Asian countries and a similar identity. In a speech in 1998, Prime Minister Obuchi listed some of these common elements of ‘Asian tradition’ as being, ‘diligence, patience, steadiness and care for others’ (MOFA 1998).

The 1998 Bangkok speech and visits to ASEAN nations were designed to demonstrate this growing emphasis on Asia and the Pacific region. The Bluebook 1998 noted the government’s view that:

The international community of today is becoming increasingly interdependent politically, economically, culturally, socially and indeed in all aspects. Moreover, with the end of the Cold War, in place of ideological confrontation, ethnic and cultural differences have been pushed to the forefront of international relations. In order to ensure the stable development of the international community, it is increasingly important for countries to become mutually cognizant of their ethnic, cultural and social diversity and to deepen mutual understanding. Further, emergence of a myriad of global issues – poverty, energy, human rights and the environment, etc. – has been activating international exchanges related to these issues.

(MOFA 1998:n.p., original in English)

Japan’s Official Development Assistance (ODA)

According to its Constitution, proclaimed in 1946, Japan is committed to playing an active role in the promotion of peace and to contribute to the international community using peaceful means under the doctrine of international cooperation
and pacifism. ODA programmes directly serve this intention, as noted by MOFA (2004a):

Promoting the welfare of developing countries and contributing to the stability and development of countries through ODA is an important means of making international contributions suitable for the basic doctrine of the Constitution of Japan.

The ODA programme then became part of the nation’s campaign to rehabilitate Japan’s position in the international community, seeking to project an image abroad that brought international respect and admiration and, as the Constitution says, to gain an ‘honoured place’ in the world.

Reflecting this dual motivation, ODA had two major roles. First, it gave financial assistance that began as post-World War II reparation payments to the Asian countries with which Japan concluded reparation treaties, such as Myanmar (then the Union of Burma), the Philippines, the Republic of Indonesia and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (then the Republic of Vietnam, 1954–75) (MOFA 2004a). These countries were prioritised, partly due to the Cold War, in an effort to support and develop their commitment to democratic institutions. Second, ODA was designed to bridge and strengthen relationships between Japan and the recipient countries, and thus, in the long run, to contribute to Japan’s trade and economic interests. Taken together, through ODA programmes, the dual aims of payment of reparation and concurrent economic assistance had a direct connection to Japan’s exports because the goods and services procured were limited to those of Japan (MOFA 2004a).

Initially Japan’s foreign aid programme was externally imposed – Japan was required to pay US$2 billion in reparations to the 13 Asian countries it had occupied during World War II. These payments began in 1954 and ended in 1976 (see Box 4.1). Leheny and Warren (2010:4–6) point out that Japan sought a way to use reparation treaties with Southeast Asian governments to improve its access to raw materials, markets and governments in the region. In this way the Japanese government skillfully organised itself to provide this reparation, to benefit not only the recipient countries but also Japanese private companies by having them execute the projects. This also facilitated, coordinated and reduced transaction costs for the Japanese government. In short, the reparation scheme, which later developed into ODA, enabled Japan to secure resources such as raw materials for its own industries, to promote Japanese business interests, and to open up markets for exports (Kawai and Takagi 2004:259).

Japan’s post-war recovery was based on a domestic economic recovery and a spirit of self-help (Fukuoka et al. 2010). ODA became the means of repaying the international community through Japan’s own development process (JICA 2011a). Self-help came through Japan’s own experience of development and transformation, as it became the second largest economy in the world, a position it held until recently. As of 2011, Japan is third in the world, behind the United States and the People’s Republic of China (Bloomberg News 2010:n.p).
The concept of self-help derives from the policy of Prime Minister, Kishi Nobusuke (岸信介) (1896–1987), who held office from 1957 to 1960. He became one of the most influential politicians in re-establishing Japan’s pre-World War II position as regional leader and working towards the establishment of Japan as an economically developed country. He is reported to have claimed that ‘reparation and economic cooperation towards these countries will eventually secure a new export market for Japan’s industries and will ultimately contribute to the Japanese economy’ (quoted in Fukushima 2000:156).

Japan’s ODA has different features from those of other members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). First, Japan is one of the few Asian countries to be a DAC member, and one with intimate knowledge of the region. Second, the idea of self-help comes from Japan’s own experience, as evidenced by the fact that it is one of the most economically developed nations. Japan’s success is one of the most convincing aspects for recipient countries. Third, compared with other donors, Japan applies the highest proportion of its assistance in the form of loans as opposed to grant aid. In this way the recipient country needs to work towards specific goals until it eventually becomes self-sufficient. David Arase (2005:117–118) argued that this is based on the idea that only the countries that are committed to development will develop. Fourth, the idea of a request base requires recipient countries to understand what their needs are and take ownership of the request, rather than be merely a passive receiver. Last, Japan does not enter directly into the internal policies of the recipient countries. Miyagi Yukio (2008:11–13) argued that this is due to Japan’s concern that involving itself in the internal affairs of other countries may bring back negative memories of Japan from World War II. In contrast, most of the Western donors build in political or governance reforms to their assistance packages (Lancaster 2010:29). For Japan, foreign aid has been a practical tool to build positive relationships and to establish favourable conditions for the national interests of Japan; it has not been a tool to push political reforms onto the recipient countries.

Nevertheless, during the 1960s and 1970s, ODA did contribute significantly to enhancing Japan’s influence on the international policies of the recipient countries. This growth in influence coincided with the rapid economic growth of Japan, as its Gross National Product (GNP) moved up to take second place in the world, after the United States. In line with an expanding economy, Japan’s ODA also expanded in terms of the quantity and variety of programmes, covering an increasingly large range of activities and geographical distribution. This was partly due to the ‘burden sharing’ required by the United States, which, under President John F. Kennedy, demanded a financial contribution from Japan. To address the growing worldwide concern over the poverty and growing inequalities created by rapid economic growth in some countries, ODA refined its aims during this period to give priority to programmes related to basic human needs. In 1974, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was established to more effectively address these concerns (see section 4.6). At that time, a
considerable amount of money was allocated for project-based assistance in China, contributing to economic development there (Masaki 2006). However, with the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 and the communist regime in China, Japan gradually shifted its attention to Southeast Asia.

In the 1980s, the economic conditions and cash flow of developing countries were seriously affected in the aftermath of the oil crises of 1973 and 1979. As a result, ODA increasingly worked through the World Bank to provide structural adjustment, lending assistance to such countries to introduce economic reforms. In the 1990s, the Cold War ended following the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaving the United States as the dominant military power at that time, and Europe was generally in a period of political transition.

From 1989 to 2001 Japan became the world’s largest bilateral ODA donor in dollar terms and came to be recognised as the ‘aid superpower’ (Lancaster 2010: 29). It has been understood that the focus of Japanese aid philosophy has been on economic development and physical infrastructure (Leheny and Warren 2010:1). This basic approach has not changed since the early days, nor have the mechanisms through which ODA is delivered. Japanese firms help to identify projects for Japanese government funding; the recipient government requests the funding from the government of Japan; and Japanese firms are appointed to implement the project (Lancaster 2010:35). Although this model was not so different from those of France and Italy, Japan received criticism from other donor countries on the grounds that Japanese companies were too closely aligned with the government and with the country’s commercial investments and trade interests.

Until the first ODA Charter was approved in 1992, Japan’s ODA did not have specific guidance regarding the principles on which decision-making was based. Dominic Smith (2003:126) observed that the 1992 ODA Charter meant that:

alternative mechanisms for demonstrating Japan’s commitment to assisting the United States in contributing to global security were found. Japan vastly increased its Overseas Development Assistance Aid (ODA), and began direct economic assistance to key states in unstable regions around the globe. Japan demonstrated its shared security commitments with the United States by economic means, and on a global scale.

The 2002 revision included more philosophical depth to the ODA decision-making, requiring that:

Japan will give priority to assisting developing countries that make active efforts to pursue peace, democratisation, and the protection of human rights, as well as structural reform in the economic and social spheres […] Japan will enhance cooperation with international organisations that possess expertise and political neutrality […]. Full attention should be paid to efforts promoting democratisation and the introduction of a market-oriented economy.
Despite these amendments, which seemed more favourable to the international community and reflected Japan’s desire to elevate its position to focus on humanitarian aid, the fundamental philosophy of Japan’s ODA did not change; its focus remained the promotion of economic development by improving the business environment of recipients. This was based on the idea that economic development and the opening of markets would subsequently lead to poverty reduction and thus support humanitarian goals. This was clearly stated by Kitano Mitsuru and Yoshizawa Takashi in the Vietnam Country Report, published by the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry in 2004 (see Chapter 6).

In summary, according to MOFA, the development of ODA in Japan can be categorised into four periods as below (see Box 4.1).

The ODA programme was revised during the term of Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro (小泉純一郎) (2001–2006), as part of a substantial general reform and privatisation of government authorities (MOFA 2004a). After an extensive study of the situation in all the regions of the world, a revised strategy was instituted in 2002. In 2003, when Koizumi was re-elected, the ODA revised policy was announced. For more than five decades, Japan’s ODA has been providing

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**Box 4.1 Development of ODA in Japan**

**Development of ODA in Japan**

1. **System development period (1954–76)**

   Japan started to provide assistance by joining the Colombo Plan in 1954 when aid implementation was developed through the launch and consideration of aid implementation agencies, diversification of the framework of assistance and other measures. Reparation officially ended in 1976.

2. **Systematic expansion period (1977–91)**

   Quantitative expansion of ODA was planned through successive medium-term targets and Japan’s ODA developed globally.


   In the new international environment following the Cold War, continued efforts were particularly focused on clarifying Japan’s ODA policy and philosophy through the establishment of the original ODA Charter of 1992, the Medium-Term Policy and Official Development Assistance of 1999, and others.

4. **Meeting the Challenges of a New Era (Revised ODA Charter) (2003–)**

   Japan’s ODA reaches a new turning point with the approval by the Cabinet in August 2003 of the revised ODA Charter.

Source: Compiled by the Author based on the information from MOFA (2004a).
assistance to 185 countries and regions around the world with the aim of elevating the position of Japan in the international community. The new ODA Charter approved by a Cabinet decision in August 2003 clearly stated that the objective of ODA was ‘to contribute to the peace and development of the international community and thereby to help ensure Japan’s own security and prosperity’ (MOFA 2003a:n.p.). The Charter also insists that it is essential for Japan to take the lead in efforts to resolve issues shared by the international community, such as humanitarian issues, conflicts and terrorism, and issues of global cooperation.

Prime Minister Koizumi was very assertive about diplomatic and security goals. Consequently, as can be seen in Table 4.1 below, 2001–6 was a crucial period in which Japan started to shift the ODA in a more security-related yet humanitarian direction such as humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in 2004. This was a way to legitimise involvement in the Afghan war and at the same time to justify or reflect the humanitarian aims of Japan’s involvement. This was a visible shift from previous decades, as Japanese aid was commonly known to support physical development mainly through construction work (Table 4.1 shows the shift to humanitarian aid).

After Koizumi stepped down in 2006, Abe Shinzo (安倍晋三) became the Prime Minister (2006–7) and there was a further review of the work of ODA. This was largely because of the Japanese government’s concern over the rise to prominence of countries such as Brazil, China, India and Russia (MOFA 2006) in relation to its own shrinking domestic market due to a decline in population, and the consequent threat to its status in the world economy. As a result, the government decided to undertake a major reform of ODA to strengthen its efficiency. The foremost change was to the three major programmes of the ODA – yen loans, technical assistance and grant aid – which now came under the authority of the reorganised JICA, now called New JICA. The technical cooperation of JICA, the Yen loan department of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and Grant Aid department of MOFA were integrated into New JICA in October 2008 (JICA 2009a; MOFA 2006) (see Figure 4.1).

This idea was conceived during the Koizumi period. As the President of New JICA, Prime Minister Koizumi had appointed Ogata Sadako (緒方貞子), an international political scientist. She was the first High Commissioner in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to serve ten years, from 1990 to 2000. With her experience and knowledge of that international organisation and humanitarian affairs, she was considered the most capable and suitable person to become the president of this new organisation.

During 2007–8, under Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo (福田康夫), the direction of ODA was influenced by two significant events hosted by Japan, the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) and the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit (MOFA 2008). The outcome of these meetings was the development of the plan for the strategic use of ODA. Accordingly, in 2007, ODA defined five priority areas: (1) environment and climate
change, (2) economic relations with developing countries, (3) democratisation and assistance for market-oriented economic reform, (4) peace building in the fight against terrorism, and (5) human security (MOFA 2007).

In 2008, policy concern about climate change became more apparent, with the Cool Earth Promotion Programme being addressed at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (commonly known as the ‘Davos Meeting’). A month before the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in June 2008, Fukuda committed Japan to reducing its current CO$_2$ emissions by 60 to 80 per cent by 2050, and he called for a similar commitment from the other G8 nations (MOFA 2008). Climate change was also being addressed in UNESCO because of its potential impact on heritage. The summit paid particular attention to the African region, as it has the largest proportion of poverty-stricken people in the world, as well as other issues including conflict, famine, infectious diseases (particularly HIV/AIDS), climate change and accumulating debt. As a result, climate change and development in Africa have become a focus of ODA in recent years.

* Exclude grant aid that MOFA continues to directly implement with prospect diplomatic policy.

FY2008: JPY 103.50/US$ (DAC rate)
FY2009: JPY 97.60/US$ (IFS rate for 30 April 2009)

Figure 4.1 Overview of ODA and new JICA (source: adopted by the Author from JICA (2009a) New Japan International Cooperation Agency, Tokyo (in Japanese)).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year/theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **2001** ODA in the 21st Century | • Identify problems in developing countries (such as poverty and other humanitarian areas)  
  • Build international networks |
| **2002** Establishment of strategy for international assistance | • Japan’s ODA extended to the world with a focus on Asia, particularly ASEAN and East Asia  
  • Cooperation for the Consolidation of Peace and Nation-building, such as in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Aceh (Special region of Indonesia) and Mindanao (The Philippines) |
| **2003** Revision of ODA policy | ODA to be implemented to:  
  1. Support self-help efforts of in developing countries  
  2. Promote the perspective of ‘human security’  
  3. Assure fairness  
  4. Utilise Japan’s experience and expertise  
  5. Assist partnership and collaboration with the international community  
  Priority is given to ASEAN countries, China, and Africa |
| **2004** Celebration of 50th anniversary of ODA | • Strengthen collaboration between the government and implementing agency, particularly JICA and JBIC  
  • Develop human resources for supporting ODA implementation and establish the Human Resources Information Centre for International Cooperation  
  • Collaborate with universities and research institutes and establish the Support and Coordination Project for University Cooperation in International Development |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Response to the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>Response to the required new role of ODA, minor reform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger</td>
<td></td>
<td>Government established Overseas Economic Cooperation Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement of universal primary education</td>
<td></td>
<td>MOFA set up the International Cooperation Bureau</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women</td>
<td></td>
<td>JICA became the sole implementing organisation of ODA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction of child mortality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvement of maternal health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Combat against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensuring environmental sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing global partnerships for development</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Priorities in implementing international cooperation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Addressing environmental and climate change issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Realising economic growth of developing countries and furthering economic prosperity in Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Democrtisation and assistance to market-oriented economic reform</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Peace building in the fight against terrorism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Ensuring human security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Climate change and development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 New approaches to African development</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Attentions to Africa and climate change are the focus for most developed nations and, unmistakably, are in line with attention from UNESCO’s Cultural Sector.

As discussed above, ODA policy and strategy have changed over time, influenced by both the domestic and international political situation. Reform and reorganisation of government authorities relative to ODA frequently took place when there were changes of prime minister and the cabinet. Nevertheless, at all times, ODA has had a clear target, purpose, and set of strategies. It has been contributing to the development of many developing countries. At the same time, it has aimed to strengthen the diplomatic ties and economy of Japan by influencing the international and national policies of the recipient countries.

**Japanese government and ‘soft power’**

As discussed in Chapter 1, the concept of ‘soft power’ was coined by Harvard University professor, Joseph Nye, in 1990. Nye defined it as trying to move others in the direction one wants by attracting them through values and culture, in contrast to ‘hard’ military and economic power. From 2004, the Japanese MOFA began to promote explicitly this concept of ‘soft power’ when it established the Public Diplomacy Department with specific sections devoted to publicity and cultural exchange (MOFA 2009a). 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.

*(original in Japanese, translated by the author)*

Indeed, Nye’s notion of ‘soft power’ was referred to explicitly by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aso Taro (麻生太郎) (2005–7), later Prime Minister of Japan (2008–9), when he commented in a speech entitled ‘ODA: Sympathy is not merely for others’ sake’ 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 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.

*(Aso 2006a, official English translation)*

Aso went on to claim that the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was one of the major achievements of Matsuura’s term as Director-General of
UNESCO, resulting directly from Japanese efforts. In his speech regarding the role of cultural diplomacy, Aso enumerated a number of activities in various areas, such as ‘creating a map of the languages of the world which are in danger of dying out’ in which Japan has played an active role since 1993 and eventually resulted in the adoption of the Convention. He stated clearly that:

As you can imagine from the name, this Convention promotes at a global level safeguards very similar to a framework already existing in Japan, through which our intangible cultural heritage and our living national treasures have been protected.

For decades, since the end of World War II, Japan has been protecting the intangibles of skills, techniques, and master craftsmen themselves, which must exist before any tangibles can be created. In this way it has protected heritage such as Joruri Puppet Theatre and Bizen ware. And now, the goal is to get those same protections in place around the globe.

(Aso 2006a, official English translation)

This explicit promotion of ‘soft power’ underlines two political points. First, that by promoting the concept of ‘soft power’, coined by an academic in the United States, Japan was in fact, consciously or unconsciously, adopting and promoting the strategic use of ‘soft power’. Secondly, advocating cultural diplomacy demonstrated Japan’s competence in the area of ‘culture’ to the international community. As Nye (2008:ix) has argued, while the relationship between Japan and the United States remains ‘crucial to the stability and prosperity of East Asia, soft power will continue to play a very important role in the future’.

Referring to the philosophy of the ODA elsewhere in the same speech, Minister Aso explained that:

It could certainly be said that ODA is implemented as ‘Sympathy is not merely for others’ sake (“Your kindness will be rewarded in the end”)’ or ‘Charity is a good investment’, as the Japanese proverb says, and that ODA will serve no good if implemented without a warm-hearted concern for others. However, it must not be forgotten that in the end ODA is implemented for Japan’s own sake.

In other words, ODA is implemented to enhance the happiness and to raise the profile of Japan and its people in the world, and is a type of endeavour that should be considered with a broad and long-term perspective.

ODA is essentially about having other countries first use the precious money of the Japanese people for the benefit of the Japanese people later on. When you think about it, there are not many other endeavours which require such a long-term strategy as ODA.

(Aso 2006a, official English translation)

For some writers, soft power is considered to be a non-traditional force largely exercised through cultural and commercial goods (for example, Gitlin 1999;
Rosendorf 2000; Rosenthal 2001; Ferguson 2003). In the case of Japan, the international influence on popular culture through the global popularity of anime (animated films) and manga (cartoons), as well as the more traditional forms of kabuki, Noh theatre and traditional craftsmanship, portray a sophisticated traditional cultural image. Commercial goods from Sony, Panasonic, Canon, Nintendo and other companies project an image of a country with advanced technology. Japanese pop cultures have become the subject of academic study, and universities are organising ‘study tours’ to explore the contrasting aspects of traditional Japan, contemporary Japan and high technology. The younger generations are now exploring Japan not just to see the traditional temples and ancient townscapes, but also to appreciate contemporary Japan.

In April 2006, Aso (2006b) made another speech entitled ‘A new look at cultural diplomacy: a call to Japan’s cultural practitioners’. In this speech, he recalled the post-war period and the influence of American cartoons on the dreams of the Japanese people at that time. He then specified Japanese contemporary pop culture, manga and anime, Japanese traditional sumo wrestling and cuisine as being the ‘soft power’ of today’s Japan. Thus:

Blondie was run in Japanese newspapers from the 1940s into the 1950s. What emerged through this cartoon strip was a bit of a dream for the average Japanese housewife, this American way of life Blondie led, taking care of just her husband and her kids without a care about her mother-in-law, in a house in the suburbs with an entire array of household appliances. You could find the dreams of post-war Japan all wrapped up in that one household.

Popeye and Blondie caught hold of the hearts of Japanese children and mothers in an era in which Japan was still under American occupation. Now, this means that the people of post-war Japan had such a strong infatuation with the United States even though just a little while before Americans had been something akin to devils. I would argue that American comics had an influence that we simply cannot ignore. My message to you here is that Japan has held its own very nicely in this area. I would even say that Astro Boy deserves to receive the People’s Honour Award. We have all grown up nourished by Shakespeare and Beethoven and other forms of culture emerging from the West. Yet we are now at the point where culture made in Japan – whether anime and manga or sumo and Japanese food culture – is equally able to nourish the people of the world, particularly the younger generations. We would be remiss not to utilize these to the fullest.

(Aso 2006b, official English translation)

In the case of anime and manga, it is a fact that many children in Asia grew up with Doraemon and Hello Kitty. Pikachu has reached the households and children not only of Asia, but in fact in many places around the world. Likewise, Dragonball, originally a Japanese manga, was recently remade as a Hollywood film because of its popularity. A Japanese drama, Oshin, caught the imagination
of people in Asia when it first went on air in the 1980s. People were glued to their TV screens as the story was so moving, reflecting the hard life in a farming village. Aso himself is a great fan of manga and his idea about the use of ‘soft power’ is reflected in his foreign policy. In 2007, the MOFA created the International MANGA Award. In 2008 it started the Anime Ambassador Project and in 2009, the Trend Communicators of Japanese Pop Culture (or カワイイ (kawaii) ambassadors, literal translation ‘cute ambassadors’) were selected to carry out promotional activities. The promotion has been extended to the Agency of Cultural Affairs, Japan Foundation, etc. (MOFA 2009b). A Japanese word kawaii is now becoming popular among youth in other countries, who are inspired by the pop culture of Japan.

**ODA and Cultural Grant Assistance**

Under the ODA, Cultural Grant Assistance is a scheme in which funds are granted to cover the cost of purchase, transport and installation of equipment and the construction or restoration of facilities used for various cultural and higher educational activities as well as the preservation of cultural heritage (MOFA 2011b) (see Figure 4.1: ‘Overview of ODA and New JICA’). The Cultural Grant Assistance scheme was originally launched in 1975 to focus on three aspects: the conservation of cultural heritage, cultural promotion, and the development of cultural education in developing countries. It was also intended ‘to deepen mutual understanding, friendship and goodwill between Japan and developing countries, by providing those countries with support for their efforts’ (MOFA 2011a). Currently, however, there are two elements to this scheme, Cultural Grant Assistance and Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects.

From 1975 to 2007, the scheme funded 1,340 projects in 128 countries and areas with grants totalling 58,800 million yen1 (MOFA 2011b). Part of the equipment and facilities donated through Cultural Grant Assistance contributed to promoting Japanese culture in recipient overseas countries; for example, materials and equipment were donated to support Japanese language study, the promotion of Japanese culture and the arts, including martial arts, through events in the theatres, museums and art galleries of recipient countries (MOFA 2008). Thus, international aid through Cultural Grant Assistance has two aspects, namely, to build the image of Japan as a country that assists in the revival of cultural elements in recipient countries, and to promote Japanese culture in the recipient country and so provide opportunities for people to gain first-hand experience of Japanese culture.

According to the MOFA White Paper, the total amount of bilateral ODA disbursement in 2009 was approximately 1,536.6 billion yen (US$16,452.13 million) (MOFA 2010). Two major categories of ODA are Emergency Assistance and Specific Issues. Specific issues include Aid Coordination, Cultural Grant Assistance, Debt Problems, Democratisation, Disaster Reduction, Education, Gender and Development, Health, Human Security, International Digital Divide, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and Water and Sanitation (MOFA 2011a).
Japan in the global heritage context

ODA and the New Japan International Cooperation Agency (New JICA)

The JICA was established in 1974. It grew out of the amalgamation of two earlier government agencies involved in directing Japan’s international assistance projects – the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA) established in 1962, and the Japan Emigration Service (JEMIS) established in 1963. The official secondment of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) began in 1965 and by 2007 more than 30,000 JOCV and other volunteers under different categories (such as JICA Senior Volunteers) were sent into the field (JICA 2011b). In line with this operation, the Japan Export Bank Act was established under government legislation in 1950 and the operation of The Export–Import Bank of Japan (JEXIM) began in 1952. In 1960, the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund, Japan Act was enacted and the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) was established, and took over the Southeast Asia Development Cooperation Fund, which had been under JEXIM. In 1999 JEXIM and OECF were merged to become the JBIC (-legally unified). From the 1 billion yen in overseas investment loans that JEXIM provided in 1955, the figure increased to 2,193.7 billion yen by 2009 (JBIC 2010:54).

The status of JICA changed from being a special public institution to an independent administrative institution in 2003. In 2008, the overseas economic cooperation section of JBIC was merged with JICA. Since then, the main role of New JICA has been the administration of all ODA projects including technical cooperation, ODA loans and grant aid (see Figure 4.1). Ogata Sadako, the President of New JICA notes that the direction of JICA and its role have become more field-orientated, working more closely with partner governments, international donor organisations, private enterprises and, above all, local people and communities (JICA 2010:2). Since 1974, JICA has provided various forms of international assistance to over 150 recipient countries and regions through its more than 100 overseas offices (JICA 2010). Today JICA has become one of the world’s largest bilateral aid organisations with an operational budget exceeding one trillion Yen (FY2008) (JICA 2010). Since New JICA was set up in 2008, a new vision has also been announced, as Ogata explained:

We are also embracing a new Vision, ‘Inclusive and Dynamic Development’. To make this Vision a reality, we have adopted the following four Missions: (1) addressing the global agenda, including climate change, water security and food supplies, and infectious diseases; (2) reducing poverty through equitable growth; (3) improving governance, such as through reform of the policies and systems of developing country governments; and (4) achieving human security.

(JICA 2010)

Central to the prominence that the Japanese government gives to international aid for the conservation of cultural heritage is the belief that:

Cultural Heritage that is the pride of a nation touches the hearts of people directly. This kind of aid that does not stop with just material support but also conveys Japan’s knowledge, skills and heart. Cherishing culture can bring about a great long-term benefit.

(MOFA 2011c, original in English)

Japan has thus pursued international cooperation in the field of cultural heritage as one of the pillars of its diplomatic policy.

The Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad (hereafter the 2006 Law) is the legal basis for Japan’s current activities in this field. The documents from the plenary sessions of the Japanese House of Representatives reveal a clear intention to pass this law in order to promote the status of Japan through international heritage conservation cooperation and projects.

The documents show that in 2004, Hiyarama Ikuo, then chair of the committee of the Council for the Promotion of International Cooperation, held regular meetings to discuss the establishment of the Consortium to Promote International Cooperation for Heritage Conservation (Council for the Promotion of International Cooperation 2004). Hirayama had become increasingly frustrated by what he saw as a misunderstanding of Japanese conservation practice and the misconception that it did not abide by international standards in the field of heritage conservation. He was motivated by the belief that ‘[d]espite the fact that the Japanese heritage conservation skill is one of the highest in the world, it is not recognised’ (cited in Akaza 2006).

A similar sentiment was echoed in debates in the Japanese Parliament. During the plenary session on 9 June 2006, for instance, when debating the new law proposal, Endo Otohiko (遠藤乙彦) presented the rationale for the proposed Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad. It included the claim that:

The level of knowledge, technologies and experience regarding cultural property protection of our country is the highest in the world. Educational institutions and other institutes [in Japan] individually have been conducting restoration and conservation for cultural heritage overseas.

(Endo 2006)

These sentiments then found expression in the Articles of the 2006 Law. Article 1, for example, defines the purpose of the law as:

to endeavour to promote international cooperation on cultural heritage and to contribute to [the] development of diverse cultures of the world and to the
improvement of our international position, through formulating the basic principles and clarifying the responsibilities of the State and others as well as through establishing the basic matters of policy on the promotion of international cooperation on cultural heritage and the promotion of international cooperation on the protection of overseas cultural heritage that has been damaged, deteriorated, disappeared, been destroyed, or is at the risk of such (hereinafter ‘international cooperation on cultural heritage’).

(2006 Law No. 148, official English translation)

Article 2 proceeds to formulate the basic principles in the following way:

1 Bearing in mind that cultural heritage is the invaluable common property of humanity, international cooperation on cultural properties shall be those activities through which Japan makes an active contribution to the development of the diverse cultures of the world, playing a leading role in international society through the application of its store of knowledge, skills, and experience [of] safeguarding endeavours, and which at the same time promote increased mutual understanding internationally, while fostering a spirit of respect among the Japanese people for different cultures.

2 International cooperation on cultural heritage must be carried out on the principle of supporting the independent efforts of governments or related organisations in the foreign country where the cultural heritage is located, taking into account the importance of cultural diversity.

3 Policies related to the promotion of international cooperation on cultural heritage shall be carried out bearing in mind the basic principles of the Fundamental Law for the Promotion of Arts and Culture.

(2006 Law No. 148, official English translation)

In an earlier 2004 report entitled International Cooperation for the Promotion of Cultural Policies, prepared by the Council for the Promotion of International Cooperation, it had already been argued that:

It is believed that for our country to contribute internationally as a peaceful cultural nation, providing assistance to culture, as well as providing financial and humanitarian support, is highly effective. Particularly, our excavation and heritage conservation technology and skill are widely acknowledged internationally. Thus, utilising these in international cooperation is extremely meaningful.

[...] It is also important for MOFA, JICA, and the Agency for Cultural Affairs, universities and research institutes, to join the effort and work together for international cooperation on heritage conservation.

(Council for the Promotion of International Cooperation 2004, original in Japanese, author’s translation)
Establishment of Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage)

Following the enactment of the Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad (2006), the Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage) was established. Its aim was to create ‘a common base for coordinated and collaborative international cooperation by bringing together the wide variety of institutes and individuals who share a common desire to preserve cultural heritage’ (JCIC-Heritage 2007). The idea of coordinating international cooperation had emerged during a 2003 panel discussion about the promotion of international cooperation in cultural properties that had been organised by the LDP (JCIC-Heritage 2007). It gained increasing urgency, however, during the preparation for the 2006 Law on international cooperation on cultural heritage and especially in several international meetings that were held to consider how to respond to the urgent need to safeguard cultural heritage in Iraq and Afghanistan (JCIC-Heritage 2007).

When the consortium was established its major roles were defined as consisting of four aspects:

1. Promoting human relations among consortium members;
2. Expediting the collection and exchange of information concerning international cooperation;
3. Carrying out case studies and research on international cooperation in cultural heritage;
4. Publication and dissemination of activities on international cooperation in cultural heritage (JCIC-Heritage 2007).

JCIC-Heritage members normally comprise government agencies, non-governmental organisations, non-profit organisations, Japanese private sector companies operating abroad and universities. The organisational framework of JCIC-Heritage clearly emphasises missions in Asia and three of its four subcommittees are responsible for Southeast Asia, West Asia, and East and Central Asia (see Figure 4.2).

The organisational structure of JCIC-Heritage makes clear that the focus of this organisation is Asia. Japan uses it to try to understand, cooperate and influence conservation work in other Asian countries. Conversely, its work also enables Asian countries to become familiar with Japanese culture and ways of working and thinking. With the subsequent strengthening of connections between the Japanese government and that of Asian countries, it was assumed that this would greatly facilitate investment by the private sector and the activities of non-profit organisations in all areas including heritage conservation. It can therefore be said that the ultimate goal of Japan’s ODA in cultural heritage conservation appears to be to establish a leading role for Japan on the international stage and a basis from which to expand the market for Japanese investment.
There are two institutes under the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (独立行政法人文化財研究所) in relation to international cooperation for heritage conservation: the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo (東京 文化財研究所) and the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara (奈良文化財研究所). The National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo was first established in 1930 as the Art Research Institute with a bequest from Viscount Kuroda Seiki (黒田清輝), the late President of the Academy of Art. After World War II, in 1952, it became the Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties. The Department of Archives was established in 1977. This was around the time that the initial project on Dunhuang began. Dunhuang is one of the most important historical cities in Western China and a strategic stop along the ancient Silk Route. This project included the Mogao Caves (莫高窟) complex, which was later inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1987.

With the increasing emphasis on international cooperation, the Division of International Cooperation for Conservation was established in 1993 to take over
some of the functions of the Department of Archives. In 1995, this division became the Japan Centre for International Cooperation in Conservation (JCICC). In 2001, the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, became an independent administrative institution (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo 2009).

Since its inception, JCICC has hosted a series of international workshops, meetings and seminars regarding heritage conservation in Asia. For example, a conference on International Cooperation for Conservation has been regularly organised since 1997, regular Conservation of Asian Cultural Heritage seminars have been held since 1990, and the Workshop on Public Systems for the Protection of Cultural Property series started in 2001.

The aim of these activities has been clearly stated. First, the aim was to develop a new approach to protecting cultural properties, and second Japan sought to build up partnerships for ‘cooperation through mutual understandings of each protection system’ (JCICC 2006). This effort led to invitations being issued to a number of mid- and high-ranking officials in Asian countries to take part in these activities in Japan. As a result, the Centre believes it has succeeded in developing strong partnerships not only between the governments but also at the individual level and this has contributed positively to international relations generally between these countries and Japan.

The National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara (奈良文化財研究所), the second of the two institutes, was originally founded in 1952 as an auxiliary organisation of the National Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties, the predecessor of the current Agency of Cultural Affairs in Japan. Originally, the focus was on history, architecture and arts. However, in the 1960s and 1970s, with an increasing number of projects, it became necessary to establish the Division of the Heijo Palace (1963), and the Division of the Asuka/Fujiwara Palace Site (1973) (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara n.d.). In 1974, the Centre for Archaeological Operations was also added to train local excavators and to provide advice to local authorities (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara n.d.).

Both institutes are actively engaged in international cooperation and provide the facilities for skill and knowledge training. Most heritage practitioners who have been invited to Japan will be particularly aware of the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, as it is one of the main institutes for cooperation in the heritage field.

Since the 1970s, Japan has been funding and supporting heritage conservation throughout the world, although its focus has always been in Asia where Japan has been involved in conservation projects in almost every country: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, China, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam (National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo 2011). Among these, the most prominent projects have been Angkor (Cambodia), Borobudur (Indonesia), Ayutthaya and Sukhothai (Thailand), Hue and Tang Long (Vietnam) and Goguryeo (North Korea).
Korea), all of which are iconic references to their country’s national identity and are now listed as World Heritage sites.

The strong relationships that have consequently developed between Japan and Asian countries can be seen retrospectively through the support from Asian countries in international decisions and actions. Such supportive action in the international community also comes from the non-Asian countries with which Japan cooperates through various cultural and educational programmes and activities.

A number of renowned experts have been invited to Japan as part of the campaign for World Heritage nomination in Japan to facilitate the inscription. For example, the annual meeting of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, IFLA (International Federation of Landscape Architects) and the International Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes (ICOMOS-ISCCCL) was hosted in Tokyo in September 2009 during the preparation of the World Heritage nomination file for Fujisan. Some of the ICOMOS-ISCCCL members were invited to visit Fujisan with financial support from the Japanese government. Gustavo Araoz, the president of ICOMOS International was also invited to give a private speech to ICOMOS Japan, the national chapter of ICOMOS, on 2 September 2009. After the speech and a short discussion about the possibility of further cooperation, Araoz expressed his gratitude as the President of ICOMOS International, and embraced the president of ICOMOS Japan saying ‘Japan is such a true friend to us’ (personal communication with a participant at the 2 September 2009 meeting).

Japan’s involvement with UNESCO

**National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ)**

Japan became a member of UNESCO in 1951. However, Japan’s involvement with UNESCO began earlier. In 1947, groups of citizens began to form a number of regional UNESCO associations. This led to the establishment of the NFUAJ in 1948 (NFUAJ 2011). The NFUAJ’s initial prospectus indicated that Japan was ‘swiftly grasping the opportunity to take part in UNESCO’ and ‘wanting to restore Japan’s international status’ (quoted in NFUAJ 2008:8).

In 1952, soon after the end of occupation, the Japanese Parliament quickly enacted the Law Concerning UNESCO Activities. The United States had expected Japan to rejoin the international community, as revealed in a report of the United States Education Mission during a visit to Japan in 1946:

> As the Japanese people forge ahead with the democratisation of education and renew their contact with people in other nations, UNESCO is without a doubt likely to become stronger and more influential. This organisation will provide Japan with assistance and encouragement […]. We are confident that Japan will gladly be welcomed as part of UNESCO’s membership in the not-so-distant future.

(Quoted in NFUAJ 2008:8)
In the early days of its establishment, many of the activities involving UNESCO in Japan were promoted and administered through non-governmental organisations, particularly the NFUAJ (see Figure 4.3). Its activities included fundraising, particularly from Japanese banks. This was facilitated by the fact that the third President of NFUAJ, Sato Kiichiro, was the Chairman of the Tokyo Bankers Association, which comprised 13 of Japan’s most important banks (NFUAJ 2008:17). When UNESCO launched the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia in 1960, the NFUAJ was appointed to administer Japan’s Nubia Fund, established in 1963. Consequently, in addition to the donation from the Japanese government, the Nubia Fund was supported by the non-governmental sector enabling it to raise about 300 million yen (approximately US$1 million at that time⁴). It became ‘the largest donation amount of any country in the world achieved through the cooperation of non-governmental sectors’ (NFUAJ 2008:18). The donation mainly came from Asahi Shinbun (the Asahi News Agency), which offered the revenue it had obtained from the Egyptian (Tutankhamen) Exhibition held in Tokyo, Japan (Yoshimura 2007:n.p.).

Such achievements gave Japan some confidence in stepping forward to play a more important role on the international stage. In 1965, Japan suggested the establishment of a world federation of UNESCO clubs and associations (NFUAJ 2008:25). The response of the then Director-General of UNESCO, René Maheu, was to suggest that Japan first form an Asian federation. This was to become the Asia Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (AFUCA),

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**Figure 4.3** Organisational chart of UNESCO activities (source: author adopted from NFUAJ (2011)).
established in 1974. Eventually, in 1981, the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (WFUCA) were established and Kazuno Kiyoshi was unanimously elected as its first president of WFUCA (NFUAJ 2008:24). This demonstrates Japan’s growing visibility in international affairs centred on UNESCO at the time.

The Initial Stage of International Cooperation for Heritage Conservation with UNESCO

As previously noted, in the 1960s UNESCO launched the International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia. By 1973, the Japanese government had donated approximately US$100,000 (MOFA 1974). At that time, Japan’s contribution was mainly limited to a financial donation and it did not become involved with the actual work. The relocation and reconstruction of the Abu Simbel Temple was completed in September 1968. However, since all the other monuments would also have to be dismantled and reconstructed, the international campaign continued (Valderrama 1995:194). One of the most effective features for securing international support for the project was the establishment of an Honorary Committee of Patrons, under the chairmanship of King Gustav VI Adolf of Sweden and Prince Mikasa of Japan (Hassan 2007:82). Other committee members were Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, Queen Fredrika of Greece, Princess Grace of Monaco, Princess (later Queen) Margrete of Denmark, Mrs Franklin Roosevelt, Dag Hammarskjöld, André Malraux, and former UNESCO Director, Julian Huxley. These patrons acted as emissaries to world leaders on behalf of UNESCO.

The seventeenth session of the General Conference was held in the Paris UNESCO headquarters from 17 October to 21 November 1972 with Hagiwara Toru (Japan) as president of the conference (UNESCO 1972a:14). It was to be a significant meeting as this was when the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1972b) was adopted. Hasegawa Toru was also the President for the Third Extraordinary General Conference the following year, from 23 to 26 October 1973 (Valderrama 1995:221). Japan’s growing importance was confirmed when at the UNESCO General Assembly in December 1972, it was decided to locate the United Nations University (UNU), the world’s first international university, in Tokyo (UNU 2011:n.p.).

Two important Japanese heritage conservation projects in the early days of UNESCO prior to the establishment of the World Heritage system were Borobudur (Indonesia) and Angkor (Cambodia). In the case of Borobudur, the Indonesian government had made a request to the international community for a major conservation project in the late 1960s (Voûte 1973). A decision to provide assistance was made by UNESCO in around 1972, along with support for other heritage projects in Afghanistan (Bamiyan) and Pakistan (Mohenjo-Daro) and for several projects related to cultural tourism: projects in Florence, Venice and Bali (Valderrama 1995:206). In 1973, the UNESCO Executive Board authorised the Director-General to initiate International Protection Campaigns at the beginning
Japan in the global heritage context


Japanese involvement in Borobudur in the 1970s was significantly different from its involvement in the temple restoration project in Nubia. In the latter case, the Japanese contribution was mainly confined to financial support. However, by the time of the Borobudur project, Japan had also gradually became an active participant in UNESCO as well as being actively engaged at the site, ensuring that it was now able to be involved practically in the conservation works. The Japanese conservation team at Borobudur was led by Chihara Daigoro (千原大五郎), who was well respected internationally as an influential scholar in the field of oriental architectural history. He was the leading member of the heritage conservation team in Borobudur from 1972 and a member of the international committee (Ishizawa 1997). He was involved in conservation technology, mentoring interns, managing the temple and the Archaeological Park, and developing the research centre. With the support of Chihara Daigoro and other business people who had relations with Indonesia, and the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) established in Japan in 1971 acting as promoters, the Japanese Government allocated US$100,000 per year for Borobudur. This was supplemented by the US$1,200,000 it hoped to collect from public donations (MOFA 1974).

At a Cambodia Restoration Conference in Tokyo in 1992, Japan was approached by Prince Norodom Sihanouk for assistance in the preservation and restoration of Angkor Wat (Ishizawa 1993). Japan had actually been engaged in the heritage conservation work at Angkor Wat since 1980, when the Sophia University International Survey Team conducted an onsite survey. In 1992, in response to the request from Prince Sihanouk, the Japanese Government allocated a special contribution of US$1 million to support its Angkor monuments preservation project (Ishizawa 1993:46). The Japanese heritage experts involved with Angkor were later sent to Hue at the request of the Vietnamese government to work on the restoration of the Hue citadel (see Chapter 6). The success of UNESCO’s projects such as Nubia, Borobudur and Venice gave rise to a large number of requests from other state parties. Subsequently, five campaigns were initiated which included the project for safeguarding the Historic Monuments of Hue, Vietnam (Valderrama 1995:274) (see Chapter 6).

Japan becomes leading funder of UNESCO

Japan in relation to the withdrawal of the United States of America and the United Kingdom from UNESCO

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) and argued that UNESCO’s recent trends in ‘the policy, ideological emphasis, budget and management […] had led UNESCO away from the original principles of its Constitution […] [and had] served the political purposes of Member States, rather than the international vocation of UNESCO’ (Valderrama 1995:277). The decision by the United States was soon followed by the withdrawal of the United Kingdom and Singapore on 31 December 1985. Another factor that contributed to their withdrawal was the publication of the report, Communication and Society Today and Tomorrow, Many Voices One World: Towards a New, More Just, and More Efficient World Information and Communication Order, by the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems set up by UNESCO. This was condemned by the United States and United Kingdom because of their concern that it infringed upon the principle of freedom of the press (see also UNESCO 1981 [1980]). Their withdrawal, particularly that of the United States and the United Kingdom, had a significant impact on the operations of UNESCO, especially in relation to its finances.

While it was expected that Japan might follow the United States, and despite a high-ranking government officer who pushed for Japan’s withdrawal, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO expressed its belief that Japan should stay and cooperate with the process of reforming UNESCO (NFUAJ 2008:29). In 1985, the NFUAJ worked strenuously to prevent Japan’s withdrawal from UNESCO, addressing a petition to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Education. An English translation of the petition was also sent out to the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom and the members of WFUCA. The petition stated that:

We wish for it to be remembered that, despite Japan being under occupation, UNESCO allowed Japan to join its membership some five years before the United Nations [accepted Japan]. In that sense, of all the specialized agencies related to the United Nations, Japan has a particularly deep relationship with UNESCO and regards it as a very important organization for Japan. At the same time, the Asian countries friendly to Japan that provided active support for Japan becoming a member of UNESCO cannot be forgotten.

(NFUAJ 2008:29–30)

The petition had the effect of eliciting a response from the UNESCO councils in Oakland and Denver in the United States, which insisted that ‘We will continue to work with UNESCO and not be influenced by [the] government decisions’ (NFUAJ 2008:30). The NFUAJ also worked with WFUCA and Americans for the Universality of UNESCO, an institution organised in 1984 after the United States announced its withdrawal from UNESCO (US Department of State 2011) with a campaign, Keep the United Kingdom in UNESCO, organised in 1985 by influential individuals and organisations in the United Kingdom and by members of the Lower house of Parliament who held a meeting to discuss the issue (NFUAJ
2008). Although this campaign was unable to influence the decision made by the United Kingdom government to withdraw from UNESCO, it did have a significant influence in persuading Japan not to do the same (Dutt 1998:n.p.).

In the mid-1980s, Japan was in the midst of a trade war with the United States. Japan was not only experiencing pressure from the United States but also from Europe to reduce its trade surplus and barriers to foreign investments. At that time, the Japanese economy was flourishing and Japanese politicians considered the attitude of the United States towards Japan to be ‘Japan-bashing’. In particular, American criticism of Japan’s unwillingness to contribute troops and its ‘cheque-book’ diplomacy during the Persian Gulf War intensified anti-American sentiment and ‘stiffened Japan’s national pride as a sovereign state’ (Watanabe 2008:7).

Steven Weisman, in an article published in 1991, provides useful insight into the attitude of Japanese diplomats and academics towards the United States at that time (New York Times, 5 September 1913). He notes Ogura Kazuo, then Director of Cultural Affairs in the MOFA, writing in Gaiko Forum, a Japanese language magazine published by the MOFA, as saying:

Those on the United States side are still leaning heavily on Japan, never reflecting [upon] their own country’s shortcomings […]. And those on the Japanese side are still bowing before the American demands, as if doing so was Japan’s fate.

He goes on to cite Ogura’s concern that the ‘American approach to Japan comes across as an attempt to create a spiritual colony of the United States on Japanese soil’. He cites another prominent Japanese critic of the United States’ attitude, Okamoto Yukio, a former diplomat, who complained, ‘There is a growing feeling that on trade issues, the United States is bullying Japan, arrogantly making demands on every trivial matter that does not comply with the American standard of justice’ (Weisman 1991:n.p.). A similar attitude was expressed by Irie Takanori, a professor at Meiji University, Tokyo, who wrote that, ‘Japan suffered from the aftermath of three wars, World War II, the Cold War and the Gulf War’. However he had also been critical of Japan, which he believed had an ‘Anglo-Saxon neurosis that made it slavishly follow the views of the West, particularly the United States’ (Weisman 1991).

Japan’s increasing involvement in and contribution to UNESCO in the 1980s came at a very good time for both UNESCO and Japan. It coincided with the withdrawal of the United States and the United Kingdom, at a time when UNESCO, as a consequence, was facing a financial crisis. Not only was the Japanese economy booming, but also Japan was stepping up its role in international affairs. The consequence of this was that Japan increasingly took the initiative in funding UNESCO projects, and this was reflected in the establishment of the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust (日本政府信託基金) in 1989.

Since the 1980s, Japan has remained an active member of UNESCO especially in matters regarding world peace, education and cultural promotion.
Examples of such programmes are Promotion of Adult Literacy in the Northern Mountainous Region of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, funded through ODA valued at about 290 million yen (approximately US$2.7 million) in 2000, and the Strengthening of Non-formal Education project in Afghanistan through ODA of about 350 million yen (approximately US$3 million) in 2003 (NFUAJ 2008:38). But in the course of the 1990s, circumstances had changed. The Japanese economy had begun to decline while the economy of the United States had begun to recover. Once more the United States was perceived ‘as the sole winner in the new world order of globalisation in terms of culture, finance, information, military, politics, science and technology [and] became the dominant one’ (Watanabe 2008:7). The United Kingdom and the United States rejoined UNESCO in 1998 and 2003 respectively. Singapore rejoined in 2013 after a long absence. Despite the Japanese economic recession, however, Japan kept providing international assistance, as cultural assistance in foreign diplomacy remained one of its high priorities.

**Japan’s financial contribution to UNESCO through Funds-in-Trust**

In 2009, the Director-General Matsuura Koichiro paid tribute to the contribution Japan had made over 40 years in supporting UNESCO and its many cultural projects. During that time, Japan had contributed US$260 million through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust as well as providing significant technical support and expertise (UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust 2009:2).

Japan had launched its first heritage conservation-related Funds-in-Trust in 1989 through the MOFA using the existing Funds-in-Trust national model launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in 1969. The geographical focus of the Funds-in-Trust from the beginning was the Asia-Pacific region and Africa (UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust 2009). Funds that are directly related to heritage conservation are for (1) the Preservation of World Cultural Heritage and (2) the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (see Box 4.2).

As summarised in Box 4.3 below, under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan, there are nine schemes. Among these, the most relevant funds for heritage are the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of International Cooperation and Mutual Understanding. Fifty per cent of these funds go to the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) and the NFUAJ to support international exchange activities with Japan (UNESCO 2005a).

**Matsuura Koichiro, Director-General of UNESCO (1999–2009)**

Matsuura Koichiro (松浦 晃一郎) was Director-General of UNESCO from 1999 to 2009, the first Director-General to have an Asian background. Prior to his appointment, Matsuura Koichiro was in the Financial Division of the MOFA, under Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru. He was also known to be a school
friend of former Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo, a connection that seems to have had important implications for his career path. He began his career as a diplomat assigned to Ghana (1961–3), an appointment that made him aware of the development issues in African countries. As a diplomat, Matsuura was very enthusiastic in working on economic development issues in Africa and he played a crucial role at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) held in Yokohama, Japan in 2008 (Matsuura n.d.). He took this concern and interest with him when he was appointed to the Economic Cooperation Bureau in the MOFA, where he was Director-General from 1988 to 1990. During this appointment, he was responsible for adding education and human resource development to the agenda of ODA (Matsuura n.d.). Given his

Box 4.2 UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Culture

The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage: Established in 1989

Its purpose is to preserve the tangible cultural heritage such as historical monuments and archaeological remains of Outstanding Universal Value.

The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Established in 1993

Since 2001 the Fund has been used for the ‘Proclamation of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity’ programme. It has been one of the main active contributors to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, promoting the ratification of the Convention by other member countries and supporting its implementation at national, regional and international levels.

Trans-sectoral

The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Capacity-building of Human Resources: Established in 2000

These are large-scale Funds-in-Trust that have been financing a number of projects aiming to strengthen human capacity in developing countries.

This Funds-in-Trust covers the actions of all the five programme sectors, namely education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, and culture, as well as communication and information. The priorities are accorded to the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP), preventive education against HIV/AIDS (EDUCAIDS), teacher training projects in sub-Saharan African countries (TTISSA), fellowships programmes, the International Programme for the Development of Communication (PDC), assistance for science reform, youth violence prevention, etc.

**Box 4.3 UNESCO/Funds-in-Trust under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Japan)**

**UNESCO/Funds-in-Trust under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan**

To promote mutual understanding by means of exchange students, teachers and other professionals, international meetings and other activities in all of UNESCO’s fields of competence.

**Social and Human Science**

1. **The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Promotion of International Cooperation and Mutual Understanding:** Established in 2000. Some 50% of the funds are devoted to exchange activities with Japan subcontracted to the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) and the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ); the other half is for exchange activities without limitation of geographical regions.

To support UNESCO’s implementation of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development as well as activities in education at all levels in non-formal, primary, secondary and higher education.

**Education**


**Natural Science**


6. **The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of Scientific Programmes for Sustainable Development:** Established in 2002. This integrates the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Basic Science in Southeast Asia (established in 1975), the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme (established in 1983), the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the International
Hydrological Programme (IHP) (established in 1990), and the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Solar Energy Programme, created in 1998. UNESCO Jakarta, mainly for the benefit of countries of Asia and the Pacific.

*Communication and Information*

7. **The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of the Effective Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education: Established in 2001.** Projects are concentrated in Asia and the Pacific and coordinated by UNESCO Bangkok.

8. **The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Information for All Programmes (IFAP): Established in 2002.** This succeeded the Funds-in-Trust for the General Information Programme, created in 1996. Projects are concentrated in Asia and the Pacific.

To mobilise science knowledge and policy for sustainable development and strengthen UNESCO’s activities in the field of science in Asia and the Pacific Regions by utilising Japan’s financial resources and scientific competencies.

9. **Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Scientific Programmes on Global Challenges in Asia and the Pacific Region: Established in 2007.** Coordinated by UNESCO Office, Jakarta as cluster office. Projects inaugurated in 2009 were as follows:

   i. Biosphere Reserves for Environmental and Economic Security (BREES)
   ii. Water Interoperability Networks for Global Change Adaptation (WINGA)
   iii. Comprehensive Programme to Enhance Technology, Engineering and Science Education (COMPETENCE)
   iv. Strengthening Resilience of Coastal and Small Island Communities towards Hydro-meteorological Hazards and Climate Change Impacts (StResCom)


background and prominent role in developing Japan’s foreign aid agenda, Matsuura Koichiro was an ideal candidate for the position of Director-General of UNESCO, able to help the Japanese government to achieve its aim of increasing its role and profile on the international stage. The Japanese Government consequently ‘organised fierce campaigns’ to secure his election (Matsushima 2009:n.p.).

In Japan the results achieved by UNESCO during Matsuura’s term as Director-General have been widely interpreted as Japan’s having effectively rescued and extended the work of the organisation (see, for example, Matsuura 2006, 2009; NHK 2009; BS Fuji 2010). For example, Matsuura was successful in pushing through reform of UNESCO and overcoming staff resistance to
drastic cutbacks in the work of the organisation. He convinced the United States under the Bush administration to return to UNESCO. Matsuura has commented in interviews that this success was achieved as a result of intense diplomatic negotiations with UNESCO Members States and States Parties to the Conventions. Matsuura worked towards the adoption of three major conventions in the heritage field: the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001), the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) (the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention), and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005). While the adoption of the Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention in 2001 was, to some extent, the conclusion of work initiated by his predecessor, and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) was the outcome of a strong push from a range of countries concerned about cultural industry and trade (Coalition for Cultural Diversity 2010; Graber 2006; Personal communication with an anonymous UNESCO staff member from the time of Matsuura, 26 February 2011), the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention clearly owed its existence to the strong support provided by the Japanese government.

This Convention in particular embodied one of the strengths of the Japanese approach to conservation: intangible cultural heritage, which had been recognised in Japan’s legal framework for heritage conservation since 1950. For Matsuura personally, the promotion of intangible cultural heritage was a crucial element in Japanese cultural diplomacy. When asked about his efforts in having the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention adopted, he confirmed that ‘I took the initiative to adopt the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention […] Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was incorporated in order to balance the euro-centrism’ (Matsuura 2009:n.p.). Earlier he had argued that his emphasis on promoting the idea of intangible cultural heritage flowed out of his earlier African experience, noting that ‘For Africa, intangible cultural heritage, such as traditional dances, songs and rituals, is very important, so I took the initiative’ (Matsuura 2006:1–2). In fact, as he noted, the African nations as well as the Asian representatives were generally very cooperative in supporting adoption of the Convention, while he recalls that initially Western European Member States were opposed to the idea. In the end, eight Member States abstained while none stood or voted against it (Matsuura 2006). This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

One of the other significant events during Matsuura’s term was the return of the United States to UNESCO in 2003. Indirectly recognising the work of the Japanese Director-General, then President George W Bush announced that ‘As a symbol of our commitment to human dignity, the United States will return to UNESCO […]. This organisation has been reformed and America will participate fully in its mission to advance human rights and tolerance and learning’ (BBC News 2002). Other commentators also recognised ‘Japanese career diplomat, Koichiro Matsuura’ as the person responsible for ‘trying to reign in [UNESCO’s] sprawling bureaucracy and woo back the United States’ (BBC
The former US ambassador for UNESCO, Louis Oliver (2009: n.p.) noted for instance that:

The United States withdrew from UNESCO in 1984 because of its lack of accountability and excessive politicisation. Under the leadership of its current director general, Koichiro Matsuura, a skilled Japanese diplomat, UNESCO made considerable progress in reforming itself. That enabled the United States to rejoin the organisation in 2003. My challenge was to ensure that US values and interests would be promoted by these instruments [...]. In fact, UNESCO’s work in education has made real progress in the last few years, particularly in its literacy programs, which have greatly benefited from the strong support of UNESCO’s honorary ambassador for the literacy decade, former first lady Laura Bush.

A contrasting analysis of the American turnaround by Gabrielle Capla (2009), in an article published in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, argues that America’s decision to rejoin UNESCO had more to do with the fact that the United Nations had refused to approve President Bush’s military objectives in Iraq in February 2003. In October 2003, Washington therefore rushed to rejoin UNESCO following President Bush’s speech a month earlier, in an effort to prove the United States’ commitment to support humanitarian goals. Capla also indicated some negative impacts on UNESCO during Matsuura’s term. This was not an interpretation that Matsuura was prepared to confirm and his office sent a letter to *Le Monde Diplomatique*, supported by 25 ambassadors for UNESCO, both rejecting Capla’s interpretation and regretting the negativity of the article, which, it asserted, failed to recognise the current status and truth about UNESCO.

**Summary**

Early forms of development aid began with the post-war reparation payments. Directed by the vision of the then Prime Minister Kishi, Japan effectively developed policies not just to benefit the recipient countries but also to secure Japan’s own benefit. Although it has been commonly understood that Japan’s major focus was economic development, nevertheless, Japan’s desire to be the leader in Asia and ultimately a leader in the global arena has not changed since the pre-World War II period. Japan’s interest in culture, which it extended through cultural diplomacy in its exercise of soft power, has become the new method of establishing its position in world politics and the global economy. When Matsuura Koichiro became the Director-General of UNESCO, Japan began increasingly to play a leading role in shaping international policy and practice. This was largely because of Matsuura’s influence on the direction of UNESCO’s cultural policies and because Matsuura was seen to be able to mobilise much-needed Japanese aid money (Sharma 2009).

This chapter has demonstrated how Japan has elevated itself in the international field of cultural heritage conservation and how at the same time it has...
fulfilled its national interest. Building upon the discussions in Chapters 3 and 4, the next chapter discusses the background to the adoption of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and Japanese engagement in implementing the Convention as well as international discourse about intangible cultural heritage.

Notes

2 Currently Tokyo University of the Arts 東京藝術大学 (until 2008, the English name of the university was the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music).
3 The centre was first established in 1995 as 国際文化財保存協力センター in Japanese, and in 2006 became 文化産業国際協力センター.
5 Intangible heritage

Introduction

In the 1990s, the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage was discussed at length by heritage practitioners (see Chapter 3). The Nara Conference on Authenticity held in 1992 marked a turning point for heritage practitioners in rethinking the concept of authenticity, and the relationship between tangible and intangible elements of heritage. Japan had had a long history of heritage practice in which concern for tradition and cultural significance, as well as for natural environmental issues, were paramount. The application of the international standard widely implemented at that time proved to be problematic from the Japanese professional point of view, which was that conservation methods, especially in relation to authenticity, had to be both broadened and made culturally relevant. Thus, during the Nara Conference, the view that tangible heritage was inseparable from the intangible elements gained prominence. In some ways, this was a response to Japan’s difficulties in applying the international standard to the wider perspective. It also reflected a growing appreciation of the need to recognise diversity, both in regard to world cultures and to different approaches to and types of heritage. In short, a more holistic approach to the question of heritage conservation began to dominate the heritage discourse. The Nara Document on Authenticity (1994) is commonly seen as recognising cultural differences between East and West. However, its interpretation is not simply about East versus West, rather, it also recognises the cultural diversity that exists in time and space and the importance of respecting the community that generated the heritage.

In the 2000s, the proposal for the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was strongly supported by the Japanese government and finally adopted by UNESCO. Although the initial draft was strongly influenced by the model provided by the Japanese national system for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, it had been extensively revised on the basis of input from the international community and, in its final form, developed into a Convention with much wider scope. However, in order to adequately appreciate the significance attached to the idea of ‘intangibility’ of heritage as it was discussed over this period, it is necessary to revisit the terms and Operational Directives that were being
considered in the course of these lengthy discussions. The final definition of ‘intangible cultural heritage’ for the purpose of the Convention is supplied in Article 2 of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention.

To understand the idea of intangible cultural heritage in Japan, one needs to refer to how it is described in Japanese and to the early motives for establishing this category in the Japanese national system. In Japanese the relevant term, translated into English as ‘intangible cultural properties’, is 無形文化財, mueki bunkazai. The word mueki refers to something that does not have specific form or shape and therefore can literally be translated as ‘non-form’. When the category of mueki bunkazai was introduced, its initial purpose was to ensure the protection of the performing arts, craftspeople, traditional skills and similar cultural practices (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950:198). An explanatory note on the 1950 Cultural Property Law clearly indicates that committee members who drafted the 1950 Cultural Property Law were aware that this category had limitations and that the entire notion of mueki bunkazai was not covered. Nevertheless for the time being, they believed that the existing categories would at least protect the general range of elements (Takeuchi and Kishida 1950:199). As for the term, bunkazai (‘cultural property’), since the existing term ‘intellectual property’ made it clear how the word ‘property’ could be applied, this was considered adequate for the purposes of mueki bunkazai (see Chapter 3).

As the Japanese case demonstrates, the way the term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ is interpreted and used, and the translation of the term, can cause misconceptions. For example, in French, one of the official languages of UNESCO, ‘intangible cultural heritage’ is translated as patrimoine culturel immatériel. Other Latin-derived languages, such as Spanish and Portuguese, have followed this usage and have adopted the term immaterial (non-material). However, in recent years, some Portuguese scholars have started to use the term intangível, derived from the English term (personal conversation with an academic in Portugal, 20 June 2011). In contrast, in Spanish, intangível refers to something you cannot touch and therefore, it remains a word that is not applicable for this framework. Another example pertains to the Chinese language. In the People’s Republic of China, the official UNESCO translation applies the French word and translates it as 非物质文化遗产, whereas, in Taiwan the term 無形文化遺産 is used, as in Japanese. The words ‘intangible’, ‘immaterial’ or, as in Japanese, ‘non-form’, have different meanings and so when discussing the idea of ‘intangible’ in a language where a different word is used, different meanings or connotations may be conveyed. Thus, as people from different language backgrounds apply their own interpretation for each word the issue becomes more complex.

One of the Japanese participants who attended UNESCO international meetings and intergovernmental meetings for intangible cultural heritage described to the author how the discussion on the term ‘intangible’ went on endlessly. For people with limited English or French language skills, it was almost impossible to follow the discussion (personal conversation, Tokyo, 5 August 2009).

This chapter opens with a discussion of the background to the adoption of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. It then discusses the Japanese
involvement in this process to demonstrate that, in line with what has been argued in the previous chapter (Chapter 4), promotion of the Convention can be seen to have been part of Japan’s cultural diplomacy agenda. The chapter then moves on to show how Japan has since dealt with the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and the extent to which adjustments had to be made to address it within the Japanese national system.

**UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)**

*Moving towards the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*

Efforts to formulate a legal instrument to safeguard intangible heritage began at the time of the adoption of the World Heritage Convention in 1972. Although the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore was adopted in 1989 (hereafter the 1989 Recommendation), and was the first document related to what we now call ‘intangible cultural heritage’, its history can be traced back to at least 1971 when the UNESCO Secretariat prepared a document entitled *Possibility of Establishing an International Instrument for the Protection of Folklore* (Sherkin 1999; UNESCO 1971).

At the beginning of the 1980s, UNESCO began to set up an international directive for the protection of folklore. In 1982, UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) jointly established *Model Provisions for National Laws on the Protection of Expressions of Folklore against Illicit and Other Forms of Prejudicial Action* (UNESCO and WIPO 1992). The focus, at this stage, was on the aspect of intellectual property of folklore and ways to ensure its protection through copyright law.

However, there was a shift in 1982. UNESCO convened the First Governmental Expert Meeting in Paris to address more overall aspects of ‘folklore’. Samantha Sherkin (1999:47–8), a Consultant for Intangible Cultural Heritage Unit at UNESCO, notes that the aim of the meeting was to define and look for measures to safeguard the continued existence of folklore, its development and authenticity and means of protecting it from distortion. During this meeting, for the first time, a firm definition of ‘folklore’ was established. In 1985, at the 23rd session of the UNESCO General Conference, it was decided that the new instrument for the protection of folklore would be a recommendation rather than a convention. This was because recommendation is a more flexible instrument, whereby the General Conference formulates principles and invites Member States to adopt any means, legislative or otherwise, in order to apply them.

Aikawa Noriko (1999:13) wrote that the 1989 Recommendation, ‘the first international standard-setting instrument for the protection of traditional culture and folklore’, was established only ‘[a]fter sixteen years of a long, arduous, and costly process’. At the time, the 1989 Recommendation served the purpose of safeguarding traditional cultures quite well, as the attention of the global
community was only gradually increasing in regard to this aspect of heritage. As Aikawa (1999) pointed out, some of the factors that led to promoting the idea of protecting traditional culture was the rise in the number of ethnic groups attaining their independence after the end of the Cold War, as well as the movement in Latin America commemorating 500 years of encounters with Europe. As a result, the expression of local identity through traditional cultures increasingly became of a matter of worldwide interest.

In 1991, the UNESCO General Conference decided to conduct a programme in its Cultural Sector, entitled Non-Physical Cultural Heritage, as a way of bridging the gap between the two programmes established earlier – Enhancement of Cultural Identities and Physical Cultural Heritage (Aikawa 1999). The following year, this programme was renamed Intangible Cultural Heritage. In 1993, Japan established its Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and its first contribution was to hold an international conference at the UNESCO Headquarters to prepare new guidelines for the Intangible Cultural Heritage Programme (Aikawa 1999). The result of this conference, the International Consultation on New Perspectives for UNESCO’s Programme: the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 1993a), was a call for a greater awareness of intangible cultural heritage and the communities who were its creators and bearers. Under this programme in 1993, five pilot projects in five continents, including Nha Nhac Vietnamese court music were chosen (see Chapter 6).

As a priority, the conference also emphasised the need to revitalise traditional cultures by adapting them to the contemporary world. As a result, the conference summarised some key approaches for the forthcoming Intangible Cultural Heritage Programme as follows (Aikawa 1999:14–15):

• not to crystallise the intangible cultural heritage, whose fundamental characteristic is to be permanently evolving;
• not to take this heritage out of its original context, as, for example, ‘folklorisation’ does;
• to be aware of the obstacles that threaten the survival of the intangible cultural heritage;
• to give greater emphasis to the intangible heritage of hybrid cultures, which develop in urban areas; and
• to employ a different methodology for the intangible cultural heritage than for the tangible cultural heritage.

Moreover, during the conference, the participants supported the idea suggested by UNESCO of providing short-term priority to music, dance, theatre, oral traditions and languages (UNESCO 1993a:6). In the same year, 1993, following a proposal by the Republic of Korea, UNESCO carried out a programme called the Living Human Treasures Programme. The initial stage of the programme was to conduct a survey of national systems to ascertain whether there was any official recognition of people who possessed traditional skills. This was to form
Intangible heritage

part of the background study needed to develop the programme. Some countries, including Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Philippines, had already successfully implemented systems to recognise traditional craftspeople. Based on the initial survey results, it was agreed to: (1) establish legislation to protect the intangible heritage; (2) identify the possessors of relevant know-how; (3) formulate a national register of the types of intangible heritage to be protected; and (4) prepare a roster of potential candidates for inclusion on the list of National Living Human Treasures (Aikawa 1999). Subsequently, eight regional seminars were held in different regions of the world, namely:

- **Mexico (1997):** Regional Seminar on the application of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore of Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico, 22–24 September 1997.
- **Finland (1998):** Regional Seminar on the application of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore in Western European countries, Joensuu, 4–6 September 1998.

It can be clearly seen, therefore, that in the course of the 1990s, the need to establish a new standard for protecting intangible cultural heritage was broadly recognised. Japan’s active involvement in formulating this new framework for heritage conservation came to mark the nation’s presence in the global and regional cultural diplomacy and foreign aid. That Japan chose to be at the forefront of this particular new direction was not only due to the fact that Japan had had a legal instrument for the recognition of intangible cultural heritage in place since 1950 but also because of its dissatisfaction with the limitations of the World Heritage Convention. As outlined in Chapter 3, Japanese reaction to the
existing international Convention on World Heritage had been voiced earlier in 1994 and had been instrumental in ensuring that the Nara Document on Authenticity recognised the importance of the intangible aspect of tangible heritage, such as craftsmanship, rather than merely the physical authenticity of materials.

In 1998, Aikawa, then Head of UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, said on behalf of UNESCO that:

The World Heritage List, despite its ‘success story’, has a number of drawbacks. It corresponds to a reference frame which is not always suitable for many countries of Africa, Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean, whose heritage is expressed more typically through living cultural expressions, namely music, dance and oral traditions.

(ACCU 1998:14)

Professor Kono Toshiyuki (河野俊行), a specialist in Intellectual Property Law who was involved in the process of formulating the preliminary draft of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, made a similar point in relation to the World Heritage when he noted that:

In fact, more than 50% of the WH [is] located in Europe and North America. 90% of European countries have at least one WH [listing], while 50% of countries in Asia and the Pacific have one WH [listing]. Although 40 countries in Africa, except [the] Arabic area, have ratified the WH Convention, only 7% of the WH [listed is] located in Africa.

(Kono 2004:38)

These comments were in line with the argument put by the UNESCO Director-General, Matsuura, in welcoming the adoption of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, that the Convention would help African and other nations that were having difficulty in placing items on the World Heritage List under the terms of the earlier Convention (Matsuura 2006; see also Chapter 4).


For a decade, the 1989 Recommendation had served as a principal reference document for activities regarding the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it appeared that the 1989 Recommendation was less successful than hoped, as not many further activities were undertaken by the various governments (Smeets 2004). In an address in 2002, the UNESCO Director-General admitted that ‘the 1989 Recommendation, which was indeed intended to protect the intangible heritage, had not managed to achieve its goal. Its non-binding nature (“soft law”), offering little encouragement for States, was probably the main reason for that’ (Matsuura 2002). Moreover, in retrospect, Kono (2004:38) argued that the 1989 Recommendation ‘focused mainly on the
methods for [the] recording of folklore culture, and it was based on a nowadays outdated anthropological theory’.

At this stage, the definition of ‘intangible cultural heritage’ was different from the one that the Convention adopted later in 2003. The definition of ‘oral and intangible heritage’ used at the 155th session of the UNESCO’s Executive Board referred back to the definition in the 1989 Recommendation (adopted at the 25th session), which stated that:

Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognised as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts. In addition to these examples, account will also be taken of traditional forms of communication and information.

(UNESCO 1998a:10)

Increasing interest among the Member States in the late 1990s regarding oral heritage and intangible cultural heritage led to the recommendation by the UNESCO Executive Board in 1997 that, in the framework of action for safeguarding and revitalising intangible heritage, emphasis should be placed on the preservation of oral traditions, and endangered languages and forms of cultural expression, in particular those of minorities and indigenous peoples (UNESCO 1997a). This was followed on 12 November 1997 by the adoption by UNESCO’s General Conference at its 29th session of the Resolution regarding the oral heritage of humanity that had been recommended in the report of Commission IV at the 27th plenary meeting. The resolution included an invitation to the Director-General:

to prepare and submit to the Executive Board at its 154th session (May 1998) a detailed proposal concerning the criteria for the selection of such spaces or forms, the practical arrangements for international recognition thereof as part of the oral heritage of humanity, and the type of action required from the Organisation, the international community and public and private donors in order to ensure the protection and promotion of such cultural spaces.

(UNESCO 1997b:54)

Subsequently UNESCO decided to extend the scope of the new criteria to widen the kinds of intangible cultural heritage and adopted a resolution called the Proclamation of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In late 1998, at the 155th session of the UNESCO’s Executive Board, the Director-General presented for the board’s consideration a set of ‘Regulations
Intangible heritage relating to the proclamation by UNESCO of masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity’ (UNESCO 1998b:9). The draft of the regulation proposed in 1998 aimed to:

pay tribute to outstanding masterpieces of the oral and tangible heritage of humanity, which will be selected from among cultural spaces or forms of popular or traditional cultural expression and proclaimed masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity.

(UNESCO 1998b:9)

It was proposed that the evaluation of a ‘masterpiece of intangible heritage’ would be the responsibility of juries comprising nine members designated by the Director-General of UNESCO who would apply a set of rigid criteria. The proclaimed masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage would need to be of ‘outstanding value’ and represent ‘(i) either a strong concentration of the intangible cultural heritage of outstanding value; or (ii) a popular and traditional cultural expression of outstanding value from a historical, artistic, ethnological, sociological, anthropological, linguistic or literary point of view’ (UNESCO 1998a).

This draft was brought to the 30th session of the General Conference in 1999. In Resolution 25: Major Programme III: Cultural development: heritage and creativity, the Session authorised the Director-General to implement the corresponding plan of action in order to:

(iii) foster the preservation and revitalisation of the intangible heritage by contributing to the training of specialists in the areas of collection and conservation and by giving high priority to the enhancement and transmission of that heritage, and carry out a preliminary study on the advisability of regulating internationally, through a new standard-setting instrument, the protection of traditional culture and folklore.

(UNESCO 1999:63)

It was at this 30th session of the General Conference in 1999 that the Japanese representative, Matsuura Koichiro, was appointed as the new UNESCO Director-General. As described in Chapter 4, following this appointment the establishment and promotion of a new document for the safeguarding of the intangible heritage became one of UNESCO’s major tasks. Consequently, in the next General Conference Session in 2001, UNESCO decided that the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage ‘should be regulated by means of an international convention’ (UNESCO 2001a:67).

Drafting the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, a new international legal instrument, was a complex issue. It needed to take into account scientific, legal, and historical aspects that had been raised in: (1) eight regional seminars held between 1995 and 1999 on the application of the 1989 Recommendation; (2) the international conference, ‘A Global Assessment of the 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore: Local
Empowerment and International Cooperation’, held at the Smithsonian Institution in June 1999; and (3) the document entitled ‘Report on the preliminary study on the advisability of regulating internationally, through a new standard-setting instrument, the protection of traditional culture and folklore’, which had been drafted by Janet Blake, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Glasgow, and examined at an international experts’ meeting on ‘Intangible cultural heritage – Working definitions’ organised by UNESCO in March 2001 in Turin (UNESCO 2001b).

The Executive Board subsequently decided to include the matter on the agenda of the 31st session of the General Conference (UNESCO 2001b). In August 2001, the General Conference agreed to ‘invite the Director-General to submit to the General Conference at its 32nd session a report on the situation calling for regulation and on the possible scope of such regulation, together with a preliminary draft international convention’ (UNESCO 2001c). At this stage, therefore, it had become apparent that the new document would be stronger as a convention, rather than a recommendation.

The first session drafting the new Convention commenced in September 2002 at the UNESCO Headquarters. The draft taken to discussion was that formulated in June 2002. In Article 2, intangible cultural heritage was defined as:

> the practices and representations – together with their necessary knowledge, skills, instruments, objects, artefacts and places – that are recognised by communities and individuals as their intangible cultural heritage, and are consistent with universally accepted principles of human rights, equity, sustainability, and mutual respect between cultural communities. This intangible cultural heritage is constantly recreated by communities in response to their environment and historical conditions of existence, and provides them with a sense of continuity and identity, thus promoting cultural diversity and human creativity [the cultural diversity and creativity of humanity].

The ‘practices and representations’ of “intangible cultural heritage”, were listed as covering four types: (1) [forms of] oral expression, (2) the performing arts, (3) social practices, rituals, festive events, and (4) knowledge and practices about nature.

(UNESCO 2002)

After the First Preliminary Draft, the Convention underwent a series of amendments, and in its final version a fifth category of intangible cultural heritage was added, namely ‘expressions, knowledge, skills’ and ‘traditional craftsmanship’. As such, at the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, intangible cultural heritage is defined in Article 2 in the following terms:

1. The ‘intangible cultural heritage’ means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage. This
intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly re-created by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

2 The ‘intangible cultural heritage’, as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

(a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
(b) performing arts;
(c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
(d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
(e) traditional craftsmanship.

As Rik Smeets, Chief, Intangible Heritage Section, Division of Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, noted, the process had been long and arduous:

[A]fter a painstaking process of consultation, after three sessions, plus an intersession, [by] intergovernmental experts, and after a favourable debate in the September 2003 session of the Executive Board, UNESCO’s General Conference adopted the Convention in October 2003, not without heated debate, but still without a dissenting vote. It did so two years before schedule.

(Smeets 2004:139)

While the original idea for the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention had emphasised the preservation of oral traditions and endangered languages and forms of cultural expression, in particular those of minorities and indigenous peoples (UNESCO 1997a), the final Convention emphasised the need to safeguard ‘living’ intangible cultural heritage. This in practice, was understood to mean:

if choices have to be made, preference will have to be given to safeguarding measures in situ, that is within the habitat of the communities concerned, rather than to representations outside the context of the community of the traditional enactors.

(Smeets 2004:139)

The intention of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was to attempt to accommodate the complexity of intangible cultural heritage in different parts of the world, as well as the different conservation mechanisms of
Intangible heritage

Member States. The notion of ‘safeguarding’ in the Convention was understood to cover a wide range of conservation measures including ‘the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalisation of the various aspects of such heritage’ (Article 2.3). Comparing the successive drafts, it can be seen that this scope was extended from the first draft in 2002 where safeguarding only included ‘the identification, documentation, protection, promotion, transmission and revitalisation of aspects of such heritage’ (UNESCO 2002). The key measure in the 2003 Intangible Heritage Convention is the emphasis on creating inventory with the establishment of a Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Article 16), a List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (Article 17), and the development of inventories at the national level (Article 12).

When the 2003 Convention was adopted, 120 States Parties voted for adoption of the Convention. Eight States Parties abstained but none voted against the Convention. The eight abstentions were United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark and Switzerland. Later, Switzerland, in 2008, and Denmark, in 2009, joined the Convention. Matsuura (2006:3) noted in the symposium organised by ACCU and Agency of Cultural Affairs in 2006 that the reason for some countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand to abstain from the Convention could be partly explained by their concerns related to internal policies with reference to aboriginal people and new immigrants.

One United Nations declaration that could be considered in this context, as Matsuura suggests, is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). Although there are a number of reasons for each country not signing the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, coincidentally, four of the six countries that have abstained from signing it also initially voted against the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007 (UNHR 2013). Subsequently, Australia in 2009, Canada in 2010 and New Zealand have endorsed the declaration and the United States has declared its intention to sign it.

Criticism

After the Convention was adopted in 2003, a number of conferences, meetings, and expert meetings were held to promote the Convention to the Member States before it came into force in 2006. Nonetheless, several aspects of the Convention have continued to attract critical comment right up to today. First, the decision to interpret the concept in terms of ‘representative’ rather than as ‘outstanding’ examples of intangible heritage makes the evaluation of what to place on the list difficult. After heated debate among intergovernmental experts, the term ‘outstanding’ was changed to ‘representative’ in order to avoid injecting comparative value into intangible cultural heritage. The initial approach, Smeets (2004:144) suggested, ‘was considered discriminatory for other elements of the intangible
cultural heritage that are not proclaimed Masterpieces but are equally crucial for the identity of groups and communities’. In response, it was argued that if a potential candidate for the list was equally important it should be nominated as well, so that there should not be any basis for possible discrimination as said. In fact, as Hafstein (2009:93) noted, ‘In the final text of the Convention, the provisions for the Representative List are vague enough to postpone this debate until the present time when state parties are beginning to revisit it’.

The second, related issue attracting criticism has been that the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention does not set out clear criteria for the process of evaluation. This is because it is meant to be different from that used in the World Heritage Convention where nominations are required to meet specific qualifying conditions – authenticity and integrity. Under the World Heritage Convention, such qualifying conditions are not only used in the evaluation process but ‘once things are on the List, these qualifying conditions also become the conditions for protection, and therefore a necessary part of management’ (Stovel 2004:131). Apart from the inventory and listing, the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention provides little detail about the measures required to be undertaken to safeguard intangible cultural heritage elements and their ongoing management. Nevertheless, a set of Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention of the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage (‘Operational Directives’), somewhat equivalent to the Operational Guidelines for the World Heritage Convention, was developed for this Convention. In comparison with the World Heritage Convention, the major emphasis of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was on the intergovernmental political framework required to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.

**Refining the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

The concern about safeguarding intangible heritage has led to recognition of the relationship between the concepts of tangible and intangible in heritage discourse. This was already reflected in the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention where the definition of intangible cultural heritage clearly recognised the relationship between the intangible and tangible aspects. As stated in Article 2, intangible cultural heritage means not only the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills, but also the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith. This implies that focusing only on the intangible aspects is insufficient to adequately ensure its viability. In this regard, both Kono (2004) and Stovel (2004) have drawn attention to the relationship between the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and the 1972 World Heritage Convention. According to them, the inclusion of ‘cultural space’ as part of the intangible cultural heritage defined by Article 2 of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention could fall into the category of ‘cultural landscape under the World Heritage Convention which also covers the intangible aspects of the significance of place.
A number of these issues were resolved with the adoption of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention that came into effect in 2006, and as of May 2011 the number of Member States had already reached 136 (UNESCO 2011b). As of 2011, more than 200 elements have already been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It can be said that the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention is still in the early stage of its evolution, and the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention need further development. Although these guidelines were adopted in 2008 and amended in 2010 to provide the criteria for inscription, they still do not clearly explain how to assess intangible heritage. This remains a challenge to those in UNESCO and elsewhere who wish to see the Convention succeed in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. While the World Heritage Convention is facing the issue of imbalance in its List, it does make clear the conditions for the protection of the inscribed properties. The 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention has yet to demonstrate that its impact will not merely be the drawing up of a list of intangible cultural heritage. As Stovel (2004:130) reminded the Member States, ‘both of these Conventions are meant not just to create lists of sites or places or objects or traditions, but in fact to provide examples of best practice, which we can refer to for guidance’.

Timothy Curtis, the head of the Culture Unit in UNESCO Bangkok, acknowledged that just as in the case of the Operational Guidelines for the World Heritage Convention, more work needs to be done on the development of the Operational Directives (personal conversation, 26 January 2011). He also expressed his concern about the motive for listing the intangible cultural heritage for tourism purposes. He emphasised that tourism could come later as the result of being listed but not as the primary motive to nominate for the listing. For this purpose, he felt that there is still a need to organise more workshops to promote a better understanding of the 2003 Convention.

Japanese involvement and the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention

Japanese government’s strategic involvement on the establishment of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention

As discussed in Chapter 4, the Japanese government strongly supported the 2003 Convention, together with the other efforts of UNESCO Director-General Matsuura, as part of its cultural diplomacy. Japan was heavily involved in all aspects, from the drafting of the Convention to providing financial assistance through the Funds-In-Trusts and ACCU. As Kono (2004:37) has suggested, Japanese efforts in establishing the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention can be compared to the initiative of the United States 30 years earlier when the World Heritage Convention was adopted in 1972. Since Japan already had a tradition and system for safeguarding intangible heritage, the so-called ‘Living National Treasure’ provision, as part of the Japanese National Law for the Protection of
Cultural Properties, the influence of Japan was also crucial to the development of the initial model of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, as has been explicitly claimed by the ACCU (2007:10).

UNESCO has taken a number of measures in response, such as the Recommendation adopted in 1989 on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore and a 1993 programme named Living Human Treasures, which is modelled on the Intangible Cultural Assets Preservation System under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties of Japan, stipulated in 1950.

Although the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was adopted fairly quickly compared with the other conventions, Japanese experts working to have the Convention supported found it difficult to have their ideas accepted. As Kono (2004:39) recalled, ‘At the first intergovernmental meeting, all European countries except the Netherlands expressly opposed the idea to make such a convention, thus the meeting almost collapsed’. Nevertheless, the Convention was redrafted a number of times and was finally passed (see Chapter 4).

In the face of this lack of support, during the preparation of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, Japan took a leading role throughout most of the debates and negotiations. Kono (2004:39), who has been involved since the drafting of the Convention as one of the Japanese representatives, justified this on the grounds that Japan was the first country in the world that had adopted the notion of intangible cultural heritage under the national cultural heritage conservation system, and that this experience, lasting more than 50 years, entitled Japan to take the lead. At the same time, the Japanese government explicitly used the opportunity to extend the reach of its cultural diplomacy:

Japan believes that support for the Cultural Heritage that is the pride of a nation touches the hearts of people directly. This kind of aid does not stop with just material support but also conveys Japan’s knowledge, skills and heart. Cherishing culture can bring about a great long-term benefit.

(MOFA 2011c)

There are, however, some important differences between the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and the Japanese model, especially in the way that the concept of ‘outstanding’ or ‘important’ heritage are formulated in the Convention and in Japan’s 1950 Cultural Property Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. In the national system, only what the state government designates as ‘important intangible cultural property’ is recognised and financially supported. The spirit of this law appeared in UNESCO’s activities and programmes prior to the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention as well, for example in the articles of the Proclamation of Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage Programme. This concept was initially proposed for the 2003 Convention as the ‘list of masterpieces of intangible cultural heritage’, but, as indicated above, it was changed due to the opposition view that it was reminiscent of the concept used in the World Heritage Convention (Smeets 2004:143–145). The concept of ‘representativeness’ in the Convention is based on the thought that ‘all items of the
Intangible cultural heritage in the world should have the same value’ (Kono 2004:41).

During a number of initial Intergovernmental Meetings of Experts, the idea of listing was discussed at length and opposed by delegations mainly from Europe, although the Director-General encouraged the idea. The idea of creating lists was eventually supported by a majority of Member States by 2003, but only after extensive negotiation, discussion and lobbying prior to the voting. In the third session of the Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts on the Preliminary Draft Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in June 2003, there were two clear groups – those who supported the idea of a list and those who did not. Japan was at the forefront of the first group, with strong support from the delegates of the Netherlands in particular. Just as during the establishment of any convention not only Japan but also other countries were lobbying and negotiating continuously during the Expert Meetings and Intergovernmental Meetings. Hafstein (2009:98–99), writing of his experience at the meeting in June 2003, recalled that:

I later heard through the grapevine that the Japanese delegation was busy taking other delegates to lunch. All kinds of lobbying and negotiations were taking place behind the well-lit scenes of the meeting room at Place Fontenoy, out of earshot from microphones and multilingual headsets [...]. There was a great deal of informal diplomatic manoeuvring during coffee and lunch breaks and no doubt also over white-clothed Parisian dinner tables.

In 2008, the author was able to witness similar manoeuvrings during a 2008 UNESCO Intergovernmental Meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Dutch representation included a scholar specialised in Indonesian culture, and demonstrated their keen ongoing support for Indonesia’s Wayang puppet theatre, which was listed in 2007. Given the fact that the Netherlands had not then signed the Convention – it did not do so until 2012 although Indonesia had signed in 2007 – this was clearly a case of the Netherlands demonstrating its form of cultural diplomacy in relation to their former colony.

Japan Funds-in-Trust

In preparation for the 2003 Convention, Japan had been providing financial and technical support to safeguard and promote the intangible cultural heritage of many countries through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which had been established in 1993. The aim of these funds is ‘to assist developing countries to take action to preserve, revitalise, promote and transmit to future generations their intangible cultural heritage’ (UNESCO 2005b:10).

This financial support has assisted efforts to safeguard and promote a number of dance and musical forms, as well as craftsmanship, that were in danger of
being extinguished in many parts of the world. Since the Fund started in 1993, 62 such projects have been completed and, currently, 33 projects are under way (MOFA 2011d). At the time the Convention was adopted in 2003 Japan had already contributed about US$9 million to this Fund and the figure increased to US$12.57 million in 2008 (MOFA 2011d). Although the main aim of the Fund was to assist developing countries, the Fund has in fact contributed to countries, both developed and developing, in all regions of the world. Between 1993 and 2005, Asian countries were the major recipients of the Fund but in recent years the Fund has provided more assistance to African countries. Assistance provided through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust helps disseminate not only UNESCO’s efforts to protect intangible cultural heritage but also promotes the contribution of the Japanese government.

These projects cover various activities, such as:

- the publication of an art book on East Asian lacquer ware (Myanmar, 1997);
- the International Expert Meeting for the Safeguarding and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Vietnam (Vietnam, March 1994);
- audiovisual documentation of the oral heritage of Mongolia (Mongolia, August 1999–May 2002);
- workshops for the Inheritance of National Costume-Making Skills in Asia, (China, July 2000–July 2002);
- an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage in Lithuania (Lithuania, September 2000–September 2001); and

**Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)**

Since the late 1990s, the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) has been playing an important role in preparing and promoting the establishment of the conservation system for intangible cultural heritage through a number of seminars and training sessions in Japan. This was one of the means by which the Japanese system and concept of safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage was disseminated to the Member States. Domestically, in Japan, this is considered to be part of Japan’s contribution to the international community (see Chapter 4).

In 1998, representatives from 19 countries including Japan, and Aikawa, Chief of Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, as the representative of UNESCO, joined the Regional Seminar for Cultural Personnel in Asia and the Pacific, held in Tokyo. The discussions were based on a questionnaire conducted earlier in 1997. At the seminar, the major issues faced by most of the participating countries were identified as:

- an inadequate legal system, and a lack of budget and human resources;
- a lack of training opportunities for personnel involved in this field;
• a lack of criteria for defining which traditional/folk performing arts should be preserved;
• a lack of local people’s awareness as to why traditional/folk performing arts should be preserved and promoted; etc. (ACCU 1998).

As one of the first steps in the preparation of the new international standard for the protection of intangible cultural heritage, the seminar came up with a number of suggestions. These were:

• to formulate and execute national policies;
• to conduct scientific investigation;
• to reinforce advocacy activities for making programmes and allocating budget and personnel;
• to create awareness among government personnel, and people in general, of the importance of this kind of activity (ACCU 1998), etc.

In 1999, ACCU and the Thai National Commission for UNESCO coorganised the Regional Seminar for Cultural Personnel in Asia and the Pacific – Preservation and Promotion of Traditional/Folk Performing Arts’. The seminar revealed major problems being faced by Asian countries. As a result, it defined a number of measures that needed to be taken, including:

• encouraging the involvement and participation of communities in the collection and preservation of traditional/folk music;
• promoting international cooperation;
• protecting intangible folklore from exploitation;
• upgrading technology and human resources (ACCU 1999).

In 2000, ACCU organised the Regional Seminar for Cultural Personnel in Asia and the Pacific entitled ‘Building a Network for the Preservation and Promotion of Traditional/Folk Performing Arts’. This was held from 8–12 February in cooperation with UNESCO, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO and ACCU. The seminar brought 21 experts from 19 UNESCO Member States to Tokyo, where they joined those from the previous seminar of 1998. The 2000 seminar focused on the issue of promoting the concept of ‘intangible cultural heritage’ and the establishment of a data bank on traditional/folk performing arts. It identified as major concerns the misinterpretation and insufficient understanding of the term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ and the lack of primary data on intangible cultural heritage (ACCU 2002). One of the findings of this seminar was the need to identify the responsible authorities and to conduct inventories of intangible cultural heritage at a national level in order to establish a data bank. As a result ACCU agreed to hold a regional seminar every two years.

In 2002, ACCU organised another regional seminar entitled ‘Promotion of the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity’ in Tokyo. This time the number of participating countries increased to 28
The seminar discussed the Japanese system of protection of intangible cultural property as well as the UNESCO programme on the Proclamation of Masterpieces. In the country report session, six Member States – China, India, Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Uzbekistan – presented their lists of proclaimed Masterpieces in their countries, while other countries presented progress reports on national systems and work regarding intangible cultural heritage.

In 2004, ACCU held the ‘Regional Meeting on Promotion of Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage’ in Osaka (ACCU 2004a). Twenty-seven countries joined this meeting and presented reports on their progress. In December of the same year, ACCU held a Workshop on Inventory-Making for Intangible Cultural Heritage Management in Tokyo (ACCU 2004b). This workshop basically provided sessions based on the Japanese experience and their system regarding inventories and the protection of intangible cultural heritage. Since then, ACCU activities regarding intangible cultural heritage have focused on the promotion of the Convention and inventory-making. Its subsequent major activities have been as below:

- Sub-Regional Meeting on Inventory-making Methods (Bangkok, Thailand, 13–16 December 2005);
- UNESCO–ACCU Expert Meeting on Community Involvement in Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (Tokyo, Japan, 13–15 March 2006);
- Symposium on Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Tokyo, Japan, 23 August 2006);
- UNESCO–ACCU Expert Meeting on Transmission and Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage through Formal and Non-formal Education (Chiba, Japan, 21–23 February 2007);
- Workshop for Youth Participation in Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and Community Development, (Tsuruoka, Japan, 8–11 June 2007);
- Promotion of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage through Workshops on Creating Related Public Relations Materials by Art/Design Students (Sagamihara, Japan, 2–5 July 2007);
- 2008–2009 International Partnership Programme for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2nd Training Course for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Nara, Japan, 11–17 December 2008);
- 2nd Workshop for Better Practices in Communities’ intangible cultural heritage, Revitalisation for Promotion of the UNESCO 2003 Convention (Tokushima, Japan, 13–15 November 2009);

The Japanese National System and the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention

The first three elements of the intangible cultural heritage of Japan inscribed on the 2008 Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity are the Nohgaku Theatre, the Ningyo Joruri Bunraku puppet theatre and the Kabuki Theatre. All are derived from the existing list of Important Intangible Cultural Properties in the Japanese national system and were proclaimed as Masterpieces before inscription on the UNESCO Representative List in 2008. All three types of the inscribed performances are widely performed in high-class regional theatres and often tour overseas to showcase ‘Japanese culture’. They are very iconic in their representation of Japanese culture and at the same time present a model of how traditional culture is well protected and cherished.

Even though Japan played a key role in having the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention reflect the principles of its national system, there are still significant gaps in adapting the Convention to this system. In working towards the Convention, Miyata (2010:2) recalled that:

it is not yet determined how we will handle new ideas stated in the Convention. So far, we have only focused on the effects the Convention may have on the Japanese system and just tried not to create any confusion. We still have a lot to do before we fully address the Convention […] In principle, we decided to choose an element to be nominated from the three categories evenly. We made it clear that any one category should not be disproportionately emphasised […] We consequently made it a basic rule to nominate eventually all elements listed on the national inventory for the UNESCO Representative List.

Later, in 2010, according to a staff member of the Agency of Cultural Affairs (personal conversation, 20 August 2010), Japan’s plan was to nominate the elements in order of the year in which they were designated in the national list, starting with the oldest designation. However, there is currently one exception. Although the Traditional Ainu Dance was inscribed on the the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009, according to the person in charge of intangible cultural heritage at the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the national government decided to include this in the nomination to reflect Japan’s recognition of and support for cultural diversity (comment made at a closed seminar, Tokyo, 4 August 2009).

Some of the differences between the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and the Japanese system pose challenges for Japan in implementing the
Convention. For example, the Convention’s definition covers a wider scope than that of the three categories under the Japanese national system, Intangible Cultural Properties, Intangible Folk Cultural Properties and Preservation Techniques for Cultural Properties (see also Akagawa 2014b).

For other countries where an inventory of intangible cultural heritage has not yet been developed, it can be expected that once a national system is established, a Member Party would naturally have the item most recognised nationally, or the element that best portrays the image of the country, listed first. Due to differences between cultural boundaries and contemporary national boundaries, issues may arise when several Member States practise similar cultural elements. In this situation, a member state will strive to be the first to have the element that is shared among the cultural groups listed under its name.

In contrast with the Japanese national system, the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention focuses on the role of the community; that is, recognition of intangible cultural heritage recognises not only the heritage element but also the presence of the community. Nevertheless the Japanese national system does also have this as a side-effect within the country since, as Barbara Thornbury (1999:233) notes, local performance exhibits the pride of local community. She gives the example of kumi odori – a musical dance–drama in Okinawa – which is significant ‘not just as a splendid form of entertainment for visiting dignitaries but [as] a statement of Okinawan pride in their own culture’.

Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is thus not just about preserving traditional performance, as it also has political significance. Continuity of the intangible cultural heritage frequently results from the revision or reinvention of traditional practices over the course of time and at the same time can also be influenced by the context of asserting local or national identity. The reinvention of traditional performance, such as traditional dances performed in restaurants and visitor centres, is primarily used for tourism purposes, and consequently it is frequently criticised since it is taken out of context, which undermines the original meaning of the performance. To what extent the evolution and transformation of traditional forms can be acceptable are issues to consider. For example, in the case of Ainu culture, Kato Tadashi, then President of the Traditional Ainu Dance Preservation Association, said that:

We are now considering how to develop Ainu culture and the traditional Ainu dance. Some of us have created a new dance, based on the traditional Ainu dance but arranged in a modern way for theatre performance. Some younger people have formed a band for modern music, using a Tonkori, a string instrument of the Karafuto Ainu, which they connect to a small amplifier.

(Kato 2010:5)

According to the principles of the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, local communities should play a key role in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Therefore the local effort to revitalise intangible cultural heritage by introducing new performances should be respected, as it is ‘authentic in the
sense that the performances are self-sustaining and providing a certain satisfac-
tion to both the performers and the spectators’ (Kawada 1999:177). Under the
Japanese national system, however, the issue of consent from the community is
not clear. Although administrative decentralisation took place in Japan, the con-

servation of the cultural heritage listed in the national system remains very much
a matter for the national government, particularly in terms of budgeting. More-
over, although as Miyata Shigeyuki, Director of the Department of Intangible
Cultural Heritage, the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, has
pointed out, the Japanese government consults with the local community in
terms of planning for the safeguarding and maintenance of heritage, this is not
specified in the 1950 Cultural Property Law. Yet, as Miyata (2010:3–4) says,
community support is essential in practice since:

The government’s assistance works only when the community has the inten-
tion of keeping it alive. In other words, it is the community or local people
that contribute to make specific safeguarding plans, and the national govern-
ment only helps them to do so […] The Japanese government fully consults
with the community when designating or making a plan to safeguard any
cultural properties. However, it is not specified in the law that the govern-
ment should obtain prior consent from the community, nor is it common that
two parties sign an agreement.

Related to this aspect, anthropologists such as Iwamoto Michiya (岩本通弥)
(2007) have raised concerns that the designation imposed on a local community
by a decision of the national government could create a burden for that com-
munity, since it would then be obliged to accept the value determined by the
national government and ‘look after’ the place or maintain the activities. Others,
such as Morita Shinya (森田真也) (2007), drawing on the example of a festival
at Taketomijima, have argued that local communities which are able to take
advantage of the status of legitimacy that national designation provides, and suf-
ficiently skilful in maintaining the control over their value, can benefit from the
designation. Thus, in his opinion, the designation does not necessarily mean that
the community has been forced to accept the prescribed value from the state.

Another fundamental problem of the framing of safeguarding of the intangi-
ble cultural heritage under the national system is that the continuity of practices
relies largely on the individuals who hold the intangible cultural heritage skills,
and on whether the skills are officially designated. There have been many cases
where local traditional performances were not recognised or did not fit into the
legal framework for the designation. This issue will persist, as the scope of the
‘elements’ for the national system is limited and tends to favour heritage that fits
the narratives which represent the nation. Elaborating on this limitation Kawada
Junzo (川田順造) (1999:176) notes that:

To my personal knowledge, there is an excellent strolling biwa lute player
and singer, the last one in Kumamoto Prefecture in Japan. This kind of
music was traditionally reserved for blind people. Since strolling performances are no longer possible, this blind old man lived alone in penury in a remote village. Several researchers of traditional popular music, including me, recorded his performance, wrote about him in magazines, and organised a concert at which he performed in a small music hall in Tokyo. But he died at a very old age without a successor. Such a popular performing artist and many other strolling players do not qualify for recognition and support as ‘living national treasures’.

Another difficulty for the biwa lute player and singers is that traditionally the players are visually impaired. If disability is the qualifying condition, this could pose wider issues when applying the contemporary legal framework. This could be similar to the case of castrati, male singers who have to be castrated to perform a category of singing, a practice that is no longer acceptable under contemporary law.

Another example is the Sinterklaas tradition in the Netherlands, which in recent years has been under increasing criticism because of the representation of Sinterklaas’s ‘helper’, Zwarte Piet (or Black Peter), as ‘black’. Critics point to this representation as a continued expression of racial attitudes and practices of servitude from a previous era. Nevertheless, Sinterklaas has remained a unique festival in the Netherlands, particularly directed at children. The Sint, Saint, is said to come annually from Spain along with his ‘helpers’ and arrive in each city through the canal in a small boat. On 5 December, children will place some hay and sweets in a wooden clog for the Sint’s horse and for the helpers. Presents, supposedly from Sinterklaas, are left behind by Zwarte Piet. These are discovered the following morning accompanied by a short poem related to the recipients’ personality and character. It is only after 6 December that Christmas trees will be displayed and the nativity of the Christ is celebrated. This Dutch family tradition remains distinct from Santa Claus or Father Christmas welcomed on 25 December, which has now become a more or less standardised event internationally.

Negative international commentary and the pursuit of ‘political correctness’ amongst groups within Dutch society is increasingly questioning this tradition despite the fact that it is still much loved by the general public and has been passed down for generations. Supporters of this Dutch version of the traditional Sinterklaas event fear that this criticism will force Dutch society to modify what is seen as an offending presentation or, alternatively will lead to the gradual decline of this family event as people would feel increasingly uncomfortable celebrating it (personal communications with academics in the Netherlands, 7 December 2013).

Summary

As outlined in this book, Japan is one of the countries that has been protecting intangible cultural heritage for many years under a national legislative system.
The 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, together with the discussion on authenticity and the earlier Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), are Japan’s major contributions to the international discourse on the protection of cultural heritage. Japan strategically funded and pushed its way forward, especially for the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, to mark its presence on the international stage. In the next chapter, a case study of Vietnam is introduced to explore in detail the role of Japanese cultural diplomacy within the Asian region. This case study reveals how Japan has contributed to and supported Vietnam’s heritage conservation as a form of ‘soft diplomacy’. It also investigates how such practice may impact on the direction of Vietnamese national policies towards enhancing Vietnam’s cultural identity.
6 Vietnam case study

Vietnam’s nationalist history and Japan’s Official Development Assistance to Vietnam

Introduction

With the reunification of Vietnam in 1975, following the 6th Party Congress (1986) and the introduction of Doi Moi policies and after the Cold War, foreign aid from the developed world began to flow into Vietnam. In 1994, the United States lifted its embargo on aid to Vietnam and normalised its relations in the following year. Japan resumed its full scale ODA to the Hanoi Government in 1992 and has been the leading donor of ODA to Vietnam since 1995. Unlike other donors, Japan’s assistance has been specifically targeted at intensive infrastructure development in transport, power, schools and hospitals and as a result, Vietnam has become one of the most important recipients of Japan’s economic cooperation programme (MOFA 2011e). Japan has instituted a number of aid programmes worldwide, but the distinctive aspect of its aid to Vietnam has been that it was the first time that Japan attempted to go beyond its traditional ODA principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the recipient countries (Shiraishi 2009:29).

Japan has conducted a number of policy-oriented programmes in Vietnam since 1995, two of which are particularly notable. The first was the ‘Study on the Economic Development Policy for the Transition toward a Market-Oriented Economy in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam’, also known as the Ishikawa project, which was supported by JICA and implemented between 1995 and 2001. The second was the ‘Judicial System Support’ programme, supported by JICA, which commenced in 1996 and was still continuing as of 2011.

The ‘Study on Economic Development Policy’ was agreed upon during the visit of the former Communist Party General Secretary, Do Moi, to Tokyo in April 1995 (GRIPS n.d.). The project was implemented in a partnership between JICA and the Vietnamese Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI). In this project, one of Japan’s major contributions was to assist in the implementation of Vietnam’s Sixth Five-Year Plan (1996–2000), its Seventh Five-Year Plan (2001–5) and its Ten-Year Strategy (2001–10). Approximately twenty academics from both countries participated in this programme to ensure that intensive discussion would lead to an appropriate understanding of Vietnam’s requirements and a consensus on both sides as to how these would be achieved (GRIPS n.d.).
Official statements by the MOFA in 2004 indicate that the Japanese government was aiming to develop a more assertive strategy in the delivery of its aid programmes. It noted that such assistance should enable Japan ‘to demonstrate intellectual leadership in global assistance trends and to convey Japan’s concepts on development and assistance’ (MOFA 2004b:26–27). Later analysis by the Graduate Research Institute of International Policies (GRIPS) confirmed that projects such as the policy-oriented programmes:

[are] good examples of Japan’s intellectual ODA that shows the Japanese development approach based on long-term orientation and real-sector concern. The project made important contributions in three areas: (i) advice on strategic policy options for the long-term development agenda; (ii) production of various academic research papers including analytic assessment and key development issues facing Vietnam; and (iii) technical assistance to Vietnamese policy makers in research methodology and Japan’s development approach, through a collaborative process.

The second of the two programmes, the Judicial System Support undertaken by JICA since 1996, has been supporting the drafting of civil and commercial legal documents, as well as human resource development. Under this programme, two sub-projects, ‘Japanese Cooperation to Support the Formulation of Key Government Policies on the Legal System’, and ‘Technical Cooperation in the Legal and Judicial Fields’ were implemented in three phases between 1996 and 2007: Phase 1 (1996–9); Phase 2 (2000–3); and Phase 3 (2003–7). JICA also contributed to the preparation of Vietnam’s Civil Procedure Code (approved in June 2004) and the revision of the Civil Code (approved in June 2005). Based on the success of these initiatives, JICA has gone on to be engaged, since April 2007, in the ‘Technical Assistance Project for Legal and Judicial System Reform’, to facilitate the resolution of key issues emerging in the areas of litigation and legal enforcement (JICA 2009b).

In addition to this cooperation on legal and administrative matters, Japan has also been involved in a range of cooperative programmes related to physical projects. This high-level Japanese presence in Vietnam has received a positive response and is usually well publicised. A 2002 evaluation by the International Development Centre of Japan (IDCJ) reported that:

Japanese activities are well known among the people of Vietnam: the national-level hospitals, roads and schools aided by Japan are visible. Not only the direct beneficiaries but also the general public know [of] the existence of Japanese ODA projects, because central and regional governments and [the] Japanese Embassy have endeavoured to improve public relations so that Japanese ODA projects are frequently introduced on television programmes and newspapers.

(IDCJ 2002:8)
This suggests that Japan’s ODA to Vietnam is quite distinct, as Vietnam was the first case where Japan moved away from its earlier ‘non-interference’ policy with regard to its delivery of foreign aid. Under its new approach through the ODA, Japan has been able to exercise a significant degree of influence over Vietnam’s development policy and judicial system. As this chapter aims to show, through its aid programmes Japan has been able to develop a similar degree of influence in the area of Vietnamese cultural heritage conservation policy and practice, in alignment with Vietnam’s own concept of the use of culture as a basis of development.

To understand the significance of Hue, the chapter will begin with an overview of its place in Vietnamese history. The chapter will then proceed to explore the historical discourse presented by Vietnamese scholars on the place of the Nguyen dynasty in Vietnam’s past and its relationship with this former royal centre. The chapter will then outline the direction taken by the Vietnamese government to utilise culture as a basis of development before providing a general overview of Japan’s involvement in cultural heritage.

### Vietnam and Vietnamese nationalist history

Vietnam joined UNESCO in 1951 when it was still under the French colonial administration. From 1954 to 1975 Vietnam was divided politically into North and South Vietnam and during this period South Vietnam took over the member state status of UNESCO (Phung Phu 2009a). After the reunification of North and South Vietnam in 1975, the newly established Socialist Republic of Vietnam took on membership of UNESCO in 1976 and ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1987. Unfortunately, during approximately four decades of warfare following the end of World War II, first against France (1946–54) and then against the United States and its allies (1955–75), many important cultural heritage sites, including a number of legacies from the Nguyen dynasty, were destroyed or damaged. In addition, many of the remaining historic buildings suffered from unpredictable natural disasters, especially typhoons and floods, and from general neglect.

When studying post-war Vietnam’s cultural heritage policy, especially in relation to the legacy of the Nguyen dynasty, the long history of nationalist struggle against the French needs to be taken into consideration. France began to take over in the south of Vietnam in 1858 and by 1885 governed the territories of Tonkin, Annam and Cochin China in the northern, central and southern parts of modern Vietnam respectively. Together with Cambodia and Laos, which became French protectorates, these three sections of Vietnam became French Indochina, with only Cochin China ruled directly as a French colony. During this period, the Imperial Court of Hue came under French supervision and French officials took control of nearly all government functions (Truong Buu Lâm 2000:17).

In its anti-colonial struggle against the French, many Vietnamese nationalists who admired the success of Japan sought its support. Amongst these was Phan Boi Chau (1867–1940), one of the most famous Vietnamese anti-colonialists and
a pioneer of twentieth-century Vietnamese nationalism. He was inspired by Fukuzawa Yukichi (see Chapter 2) and saw Japan’s Meiji restoration as the model for a future modern independent Vietnam (Vinh Sinh 1988:102; Taylor 2001:13; see also Sakai 1972; Shiraishi 1975; Goto 1979). Vinh Sinh (1988:130), a Japanese and East Asian history specialist, and Emeritus Professor at the University of Toronto, has suggested that Japan’s defeat of Russia in the 1905 Russo-Japanese War and its advance into the Western colonial territories in Asia inspired the nationalist sentiment of Vietnamese intellectuals (see also Sakai 1972; Shiraishi 1975; Goto 1979). Many Asian students, including Vietnamese, went to Japan to study. Phan Boi Chau’s ‘Go East’ (Đông Du) movement, begun in 1905, sent about 200 Vietnamese youth to Japanese schools to study modern ideas and learn the military tactics and secrets that would allow Vietnam to achieve independence from France (Nguyen Khac Kham 1988; Vinh Sinh 1988:102; Taylor 2001:13; Goscha 2003:537). Expressing his hatred of French colonialism, Phan Boi Chau wrote:

[T]hey treat us like buffaloes and horses: they suck the sweat and blood from our people; and yet they dare broadcast loudly to the rest of the world that France is here to protect the Indochinese country. Oh! Compatriots, the country is ours; the people are ours!

(cited in Truong Buu Lâm 2000:107)

One of the most important figures to be sent to Japan at this time was Prince Cuong De (1882–1951), son of Crown Prince Chanh and eldest son of the founder of the Nguyen dynasty, Emperor Gia Long. Phan Boi Chau’s aim was to re-establish the monarchical system in order to support action for an independent Vietnam, and so he approached Prince Cuong De to head the Association for the Modernisation of Vietnam (Nam Duy Tan Hoi) (Truong Buu Lâm 2000:178). However, Phan Boi Chau and his supporters subsequently gave up hope for a new monarchy, for which they had envisaged Cuong De to be well suited as the next Emperor, and instead adopted a republican model when founding the Association for the Restoration of Vietnam (Viet Nam Quang Phuc Hoi) (Truong Buu Lâm 2000:162). Cuong De remained in Japan, from where he supported the independence movement, but he died there in exile with his dream unfulfilled (Marr 1971).

Like many other Asian anti-colonial nationalists, Phan Boi Chau saw Western colonial inroads into Asia as the domination of the white race over the yellow race, and entrusted Japan with the role of leader of an Asian alliance, ‘the eldest brother among the yellow race’ (người anh ca da vang) (Vinh Sinh 1988:130). Although he had a genuine admiration for Japan, Phan Boi Chau’s promotion of Japan and her leading role in Asia was in fact aimed at making use of Japan by soliciting its aid for his anti-French cause (Vinh Sinh 1988: 130).

At that time Japan, a yellow-skinned people like ourselves, had just defeated Russia and [was] becoming a strong power. Perhaps they wanted to be lord
Vietnam case study: nationalist history

and master of all Asia. In any case they would help us if only to weaken the strength of Europe – this would be to their advantage. If we were to go to Japan and tell them our moving story, surely they would assist us. Whether they lent us weapons or helped us to buy them, it wouldn’t be difficult.

(Cited in Vinh Sinh 1988:130)

Later, when Phan Boi Chau arrived in Japan, his admiration was extended to Japanese people themselves. He was impressed by Japan’s modern facilities, but more than that, by the self-discipline of the Japanese people, their ability to show compassion to those in need and the apparent political responsibility of the Japanese citizenry (Marr 1971:109–122).

Throughout his life, Phan Boi Chau was pan-Asianist, a perspective that placed emphasis on the common cultural and racial consciousness and heritage of East Asia. Later in his life, in 1925, Phan Boi Chau was arrested by the French authorities and lived under close surveillance in Hue until he died in 1940 (Truong Buu Lâm 2000:105, Vinh Sinh 1988:141). Although later in his life he regretted that he had not accomplished anything significant (Truong Buu Lâm 2000:121), nevertheless he was responsible for an important period in the history of Vietnamese anti-French colonialism and established a bridge for the historical relationship between Vietnam and Japan.

During World War II, Japanese forces were stationed in Vietnam, although under an agreement with the Vichy French. As a formal ally, Japan allowed the colonial French regime to continue to manage the Vietnamese territories on a day-to-day basis until the Japanese took control in March 1945. After the defeat of Japan later in 1945 and the collapse of the Nguyen dynasty, Ho Chi Minh announced the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on 2 September 1945. With France’s attempt to restore its colonial regime and the resistance of Viet Minh (Việt Lê Độc Lập Đông Minh Hội, the League for the Independence of Vietnam), the First Indochina War broke out between the French and the Vietnamese in 1946, and lasted until 1954. According to the intensive 2005 study by Ikawa Kazuhisa (井川一久) and Shiraishi Masaya (白石昌也), both prominent Vietnam scholars in Japan, some 600 Japanese former soldiers contributed aid to the Viet Minh during the war with France. Some of them were recruited as trainers for the Viet Minh troops to transmit Japanese military tactics. These Japanese adopted Vietnamese names and were commonly known as người Việt Nam mới; that is, New Vietnamese (Ikawa and Shiraiishi 2005:8). Following the Geneva Accord of 1954, Vietnam was divided into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh and the State of Vietnam headed by Emperor Bao Dai. The Vietnam War (or Second Indochina War) broke out in 1955 and lasted until the fall of Saigon in 1975.

At the end of the Indochina War in 1975, and more particularly after Vietnam gradually opened up to the outside world after the Sixth Party Congress in 1986, France, the former colonial power, once again saw its former colonies as an outlet for its capitalist and commercial interests (Cooper 2001:203). Indochina
re-emerged as a tourist destination, which showcased images of France’s legacy in the Orient and gave tourists an opportunity to gaze on and consume the tangible and intangible heritage of L’Indochine française. However, immediately after World War II, Japan had also set its foot back into Vietnam again through its reparation scheme (see Chapter 4), which offered significant physical infrastructure development packages to a number of Asian countries, including Vietnam.

**Recognition of the Nguyen Dynasty as a legitimate part of Vietnam’s past**

Despite French interest in Vietnam’s cultural heritage during the colonial era, Vietnamese scholars have been critical of its policy under which a number of Vietnamese buildings were destroyed. Nguyen Quoc Hung, Deputy Director of the Department of Preservation and Museology in the Ministry of Culture and Information, for one, has pointed out that the French approach to conservation focused on preserving selected materials rather than the spirit and meaning of the cultural heritage in the place:

> Western methods was [sic] brought, along with French scientists, into Vietnam. [C]ultural heritage lost its common property, and some relics were spitted out of the heritage to [be] put in a museum or in several In the period of French domination, the concept of conservation by collections […] The French also destroyed many [sic] cultural heritage of Vietnam to settle other buildings serving the imperial regime.

(Nguyen Quoc Hung 2003:61–62, original in English)

When Ho Chi Minh established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam) in 1945, he promulgated a decree to conserve the relics across the whole country and to prohibit the destruction of temples, pagodas, palaces, citadels and tombs that had not been adequately conserved. Moreover, the decree also protected royal documents, such as imperial edicts, certificates and papers as historical evidence. However, due to the outbreak of the First Indochina War, this decree did not come into force until the end of French imperialism in 1954. A new decree, ‘No. 519TTg on protecting and managing historical-cultural sites and scenic landscapes’, was announced in 1957 by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Nguyen Quoc Hung 2003:63). In the 1957 decree, significant elements included pagodas, temples, castles, palaces, churches, citadels, military posts, ancient tombs, residences, caves, mountains, areas, rocky mountains, parts of the rivers, sea areas, gulfs and things depending on these estates such as steles, statues, grave stones, ancient trees, etc., without discriminating as to whether they belonged to emperors, mandarins, courtiers, the military or to the common people.

When Vietnam was finally unified in 1975 Hue was seen as one of the symbols of unification and reminiscent of the past before colonisation when the
country was unified before under the last imperial Vietnamese dynasty. Phan Thuan An, a Vietnamese architect who contributed to the first survey of Hue in 1978, wrote about the feelings the people of Hue had towards their city’s heritage. He cited a local official at a 1997 conference, saying that ‘everyone hope[s] that this place and other annexes will have [the] chance to [be] renew[ed] after a long period of destruction’. It was, he said,

war that destroyed half of [The] Complex of Hue Monuments. On behalf of National Cultural Heritage Conservation, we have to do something for [the] Hue monuments. If we can’t restore [it] all, [then] at least we ought to restore some [of the] valuable architectural constructions of culture and history [that] contribute to the world heritage.

(Phan Thuan An 2006:114, original in English)

Dang Van Bai, the then Director of the National Cultural Heritage Department of Vietnam, in the Ministry of Culture and Information, explained that at the time Hue was inscribed on the World Heritage List most of the monuments in Hue were deteriorating (Dang Van Bai 2006:102). He observed that ‘obviously, the integrity and completeness of the Hue Ancient Capital Architectural Complex no longer remain’. However, when discussing his organic city concept as applied to Hue, Dang Van Bai implied that focusing too much on the architectural and material authenticity alone would not contribute to the integrity of the city, which he considered to be a living organism. He argued that:

As an ancient city, Hue exists as a living organism with periods of forming, developing, prospering, declining and then reviving, we should recognise [the] architectural complex of Hue Ancient Capital as an united perfect whole that lasted hundreds of years with many changes of ecological landscape, urban architecture as well as historical, socio-economic condition.

(Dang Van Bai 2006:102 – original in English)

Thus, from the Vietnamese government’s point of view, it would be necessary to reconstruct the major historic buildings in order to present the integrity of the whole ancient city. This conforms to the statement on the Can Chanh Palace in the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website and literature published in 1994 by UNESCO. It indicates that the Vietnamese government’s desire to reconstruct the Can Chanh Palace was not only to reconstruct the physical building but also to rehabilitate the feeling of the people. A pamphlet produced by the HMCC and Asia Region Architecture Laboratory of Waseda University (Waral-Waseda) entitled ‘Project of the Reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace’, makes the point clearly that:

In February 1947, together with many royal buildings, the Can Chanh palace [was] completely destroyed. [These are] the greatest ever cultural loss(es) during the war of 30 years (1945–1975). However, […] cultural values […]
never perish for good. The Can Chanh palace just like other Hue heritages [will] revive exactly in the same way as our people’s eternal existence [does].

(HMCC and Asia Region Architecture Laboratory of Waseda University (Waral-Waseda) 2000, original in English)

The *Far Eastern Economic Review* journalist, Murray Hiebert, suggested an alternative interpretation linked to the renewed interest in re-creating the Hue heritage. A substantial number of Nguyen buildings were neglected owing to an emphasis on preserving the ‘landmarks of the country’s revolutionary history […] and propaganda which blamed the Nguyen Dynasty for “selling” Vietnam to the French in the late nineteenth century’ (Hiebert 1991:42). Over the years, this has changed gradually, especially since the 1980s when Vietnamese historians began to look again at the role of each monarch and state that ‘those who say the Nguyen Dynasty gave Vietnam to foreigners do not understand our history […] most of the kings struggled against the French’ (cited in Hiebert 1991:42). As such, not all of the Nguyen emperors were considered as betrayers of the country. This movement eventually led to greater acceptance of the Nguyen built heritage as part of the Vietnamese legacy. In the 1990s, many books on Vietnamese identity and cultural foundations, folk beliefs and cultural traditions were reprinted as part of a broader effort to integrate Vietnam’s domestic economy with international markets (Taylor 2007:19), to promote internal cohesion within Vietnam, and also to present Vietnam’s liberal image to the international community.

In one of the junior high school textbooks in Vietnam, *History of Vietnam: Junior High School Text Book* (2008) edited by Phan Ngoc Lien, the ancient capital of Hue is portrayed and described with grand narrative. It mentions the World Heritage status of Hue as the place of the last Vietnamese royal empire of the Viet people. An anonymous academic in Ho Chi Minh City recalls that the government’s attitudes towards the Nguyen dynasty gradually changed after 1990, and the stereotype of the Nguyen dynasty as ‘bad’ was not fixed into the minds of people. In general, the Nguyen dynasty was simply considered to be one of the dynasties in their history (personal communication, Ho Chi Minh City, 20 January 2011).

By the late 1990s even officials in Hanoi were asserting that Hue’s heritage is ‘not so much monuments to a despised monarchy and feudal past’, but rather a representation of the ‘ingenuity, craftsmanship, and hard labour of Vietnamese workers’ (Keenan 1998:54). Thai Cong Nguyen, then Director of HMCC, claimed that the government’s decision was to protect the ‘property created by the Vietnamese people’ (Keenan 1998:54, 57). This is also stated in the nomination dossier submitted to the World Heritage Committee in 1992. Keenan (1998:56) writes about the view of a Hanoi-based historian regarding the people’s feelings towards Bao Dai, the last Emperor of the Nguyen dynasty: ‘People don’t talk about the old excesses but about the good gestures of Bao Dai – like when he abdicated […] He is no longer hated by the people.’
Nguyen Dac Xuan, a leading researcher on Hue’s history, explained the shifting attitudes of Vietnamese people. Revolution was the only means with which they could fight the foreign powers and many Vietnamese were prepared to ‘sacrifice’ everything that they held dear, including ‘imperial Hue’ (in Hiebert 1991:41). In some cases, according to Nguyen Dac Xuan, people were educated to think in certain ways, often under the influence of state propaganda, and they had to conceal how they really thought. Thus, certain acts observed by outsiders did not necessarily reflect how people really felt about imperial Hue. In recent years, the restoration of the Nguyen heritage may have enabled recognition of the past to gradually resurface in their thoughts and emotions.

The information gained from personal conversations conducted during fieldwork with the local Vietnamese in Hue underpins Nguyen Dac Xuan’s comments. These informants expressed little animosity towards the memory of the Nguyen dynasty in Vietnam as most, where they were willing to offer an opinion, simply said: ‘it is part of our history’. For example, one person indicated that ‘If you ask me, to which do I feel closer – French or pre-French – then of course, pre-French. We are Vietnamese and have always been’ (personal conversation with anonymous respondent, 12 January 2011). None of the respondents said they felt close to the French. Vietnam has progressed and its interpretation of its own past has evolved. There was a time when feudalism (phong kien), and wastefulness (lang phi) were declared harmful for the nation. This idea now receives less emphasis. The shift in narratives and the official ideology, as Logan argues, can be seen:

[as] Governments wilfully distort[ing] the collective memory – a strategy [aimed] at manipulating the collectivity, by manipulating its history, by ‘explaining’ its history in order to win support for a particular set of policies, or for the maintenance of their hegemonic power in the present social order.

(Logan 2005:573)

Tsuboi Yoshiharu (坪井善明), a professor at Waseda University specialising in Vietnamese political history, writes that the Vietnamese Socialist Party basically has a pragmatic attitude. He explains (Tsuboi 2008:88–89) that the Vietnamese government is prepared to change or adjust its policies or interpretation of ideologies when necessary to adapt to emerging realities. Plugging the gaps created by the contradictions that occur between the ideology promoted by the party and reality is seen as essential for the survival of the ruling Communist Party. Further, the government has a propensity to follow a country it has judged to be in favour of Vietnam’s own interest. The government’s overriding principle, however, is to maintain its political authority through policies that it judges will ensure Vietnam’s economic development in the context of global interaction.
Vietnam: culture as a basis for development

Today the Vietnamese government sees heritage tourism as important, not only as a means of presenting its national history but also for economic reasons, as a major source of national revenue (Logan 2005:574). Thus, for Vietnam, using culture as a basis for development, by linking it to its burgeoning tourist industry, has been an effective strategy direction. This was made clear at an international seminar: Hue, World Heritage City: Preserving Urban Heritage as a Vector for Development, held on 17–18 April 2000, organised by the Thua Thien-Hue People’s Committee, and the Vietnam National Commission for UNESCO, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Representative Office in Vietnam (UNESCO Hanoi office) and the Lille Metropole (France). Among those invited were Mounir Bouchenkai, Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO, representing Matsuura Koichiro, Director-General of UNESCO, and international experts from Australia, France, Japan and Poland among others.

Prior to this meeting, the Vietnamese government had already injected a considerable amount of funding and effort into conservation projects in Hue. The functional role of cultural heritage was reiterated in an announcement by the Vietnamese Prime Minister in 2008 and affirmed in Conclusion No. 48, passed by the Vietnamese Communist Party Politburo on 25 May 2009, in promoting the city as a ‘cultural festival and tourism city’. This determined that ‘[the city of] Huế [should become] the national cultural and scientific centre in Central Vietnam’ (Nguyen Van Phuc 2009:13). As Nguyen Van Phuc, Head of the Hue Monuments and Conservation Centre (HMCC) International Cooperation and Affairs, explained in 2009, this development strategy ‘created strong impulses which gave Hue heritage a great opportunity to be preserved and promoted, deserving [to be] one of the most typical [sic] heritage site[s] of Vietnam’ (Nguyen Van Phuc 2009:13).

In January 2011, a conference on tourism promotion for the central province of Thua Thien-Hue was held in Hanoi (Viet Nam News 2011a). This conference was intended to introduce coming tourism events and promotions in the province. These included the Hue Traditional Crafts Festival, which would comprise the gastronomy of Hue, as well as the royal cuisine. The Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism planned to launch a number of tourism programmes including ‘tours to discover the treasures of Hue and help tourists understand the legacy of the Nguyen dynasty by experiencing the culture and visiting pagodas’ (Viet Nam News 2011a).

In terms of tourism, Article 43 of the 1992 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam asserts that the rights and responsibilities of the state include the development of tourism and that ‘tourist activities inside and outside the country are to be encouraged and broadened’. Furthermore, it states that the state aims to expand international exchanges and cooperation in the fields of culture, information, literature, art, science, technology, education, health care, physical culture and sports (Article 43). This confirms the intention of the
Vietnamese government to use cultural heritage as a tool for both economic and diplomatic purposes and also for the reason that, as Robert Templer (1999:262) explained, the ‘emphasis on cultural identity, history and locality, usefully reinforce many of [the Communist] Party’s ideas about nationalism without throwing up challenges’.

Articles 30 to 40 of the 1992 Constitution refer to the Vietnamese nation’s cultural heritage. Cultural heritage is regarded as one of the important elements in building and safeguarding the country, as is made clear in the first paragraph of the Constitution’s preamble:

Through the millennia of their history the Vietnamese people have worked hard and creatively and fought valiantly to build and safeguard their country, in the course of which the nation’s tradition of unity, humanity and of staunch and indomitable struggle has been forged and its cultural heritage built and nurtured.

This focus on ‘national identity’, of which cultural heritage is a medium, is highlighted in Article 30:

The State and society preserve and develop a progressive Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity; and inherit and enhance the values of the multi-ethnic Vietnamese civilisation, Ho Chi Minh’s thought, ethics and style; assimilate the quintessence of human culture; and foster all the creative talents of the people.

However, it is also clearly stated that ‘the State assumes the unified administration of cultural development. Reactionary and depraved ideologies and culture are to be banned; superstition is to be driven out.’ Logan comments that ‘Vietnam severely limits civil and political rights in order to maintain the one-party rule that is seen as essential to hold the country together and to prosper (Logan 2010:193).

Aikyo Masanori (鮎京正訓), a legal expert on the Vietnam Constitution, argued that the 1992 Constitution was very compromising in nature and that in order to meet its goals, it would have to be revised in the near future (Aikyo 1993). He reflected on some contradictory aspects of having a communist regime and at the same time adopting a mixed-market economy. To mask the contradiction, it was important to place more emphasis on President Ho Chi Minh’s thoughts and present him as a symbol for maintaining the Communist Party’s power. This was a major difference between the 1984 Constitution and the 1992 Constitution (Aikyo 1993). Thus, since the Doi Moi policy and the 1992 Constitution came into force, the emphasis on tradition has been amplified through the adoption of the thoughts of Ho Chi Minh. Based on Ho Chi Minh’s nationalism, the state and the Party now places more emphasis on policies that help to preserve (bao ton) and promote (phat huy) the nation’s traditional identity (ban sac truyen thong) (Taylor 2003, 2007). The state directs people to remember their
roots (nho nguon goc), and not to lose connection with their cultural roots (khong mat goc) (Taylor 2003:384; Endres 2002:305–309) and further, to ‘harness traditional cultural resources for development, by defining culture as “a great national power for industrialisation and modernisation”’ (Bui Dinh Phong 2001:23–35, cited in Choi 2007:103). This approach has become increasingly apparent and is now embedded in both the policy and the direction of the nation and, specifically, it can be seen flowing through to support national heritage conservation projects.

The phrase ‘culture as the basis of development’ was often heard during fieldwork in Vietnam in January and February 2011, with government officers frequently indicating that conserving or safeguarding projects needed to be in line with this national policy direction. It may also suggest that particular projects themselves may have helped shape Vietnam’s national system for safeguarding its cultural heritage.

Summary

The chapter began by addressing Japan’s ODA to Vietnam and then moved on to the historical background of Vietnam and Vietnam’s nationalist history in relation to Japan to provide an understanding of the significance of the place. The case of Japan’s ODA to Vietnam is distinctive in the sense that it was the first case where Japan engaged in supporting the development of internal policies in the recipient country, describing it as ‘intellectual ODA’. In the next chapter, two examples are investigated: the restoration project related to Can Chanh Palace and the safeguarding of Nha Nhac court music.
7 Vietnam case study
Can Chanh Palace and Nha Nhac Court Music in Hue

Introduction
This chapter examines two cases of Japanese participation in cultural heritage projects in Vietnam, the first involving an example of tangible and the second of intangible cultural heritage. Both projects have been carried out in the Hue citadel in central Vietnam. An investigation of Japan’s involvement in Hue demonstrates how Japan has been able to utilise its expertise and experience in both tangible and intangible heritage conservation as a basis for its cultural diplomacy to exercise soft power.

The chapter begins by introducing the Complex of Hue Monuments, which is listed as World Heritage. It details Japan’s aid for the Complex of the Hue Monuments with specific attention to the history of restoration projects related to the Can Chanh Palace. Following this background, the chapter then traces recent projects funded by Japan involving the plan for reconstructing the Can Chanh Palace and the conservation approach that Japanese cultural aid has promoted.

Second, the chapter presents the intangible cultural heritage case that involves Nha Nhac, the tradition of court music that reached its peak in Hue during the Nguyen dynasty (1802–1945). This case examines the sequence of projects designed to safeguard this cultural tradition that have been funded by the Japanese government and involved Japanese experts and, more generally, Japan’s influence on the development of a national heritage protection system in Vietnam.

The last section of the chapter then discusses the ‘use’ of Hue. The representation of the place caters for different interest groups involved in economic development and at the same time influences the re-creation of national identity. The discussion of both projects reveals how Japanese aid has influenced Vietnam’s practice and the national system for safeguarding its cultural heritage while also supporting the process of portraying Vietnam’s national identity. Interviews and site observations related to this case study were made during field trips to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Kingdom of Thailand in 2011 in accordance with Human Research Ethics Committee.
Japan’s heritage conservation projects in Vietnam

As described in Chapter 4, the Japanese aid system is complex. Funding for foreign heritage conservation projects does not necessarily come under the system of cultural grant aid. Projects are identified in terms of ten categories: basic (preliminary) research, project planning, conservation work, master planning, human resources and training, equipment provision, facilities equipment, installation of a facility, regional development, awareness outreach activity, and financial aid. These different aspects can be funded from different agency budgets. To date, approximately 53 major projects have been conducted in Vietnam funded by Japanese support (National Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo 2011:n.p.). These projects are based in Hanoi, and include the Thang Long citadel-Hanoi, as well as Hoi An, My Son, Dong Lam Village, a number of museums and the conservation of ancient archival documents in various locations (Figure 7.1). Other than Dong Lam Village, all the historic sites are World Heritage listed (National Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo 2011:n.p.).

The Hue case is unique in that it was the first site in Vietnam to receive Japanese support as a conservation project, to be inscribed on the World Heritage List and to have an Intangible Cultural Heritage element listed under the Japanese-influenced 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. To date, the reconstruction project is considered to be the largest in Vietnam in terms of both budget and scale. Throughout the efforts made to safeguard the site, while the projects have involved experts from other countries, Japanese professional expertise and government support have been influential and visible. This has

![Figure 7.1 Plaque commemorating ‘The project for improving the surrounding area of My Son sanctuary’ (photo by author, January 2011).](image-url)
only been possible because of the commitment of the Japanese government and the fact that the agreement between the governments of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Japan suited both of their interests.

The Complex of Hue Monuments

The first World Heritage site in Vietnam, the Complex of Hue Monuments, was inscribed in 1993, after decades of efforts to safeguard the last imperial capital of Vietnam. The site’s significance is described in the nomination document as follows:

Established as the capital of unified Viet Nam in 1802, Hué was not only the political but also the cultural and religious centre under the Nguyen dynasty until 1945. The Perfume River winds its way through the Capital City, the Imperial City, the Forbidden Purple City and the Inner City, giving this unique feudal capital a setting of great natural beauty.

Hue represents an outstanding demonstration of the power of the vanished Vietnamese feudal empire at its apogee in the early nineteenth century. The complex of monuments is an exceptional example of an Eastern feudal capital and of the planning and construction of a complete defended capital city in a relatively short period. The integrity of the town’s layout and building design make it an exceptional specimen of late urban feudal planning (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 1993).

The historical description is summarised in the Advisory Body Evaluation document (ICOMOS 1992) as follows:

The new capital was planned in accordance with ancient oriental philosophy in general and Vietnamese tradition in particular; it also respected the physical conditions of the site, especially the Perfume River and Ngu Binh Mountain (known as the Royal Screen). The relationship between the five cardinal points (centre, west, east, north, south), the five natural elements (earth, metal, wood, water, fire), and the five basic colours (yellow, white, blue, black, red) underlies the conception of the city, and is reflected in the names of a number of its most important features. The Perfume River is the main axis, dividing the capital into two.

The detailed planning was entrusted to Nguyen Van Yen, commander of an army unit specializing in the construction of citadels. Four citadels or defended enclosures made up the city Kinh Thanh (Capital City), for official administrative buildings; Hoang Thanh (Imperial City) for Royal palaces and shrines; Tu Cam Thanh (Forbidden Purple City) for the Royal residences (the two last-named are known collectively as the Dai Noi or Inner City); and Tran Binh Dai, an additional defensive work in the northeast corner of the Capital City, designed to control movement on the river. A fifth fortress, Tran Hai Thanh (Coastal Bastion), was constructed a little later to protect the capital against assault from the sea.
According to the research conducted by HMCC and Heritage-Waseda (2009:x), one of the important aspects of the citadel was the traditional system of environmental control by effectively utilising the significance of Song Huong (Huong River or Perfume River) as both waterway and drainage system.

The town of Hue was badly damaged in hostilities with the French in 1885 and between 1946 and 1954. Hue played an important role as the centre of the revolution in which the last Nguyen Emperor was dethroned. Then, as Hue was near the border of the sixteenth parallel north, which divided South and North Vietnam after the 1954 Geneva Accord, it was again regularly caught up in shifting fortunes during the two decades’ Vietnam War or the Second Indochina War. The entire city, including the citadel, temples and palaces, was severely damaged by military operations in 1968. During the field visit conducted in 2011, the scars of war were still evident in the condition of the citadel (Figure 7.2).

After the victory of the North Vietnamese in 1975 and the country’s reunification under Hanoi, many historic buildings that were considered to be symbols of feudalism were usually excluded from consideration for restoration projects (Long 2003:1). Nonetheless, in terms of its legal status, the Hue complex continued to retain protective classification from the Ministry of Culture, Information and Sport as a Grade AII Historical Property, in successive ordinances in 1945, 1957, 1973, 1984, 1985 and 1986 (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 1993). The entire complex is now owned by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Council of Ministers has approved management and conservation projects for all protected monuments.

*Figure 7.2 Structure in the Hue citadel destroyed during the Vietnam War (photo by author, January 2011).*
Japan’s aid for the Hue Monuments Complex

Japan began its technical and financial support for the restoration of the Hue Imperial City in 1989, three years after Vietnam introduced the economic reform policy (Doi moi) that aimed to create a socialist market-oriented economy (Kinh tế thị trường theo định hướng xã hội chủ nghĩa). Through various organisations, both government and non-government, Japan has contributed more than 4.76 million US$ over the past two decades for the conservation of both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Hue. These contributions are shown in Table 7.1. The comprehensive table of all international assistance for Hue is in Appendix 1.

Japanese assistance to the Hue citadel began in 1989 when the first investigation by Japanese experts took place. At that time, the investigation team was informed by the Vietnamese Government that the conservation of the Hue monuments was considered to be a priority and, in addition, that the Vietnamese government was seeking economic stability and the development of tourism as one of the tools to stimulate economic growth (Ishizawa 1989). The investigation was conducted mainly by representatives of the Embassy of Japan in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Ishizawa Yoshiaki (石澤 良昭) and Nakagawa Takeshi (中川武) (Ishizawa 1989).

Ishizawa Yoshiaki is one of the pioneers of international cooperation in heritage conservation projects in Southeast Asia. With his proficiency in languages such as French and English, he started his career working on heritage conservation at Angkor. He is currently the rector of Sophia University and became the president of the Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage) after the death of Hirayama Ikuo in 2009 (see Chapter 4). Ishizawa remains active as one of the major figures in Japan for restoration projects in Southeast Asia. Nakagawa Takeshi, a professor at Waseda University and Director of Waseda University ASEAN Regional Architecture Laboratory, was working together with Ishizawa at Angkor. Then, when the Japanese government decided to fund the restoration project at Ngo Mon (the South Gate or main gate of the Imperial City), he was invited to be the project leader. He has maintained a close relationship with Vietnam and is currently the project leader for the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace and the Director of Heritage-Waseda at Waseda University.

When Japan started funding the preservation of World Heritage by means of a UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust, the immediate focus was on the tangible cultural heritage that was related to World Heritage sites. Japan was one of the initial countries to be engaged in restoration projects in Vietnam, alongside France and some of the communist countries with which Vietnam already had close relations in the past, such as Poland. Ngo Mon was restored between 1990 and 1992, and Huu Tung Tu (a pavilion at Minh Mang’s Tomb) was restored between 1995 and 1996. In 1993, the Complex of Hue Monuments, including the citadel and several of the imperial mausoleums, was inscribed on the World Heritage List (Figure 7.3). The film Indochine (1992) was filmed at the site after...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Source of grant</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Amount (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 1990–2</td>
<td>Restoration of the Ngo Mon (South gate: the Main gate of the Imperial City)</td>
<td>Japan Funds-in-Trust (via UNESCO)</td>
<td>Hue Monument Conservation Centre (HMCC)</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1994</td>
<td>Facilities for the antique storehouse in the Hue Museum of Royal Fine Arts</td>
<td>Toyota Foundation</td>
<td>HMCC</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 1995–6</td>
<td>Restoration of the Huu Tung Tu structure at the Minh Mang Tomb</td>
<td>Toyota Foundation and Japan Foundation</td>
<td>HMCC</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 1994–2005</td>
<td>Research on the history and culture of Hue</td>
<td>Toyota Foundation</td>
<td>Individuals (about 20 topics)</td>
<td>195,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 1996</td>
<td>Training in Nha Nhac Court Music</td>
<td>Michinoku Bank</td>
<td>Hue College of Art</td>
<td>132,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 1997</td>
<td>Survey of traditional houses in Thua Thien Hue</td>
<td>Showa Women’s University</td>
<td>HMCC, Department of Architecture at the Hue College of Sciences</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 2002</td>
<td>Documentation of Nha Nhac Court Music; compilation of the National Candidate File of Nha nhac</td>
<td>Japan Funds-in-Trust (via UNESCO)</td>
<td>HMCC</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 2003</td>
<td>Training for young researchers in the central region</td>
<td>Toyota Foundation</td>
<td>The Sub-Institute of Cultural Research and Information</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 2005–8 (extended to 2012)</td>
<td>Project for joint research, training and conservation in the Hue Monuments Complex</td>
<td>Japanese government (via Waseda University)</td>
<td>Waseda University and HMCC</td>
<td>3,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 2007–10</td>
<td>Cooperative research on Hue Citadel water network</td>
<td>JBIC via UNESCO Hanoi JBIC (22,340) + Vietnamese government (10,000)</td>
<td>HMCC and Waseda University</td>
<td>22,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 4,759,240

Source: Compiled by the Author from Phan Thanh Hai (2006:145–146); Hue Monuments and Conservation Centre (HMCC 2011); HMCC and Institute of UNESCO World Heritage-Waseda University (Heritage-Waseda) (2009).
the restoration. With Catherine Deneuve as the leading actress, the film presented a revisualisation of the end of *L’Indochine française* for a post-colonial audience for whom the restored monuments contributed an important element.

Since then, assistance has expanded to cover intangible cultural heritage. Projects to safeguard Vietnamese Nha Nhac court music emerged with funds from the Japanese government with Japanese experts. In the case of both tangible and intangible heritage conservation, Vietnamese experts were encouraged to work side by side with Japanese experts and, in the case of tangible heritage, also with French experts (*Daily Yomiuri Online* 2009), since all projects aimed to train local craftspeople and other local staff (UNESCO 1993b). Nha Nhac court music, proclaimed as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003, and then inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008, will be discussed later in this chapter.

**The Can Chanh Palace**

The Can Chanh Palace was originally built in 1804 by the first Nguyen dynasty Emperor, Gia Long and destroyed in 1947 during the First Indochina War. The palace had been restored and partly reconstructed several times over the previous two centuries. The first major restoration was undertaken in 1899 during Emperor Thanh Thai’s reign. New flower-patterned enamelled tiles were used to pave the floor (Phan Thuan An 2006:110). During the reign of Khai Dinh...
(1916–25), the buildings, together with the Thai Hoa Palace, were embellished in 1923 with vermilion and gilding to celebrate the Emperor’s fortieth birthday in the following year (Phan Thuan An 2006:110). Moreover, the Left and Right Houses on either side of the court in front of the main palace were also restored again in 1977 (Phan Thuan An 2006:112).

In 1947, Nguyen Ba Chi, the Director of École Française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO) in Hanoi and an trusted architect, was dispatched by the Hanoi government to assess the damage to the Can Chanh Palace, Dai Cung Mon and the Left and Right Houses. He reported on the state of the Imperial City on 14 September 1947 in the following terms:

Dai Cung Mon – It was completely destroyed [...]. Can Chanh Palace – This house – a place where great mandarins used to have a council meeting here twice a month – is totally destroyed; it now is [...] rubble and all the valuables are burnt down. Only 2 great copper urns, each weighs 1,500 kg, still remain [...]. Left House – Right House – which are on both sides of Can Chanh Palace – are destroyed a little. Presently, Left House is destroyed more seriously. At the beginning of the outside, both sides of the compartments are burnt, many rows of columns burnt half, the ceiling and roof ridge are damaged rather seriously. They are now being repaired.

(Quoted in Phan Thuan An 2006:111, original in English)

Hai Thurng, Vice-Director of the Hue Museum of Royal Fine Arts at the time, described the destruction of the Can Chanh Palace and emphasised its historical significance in the following terms:

Can Chanh palace was the site where regular ceremonies of the Nguyen Dynasty took place for over 140 years. This palace was fully destroyed by fire in the war on [of] February 1947, making a space of abandonment, a feeling of emptiness in the central axis within the imperial architectural planning. It was this palace where events of greatest significance were discussed.

(Hai Thurng 2006:132, original in English)

According to Phan Thuan An (2006:111), around 1960, Nguyen Phuc Chiem Nguyen, from the Department of Construction in Thua Thien Province, conducted site visits and left some drawings for the Can Chanh Dien Palace Reconstruction Project. According to Phan Thuan Anh, the drawings are known to be kept at Ho Chi Minh City. However, so far, no further record on this project has been accessible or even recovered. The political situation was exacerbated in the late 1960s, as the entire ancient city of Hue and many other historic buildings were damaged again during the Tet Offensives in the Second Indochina War (also known as the Vietnam War or American War).

UNESCO began to send experts to the site between 1971 and 1973, even before the war ended in 1975. W. Brown Morton III, an architect at the
International Centre for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), was one of the experts to examine the condition of the remaining structures. His report was published in 1974 under the title ‘The Conservation of the historic sites and monuments of Hué’ (Morton 1974). The possibility of reconstructing the buildings in Hue seems to have been first mentioned in UNESCO documents by Pierre Pichard, an international expert dispatched by UNESCO in 1978 at the request of the Vietnamese government. This was more than a decade before the Japanese government began to engage actively in the conservation of Hue. In his report, ‘La conservation des monuments de Hué’, submitted to UNESCO in 1978, Pichard indicated that the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace would cost 8 million Vietnamese (old) Dong, (around US$1.3 million at the time) (Phan Thuan An 2006:118). He insisted that the reconstruction was feasible only if there was enough information, such as old photographs (Pichard 1978:46). According to Pichard, the work would require:

> a very substantial budget (8 million [Vietnamese] dong) for the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace, which totally disappeared in 1947, and this, starting from 1981. This reconstruction should only be considered if comprehensive documentation can be assembled (photographs of details) about this monument and should not, under any circumstances, be attempted unless it can be ensured that all of the monuments still standing today will survive.

(Pichard 1978:46; translated by author)

Pichard further clarified that the conservation of Hue represented the effort of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, which had taken on this project as a national agenda item (Pichard 1978:47). His report indicated that the principal buildings along the main axis remained significant and provided a potential basis for revitalising Hue. Moreover, many buildings in the area of the citadel and the adjacent market town were still in use and continued to exhibit the cultural life of the city. These historic buildings, he noted, were also associated with local traditions such as poetry, craft activities and traditional Hue cuisine, which he described as ‘fameuse dans tout le Vietnam’ (famous all over Vietnam). Moreover, he recommended revitalising many forms of entertainment, including the royal ballet, traditional music, songs, dances and various forms of theatre that could be performed outdoors. He also suggested reviving the Royal Theatre (Pichard 1978:48), as if he already had a vision of giving new life to this place, well in advance of what was later to become known as ‘intangible cultural heritage’.

The idea to reconstruct the Can Chanh Palace also emerged from discussions between Pichard and Vietnamese scholars. Hoang Dao Kinh, a Vietnamese architect, wrote in his paper (2006) that the plan to reconstruct the palace had been debated in 1978 but was not regarded as the most urgent task at that time. Hoang Dao Kinh wrote in his paper, ‘Reconstruction of Can Chanh Palace is the done thing’:
In 1978, architect P. Pichard and I only expected the restoration of Can Chanh Palace based on the motives that I firstly mentioned in this paper when we took part in the Nguyen architectural complex conservation program in Hue. However, we definitively protested against any reconstruction plan of the palace or of any architectural item at the time when it was even impossible to save the remains [of other buildings]. Saving, imperative and long-term maintenance must be given the first priority! After a quarter of [a] century, the remains of Nguyen material culture in Hue are basically saved, partly restored by scientific methods. The restoration of such a very important architecture as Can Chanh Palace can be now taken into the concern [consideration].

(Hoang Dao Kinh 2006:107, original in English)

In 1980, at the 110th session of UNESCO’s Executive Board, it was argued that:

The historic city and the royal tombs still represent the keystone of the Vietnamese architectural heritage, despite the damage sustained by the city through the fire in 1947, the fighting which took place there in 1968 and deterioration caused by the tropical climate.

(UNESCO 1980:2)

The same document noted that a plan of action had been prepared for the international campaign and its implementation to reconstruct and restore 15 monuments, including the Can Chanh Palace, and to rebuild and restore the Tombs of Minh Mang and Tu-Duc (UNESCO 1980:2–3). The cost of the project was estimated at US$3,984,000 of which the Vietnamese government was to contribute US$757,000. In the last part of this document, the UNESCO Director-General requested the Executive Board to authorise him to launch an appeal for the safeguarding of the Hue monuments. The Executive Board agreed and the appeal was launched on 25 November (UNESCO 1980:5; M’Bow 1981:1).

During a visit to Hue in 1981, Amadou Mahtar M’Bow, then Director-General of UNESCO, reiterated the organisation’s belief that the cultural heritage of Hue was ‘one of the culminations of Vietnam’s cultural identity and indispensable of [sic] humankind’s culture’ (quoted in Truong Quoc Binh 2000:1). After that, with support from UNESCO, the international campaign for Hue’s restoration began, focusing particularly on the funding and capacity building of the Vietnamese personnel. As a result, the HMCC was established in 1982 and in 1983 the Hue-UNESCO Working Group was founded, which operated until 1998. This working group comprised UNESCO representatives, international experts and representatives from among Vietnam’s conservation and museology professionals and was designed, among other things, to raise cooperation between international organisations, government organisations, NGOs, private organisations and the Hue enthusiasts. However, according to Truong Quac Binh (2000:2), in the period 1982–1990, this UNESCO-led international campaign produced only limited results because of the political factors.
As outlined below, these factors were at play in both UNESCO and Vietnam. The political context notwithstanding, the campaign did help to disseminate the importance of the Hue heritage and enhance the capacity of the local staff through training.

The political environment within Vietnam changed significantly from the late 1980s. In 1986, the Sixth Congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party launched the *Doi Moi* economic liberalisation policy. The financial embargo by the US government was only lifted in 1994 during the Clinton administration and this initially limited the impact on the policy. In the regional context, Vietnam started preparing to join ASEAN in 1992 and was admitted as a full member in 1995, its membership helping to integrate its economy into the world economic system (ASEAN 2011:n.p.). As for UNESCO, this was the time when the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew from UNESCO and Japan started to provide major funding to keep UNESCO operating (see Chapter 4). In 1989, Japan had established the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of World Heritage at UNESCO in fulfilment of the announcement of Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru during a speech in London. He said that Japan would develop a “framework for international cooperation in order to realise a “Japan that contributes to the world””. Japan named the strengthening of international cultural exchange as one of the three pillars of its plan (MOFA 2011a, 1988b). The Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage were established in 1993 (MOFA 2011c) (see Chapters 4 and 5).

In 1989, prior to the restoration of Ngo Mon, a general inspection of the Hue citadel area was conducted by Japanese heritage experts and staff from the Consulate General of Japan in Vietnam (Ishizawa 1989). Phan Thanh Hai (2006:145), then Chief of the Research Department at HMCC and currently the HMCC Vice-Director, commented that the survey report in 1989 ‘drew much attention from Japanese sponsoring and researching associations on Hue – the ancient capital’. In 1990, in response to a request from the Vietnamese government for international assistance, the Japanese government decided to allocate financial support to provide for the needs identified during inspections by UNESCO and Japanese experts. Its focus was on the restoration of the Ngo Mon, built during the reign of Emperor Gia Long (1802–20) and completed by Emperor Minh Mang (1820–41). Through its UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust, US$113,000 were provided between 1992 and 1993, as well as technical support. The restoration of this iconic U-shaped structure of brick, stone, wood and bronze with its decorative features was completed in 1993 (Permanent Delegation of Japan to UNESCO 2010). During the project, comprehensive assessments, such as an analysis of the causes of decay, were conducted to develop suitable conservation measures. In addition, equipment and onsite training of the Vietnamese staff were provided (UNESCO 1998b:15).

In 1992, under the Ordinance on the Protection and Utilisation of Historic, Cultural and Landscape Relics (enacted by the State Council of Vietnam in 1984), the Minister of Culture and Information and the Hue Province People’s
Committee announced the plan for the preservation of Hue (Truong Quoc Binh 2000:5–6). The following year, in 1993, the Vietnamese nominated 16 monuments in Hue for inscription on the World Heritage List, known as the Complex of Hue Monuments. This was successfully inscribed under criteria (iii) and (iv), with its significance described as ‘an outstanding demonstration of the power of the vanished Vietnamese feudal empire at its apogee in the early nineteenth century; and the Complex of Hue Monuments is an outstanding example of an eastern feudal capital’ (ICOMOS 1992).

In 1994, ‘Sauvegarde et Développement du Patrimoine de Hanoi et Hué’ was published by UNESCO with financial assistance from the French MOFA. The half-page section that mentioned the construction was subsequently made available in English on the World Heritage Centre website, under ‘Activity: Complex of the Palace of Audiences – Dien Can Chanh’ (UNESCO 2010a). The text as published on the website shows that the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace has been acknowledged, if not formally endorsed, by UNESCO since this time:

This complex was built in 1811, but burned down in 1947. The local authorities wanted it to be reconstructed exactly as before on the basis of the surviving plans and documents. The western and eastern pavilions, which were fortunately preserved, were fully restored in 1990–1991. Once this building has been rebuilt, the whole site will recover its significance and the axis of the Forbidden Purple City and the Imperial City will be re-established. This complex is intended to house the National Library.

(UNESCO 1994:33, UNESCO 2010a)

Phung Phu, Director of HMCC, explained in his 2006 report entitled ‘In regard to the authenticity of the reconstruction of historic buildings at archaeological sites: the Can Chanh Palace and other buildings in Hue, Vietnam’ that the Hue monuments fall into three categories. First, there are the structures that remain as they were built. These comprise mostly the oldest and most damaged (i.e. with 50–80 per cent of the structure damaged). The second category comprises the structures that were restored by the Ministry of Construction during the Nguyen dynasty, while the third category includes the structures that have been restored since the end of the Nguyen dynasty (Figure 7.4).

Recent projects funded by Japan for the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace

In 1994, a joint research project between the HMCC and Japanese experts affiliated with the Asia Region Architecture Laboratory of Waseda University (Waral-Waseda) was officially formed and began a cooperative programme of scientific study, technical training and restoration projects for the Complex of Hue Monuments (UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site). Later in 2001, Asia Region Architecture Laboratory of Waseda University (Waral-Waseda) (established in 1882) became the Institute of UNESCO World Heritage at Waseda.
Vietnam case study: Hue

Since 2002, Heritage-Waseda has been selected as a Centre for Scientific Frontier Projects by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

The initial stage of the cooperation between the HMCC and Waseda University, which ran from 1994 to 2004, had four main goals. These are described by Phung Phu (2009b:9) as:

1. To undertake a comprehensive study on heritage; to provide a scientific basis for the conservation and restoration of the Complex of Hue Monuments sites.
2. To establish a conservation methodology on authenticity using international criteria; and to promote cultural heritage values.
3. To examine how Japan’s technical expertise can be applied and to adopt those that match the real conditions of Vietnam; to undertake capacity training of human resources; and to train personnel in the technology of analysis and restoration.
4. To undertake a feasibility study for the reconstruction of Can Chanh Dien, the central building of the royal palaces of the Nguyen dynasty in Hue, which was literally war-torn and in ruins.

In 1997, the HMCC held an international conference entitled ‘The necessity of [sic] Can Chanh Palace restoration’, which focused on three key aspects: significance, ability and methods of restoration (Phan Thuan An 2006:114).
Participants included Vietnamese authorities related to museums, conservation, architecture, history, construction, the UNESCO Hanoi Office, Waseda University and international participants from countries such as Poland and France. Following the conference, a reconstruction plan was publicised and a model of the palace on a 1:50 scale was made. A long-term commitment was also made by the Vietnamese government, which included a long-term plan (1996–2010) with an investment budget of VND720 billion (US$70 million) that was aimed to preserve, restore and reconstruct over 80 architectural structures. This included the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace (Phung Phu 2006:99–100).

According to the ‘Final Report of the Ninth Session of the Working Group for the Safeguarding of the Hue monuments and World Heritage sites’ (UNESCO 1998b), the objectives of the Planning Project on the Preservation and Development of the Values of Hue for the Period 1996–2010 were:

[to] present all precious values of Hue Cultural Heritage which include those of the tangible and intangible cultural heritages, the cultural urban heritage and the natural landscape and townscape in educating people for the maintenance of tradition, national cultural identity and in improving their cultural enjoyment.

(UNESCO 1998b:9)

In this final report, Truong Quoc Binh, Vice-General Director of the Department of Preservation and Museology and Permanent Secretary of the Hue-UNESCO Working Group, suggested that ‘One of the most important works for [the] long-term conservation and site development plan of Hue is [to] increase the study to define the protective boundaries of site area and [the] buffer zone of [the] Hue monuments area’ (UNESCO 1998b:11). He drew attention to the ‘Hue national scenarios [precincts]’ as cultural landscapes and suggested the importance of the ‘Perfume River’ as the ‘spine’ of the Hue World Heritage Site for the protection of the cultural landscape; this could be realised by expanding the protection zone with enhanced regulation and environmental management (UNESCO 1998b:11). As a result, the scope of conservation projects was intended to become wider, not only to support the conservation of the World Heritage sites, including the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace, but also to take into consideration the cultural landscape and environmental management. However, according to the Report of the Joint WHC/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the World Heritage site at Hue, conducted on 12–22 October 2006, there was no action to consider the cultural landscape or bring the river into the World Heritage property (Boccardi and Logan 2006).

A decade of cooperation projects having been considered successful, a new large-scale plan, entitled the Project for Joint Research, Training and Conservation in the Complex of Hue Monuments, was established for the period 2005–8, with US$3.7 million assistance from Japan through Waseda University. The cooperation process had five main objectives (HMCC and Heritage-Waseda 2009:n.p.).
To contribute to the construction of an international policy for cooperation on cultural heritage conservation between Vietnam and Japan.

To conduct a conservation study of the Historic Eco-City of Hue in conjunction with the logical connection with the Complex of Hue Monuments.

To introduce and apply the conservation methodology and technology of Japan by adapting it to the current situation of Vietnam.

To develop information technology through the establishment of the Centre for Joint Research, Training and Conservation at the Complex of Hue Monuments.

To conduct training for professional employees (Human Resources) in the field of Cultural Heritage Conservation for the HMCC and Thua Thien-Hue province.

During this project, the HMCC received the First-rate Labour Medal from the Vietnamese government in 2007 for its considerable conservation achievements and the promotion of Hue’s World Cultural Heritage (Phung Phu 2009b:8). The project was later extended to 2012. Yet another long-term project, ‘The Planning Project on the Preservation and Development of the Values of Hue for the Period 1996–2010’, has been amended to the period of 1996–2020. In this project, the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace is listed as of high priority (Phung Phu 2009b:6). In justification of the extension of the projects, Phung Phu (2009b:11) stated that the past projects, especially with Heritage-Waseda, had been ‘highly appreciated by UNESCO […] and international experts’ and that the reconstruction project is a ‘common strategy’ of local and central authorities that has strong support from the international community.

The approach involving Japanese academic institutions

A cooperation framework between Vietnam and Japan was developed to facilitate the ongoing projects (see Figure 7.5). As described in Figure 7.5, Waseda University undertakes research projects in cooperation with the HMCC and provides feedback and suggestions to both the Vietnamese and the Japanese government. Based on the research outcome and suggestions by Waseda University, the Vietnamese government and the Japanese government negotiate the future direction of a project and its funding. This model is similar to the Japanese conventional ODA model, in which a private company and/or experts conduct preliminary research and provide feedback and suggestions to both governments. After discussion and negotiation between both governments, the project will then be developed incorporating the experts and/or the private company that provided the suggestions. When the infrastructure is about to be put in place, then other organisations or experts may also be involved from both the Vietnamese and the Japanese governments.

The reconstruction plan prepared by Waseda University, with the cooperation of both Vietnamese and French experts, is based on information gained from several sources, including old photographs, studies of the nearby royal buildings,
Vietnam case study: Hue

historical documents and interviews with experienced carpenters (Nakazawa 2006:125–127). The leader of the Can Chanh Palace project, Nakagawa Takeshi, also noted that his research team searched for experienced traditional master carpenters in Vietnam who possess the traditional skills for working with wooden structures and were able to carry out comprehensive documentation. Through this part of the project they were able to revive some of the construction techniques that were about to disappear (Waseda University Research Promotion Division 2004:n.p.). The research team also collaborated with French researchers and conducted an intensive investigation on the construction materials, using documents and photographs kept in France from colonial times. Nakagawa also stressed the importance of local people being the key to place-making and overall environmental protection. For this to happen, he insisted that international cooperation should include human resource development for local people. Moreover, increased community participation and transparency as well as the disclosure of information, should be realised (Waseda University Research Promotion Division 2004:n.p.). French cooperation regarding documents and archival materials is important, since it was not usual during the Nguyen dynasty for anyone to be allowed to take photographs of the citadel and other monuments that related to the royal family. However, members of the protectorate government were given permission to take photographs (Hoang Dao Kinh 2006:111), and therefore, they were essentially the only ones who held the photographic evidence.

In the report published in 2006, Nakagawa Takeshi did not explicitly mention the need for reconstruction. Rather, he reported on the technical analysis of the

![Diagram of international cooperation between Vietnam and Waseda, Japan in Hue](source: Author, adapted from HMCC and Institute of UNESCO World Heritage-Waseda University (Heritage-Waseda) (2009)).

Figure 7.5 Framework of international cooperation between Vietnam and Waseda, Japan in Hue (source: Author, adapted from HMCC and Institute of UNESCO World Heritage-Waseda University (Heritage-Waseda) (2009)).
site and contemplated different methods of reconstruction. His approach required sufficient information and until that was found and analysed, he rejected the actual restoration projects. His was a very careful approach. He insisted that, whereas ‘some opinions even call for rapid restoration using concrete instead of stone materials [...] the Japanese government team is intent on the strict use of traditional techniques, methods and materials’ (Daily Yomiuri Online 2009). For example, in Angkor, in the past, the conservation works carried out by the French used slabs of concrete to restore the structure, which they recently reworked by dismantling and reassembling (presentation at a closed seminar at the Netherlands 22 June 2011).

In an interview conducted by the Yomiuri News Agency in 2009, Nakagawa elaborated further on his approach to international cooperation:

Our university has accepted into the graduate school several members of local staff from both Angkor and from Hue in Vietnam. Some of these people have already obtained their degree and returned to their native country, where they are active as partners of our project. Their presence is extremely reassuring. However, unfortunately, a situation exists in many developing countries in which power is held by a small group of influential people and staff with specialist ability is [are] not able to exert leadership. I strongly feel that in order to create even small reforms toward a situation in which such staff can have power onsite, a graduate school program is required that can develop many times the current [number of] staff.

(Daily Yomiuri Online 2009)

This approach has been welcomed by Vietnamese site managers. Many have indicated that they appreciate the approach of Nakagawa and the Japanese academics who usually include Japanese doctoral students and graduates as members of the research team (Personal conversation with the local site managers, Hue, 14 January 2011). The local authorities in Vietnam believe that this approach gives a solid basis for sustained cooperation and the nurturing of long-term relationships (Personal conversation with a senior manager at HMCC, government official at Department of Cultural Diplomacy and UNESCO affairs, Hanoi, 13 January 2011). In 2008, Nakagawa Takeshi was awarded the Friendship Order by the Vietnamese State for his contribution to the conservation of Hue cultural heritage (Vietnam MOFA 2008:n.p).

Although the reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace could be seen as being the most important and distinct core of the entire Hue project, Japanese researchers have been trying to pursue a more holistic approach. One of the main ideas underpinning the conservation project for the city of Hue has been to base the management system on the way in which the original city was planned and therefore, revitalise the traditional environment. This is not to imply a return to ancient times, which indeed would be impossible due to disruptions caused by modern development, but rather, to develop an approach to heritage that brings back traditional knowledge, which will allow more sustainable revitalisation of
the citadel and secure its future. This approach essentially considers the entire city and the surrounding environment as a cultural landscape, not only from an aesthetic point of view but also for its functionality. The project thus is not only about reconstructing a single structure but also keeping in mind the entire ancient city planning and environmental management system. Nevertheless, this is not to say that modern residential, commercial and industrial development cannot take place, but that it must do so in a more coordinated way. This has been discussed since the early days of the projects, including at the seminar in 2000 at Hue. Moreover, the experience of the Japanese experts gained from conservation and reconstruction work in Japan, for example, on the Suzaku Mon (Southern gate) of the Heijokyo Palace in Nara or Shurijo, a castle in Okinawa, were mentioned during the project as significant examples. Some of the Vietnamese staff were invited on a technical tour, and to train in Japan to see comparable projects that have been carried out in Japan.

Nha Nhac, Vietnamese court music

The intangible cultural heritage case presented here concerns Nha Nhac, the court music that reached its peak in Hue during the Nguyen dynasty (1802–1945). Nha Nhac, the music of the Hue Imperial Court, was the first element from Vietnam to be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity that was created at the UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. The following sections investigate the efforts undertaken to protect Nha Nhac, and so to further understand the nature and extent of the Japanese financial and technical assistance in protecting Vietnam’s heritage.

Nha Nhac means ‘elegant music’ (Le Thi Thanh Binh 2005:1). In Chinese this is written as 雅樂, pronounced as Yayue, the same writing as in Japanese using kanji where it is pronounced as Gagaku. The term is pronounced Aak in Korean. Nha Nhac is known to have originated in China, as were the East Asian varieties. For example, Japan’s Gagaku was adopted from the Tang dynasty (around the eighth century AD) and the Korean Aak from the Song dynasty (around the twelfth century AD). As for Vietnam, according to the description in Dai Viet su ky [History of Great Vietnam], it was introduced from China during the Ming dynasty (around the fifteenth century AD) (Tokumaru 2004:122).

Nha Nhac was proclaimed a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003 and then recognised in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008. A year later, Japanese Gagaku was inscribed on the same list. According to the proposal for a project, the ‘Implementation of the National Action Plan for the safeguarding of Nha Nhac – Vietnamese Court Music, a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity’, Nha Nhac is the only form of traditional music in Vietnam that is nationwide. Further, it has not only survived in the performance of traditional Vietnamese rituals and religious ceremonies but has also become the ‘source of inspiration for contemporary Vietnamese music’ (UNESCO Hanoi
n.d.:3). Le Thi Minh Ly, the Head of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Department, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MOCST), described Nha Nhac as a ‘masterpiece of [the] Vietnamese People’s creative talent, expressing [the] identity of Vietnamese communities […] not only the confidence and pride of [the] Vietnamese nation but also the community’s consciousness of […] [the] threat of degrading this intangible cultural heritage’ (Le Thi Minh Ly 2004:28).

Although the history of Nha Nhac began during the Vietnamese Le dynasty (1427–1788), it reached its peak and was institutionalised under the Nguyen monarchs of Hue (1802–1945) (UNESCO 2010b). It was ‘performed at annual ceremonies, including anniversaries and religious holidays, as well as special events such as coronations, funerals or official receptions’ (Le Thi Thanh Binh 2005:1). For the Vietnamese, Nha Nhac is not just a matter of performance but also an essential element of the ritual process, as Le Thi Thanh Binh explains:

Rich in spiritual content, Nha nhac provided a means of communicating with and paying tribute to the gods and kings, but it also served as a vehicle for transmitting philosophical thought and aspects of the Vietnamese cosmogony.

(Le Thi Thanh Binh 2005:1, original in English)

With the collapse of the Nguyen dynasty in the mid-twentieth century, Nha Nhac lost its role as the royal ceremonies were no longer performed, and it was subsequently abandoned by the revolutionary Vietnamese. The Nha Nhac performers scattered, many leaving Hue and returning to their hometowns. One of the two remaining instrumentalists, Tran Kitch, who served the last Nguyen Royal Court, has taught at the Hue National Music School (the current Hue Art College) since 1962, while some of the other performers for the last monarch in the royal court continued to teach music to the following generations in their hometowns (Trong Binh 2010:n.p.). In the early 1970s, Tran Van Khe, a Professor Emeritus at the University of Paris, noted that Vietnamese and French musicians and musicologists were interested in collecting documents and undertaking musical research in the traditional music of Vietnam undertaken under the former colonial regime. At the time he was writing, in 1970, he believed that generally ‘[t]here is no lack of public and private societies for the preservation of traditional music in Vietnam’ (Tran Van Khe 1972:41). Key among these Vietnamese musicologists were Professor Vinh Phan and Tran Van Khe. The former has undertaken extensive studies of the musical forms at Hue, including court music, entertainment music and Buddhist music. The latter, one of the most important and influential musicologists in Vietnam, with both a national and international reputation, has been involved in most of the projects related to Vietnam’s traditional music, including the UNESCO projects.

As mentioned earlier, in Vietnam the safeguarding of intangible elements, including Nha Nhac court music was suggested as early as 1978, when UNESCO sent the French expert, Pierre Pichard, to Hue. He later referred to this music in his report, and his suggestions were based on consultations he had undertaken
with Vietnamese government officials and local scholars. Subsequent activities undertaken with UNESCO and international organisations have included activities related to research training, the improvement of performance skills, the interviewing of master musicians who witnessed the Nguyen dynasty court performances, the collecting and archiving of documents, the revival of musical pieces of Nha Nhac, the reproduction of costumes and instruments for Nha Nhac, and the dissemination and promotion of the value of Nha Nhac through performance, public talks and the media (Phung Phu 2007).

After the establishment of the HMCC in 1982, the HMCC began trying to bring Nha Nhac back to life. The Duyet Thi Duong Theatre was restored between 1998 and 2001 with grants from the French government and private companies totalling US$124,000 (see Appendix 1 for the list of grants). In 2006, the Traditional Royal Theatre and the Hue Traditional Art Troop were merged and became the ‘Hue Royal Traditional Theatre’ under the auspices of the HMCC (Hue Royal Traditional Theatre 2010:n.p.). According to Nguyen Dac Xuan, because ‘the instrumentalists in Court were considered as soldiers’ the groups of performers are, therefore, addressed as ‘troops’ in the Vietnamese document (Nguyen Dac Xuan 2004:87). In January 2011, the theatre had around 170 staff, including three troupes of performers, as well as researchers, consultants and general staff (Figure 7.6 and 7.7).

Figure 7.6 Nha Nhac Theatre restored during 1998–2001 (photo by author, January 2011).
Vietnam case study: Hue

Safeguarding Nha Nhac: early attempts

A number of efforts have been made to revitalise the diverse forms of Vietnamese culture. Some projects were initiated by the Vietnamese, and others by foreign organisations or individuals. Some were linked to UNESCO. In 1993, ‘Nha Nhac, Vietnamese Court Music’ was chosen as one of the pilot projects in New Perspectives for UNESCO’s Programme: The Intangible Cultural Heritage, a UNESCO programme directed by Aikawa Noriko (愛川紀子). This programme included five projects in five continents (namely the traditional music in Niger, the creation of a network of institutes for the sub-regions of Central and Eastern Europe, the traditional music and dance of Tunisia, and the intangible urban heritage in Mexico city (UNESCO 1993c). Kawada Junzo (川田順造), from Japan, was elected as one of the vice-chairmen of the expert committee that steered the programme. Kawada is an expert in African studies and obtained a doctorate at the University of Paris V. He was awarded France’s highest cultural honour, and volunteered to work in Burkina Faso, then called the Republic of Upper Volta, for the OTCA, currently known as the JICA. The Vietnamese proposal for Nha Nhac music was presented by the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Vietnamese National Commission for UNESCO. The representative from SEAMEO-SPAFA supported the proposal and offered support to Vietnam (UNESCO 1993c).

In this project, UNESCO provided seed funding ranging from US$50,000 to US$200,000 for two to four years. In the report for the pilot project in 1993, one
expert suggested that the Nha Nhac court music project ‘might serve as a model for the study of other similar urban cultures, especially in Asia’ (UNESCO 1993c:13). Moreover, some experts also mentioned the purpose of revitalising Nha Nhac court music, indicating that it would ‘contribute to the economic development of Vietnam’ (UNESCO 1993c:13). As a result, an ‘International Workshop of Experts for the Safeguarding and the Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hue and its Region’ was organised in 1994. Aikawa Noriko, Tran Van Khe and Le Kinh Thai were responsible for this workshop (Aikawa 2004).

In 1994, a year after the inscription of the Complex of Hue Monuments on the World Heritage List, an ‘International Expert meeting on the Preservation and Revitalisation of the Intangible Heritage of the Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam’ was held in Hanoi, funded by the Japanese government through the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust. The official project for the safeguarding of Nha Nhac began with an invitation from the Vietnamese government and UNESCO to Japanese experts, including Yamaguchi Osamu (山口修), then a Professor at Osaka University, and Tokumaru Yoshihiko (徳丸義彦), then a Professor at Ochanomizu University. The invitation was worded in terms that suggested it was intended to re-initiate the project that Japan and Vietnam had tried to undertake a few decades earlier. This referred to the initial cooperation between Japan and Vietnam in the 1970s in a project called the ‘Asian Traditional Performing Arts’ (ATPA) (Yamaguchi 1999, 2001). Funded by the Japan Foundation, ATPA launched a series of events devoted to a variety of Asian performing arts in the mid-1970s. In the early stages, the project focused on music that ‘can no longer be transmitted in spite of the wishes of the tradition-bearers due to a lack of successors or for financial reasons’ (Tokumaru 2001:233). This meant specifically ‘the musical traditions of ethnic and/or cultural minorities’ (Tokumaru 2001:233). Musicologists as well as musicians from Asian countries including Vietnam were invited to perform in Japan. Unfortunately, the Vietnamese were not able to participate in the 1970s project due to the internal conflicts following the end of the Second Indochina War. Thus, as Yamaguchi (1999:2) noted, the 1994 invitation was very much welcomed by the passionate Japanese musicologists,

[who] immediately accepted the invitation because we shared memories of our efforts some twenty years before to invite a group of Vietnamese musicians and scholars to Japan […]. In the mid-1970s, with the after-effects of the Vietnam War still strongly felt, we had been worried that court music would not survive long enough to be handed down to another generation.

In April 1995, the first field survey was undertaken under the leadership of Yamaguchi and Tokumaru, sponsored by the Toyota Foundation. One of the first initiatives was to establish a university degree in court music at the College of Arts at Hue University. This new course officially opened in 1996 with a new curriculum and a new department, with the support of the Japan Foundation.
This foundation also supported training in research and the video documentation of the *Performing Arts of the Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam*. Workshops were held at Ho Chi Minh City in April 1999, organised by Yamaguchi and other Japanese specialists in collaboration with Vietnamese specialists (UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust 2001:7). This was the start of a sequence of training workshops that continued into the 2000s.

On 24–27 August 2002, an International Workshop on Nha Nhac of Nguyen Dynasty (Hue Court Music) was held in Hue to discuss how to revitalise Nha Nhac court music. The participants were from Hue, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and international participants from France, South Korea and Japan. The workshop took place at the newly restored Duyet Thi Duong Theatre (Hue Royal Traditional Theatre) (Phung Phu et al. 2004b:5–6). Aikawa, then Director of Intangible Heritage Section at UNESCO, who had been involved since the initial project, was invited to give a keynote speech. Tran Van Khe attended as a key person for the traditional music of Vietnam.

In terms of legal measures for protection, the project, ‘Conservation and Presentation of the Hue Monuments Complex 1996–2010’, was officially issued by the Vietnamese Prime Minister in Decision No. 105/TTg on 12 February 1996. The safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage was clearly stated as one of the major objectives of the Decision, focusing on preserving the value of Traditional Court Culture, including court music, court dance, court theatrical art (*Tuồng*) and court festivities (Phung Phu and Nakagawa 2006; Le Thi Thanh Binh 2005). This was followed at the provincial level in 1999, when the Thua Thien-Hue People’s Committee issued Decision No. 1264/QD-UB, which clearly indicated the intention to utilise Nha Nhac court music for the people and at the same time to strengthen the local economy. The Decision stated that the People’s Committee should ‘conserve and present the value of intangible culture, traditional art of the former Huế court [. . .] in order to upgrade the cultural enjoyment of people and develop provincial tourism’. In addition, the Decision made a long-term commitment to the newly established Hue Theatre of Royal Art.

With the adoption of guidelines in 2003 for implementing the 2001 Law on Cultural Heritage, Vietnamese Government Decree No. 92/2002/ND-CP, the Thua Thien-Hue Provincial Party Committee resolved that ‘affirming conservation of Hue royal intangible heritage is one of the three main targets in the conservation work of Hue cultural heritage’ (Resolution No. 06-NQ/TV, issued on 20 January 1998). This ensured that the project for the conservation of Nha Nhac received more support and could move ahead to achieve some of the concrete outcomes that have received considerable attention nationally and internationally. However, despite these efforts and successes, some difficult issues remained and others emerged. The issues identified were:

- Few former artists possessing knowledge of Nha Nhac and the necessary skill and ability were still alive and they were very old;
- The lack of networks among practitioners and qualified staff to carry out research (inventory, interviews, etc.);
Vietnam case study: Hue  

- Declining opportunities to transmit Nha Nhac traditional knowledge and skill to the younger generations;  
- The lack of appropriate systems for the collection of historical documents (texts, photographs, etc.) and a good archive to preserve the existing materials (Le Thi Thanh Binh 2005:2).

With the above issues needing to be addressed immediately, a national action plan to safeguard Nha Nhac was drafted in 2005 and, with the support of the UNESCO Hanoi office, access to the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust was established. But urgent action is still needed to address perhaps the most critical issue – the ageing of the master artists who had first-hand experience of performing during the Nguyen dynasty. In January 2011, a week before I arrived in Vietnam, one of two remaining master performers passed away.

Safeguarding of Nha Nhac: a recent project (2005–9)

This project, whose full title is ‘Implementation of the National Action Plan for the safeguarding of Nha Nhac – Vietnamese Court Music, a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity’, was originally signed for a duration of 36 months, from 2005 to 2008 and later extended to 48 months, ending in 2009. The project consisted of three areas: (1) survey and documentation, (2) revitalisation and transmission and (3) dissemination and promotion (Phung Phu and Nguyen Van Phuc 2009:3–9). The practical focus was on building the capacity of local staff in surveying and documentation, developing the legal framework for supporting ageing artists, publishing promotional material, implementing an awareness-raising programme for schools, revitalising old repertoires, and reproducing traditional costumes and musical instruments (UNESCO 2010b). The amount of funding from Japan Funds-in-Trust was US$154,900 with a matching fund of US$190,000 from the HMCC (Phung Phu 2007:n.p.). For this project, both Japanese and Vietnamese musicologists were called in as consultants. The Japanese expert Oshio Satomi, who seems to have been the successor of her teacher Yamaguchi, and Pham Le Hoa, Dean of the University of Pedagogy in Hanoi, investigated the programme.

As described above, the university degree in court music at the College of Arts, Hue University, in 1996 was a part of the project supported by the Japanese government through UNESCO, with Japanese and Vietnamese musicologists, such as Yamaguchi and Tran Van Khe, as consultants. However, it soon appeared that not all young members from traditional music families had high school diplomas and were thus not eligible to enter this course. Therefore, during the 2005–9 project, the curriculum was modified to form a university diploma course for those musicians who had not satisfactorily completed high school. This led to the HMCC cooperating with the Thua Thien-Hue College of Culture and Art to organise a two-year training course (a diploma course) for 20 young Nha Nhac instrumentalists who were selected for entry through the examination.
Vietnam case study: Hue

(Phung Phu and Nguyen Van Phuc 2009:6). These students were recruited to work at the theatre after the completion of the course. In January 2011, the theatre employed around 170 performers and researchers. Most of those who finished the degree became teachers or continued their studies, focusing on theory rather than becoming performers (personal conversation with a HMCC senior manager, Hue, 13 January 2011).

During this project, some other activities were also implemented. First was the overseas performance of the Nha Nhac troops. In 2007, when the delegation of the Vietnamese State Chairman, Nguyen Minh Triet, paid an official visit to Japan, the Nha Nhac troop accompanied him as cultural ambassadors and performed at the Royal Palace of the Japanese Emperor. It was commented that the Japanese Emperor greatly appreciated the performance and that the performers felt proud and honoured (personal conversation with government officials at MOCST, Hanoi, 11 January 2011; personal conversation with a senior manager at HMCC, Hue, 13 January 2011). This story was heard frequently during the field visit in January 2011. Second was the programme in the primary schools. This programme, implemented between 2006–2008, was designed to ‘provoke the passion for traditional music in teenagers, provide knowledge about Nha Nhac and teaching methods of traditional music for teachers to help their pupils comprehend and care [for] traditional arts, especially Nha Nhac’ (Phung Phu and Nguyen Van Phuc 2009:9).

Lastly, the project initiated and focused on the reproduction of Nha Nhac musical instruments and costumes. Both instruments and costumes are important supporting aspects of the skilled performance and traditional artwork. The experiences and achievements gained through the national action plan were considered a success and, therefore, a second phase and budget has been prepared by the Vietnamese Government (Personal conversation with government officials at Vietnamese MOCST, Hanoi, 11 January 2011).

Development of a national system on intangible cultural heritage in Vietnam and the Japanese influence

Vietnam is one of the first Asian countries after Japan and Korea to establish a national system to protect intangible cultural heritage. Under the Law on Cultural Heritage, approved in 2001, the Articles concerning intangible heritage are found in Chapter III. For example, in regard to the recent project, ‘Implementation of the National Action Plan for the safeguarding of Nha Nhac – Vietnamese Court Music, a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (2005–2009)’, at least two Articles, numbers 20 and 23, are relevant:

**Article 20**
Responsible state authorities must apply necessary measures to preserve intangible cultural heritage and prevent threats of […] its misuse, loss or dying out.
Article 23
The State’s policies shall encourage work to survey, compile, translate, collect, classify and preserve works of literature, art, science, oral tradition and folklore of the multi-ethnic Vietnamese community. These shall be disseminated domestically as well as through foreign cultural exchange.

When the Law on Cultural Heritage (2001) was established, the heritage laws of other countries were consulted. As Japan and Korea were the two main countries that have national systems incorporating intangible cultural heritage, the Vietnamese government naturally turned to them for inspiration and advice. As well as imparting knowledge directly to Vietnamese practitioners and lawmakers, often through ACCU workshops and seminars at the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, Japanese expertise has also been conveyed through personal contact and this has contributed directly to the subsequent revision of Vietnam’s 2001 Heritage Law in 2009. In addition, with the adoption of the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, and with the Operational Directives becoming available in 2008, MOCST recognised there was a need for adjustments to be made to the intangible cultural heritage components of Vietnam’s laws. In 2009, the National Assembly passed some amendments and the Circular for Operational Directives for Inventorying and Documenting Intangible Cultural Heritage (2009) was issued. This document places MOCST in charge of the inventory, and the issuing of certifications and approvals for the list of National Intangible Cultural Heritage (MOCST 2009).

In the Law on Cultural Heritage (2001) Article 4 defines ‘intangible cultural heritage’ as:

intellectual products with historical, cultural or scientific value that have been preserved by memory, writing, passed down through oral tradition, teaching, performance and all other means and forms. It includes language, tongue and writing, works of literature, art, science, oral tradition, folklore, ways of life, lifestyles, festivals, secrets of traditional handicrafts, knowledge of traditional medicine, and medicament, cuisine, ethnic costumes and other forms of traditional knowledge.

MOCST is also planning to introduce and implement a category that acknowledges an individual artist as a person possessing specific skill and knowledge (Personal conversation with government official at MOCST, Hanoi, 11 January 2011). This idea is similar to Japan’s so-called ningen kokuho (人間国宝) or Living National Treasure programme. The official category under Japan’s Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (1950) is Holders of Important Intangible Cultural Properties (重要無形文化財保持者) (see Chapter 3). In order to introduce and implement this category for acknowledging individual artists in Vietnam, MOCST conducted comparative research on other national systems, primarily in Japan and Korea. As a result, the Vietnamese government concluded that, in the case of Vietnam, MOCST would acknowledge a person
with a certificate but they would not automatically provide monetary support for the purpose of transmitting the skill and knowledge. Rather, monetary support would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, via projects. As this is still in the development stage, MOCST anticipates that this funding restriction will ease in the near future.

In the 2009 Circular, the method of developing and arranging the content of the inventories was clarified. For elements to be included in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory, the following criteria must be met. Elements must:

1. Have a representative quality and constitute the identity of the relevant community and locality;
2. Represent cultural diversity and human creation, having been inherited and continued through generations;
3. Have the consent of the relevant community, which makes the nomination of its own free will and is committed to safeguarding the heritage;
4. Be capable of revival and a sustainable existence (MOCST 2009).

The importance of community involvement is indicated in the Circular and the responsibilities and obligations of the communities are clearly stated. It is planned that identification, process and consultation will be organised within the wider scope of the stakeholders. Previously, public servants conducted most of the identification and listing. Under the new approach, it is planned to invite community members, local academics and students to the workshops. Another significant aspect is that before the amendments were passed, there were two contrasting opinions held among members of the National Assembly, whether to rank or just to list the intangible cultural heritage elements. With UNESCO’s support, MOCST was able to convince the party members who were in favour of ranking to come into line with the less hierarchical approach taken by the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (Vietnamnet 2009; personal conversation with the government officials at MOCST, Hanoi, 11 January 2011).

Although the UNESCO expert, Pierre Pichard, recommended revitalising various forms of entertainment in Hue as early as 1978, the full realisation of the importance of Hue’s intangible cultural heritage came later than that of the city’s tangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, it could be said that initiatives to cooperate in safeguarding the disappearing traditional music began long before the influence of the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention or even the tourism promotion that followed the introduction of the Doi Moi policy. In this regard, it could be said that Japanese assistance was initiated by the interest of individual Japanese scholars and their international colleagues but it was made possible by the availability of the funds from the Japanese government. However, it was the decision of the Vietnamese government to conserve both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Hue in the early 1990s and to use the intangible cultural heritage for the benefit of people and their economic development, the policy of ‘culture as a basis of development’, that made the safeguarding of Nha Nhac court music possible.
Japanese interest in supporting the traditional arts and music of Asia began in the 1970s, and since then, the Japanese government together with some other Japanese non-government organisations have been the main contributors of technical and financial support in the safeguarding of Nha Nhac court music. In 2011, Yamaguchi and some musicologists from other Asian countries were invited to an international seminar on Don Ca Tai Tu, a seminar on southern armature music in Vietnam. Don Ca Tai Tu was ready to be submitted to UNESCO as the sixth element that Vietnam wishes to have inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the first element from the southern part of Vietnam (Saigon Times 2011; Viet Nam News 2011b, 2011c; personal communication with an academic, Ho Chi Minh City, 20 January 2011). The invitation extended to Yamaguchi in 2011 is indicative of the amicable long-term relationship developed with Vietnamese academics and the authorities, as well as of his own commitment. At UNESCO, Aikawa has been involved and supported Nha Nhac projects since 1993. Both cases exhibit the importance of the cooperation at a personal level and also of the government of Japan with an intergovernmental organisation.

At a global level, the Vietnamese government has been consulting UNESCO regularly and its heritage projects, such as that for safeguarding of Nha Nhac, have been under the guidance of UNESCO experts from different regions and cultural backgrounds. A significant aspect was that MOCST was able to persuade some of the members of the National Assembly to apply the UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention framework, rather than a hierarchical framework, for the intangible elements in the national system. The main points of Vietnam’s national system, therefore, are largely in line with the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention and, in this sense, the development of the safeguarding system in Vietnam is progressive compared to other states, not only within the Asian region but also worldwide.

The ‘use’ of Nha Nhac

As described in Chapter 5, concerns have been raised over the ‘listing’ of intangible heritage or living heritage because of the way this could interfere with the natural changes that occur over time as a characteristic of a living organism. Intangible heritage, it is argued, is fluid since the person who bears the skill or knowledge is human. Oskar Salemink, specialist in the cultural anthropology of Southeast Asia, and editor of the book Viet Nam’s Cultural Diversity: Approaches to Preservation (2001) commented on the authenticity of Nha Nhac, after attending the ‘Festival Hue’ in 2002, as follows:

With respect to the nha nhac performance, the message is contained not in the symbolic content of the show, but in its cultural form [...] What matters, then, is not the symbolic substance but the cultural form of the performance as an artistic genre – a form which through borrowing, cross-over and
repetition has become quintessentially Vietnamese, and therefore ‘authentic’, in the eyes of a large part of the audience.

(Salemink 2007:566)

He saw that the adaptation of Nha Nhac to meet the preference of the audience affected the authenticity of the performance. A similar example is the performance of the Vietnamese folk song form called Quan Ho, the Quan Ho Bac Ninh folk songs that form the fourth element from Vietnam in the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Representative List. In previous eras, Quan Ho folk singing was vocal singing without musical instruments. However, to make it more palatable and suitable for today’s audience, instruments have begun to be incorporated (personal communication with government officials at MOCST, Hanoi, 11 January 2011; Le Ngoc Chan 2002:n.p.). There are two opinions about the merits of this. One is that since it is a living heritage, it is natural for changes in form to occur. The other maintains that any form of modification from its original should not take place (see Chapter 5).

The ‘use’ of Hue

Through support for heritage conservation projects and research, the Japanese government has been assisting in the representation of Vietnamese identity. Another important aspect of these large-scale physical conservation projects, such as that at Hue, is the significant contribution to infrastructure development. So far, the large-scale conservation projects conducted by the Japanese around the Hue citadel have centred on the monuments, including the restoration of Ngo Mon, Huu Tung Tu (a pavilion at Minh Mang’s Tomb) and of the traditional water irrigation system around the citadel. The reconstruction of the Can Chanh Palace will be one of the largest projects in terms of scale and budget when it materialises. As for the Intangible Cultural Heritage, it was specifically Japanese financial assistance and expertise that contributed to the safeguarding of the traditional music and the re-establishment of its performance at the theatre. The music troupes are now performing as cultural ambassadors for Vietnam and have visited many countries. Japan has also supported the establishment of higher education programmes in order to maintain this cultural form.

Logically, if we think of Vietnam as a socialist country, the narration of the former Nguyen dynasty and the presentation of its royal court at Hue could raise questions. However, as I discussed in the previous chapter, the narration of Vietnam’s history has been changing to integrate many aspects of the country’s past. Some scholars (for example, Aikyo 1993; Tsuboi 2008) argue that the Vietnamese Communist Party has always been more nationalistic than purely ideological and has always taken a pragmatic approach to achieve its aims. In any case, as Vietnam has opened up to the world and the forces of globalisation, it seems that, yet again, ‘globalisation [has] also been provoking a strong localist reaction, reflected in a growing interest in local history, traditions, heritage and cultural identity’ (Logan 2005:573). In this case, Hue is therefore able to showcase
the distinctiveness of Vietnam’s past, as indeed the World Heritage Listing evaluation (ICOMOS 1992:128) claims: ‘Hue is unique in its region of South East Asia [...] and conceived in a different cultural tradition’.

Hue’s heritage conservation works began in 1975 after a long period of war. At that time, before a new and extensive set of remains of the Thang Long citadel in Hanoi was found in 2004, the Hue citadel was one of the few tangible and relatively intact buildings reminiscent of the history of Vietnam before the French colonisation. As the monuments of Hue were known and acknowledged even in colonial times as one of the aesthetic elements of Vietnamese history, this undoubtedly helped to convince the socialist government to seek funding from international organisations. It also motivated French experts to support the realisation of these projects, as envisaged by Pichard’s recommendation, to revitalise the place for cultural tourism that resonated with France’s imperialist past.

The idea of using Hue for tourism had already surfaced during the French colonial period. Since the early twentieth century, as Angkor Wat represented Cambodia, so some palaces of Hue were the prime features of colonial exhibitions, such as at the *Exposition colonial de Vincennes* of 1931 (Cooper 2001:65–90). In this triumphal world exhibition of French colonialism, the replicas of such monuments and pavilions from the French colonies reconstructed at the eastern end of Paris were intended to legitimise France’s colonial role in Southeast Asia and to contrast its rule with that of its British competitor (Cooper 2001:65). Here, imagined, idealised and mythological versions of Indochina and its indigenous populations were presented as an authentic, visible and tangible reality to the visitors, allowing them vicariously to become colonisers and for the empire to be ‘colonised’ in a single day (Cooper 2001: 65–90). The presentation at the *Exposition colonial* included music and dance performances inside replicas of the monuments, as well as restaurants with staff in traditional costumes. This resembles what Pichard’s recommendation had envisaged, and the activities that can currently be witnessed by tourists at the Hue citadel, this time *in situ*.

One of the biggest objectives for Vietnam in developing tourism is to access more international tourist dollars. This requires that the grand image of the glorious culture of Vietnam’s past history be presented in a solid and sophisticated way. When Nha Nhac court music was included in the Representative List in 2008 under the UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, it was the first of all the court music in Asia, even before the Japanese Gagaku, which was not listed until 2009. As the government official at Hue indicated, they were proud to be the first country in Asia to be so recognised. As for domestic tourism: with the reinvention of the place, with the move to acknowledge the Nguyen dynasty as a legitimate past, with school programmes implementing traditional music, and with an emphasis on Vietnamese uniqueness, Hue eventually became one of the key heritage sites through which the nation’s past could be interpreted. On the other hand, this aspect of Hue’s heritage could become a problem. When the narration of history changes to cater to whatever the ‘present’ political interest wants, the elements to be highlighted and presented will shift.
The more visible and tangible aspects, such as the physical reconstruction, which tend to implant a strong impression and provide visitors with what they perceive as ‘authentic experience’, are likely to be favoured.

Summary

This chapter has explored in detail the role of Japanese cultural diplomacy. The case study has revealed how Japan has contributed to Vietnam’s heritage conservation and has demonstrated how this support by the Japanese government was a form of ‘soft diplomacy’. The chapter also investigated how such practice may impact on the direction of Vietnamese national policies of enhancing Vietnam’s cultural identity. The utilisation of culture as a basis for development by the Vietnamese government, and Japan’s willingness to support heritage conservation projects for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage at the Complex of Hue Monuments to be listed as World Heritage, complemented the interests of both countries. For Vietnam, the motive was to restore war-torn monuments and revitalise the place for future use; for Japan, it was a form of cultural diplomacy. From this discussion, it is clear that the Vietnamese had several interests that gave rise to the motivation to restore the monuments at Hue.

The narration of Vietnam’s past has changed over the years and the Nguyen dynasty has become acknowledged as a legitimate part of Socialist Vietnam’s past. The visually renewed image of the place was required to present the story of a glorious past. Nevertheless, the ‘use’ of Hue under the socialist regime could also be seen as a pragmatic approach. The main objective of the Vietnamese government with regard to tourism development has been to obtain international tourist dollars. For this reason, infrastructure and physical development are important in catering for visitors. Projects such as a reconstruction that provides visual and ‘authentic experience’ are usually favoured by both the host and the visitors. As for the Nha Nhac court music, the first element to be listed under the UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, the revitalisation projects were supported by Japanese scholars and the Japanese government, along with other non-government organisations. It was chosen as a pilot project under the UNESCO intangible heritage division. The Nha Nhac Music Troop is now considered to be a cultural ambassador for Vietnam and often accompanies the Prime Minister during his overseas trips. It also conducts performances overseas independently to represent Vietnamese culture. The recent overseas tour was to Japan in October 2011 at ‘Exchanges between Nha Nhac (Vietnamese Court Music) and Japanese Traditional Music’. According to Thruong Tuan Hai (Hue Royal Traditional Theatre 2011), Manager of Hue Traditional Theatre, Nha Nhac performance was ‘served for Japanese people at Fukushima tsunami-hit cities and a way to show encouragement to people in disaster places’.

As mentioned above, Japan has also been actively supporting research and providing financial support for the Thang Long citadel. The Thang Long citadel symbolises Vietnamese independence from China and could be the next focus for the Vietnamese government. The Japanese government’s commitment to
supporting the conservation projects of Thang Long was ensured during the Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) between Prime Minister Koizumi and President Pham Van Khai. This commitment has been accepted by consecutive Japanese Prime Ministers. It still stands as one of the important agenda items of Japan’s foreign diplomacy and was reconfirmed in 2009 during the Mekong–Japan Summit Meeting (MOFA 2009c).

**Note**

1. See Appendix 2 for a list of major universities involved in international cooperation for heritage conservation.
8 Conclusion

Japan a ‘cultural nation’?

This chapter draws together the primary arguments of each chapter of the book and presents the conclusions arrived at in answer to the research questions posed at the beginning.

The aim of this book is to examine how Japan’s heritage conservation policy and practice at home and abroad intersected with Japanese national identity and sense of nationalism and was a key element in the execution of Japan’s cultural diplomacy. It argues that Japan’s national interest was reflected in the use of cultural heritage as an element in its cultural diplomacy because it enabled Japan to present itself as a responsible global citizen. This focus is contextualised by exploring the evolution of Japan’s approach to heritage conservation and, more broadly, Japan’s positioning in Asia after World War II, and particularly following the end of the Cold War. By locating Japan’s heritage policy within this historical context the book aims to establish a clear understanding of why and how heritage conservation became one of the important means through which Japan deployed its foreign aid programmes.

In order to demonstrate how Japan’s foreign policy and the projection of its national identity abroad are interlinked by its support for heritage projects as part of its diplomacy, this study examines in detail Japan’s involvement in cultural heritage conservation projects in Hue, Vietnam. This case study reveals how Japan contributed to the conservation of Vietnam’s heritage and shows that this endeavour was supported by the Japanese government as a form of cultural diplomacy, by the exercise of ‘soft power’. It also reveals how such practice has impacted significantly on the direction of Vietnam’s national policies towards enhancing its own cultural identity.

As set out in the Introduction, this study has specifically sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do Japanese heritage conservation policy and practice intersect with issues of Japanese national identity, nationalism and national interest?
2. How did Japan make use of its heritage conservation expertise to become one of the major players in the international cultural heritage conservation field?
3. How has Japan’s use of heritage in its cultural diplomacy strategy influenced the development of ‘international best practice’ in the heritage field?
Conclusion: Japan a ‘cultural nation’?

How has Japan contributed to heritage conservation in Vietnam, and how does this reflect the Japanese government’s use of cultural heritage conservation activities as part of its cultural diplomacy in the region?

Heritage conservation policy and practice: national identity, nationalism and national interest

The analysis of key theoretical issues linked to the field of heritage in Chapters 1 and 2 demonstrate that heritage is intimately bound up with issues of national identity and discourses on nationalism. The case of Japan examined in detail in Chapter 3 shows that interest in heritage conservation developed in response to Japan’s increasing exposure to the outside world after the end of seclusion during the Meiji restoration.

The Japanese government’s objective was to strengthen its national identity by protecting cultural properties. Monuments and objects that represented and symbolised the nation at that time were carefully selected and protected. At the same time, as a part of its modernisation, ideas from the West were also incorporated in developing Japan’s own heritage protection system. This was influenced by the involvement of educators from overseas and by Japanese scholars who studied in European countries or in the United States. Aspects of these foreign influences were adopted and internalised to fit the local context.

As part of its aspiration to become a great nation, from the late 1800s, Japan articulated its aim to be the leader of Asia, a goal that was expressed in the concept of ‘Asianism’. This projection of Japan’s nationalism, in the context of European imperialism in Asia, was a belief in the superiority of Asian culture and in particular, as headed by Japan. This belief in the importance of culture was central to a sense of Japanese nationalism and imperialism, influencing political and philosophical debates in the period before World War II. At this time, the influential Japanese philosopher, Sawayanagi, argued that Japan could act as a bridge between East and West and thus contribute to the construction of a ‘world culture’. This vision, I argue, can be regarded as an early expression of Japan’s concern to build up its ‘soft power’.

After its defeat in World War II and under occupation by SCAP/GHQ, the question of culture and national identity in Japan experienced two distinct sets of shifts. On the one hand, under the direction of SCAP/GHQ, all heritage items considered as indicating ultra-nationalism, militarism and that related to the Emperor were delisted under a new law for protecting cultural properties. This demonstrated how conscious the Allied Powers were of the significance that representation of national heritage had for the Japanese and the extent to which such symbols of identity could influence their perception of nation and national identity. The law, to some extent, fragmented Japan’s national symbols, or to use Maruyama’s evocative description, komagiri, chopped it into pieces (Maruyama 1953, 1964, 1969).

On the other hand, a link was developed between the use of cultural elements and heritage conservation practice and the broader process of urban development
and planning. Two schemes, the machizukuri and furusato revitalisation programmes have played a vital role, especially in re-engineering townscapes and associated traditional elements. These schemes were aimed not only at the purposes of promoting tourism and facilitating economic development but also at producing an officially prescribed or desired image of vernacular townscapes, both as a counter to rapid cultural change and to tap into popular nostalgia.

I argue that the relationship between culture and nationalism and the growing emphasis on culture and education in general in the post-war period reflected patterns similar to those in the pre-war period. Thus I conclude that Japan’s commitment to becoming a ‘cultural nation’ after World War II resurrected the pre-war idea of Japan as the leader of Asia in a new form of ‘soft power’ that was disseminated through Japan’s cultural diplomacy.

Japan becomes a major player in the cultural heritage conservation field

In Chapter 3, I demonstrate that over the years, Japan has developed a national heritage conservation system that is based on traditional practice and the management of its environmental context. This long-established heritage conservation practice and discourse, and the way the question of ‘authenticity’ has been dealt with, have allowed Japan to place itself at the centre of the 1990s’ debate. Subsequently, the resolutions of differences between ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ approaches to heritage conservation were reflected in the Nara Document on Authenticity (ICOMOS 1994).

In comparing early European and Japanese heritage conservation practice in Chapters 1 and 3, I conclude that there are some aspects common to both. This suggests that even within Europe there have been different approaches in different historic backgrounds and climates. Nonetheless, international documents such as the Venice Charter have been generally used as common guidelines for conservation works. A detailed discussion of the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994) in Chapter 3 concludes that this meeting was of concern not only for the Japanese: rather it highlighted the fact that discussion about heritage hitherto had been predominantly carried out by European professionals in the heritage field and therefore could not sufficiently account for global cultural diversity.

This conference attracted a great deal of attention amongst heritage practitioners worldwide to the Japanese approach to heritage conservation. The notion of intangible cultural heritage especially enabled Japan to emerge as a leading influence in global heritage practice.

As subsequently developed in Chapters 4 and 5, as one of the few countries that has had protection of intangible cultural heritage as one of the key elements of its national legislative system, Japan has continued to play a major role in this area. After the successful adoption of the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994), Japanese perceptions and practice in relation to ‘authenticity’ influenced subsequent international documents in relation to intangible cultural heritage, and represent Japan’s major contribution to international discourse on the
Conclusion: Japan a ‘cultural nation’?

Protection of cultural heritage. This influence was later cemented by the adoption of one of UNESCO’s standard-setting instruments – the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, which I demonstrate was the outcome of active Japanese promotion. From the evidence, I argue that Japan was able to use its strategic position in heritage practice to push itself forward onto the international stage.

Japanese influence on international practice in the field of heritage conservation

Having examined the development of Japan’s heritage conservation practice and its engagement in international heritage discourse and practice Chapter 4 examines why and how Japan became one of the major players in the cultural heritage conservation field in detail. This is explained by examining the relationship between cultural diplomacy and foreign policy and how this intersected with Japanese perceptions of national interest. The chapter examines this relationship through an historical overview of ODA, the early form of which began as the post-war reparation scheme, mainly directed at Asian countries that had experienced Japanese wartime occupation. Although it has been commonly understood that Japan’s major focus was economic development, it is here argued that the underlying motivation has been Japan’s desire to be a dominant influence in Asia and ultimately one of the leaders in the global arena, an aim that had not changed since the pre-World War II period. In this chapter, I conclude that Japan’s interest in culture, which then expressed itself in terms of cultural diplomacy, used its recognised expertise in the area of cultural conservation as a form of soft power. This has become the means through which it has been able to establish its international position in the global economy and international security arrangements.

The mid-late 1980s was the time when the United States, the United Kingdom and Singapore withdrew from UNESCO; instead of following the path taken by the United States, Japan found a new way of contributing to international affairs – by stepping up its role in the safeguarding of world culture. In the late 1980s, having firmly established culture as one of the pillars of Japanese foreign policy, the interconnection of three elements of policy – strengthening cooperation for peace, enhancing the ODA, and promoting international cultural exchanges – was initiated.

As outlined in Chapter 4, Japan’s entry onto the international stage, in its role in heritage conservation, came at a time when the Japanese economy was flourishing and Japan was in the midst of negotiations with both the United States and Europe to reduce its trade surplus and barriers to its foreign investments. I have argued that Japan, by responding to pressure from the United States and Europe, and in order to maintain and elevate its position as a major economic power, strategically developed a policy of cultural assistance abroad and increasingly became involved in international organisations such as UNESCO. I argue that the appointment of the Japanese diplomat, Matsuura Koichiro, as
Chapter 5 extends this discussion by focusing specifically on Japan’s role in developing the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention. As one of the more significant recent developments in the area of heritage conservation, this chapter examines in detail the significance of this concept for Japanese heritage practice and traces the evolution of Japan’s efforts since the establishment of UNESCO/Japan Funds-In-Trust for Intangible Cultural Heritage in 1993 in promoting the dissemination of the concept in the international heritage community. This development, occurring in an era of globalisation and fierce economic competition, I argue, represents a clear example of how Japan has utilised ‘soft power’ in its relations with other countries.

Japan’s contribution to heritage conservation in Vietnam as a form of cultural diplomacy

Chapters 6 and 7 examine a particular example of Japanese cultural diplomacy in relation to heritage conservation in action through an examination of Japan’s involvement in cultural heritage conservation projects in Hue, Vietnam. The case study reveals the extent of Japan’s contribution to Vietnam’s heritage conservation and how that became a significant example of Japan’s cultural diplomacy. I argue that early forms of Japanese financial aid to Vietnam in the form of the post-war reparation payments later evolved as ODA programmes. Chapter 6 argues that the case of Japan’s ODA to Vietnam is significant as this was the pilot case on the basis of which Japan developed a broader policy of assisting recipient countries in developing domestic policies. This policy has been described as ‘intellectual ODA’.

Chapter 7 situates this relationship in the context of Vietnam’s nationalist history: its quest for independence from French occupation, and the modernisation of the country. I argue that an examination of Vietnam’s twentieth-century history reveals clearly that Japan was one of the major sources of inspiration for Vietnam’s nationalist movement. While today French involvement with heritage conservation projects and interest in its colonial legacy in l’Indochine française evidently continues, Japan’s interest in Vietnam has not only ensured significant funding for heritage conservation projects but has also provided support for the physical infrastructure such as building roads, schools and hospitals.

Chapters 6 and 7 also demonstrate that the Vietnamese government’s use of culture as a basis of development, and Japan’s willingness to support this approach to heritage conservation projects as well as Vietnam’s perspective on the importance of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage at the World Heritage listed Complex of Hue Monuments, accommodates the interests of both countries. For Vietnam, the motive has been to restore the war-torn monuments and revitalise the place; for Japan, it has been to exercise its cultural diplomacy and so extend its influence in Vietnam. From the discussion of this case study it
is clear that, for the Vietnamese, the restoration of the monuments at Hue has had several purposes. Underscoring its approach to the restoration of Hue has been the intention to restore the era of the Nguyen dynasty as a legitimate part of (socialist) Vietnam’s past. This has required a visually renewed image of the place to be presented to tell the story of Vietnam’s glorious past. This largely pragmatic use of the imperial Hue legacy under the socialist Vietnamese regime has had as its main objective the development of tourism and the need to obtain the international tourist dollar. For this reason, infrastructure and physical development, included in Japanese assistance, are important in Vietnam’s development programmes as well as the need to provide a visual and ‘authentic experience’ that is usually favoured by domestic as well as foreign visitors.

The safeguarding of Nha Nhac Vietnamese Court Music, as an example of intangible cultural heritage at Hue, is another revitalisation project initially supported by Japanese scholars with financial assistance from the Japanese government and some non-governmental organisations as early as in the 1970s. Nha Nhac was also chosen as one of UNESCO’s first intangible cultural heritage projects in 1993, and was a project that involved Japanese scholars. Later in 2003, it became the first element from Vietnam to be listed under the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention, where again Japan was instrumental in the preparation of the nomination document, this time through a Japanese private foundation grant. This case demonstrates clearly the important role that different levels of Japanese involvement, from grassroots initiation by Japanese scholars to diverse funding from government and non-governmental sources, have had in conserving and developing Nha Nhac court music. Nha Nhac court music now features as ‘a cultural ambassador for Vietnam’. Japan, in this sense, has been influential in restoring one of the important traditional forms representing Vietnam’s cultural heritage.

As a further example of Japan’s role in the development of Vietnam’s heritage conservation programme, Chapter 7 also examines the formation of Vietnam’s Law on Cultural Heritage (2001). I show here that the Japanese national system of heritage conservation was acknowledged as one of the models for this and is regularly referred to, particularly in relation to intangible cultural heritage. Subsequently, Vietnam quickly absorbed the concept and became one of the first countries in Asia to incorporate the concept of intangible cultural heritage into its national heritage legislation. This was well before the UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention was adopted. The continued participation of Vietnamese government officials in the training programmes and seminars conducted at ACCU and the JCICC and National Research Institute for Cultural Properties in Tokyo, and funded by the Japanese government, as well as ongoing contact with Japanese experts in the field, has continued to lead to further refinements of the intangible cultural heritage sections of Vietnam’s Cultural Heritage Law (2001). Another notable Japanese influence can be seen in the Living National Treasure programme, which is now in preparation and planned to be implemented in the near future.
An analysis of this case study, therefore, has shown that the Japanese heritage conservation approach, policy and legal frameworks have influenced the overall development of heritage policy, legislation and practice in Vietnam through cooperative projects largely administered through UNESCO/Japanese funding or bilaterally through Japanese cultural diplomacy. Through its effective use of cultural diplomacy as a form of soft power, Japan has also supported efforts to revitalise the cultural identity of Vietnam. Chapter 7 shows that Vietnam remains one of the most important recipients of Japanese aid in Asia and is a key example of Japan’s strategy of using cultural diplomacy to maintain its influence in the region.

Final reflection and further research challenges

Why does Japan fund heritage conservation projects? Most of Asia’s main heritage sites, which are iconic references to both national and Asian identity, have received major funding from Japan. Most predominant among these are Angkor (Cambodia), Borobudur (Indonesia), Ayutthaya and Sukhothai (Thailand), Hue and Thang Long (Vietnam) and Goguryeo (North Korea), all of which are now listed as World Heritage sites. In most cases, Japanese support commenced before they became World Heritage sites and Japanese-aided conservation work has in fact significantly contributed to their nomination. Nevertheless, Japan has also supported conservation projects in almost every country in Asia. In this sense, Japan has played a vital role in supporting the visual representation of ‘heritage’ in Asia.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 3, heritage is closely bound up with identity and nationalism. Heritage is therefore inherently political, selective and a contemporary use of the past. At the same time, it is a process of constructing identity. As in the case of language, where identity is also actively embedded, the conservation practice and policy of a country reflect and reinforce group identity. Indeed, conservation philosophy, which defines the way heritage is treated within a specific society, can also be regarded as a form of language. It has a psychological dimension, in that it touches the fundamental emotional needs of people seeking the security of connection with the apparent stability represented by the past in an age of rapid change and globalisation. The visual representation of the past through its representation in heritage, therefore, can have a powerful effect in terms of relating to a sense of nostalgia and memory. This requires that effective heritage conservation needs to provide an authentic experience to satisfy the heritage visitor. As such, the practice of heritage conservation is intertwined with culture, history, politics, identity, and tourism, as well as individual quests for confirmation of a personal past and belonging.

In terms of cultural diplomacy, Japan’s funding of culture is a way to portray Japan in the international community as a cultural and peace-loving nation. Within Japan, however, support for heritage conservation also represents a significant channel through which Japanese governments are able to generate support from the general Japanese public and further, indirectly to underscore Japan’s pacifist Constitution and society’s general anti-militarist orientation.
When Japan was facing criticism from the international community for its focus on its own economic success, especially in the 1980s, its involvement in international cultural projects became a means by which it could demonstrate its deeper interests to the world. It is true that economic achievement was a necessary element in the restoration of the nation after World War II, and Japan did this very well, but after the war, with Japan dependent on the United States with regard to security issues, Japan’s diplomatic positioning and approach at times seemed ambiguous.

As this book demonstrates, Japan has strategically focused on projecting its image as a ‘cultural nation’, developing an initial post-war enforced reparations programme into a unique and autonomous strategy of cultural diplomacy. Japan has taken care not to trigger adverse sentiment among the Asian countries it once occupied, and at the same time, while carefully balancing the demands of the United States and other economically developed countries, has successfully pursued its own interests. In broad terms, the evidence presented in this book demonstrates that what has always persisted quietly below the surface in Japan’s dealings with the world at large has been its desire to become, and be seen as, a ‘great nation’. Although represented in different forms, this has not changed since the Meiji and the pre-World War II period.

With generous funding available for heritage conservation projects, academics and professionals in the heritage field in other countries can both puzzle at and admire Japan’s approach. What is clear is that Japan’s commitment to provide aid to support heritage conservation has been and remains substantial. Using the heritage conservation work that it does well, Japan has created and benefited from an effective heritage-based strategy as part of its global cultural diplomacy.

Is it possible to prove the effectiveness of cultural aid as a vehicle for diplomacy and global cooperation? Proving effectiveness is beyond the scope of this book. Were the recipients of Japan’s largesse all pragmatic in accepting the cultural aid as if it had just fallen from the sky? Has Japan overcome the vague suspicions held by other Asian countries towards it because of their wartime experiences? To define the effect on the political level needs further study. However, at a grassroots level, it can be seen that the diligent work of Japanese academics and professionals is acknowledged and respected, and to some extent Japan is accepted as a close neighbour. As Nye argues in his letter to the AFP (see Tandon 2011), this cultural characteristic of the Japanese people is one of the country’s strengths and the basis of the soft power that Japan successfully pursues.

A detailed examination of the rise of Japan’s influence in the field of international heritage discourse and practice shows that it rose to prominence when the opportunity was provided by the withdrawal of the dominant global power, the United States of America, from the world’s peak cultural body, UNESCO. When the United States rejoined UNESCO in 2003, Japan continued to fulfil its leadership role, this time to welcome the United States back again.

In line with the United States’ interest, as described in Chapter 4, under the Koizumi government, Japan’s ODA policy was revised to increase its
humanitarian aid to conflict areas, such as Afghanistan. A number of humanitarian aids projects carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan were funded by Japan and other countries. In relation to heritage conservation, especially after the Law on the Promotion of International Cooperation for the Protection of Cultural Heritage Abroad (2006) was enacted, the need for support to safeguard cultural heritage in Iraq and Afghanistan was discussed in Japan in 2007 and led to a number of projects being carried out. Japan’s active support for heritage conservation and a positive image in association with UNESCO is carefully balanced in its relationships with the United States and broader international relations, politics and security.

In 2011, the United States Congress had voted to cancel its budgetary contribution to UNESCO in retaliation for the conference approving Palestine’s membership of UNESCO. It remains to be seen whether on this occasion, Japan can once again fill the void. Japan’s relative economic strength has declined in a rapidly shifting global context that is witnessing the rise of new economic powers in Asia and South America alongside economic crises in Europe and North America. More broadly, one might also wonder with some concern what effect the deteriorating global financial situation may have on heritage conservation in both developing and developed countries.

Measuring the effectiveness of the cultural grant aid described here has been beyond the scope of this study, and will therefore need to be the subject of future research. In a subsequent volume, I intend to expand the scope of this study to investigate other cases, such as Angkor in Cambodia and Borobudur in Indonesia. Both the cases of Angkor and Borobudur represent equally ionic symbols of national heritage and conservation projects funded and technically supported by Japan. These cases also contain unexplored historical background of Japanese interest in the region prior to, during and since World War II and its relationship to the policies and practices of both the nationalist and the colonial administrations. These further case studies will provide additional understanding of the Japanese contribution to heritage conservation in the Asian region. In the case of intangible cultural heritage, both Cambodia and Indonesia will also be interesting cases to investigate since the cultural boundaries pertaining to both countries overlap contemporary political boundaries with neighbouring countries. Currently, this is a cause of friction where one country nominates a cultural element to represent the nation under the terms of the international legal instrument, when such elements are equally significant to neighbouring societies. Beyond expanding this study through an accumulation of further cases it will also be essential in further studies to document the continuing developments in UNESCO policies and their impact on heritage practice globally and within the Asian region.
## Appendix 1

Comprehensive table of all international assistance in and around The Complex of Hue Monuments, complied by Author (as of 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Source of grant</th>
<th>Amount of grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>Training on conservation and restoration of Ta Vu interior (Hue Imperial City)</td>
<td>German Ministry of Foreign Affairs via German Cultural Conservation association and GCREP</td>
<td>€139,660 (equiv. US$181,558)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>Restoration and preservation of Ta Tung Tu (Minh Mang tomb)</td>
<td>Project has been made possible in part by the WORLD MONUMENTS FUND® Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage</td>
<td>US$46,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>Technical training course and preservation of the temple Toi Linh Tu (Hue Imperial City)</td>
<td>German Ministry of Foreign Affairs via German Cultural Conservation association and GCREP</td>
<td>€91,395 (equiv. US$125,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Restoration and preservation of gate Linh Tinh (Hue Confucius Temple/Van Mieu) and training course on conservation</td>
<td>International Support Programme 2010 of the Polish Foreign Affairs Ministry via the Embassy of the Republic of Poland to Vietnam</td>
<td>US$25,497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Source of grant</th>
<th>Amount of grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>Preservation and restoration of screen and gate of king’s grave at Tu Duc tomb cooperating with technical training</td>
<td>German Ministry of Foreign Affairs via German Cultural Conservation association and GCREP</td>
<td>€110,525 (equiv. US$145,450)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>Development of a road map for the preparation of the management plan and capacity-building programme</td>
<td>Royal Netherlands Embassy via Urban Solutions (Netherlands)</td>
<td>€41,630 (equiv. 54,600)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–9</td>
<td>Setting up the community network for preservation of Hue heritage</td>
<td>Nord Pas de Calais (France)</td>
<td>€13,650 (=US$20,048) and sharing budget from the Vietnamese Government 6.600 (=US$9,694)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Timber for restoration of Hue monuments</td>
<td>People’s Democratic Republic of Laos</td>
<td>150 m³ of timber (equiv. US$35,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–10</td>
<td>Cooperative research on the Hue Citadel Water Network</td>
<td>JBIC via UNESCO Hanoi, JBIC (22,340) + Vietnamese Government (10,000)</td>
<td>US$22,340 and US$10,000 from the Vietnamese Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–9</td>
<td>Cooperative research for restoration of Vo Thanh Van Thanh and Thien Mu pagoda, setting up the GIS and archaeological park around Hue monuments</td>
<td>Marche University, Ancona (Italy)</td>
<td>€80,000 (equiv. 126,400) and US$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–8</td>
<td>Digital Reconstruction of the Hue Monuments</td>
<td>Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea (Republic of Korea)</td>
<td>Corresponding to US$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>UNESCO-EIICHAP Regional Meeting – Safeguarding Intangible Heritage and Sustainable Cultural Tourism: Opportunities and Challenges</td>
<td>EIICHAP (Republic of Korea)</td>
<td>US$40,000 from EIICHAP and US$10,000 from Vietnamese Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>组织实施</td>
<td>Funding Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005–8</td>
<td>Programme for joint research, training and conservation in the Complex of Hue (in collaboration with Waseda University, Japan)</td>
<td>Japanese government (via Waseda University)</td>
<td>US$3,706,810 (the Vietnamese Government and World Heritage UNESCO-Waseda University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005–8</td>
<td>Restoration of the interior fresco paintings in the An Dinh Palace, Phase 2 and technical training</td>
<td>German Ministry of Foreign Affairs via Cultural Exchange Association Leibniz, East–West</td>
<td>€355,000 (equiv. US$420,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Preservation and restoration of interior fresco paintings in the An Dinh Palace (Phase 1)</td>
<td>Overseas Office of Federal Republic of Germany via German Embassy in Hanoi (Germany)</td>
<td>€17,580 (equiv. US$20,100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Compilation of the National Candidate File of Nha Nhac</td>
<td>Japan Funds-in-Trust (via UNESCO)</td>
<td>US$15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001–2</td>
<td>Information signage and instructions to tourists at the Complex of Hue Monuments (Phase 2)</td>
<td>Canadian Embassy via Centre for International Studies and Cooperation – CECI (Canada)</td>
<td>US$12,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Overcoming the effects of floods to the Hue Monuments in 1999</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>US$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Information signs and instructions for tourists to the Complex of Hue Monuments (Phase 1)</td>
<td>Canadian Embassy via Centre for International Studies and Cooperation – CECI (Canada)</td>
<td>US$4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>Source of grant</td>
<td>Amount of grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998–2001</td>
<td>Restoration of Duyet Thi Royal Theatre</td>
<td>Vietnam–France CODEV organisation trusted by French government and EDF, CBC, PAIMBEUF companies (France)</td>
<td>US$124,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Octagonal Buildings to the East (Hue Imperial city)</td>
<td>Canadian Embassy via Centre for International Studies and Cooperation – CECI (Canada)</td>
<td>US$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997–9</td>
<td>Restoration of Minh Lau Pavilion (Minh Mang Tomb)</td>
<td>American Express Bank via World Monuments Fund (USA)</td>
<td>US$80,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997–8</td>
<td>Restoration of the Mieu Temple</td>
<td>Polish Government (Poland)</td>
<td>US$900,000</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Restoration of monuments damaged by the whirlwind in September, 1997</td>
<td>UNESCO World Heritage Centre</td>
<td>US$50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Restoration of Hung Mieu Temple (Hue Imperial city)</td>
<td>Prime Minister of Thailand, Thai Government (Thailand)</td>
<td>US$20,000</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Facilities for Conservation Laboratory</td>
<td>UNESCO World Heritage Centre</td>
<td>FRF467,301</td>
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<td>1996–7</td>
<td>Consultancy: techniques for termite prevention and safeguarding the structure of the Hien Lam Pavilion, Dai Noi, Hue</td>
<td>Rhône Poulenc Chemicals Enterprise (France)</td>
<td>US$1,000,000</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Restoration of three altars for three patriot kings at Ham Nghi, Thanh Thai and Duy Tan (Mieu Temple)</td>
<td>Polish Embassy and ten British companies having business in Vietnam</td>
<td>US$35,000</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Restoration of Quang Duc Gate (Hue Citadel)</td>
<td>US Commercial Chamber Fair in Honolulu (USA)</td>
<td>US$50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Amount</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Facilities for computer room</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>US$10,000</td>
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<td>1995–6</td>
<td>Restoration of the Huu Tung Tu structure at the Minh Mang Tomb</td>
<td>Toyota Foundation (Japan) and Japan Foundation</td>
<td>US$20,000 + 1,000,000 Yen (equiv. US$40,000)</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Restoration of Temple of Letters (confucius temple)</td>
<td>Friends of Hue Association in France</td>
<td>FRF150,000 (equiv. US$30,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Timber forrestoration at The Complex of Hue Monuments Hue</td>
<td>Lao Government (People’s Democratic Republic of Laos)</td>
<td>400 m³ of timber (equiv. 2,200,000,000 VND or US$200,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Facilities for an antiques storehouse in the Hue Museum of Royal Fine Arts</td>
<td>Toyota Foundation (Japan)</td>
<td>US$40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990–2</td>
<td>Restoration of the Ngo Mon (South Gate: the Main Gate of the Imperial City)</td>
<td>Japan Funds-in-Trust (via UNESCO)</td>
<td>US$100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the Author (2013).
Major Japanese universities involved in large-scale international cooperation for heritage conservation (as of 2013)

Table A.2 Major universities involved in large-scale international cooperation for heritage conservation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of university</th>
<th>Major projects by country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waseda University</td>
<td>Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia University</td>
<td>Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showa Women’s University</td>
<td>Socialist Republic of Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nara University</td>
<td>Socialist Republic of Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokushikan University</td>
<td>Republic of Iraq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the Author (2013).
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References


Index

Page numbers in *italics* denote tables, those in **bold** denote figures.

Afghanistan 88, 90, 99, 101, 104, 108, 190; Afghan 88


Agency for Cultural Affairs 3, 49, 53, 55, 61, 62, 77, 98, **100**, 133

aid superpower 86

Americans for the Universality of UNESCO 106

Ancient Monument Protection Act 21

Anderson, B. 12, 16, 31

Angkor 82, 101, 104, 105, 154, 166, 176, 188, 190

anime 94–5; see also manga

*Anpo* movement 36

anti-colonial 17–18, 140–2; anti-French 140–2

Art of the Samurai 61 exhibition

Art of War, The 25; see also Sun Tzu

Art Research Institute (Japan) 100

Ashworth, GJ. and Graham, B. 12; Graham, B., Ashworth B.12; Graham, B., Ashworth B. and Tunbridge J. 12, 15, 61; Tunbridge, JE. and Ashworth, GJ. 12, 14

Asia Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (AFUCA) 103

Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) 44, 105, 108, 109, 130–3; ACCU 44, 105, 108, 125, 127, 128, 175, 187

Asian Traditional Performing Arts (ATPA) 171

Asianism 5, 28, 40, 46, 183; see also pan-Asianism

Association for the Restoration of Vietnam (*Viet Nam Quang Phuc Hoi*) 141

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) 18, 79, 82–3, 90, 154, 160

authenticity xvi, 2, 5, 10–12, 13, 21–4, 27, 43, 44, 46, 47, 67–78, 115, 117, 120, 126, 137, 144, 161, 162, 177, 178, 184; see also Nara Document on Authenticity

Awakening of Japan, The 49; see also Okakura

Bangkok 4, 82, 83, 110, 111, 127, 132

Befu Harumi 3, 36–9; see also nihonjinron

biwa 135–6

Book of Tea, The 49; see also Okakura

Borobudur 20, 82, 101, 104, 105, 188, 190; see also Indonesia

*boshin senso* 42

Boston Museum of Fine Arts 22, 49; see also Okakura

Brandi, C. 21

Buddhist 48, 74–5, 168

*bunka* 33, 40

*bunka boueiron* (In the Defence of Culture 1969) 36

*bunkacho* see Agency for Cultural Affairs

*bunka-kokka* 35, 80; see also cultural

*nation* 10, 116

*bunmei* 33

*bunmei kaika* 33

*bunraku* 58, 62, 133

burden sharing 85

Buried Cultural Properties (Japan) 50, 52, 55, **56**, 59

Burra Charter (1999) 71

Cambodia 82, 101, 104, 105, 140, 179, 188, 190, 196; see also Angkor
Cambodia Restoration Conference 105
Can Chanh Palace 6, 144–5, 149, 150, 154, 156–67, 178; see also Hue
Carr, E 13–14, 25
castrati 136
cheque-book diplomacy 82, 107
China 36, 37, 40, 84, 86, 88, 90, 100, 101, 116, 130, 132, 140, 167, 180
Circular for Operational Directives for Inventorying and Documenting Intangible Cultural Heritage (2009) 175
Coaldrake, W 8, 9
Cold War xvi, 1, 25, 31, 81, 83, 84, 86, 87, 107, 118, 138, 182
Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties 52, 101
Communication and Society Today and Tomorrow 106
Complex of Hue Monuments 2, 6, 144, 150, 152–6, 155, 156–67, 171, 180, 186–7, 191; see also Can Chanh Palace
Conference on International Cooperation for Conservation 101
Conservation and Presentation of the Hue Monuments Complex 172
Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) 1972 10, 68, 69, 104, 117, 119, 126, 127, 128, 140
Proclamation of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (1998) 11, 121; New Perspectives for UNESCO’s Programme: The Intangible Cultural Heritage 170; Intergovernmental Meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage 129; Regional Meeting on Promotion of Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage 132; Youth Participation in Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and Community Development 132; criticism 6, 125–6
Cool Earth Promotion Program 89
cultural aid 5, 79, 150, 189; cultural assistance 80, 108, 185
cultural diplomacy i, xvi, xvii, 1, 2, 3, 5–6, 13, 24, 25, 43, 44, 46, 67, 78, 79, 80, 83, 93, 94, 112, 113, 117, 119, 127, 128, 129, 137, 150, 166, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189; see also soft diplomacy
cultural diversity 19, 47, 71, 78, 98, 112, 115, 123, 124, 133, 176, 177, 184; global cultural diversity 71
cultural festival and tourism city 147; see also festivals
cultural grant 43, 79, 95, 151, 190; Cultural Grant Assistance 95; Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects 95
cultural identity xvii, 2, 6, 19, 20, 37, 38, 42, 77, 137, 148, 159, 163, 178, 180, 182, 188
Cultural Landscape 43, 53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 66, 68, 102, 126, 163, 167
cultural nation 35, 46, 54, 65, 80, 98, 182, 184, 189; see also bunka kokka
cultural nationalism 3, 17, 20, 37, 38
cultural roots (khong mat goc) 149; traditional identity (ban sac truyen thong) 149
cultural space (ICH convention related) 121, 122, 123, 126; see also Convention cultural tourism see tourism
culture as the basis of development 149

Dai Viet su ky [History of Great Vietnam] 167
Dale, P 3, 12, 38–9
Declaration of San Antonio (1996) 71
Der Deutschen Bund der Heimschutz 50
Dien Can Chanh see Can Chanh Palace
Director General of UNESCO see Matsuura Koichi
dismantling 11, 69, 70, 74, 76, 166
Doi moi 138, 148, 154, 160, 176
Don Ca Tai Tu 177
Doraemon and Hello Kitty 94; Pikachu 94; Dragonball 94
Duyet Thi Duong Theatre 172; Hue Royal Traditional Theatre 169
East and West 43, 47, 62, 115, 183; dualism 43; Western and Eastern 17, 184
East versus West dichotomy 78
economic cooperation 85, 96, 109, 138; Economic Cooperation Bureau in the
MOFA 109; Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) 91, 96
Emperor (Vietnam): Bao Dai 142, 145; Gia Long (1802–1820) 141, 156, 160;
Khai Dinh 156; Minh Mang (1820–1841) 154, 155, 159, 160, 178, 191, 192, 193, 194; Thanh Thai 156, 194; Prince Cuong De (1882–1951) 141
ethno-symbolism 30
exhibition 48, 62, 103, 179; Exposition colonial de Vincennes of 1931 179;
Exposition Universelle (The Third Paris International Exposition or Paris
World’s Fair) 1878 48
Fenollosa, E 22, 49
festivals 63, 65, 66, 74, 135, 147, 175, 177; see also matsuri
Fichte, JG 16; see also nationalism
Fine Arts and Applied Crafts (Japan) 53
First Indochina War 142, 143, 156
Folk Cultural Properties (Japan) 10, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 134
Folk Materials (Japan) 52
Folk Techniques (Japan) 53, 56, 58
folklore 17, 117, 119, 121, 122, 123, 128, 131, 175
foreign aid i, xvi, 1, 2, 79, 83–5, 111, 119, 138, 140, 182; ODA 2, 5, 6, 43, 78, 79–82, 83–92, 87, 89, 90–1, 92, 93, 95–6, 99, 108, 109, 124, 138–40, 149, 164, 185, 186, 189, 192
foreign policy xvii, 1, 2, 13, 44, 54, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 95, 182, 185
Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) 88, 109
French colonial 140, 179; French colonialism 141; colonial 9, 17, 40, 140,
141, 142, 143, 165, 168, 179, 186, 190; colonialism 18; post-colonialism 156; see also anti-colonial, anti-French
Fukuzawa Yukichi 39, 141
furusato 5, 41, 47, 63, 64–7, 184; furusato-zukuri 65
G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit 88, 89
Gakkusei undo 36; see also Anpo, Mishima Yukio
Gellner, E. 29, 30–1
Genbaku Dome 9, 46
Geneva accord 142, 153
Gidayubushi 62
Giddens, A. 18, 32
global citizen 1, 5, 46, 182; global citizenship 6
globalisation 4, 18, 19, 23, 79, 108, 178, 186, 188
Go East (Đông Du) 141
Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects 95
Great Zimbabwe meeting 71
haibutsu kishaku 48
Hello Kitty, Doraemon and 94; Pikachu 94; Dragonball 94; see also anime, manga
Harootunian, HD. 3, 41
Hashimoto Gaho 49
Hayes, CJ. 16, 34
Heijo Palace Site 70, 101
heritage tourism see tourism
Hiroshima Peace Memorial see Genbaku Dome
Hiroshima United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) 44
Ho Chi Minh 142, 143, 148; Ho Chi Minh City 4, 145, 157, 172, 177
Hobsbawm, E. 12, 20, 23, 31–2
Hoi An Centre for Monuments Management and Preservation, Hoi An 24
Hoi An, My Son, Dong Lam Village 151
Honorary Committee of Patrons 104
Hue - UNESCO Working Group 159, 163
Hue Citadel 105, 150, 153, 154, 155, 160, 178, 179, 192
Hue Monuments and Conservation Centre (HMCC) 4, 147; also HMCC 4, 147, 144, 145, 153, 155, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 169, 173, 174
Hue Royal Traditional Theatre 169; Hue Theatre of Royal Art 172
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hue Traditional Crafts Festival</th>
<th>147</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huu Tung Tu</td>
<td>154, 155, 178, 195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICOMOS</th>
<th>10, 63, 69, 71, 77, 102, 163</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas of the East, The</td>
<td>49; see also Okakura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identity</td>
<td>4–5, 14–15, 16, 17, 18–19, 20, 23, 27, 28; see also cultural identity, national identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFLA (International Federation of Landscape Architects)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Court of Hue</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Indochina War | 142, 143, 153, 156, 157, 171 |
| Indonesian | 20, 82, 84, 90, 101, 104, 105, 129, 188, 190, 196; see also Borobudur |
| Institute of Fine Arts National Treasure Repair Centre | 49 |

| intangible cultural heritage | xvi, 1, 4, 6, 11, 46, 55, 73, 74, 78, 80, 93, 108, 112, 114, 115–17, 117–37, 150, 163, 167, 168, 172, 174, 175;176, 178, 180, 184, 186, 187, 190; intangible heritage | 2, 6, 10, 11, 27, 45, 72, 73, 115–17, 117–37, 143, 150, 156, 171, 174, 177, 180, 192; immaterial 2, 116; intangible 116; see also Convention |
| Intangible Cultural Properties (Japan) (無形文化財) | 10, 11, 50, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 62, 83, 116, 133, 134, 175 |
| Intangible Cultural properties, holders | 55, 55, 57, 58, 175; Holders of Important Intangible | 175 |
| Intangible Folk Cultural Properties | 10, 45, 55, 56, 57, 58, 134 |
| integrity | 68, 71, 72, 126, 144, 152 |
| intellectual ODA | 139, 149, 186 |
| intellectual property | 116, 117; Intellectual Property Law 120; world intellectual property organisation (WIPO) 117 |
| International Campaign to Safeguard the Temple of Borobudur | 105 |
| International Campaign to Save the Monuments of Nubia | 103, 104 |
| International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter 1964) | 21; Venice Charter 21, 68, 69, 70, 77, 184 |
| International Committee on Cultural Landscapes (ICOMOS-ISCCL) | 102 |
| International Cooperation Initiative | 80, 81 |
| International Expert meeting on the Preservation and Revitalisation of the Intangible Heritage of the Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam | 171 |
| International Expert Meeting for the Safeguarding and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Vietnam | 130 |
| International Partnership Programme for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage | 132–3 |
| International Workshop of Experts for the Safeguarding and the Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Hue and its Region | 171 |
| Iraq | 99, 113, 190, 196 |
| Ise Shrine | 5, 9, 75–6 |
| Ishikawa project | 138 |
| Ishizawa Yoshiaki | 154 |
| Ito Nobuo | 11, 46, 73–4 |
| Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) | 88; JBIC 88, 89, 90, 96, 155, 192 |
| Japan bashing | 36, 107 |
| Japan Foundation | 95, 155, 171, 195 |
| Japan Institute of Fine Arts in 1898 | 49 |
| Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) | 85; JICA 88, 89, 91, 138, 139, 170; see also New JICA |
| Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) | 66 |
| Japanese Artistry and Beauty Exhibition | 62 |
| Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Capacity-building of Human Resources | 109 |
| Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Education for All | 110 |
| Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Preventive Education against HIV/ AIDS | 110 |
| Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Promotion of International Cooperation and Mutual Understanding | 110 |
| Japanese Funds-in-Trust for Scientific Programmes on Global Challenges in Asia and the Pacific Region | 110 |
| Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Asia and Pacific Programme for Educational |
Innovation for Development (APPEID)
Mobile Training Team 110
Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Information for All Programmes 111
Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific (IOC/WESTPAC) programme 110
Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 110, 129, 160; Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage 109; Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 80; UNESCO/Japan Funds-In-Trust for Intangible Cultural Heritage 186
Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of Scientific Programmes for Sustainable Development 110
Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of the Effective Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education 111
Japaneseness 3, 36; Japanese-ness 33; nihonjinron 3, 12, 28, 36–9, 39, 46, 54; nihonron 37, 38
Japonisme 48
Jokilehto, J 11, 14–15, 21, 68, 72
Judicial System Support 138
kabuki 45, 62, 94, 133
kami 51, 76
Kasuga Taisha 70
katsuyou 50; utilisation 50, 55, 60, 61, 63; utilising 53, 61; utilise 55
Kohn, H. 12, 17, 34
kokugaku 36, 46
komagiri 183
Korea, Republic of 40, 118, 119, 132, 174, 175, 192; North Korea 101, 188; South Korea 101, 102, 172; Korean 40, 42, 167
l’Indochine française 143, 156, 186
language 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 16, 17, 29–31, 38, 43, 61, 72, 74, 93, 95, 107, 116, 118, 121, 124, 154, 175, 188
Laos 101, 140, 192, 195
Larsen, K. 11, 69, 70, 77
Law Concerning UNESCO Activities 102
Law for Conservation of Art Objects and Monuments (Japan) 35
Law for Preservation of Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty and Natural Monuments (Tennen Kinen-bustu) (Japan) 50, 54, 68
Law for the Preservation of Ancient Shrines and Temples 1897 (Japan) 48, 50, 54, 55, 67, 68
Law for the Preservation of Important Art Objects and Others 1933 (Japan) 50, 54, 63
Law for the Preservation of National Treasure 1929 (Japan) 50, 54, 68
Law on Maintenance and Improvement of Traditional Scenery in Certain Districts (Historic Town Development Act) (Japan) 53, 64
Left and Right Houses (Hue) 157
Legal and Judicial System Reform 139
Living National Treasure 8, 93, 127, 136, 175, 187; Living Human Treasures Program 118
local community 63, 134, 135
Lowenthal, D 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 20, 66, 67
Machinami Hozon 64
machizukuri 5, 47, 63, 64, 184; machizukuri movement 64
Malaysia 101
manga 94–5
Market-Oriented Economy 86, 138, 154
Maruyama Masao 3, 12, 34, 35, 36, 183
Index 223
Index

Matsumoto Sannosuke 12, 32–3, 41
matsuri 66; see also festival
Matsuura Koichiro xiv, 5, 45, 80, 92, 108, 108–13, 120, 122, 125, 127, 147, 185
Meiji Era (1896–1912) 1, 9, 13, 15, 22, 33, 34, 37, 39, 40, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 54, 68, 189
Meiji Emperor 42, 51, 68
Meiji Mura 62–3
Meiji restoration xvi, 33, 48, 141, 183; Meijiishin 33; Meiji government 48
meisho (名勝) 50
Minh Mang 154, 155, 159, 160, 178, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195; see also Emperor
Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MOCST) (Vietnam) 168; MOCST 168, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (Japan) 80; MEXT 80
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (Japan) 3, 80, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 95, 98, 107, 108, 109, 139
Mishima Yukio 36
modernisation 13, 15, 21, 30, 33, 49, 141, 149, 183, 186
Modernisation of Vietnam (Nam Duy Tan Hoi) 141
monuments 9, 10, 15, 22, 55, 57, 58, 59, 66, 67, 68, 69, 74, 104, 105, 144, 145, 153, 156, 158, 159, 161, 165, 178, 179, 180, 186, 187; monumental 13, 70
Morris, W. 21
Morton, WB. 34
mujiyo 75
mueki bunksai 116; see also intangible heritage, intangible cultural heritage, intangible cultural properties
multilateralism 81
Myanmar 84, 130; Burma 101
Nairn, T. 12, 20, 31
Nakagawa Takeshi 154, 165–6
Nara 4, 5, 10, 47, 50, 68, 132, 133, 167
Nara Conference xvi, 5, 11, 26, 46, 47, 68–74, 78, 115
Nara Document on Authenticity xvi, 2, 5, 10, 11, 27, 44, 47, 68–74, 78, 115, 120, 137, 184
Nara period 47
nation branding 27
national character 13, 14, 15, 19, 29
National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ) 102–4, 103

national identity i, xvi, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 27, 28–30, 32, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 46, 47, 102, 134, 148, 150, 182, 183
national identity, Japan i, 1, 3, 4, 12, 28–30, 37, 42–3, 46, 182, 183, 188; see also nihonjinron
national identity, Japanese i, xvii, 1, 3, 6, 12, 28–30, 37, 42–3, 46, 182, 183, 188; identity, Japanese 5, 12, 13, 28, 36, 38, 42–3, 45, 50, 54, 66; see also nihonjinron
National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory (Vietnam) 175–6
National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (Japan) 61, 81, 100–2
National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Nara 100–2
National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo 81, 100–1
Nationalism i, 1, 3, 5, 12, 13, 15, 16–18, 19–21, 27, 28, 30–2, 46, 182, 183, 184, 188
nationalism, Japan 3, 5, 12, 28, 32–6, 39–42, 46, 65, 68, 182, 183, 184; ultranationalism 51, 183
nationalism, Vietnam 141, 148; nationalist history 140–3
Netherlands 128, 129, 136, 166, 192
New Japan International Cooperation Agency (New JICA); New JICA 79, 88, 89, 90, 91, 138, 139, 170
Ngo Mon 154, 155, 160, 178, 195
nguoi Viet Nam moi (New Vietnamese) 142
Nguyen dynasty 140, 141, 142, 143–7, 150, 152, 156, 157, 161, 162, 165, 167, 168, 172, 173, 178, 179, 180, 187; Nguyen heritage 146; Nguyen material culture 159; Nguyen architectural complex 159
Nguyen emperor 153; Nguyen monarchs 168; Nguyen Royal Court 168
Nha Nhac 2, 150, 155, 167–78, 180, 187, 193
Nha Nhac court music 6, 156, 167–78, 179, 180, 187; Nha Nhac Vietnamese court music 2, 118, 155, 167–78, 187; Nha Nhac Music Troop 180
Nihon Bijutsuin 22
Nihon no nashonarizumu 35
nihonjinron (日本人論) 3, 12, 28, 36–9, 39, 46, 54; nihonron 37, 38

revolutionary 32, 168; revolutionary history 145
Rieg, A. 21
Ruskin, J. 8, 21
San Francisco Peace Treaty 51, 80
Sauvegarde et Développement du Patrimoine de Hanoi et Hué 161
Sawayanagi Masataro 40, 183
Second Indochina War 142, 153, 157, 171
self-help 84–5, 90
Shikinen sengu 76
Shinto 8, 9, 48, 74; Shitoism 42
Shurijo 167
shuukei 52, 68
Singapore 101, 106, 108, 185
Sinterklaas 136
Smith, A. 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 28, 29, 30, 34
soft diplomacy 1, 46, 137, 180
soft power i, xvi, 1, 2, 5, 13, 24–7, 28, 39, 54, 79, 82, 92–5, 113, 150, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189
Song Huong (Huong River or Perfume River 153
Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO – SPAFA) 4; SEAMO-SPAFA 170
SPAB’s Manifesto 21, 72
Stovel, H. 10–11, 70–1, 126–7
Sun Tzu 25; see also Art of War
Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers/General Headquarters (SCAP/GHQ) 9, 35; SCAP/GHQ 9, 10, 35, 36, 41, 42, 51, 54, 183
Suzaku Mon 167
Taisho Era 33, 40, 54
Taiwan 101, 116
Tangible Cultural Properties (Japan) 53, 55, 56
Tangible Folk Cultural Properties (Japan) 53, 56, 57, 58
Teikoku Hotel 62
Tet Offensive 157
Thaï Hoa Palace 157
Thailand, Kingdom of xvi, 4, 82, 101, 119, 132, 150, 188, 194
Thang Long citadel 179, 180, 181; Thang Long citadel-Hanoi 151, Thang Long-Hanoi Citadel 151
Tokyo Olympics (1964) 41
Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Japan) 49
tourism 5, 13, 21, 22, 23, 24, 42, 43, 45, 53, 61, 63, 67, 104, 127, 134, 147, 154, 172, 176, 179, 180, 184, 187, 188, 190; heritage tourism 21, 22, 23, 24, 147; domestic tourism 42, 43, 45, 179; cultural tourism 104, 179; touristic experience 23
Toyota Foundation 155, 171, 195
traditional culture and folklore 117, 119, 122, 123, 128
Traditional Techniques for Conservation of Cultural Properties 10; Techniques for the Preservation of Cultural Properties 59; Conservation techniques for cultural properties 56
Tran Kitch 168
Tran Van Khe 168, 171, 172, 173
Tsurumi Yusuke 3, 12, 33, 41
Umesao Tadao 37
UNESCO Hanoi Office 4, 173
UNESCO Regional Headquarters in Bangkok 4
UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust see Japan Funds-in Trust
United Kingdom 5, 21, 29, 80, 106–8, 125, 160, 185
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 125
United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals 91, 95
use of Hue 150, 178–80
Vietnam joined UNESCO 140
Vietnamese Le dynasty (1427–1788) 168
Viollet-le-Duc, E. 22
Vizenor, G. 9
washiki and yoshiki 37; oyake and watakushi 38
Index

Western and Eastern 17, 184; East and West 43, 47, 62, 115, 183; dualism 43
World Heritage 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 53, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 80, 102, 104, 120, 144, 145, 147, 150, 151, 152, 154, 160, 161, 163, 180, 194
World Heritage Convention 10, 68, 69, 104, 117, 119, 126, 127, 128, 140
World Heritage List 100, 120, 144, 151, 154, 161, 171, 179, 186
World Heritage site 2, 5, 6, 22, 46, 102, 152, 154, 163, 188
Wright, FL. 67
Yamaguchi Osamu 171, 172, 173, 177; Tokumaru Yoshihiko 171
Yanagita Kunio 33
Yasukuni shrine 42
Yokoyama Taikan 49
Yoshino Kosaku 3, 12, 20, 37, 38
Zoku Nihongi 25
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