

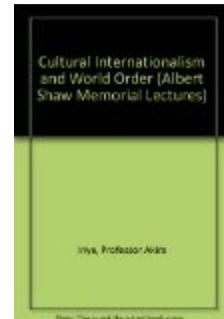
H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Akira Iriye. *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. xii + 212 pp. \$17.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8018-5457-6.

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Following earlier works such as *Across the Pacific* (1967) and *Power and Culture* (1981), in his latest work (*Cultural Internationalism and World Order*) Iriye Akira analyzes cultural internationalism by examining the role of cultural intellectuals in changing the world order and promoting internationalism. He traces the history of cultural internationalism in nineteenth century Europe to the present.

First of all, Iriye argues that the idea of international community developed in parallel with the growth of the nation-state in modern Europe. In the eighteenth century, Europe was a sort of republic bound together by common interest which developed a universalistic doctrine privileging the European states among nations and empires. As a result, the non-western countries such as China and Japan were left out as uncivilized countries which did not fit into the system of laws established by Western nations. The development of capital, labor and economic transactions during the nineteenth century, however, strengthened the interdependence among nations. In addition, the rise of military power amongst the nations made it desirable to achieve cross-national cooperation and establish international structures.

In this context cross-national cultural communication came to flourish. According to Iriye, as human affairs became less confined to the national level and fewer problems found solutions in a national framework, many organizations, international conferences and exhibitions were held, bringing together scholars, religious leaders, artists, and others from various parts of the world. At the same time the assumption that world affairs were dominated by the Western powers was also changing with Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895).

Now categorized as a civilized power, Japan began to be invited to the international or world congresses that had consisted overwhelmingly of Europeans and North Americans.

After World War II, the UNESCO re-endorsed cultural internationalism in 1948. Nonetheless, the Cold War created difficulties in conceptualizing the world as a community of nations, and did not allow for the flexibility of postwar exchange programs of students and scholars. Another issue, which Iriye points out, is the emergence of the Third World whose members occupy more than half of the seats in the United Nation. Third World nations began to present their own perspectives and agendas by criticizing the foreign policy of the developed countries. To sustain cultural internationalism in a multicultural society, Iriye emphasizes the necessity to develop a strategy which incorporates the diversity of humanity into an agenda for internationalist programs by maintaining multidirectional, open, intellectual discourses with representatives of all cultural traditions in order to cope with contemporary trans-national issues (p. 175).

In this book Iriye emphasizes the role of the rise and decline of the autonomy of cultural intellectuals and academic association in changing the world system through their cultural international activities. According to the author, the nineteenth century through the early 1920s was an era of tolerance for the autonomy of cultural internationalism by intellectuals, however, World War II and the Cold War brought about centralized government control. As a result, cultural internationalism began to be defined in governmental, policy-oriented terms. However, this argument is very ambiguous in the case of Japan. For instance, the Meiji government's moderniza-

tion policy promoted the Japanese government's active involvement in international culturalism. For one example, the Japanese Imperial Diet voluntarily proposed Japan's participation in the Columbian exposition of 1893 held in Chicago, even before they had received the official invitation. The Emperor even appointed a special supervisory commission directly under the government's control. Through the participation in this exhibition, Japan expected to gain Western recognition of Japanese art as worthy of being included among that of western civilization. Advocating a strong army and rich nation, to be treated as equal with the Western countries, the Meiji government played a major role in promoting the cultural internationalism associated with their foreign policy as early as 1868. In addition, we should not ignore the existence of the individual intellectuals who worked as government agents. For instance, Ernest Fenollosa and Lafcadio Hearn were hired by the Meiji government to aid Japan's Westernization. Ruth Benedict was assigned to study Japan's national character by the OWI in order to introduce the society and culture to Americans during WWII. In this sense, it would be very difficult to argue for complete autonomy of the intellectuals, independent of the government, in any period.

Furthermore, Iriye's argument that the Cold War weakened cultural internationalism in Japan due to Americanization, needs further articulation. For example, in the 1960s with the recovery of the economy, Japanese cultural intellectuals regained their political position. Thus, the cultural approach for protesting the Vietnam War was effectively used by Japanese artists and intellectuals. For instance, the leaders of the Beheiren, a protest lobby group, learned from the American Peace movement how to use the mass media more effectively. They bought advertisements in the New York Times in

order to express their outrage at the war, and accused Americans of hypocrisy. Young Japanese musicians also composed songs and held anti-Vietnam concerts all over the country. In this sense, I would argue that Japanese cultural internationalism was not restricted by U.S. occupation and the Cold War, rather it spread from an elitist, intellectual and limited debate to a grass roots movement. Ultimately, it emerged as much stronger and more practical with the rise of Japan's prestige in the world. Iriye's argument that cultural internationalism is led by intellectuals is at odds with the realization that an elite-oriented ideology was interpreted by the mass and used to change foreign policy in cooperation with a grass roots movement.

Emily Rosenberg argues that the U.S. ideology of foreign policy has been spread internationally by private initiatives such as private investors, missionaries, traders, mass communications, bankers, and philanthropists along with the unique American economic expansion system. Here, Iriye proves the power of cultural intellectuals to promote internationalism. Through his deep knowledge of the Soviet Union and Asia, Iriye helps to demonstrate their unique cultural internationalism separate from that of the U.S. Moreover, Iriye's argument concerning the influence of diversity within U.S. society on unification of world internationalism is certainly persuasive.

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