

# Non-Governmental Organizations and Origins of Asia-Pacific Regionalism: The Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR: 1925–1961)

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This paper seeks to give prominence to the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR), one of the earliest transnational NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region, and illuminates state-NGO relations in the region in the early days. Founded in 1925, the IPR was a novel organization in its membership and its purpose. First, its membership ranged universally inside and outside the region, including Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Hawaii, New Zealand, the US, Korea, the Philippines, Britain, France, the Netherlands, and the Soviet Union. It also included observers from the League of Nations and the International Labor Office. Secondly and more importantly, the IPR was launched with a radical purpose of building a “Pacific Community,” a transnational civil society in today’s word, through frank and rational discussion among leading intellectuals from all over the region. Though the majority of IPR members were national elites who maintained close ties with the governments, they believed that they could keep enough autonomy from the governments and independently pursue an idealistic regional order. This paper highlights the changing relationships of the IPR with the governments. In the 1920s, with optimistic hope for a new regional order, the IPR members found their mission to stay out of politics so as to independently pursue its own transnational ideals. Facing the turbulent international crisis of the 1930s, however, many members found its early “Pacific Community” ideal as outdated, and strengthened their tie with the governments, believing that they could make worthy contributions to their governments with their knowledge and expertise on the Asia-Pacific region. The history of the IPR reveals the enduring dilemma of the NGOs; stay out of politics in order to pursue higher ideals, or get into politics in order to realize even a part of their ideals in policy-making process.

## Introduction

After the end of the long Cold War, the Asia-Pacific region has witnessed rapid increase in transnational NGOs. However, the increasing NGO participation in regional politics does not necessarily mean that the Asia-Pacific countries are moving from a state-centric order towards a transnational order. In order to assess the true significance of the rise of NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region, we should analyze *what kind of* relationships they have with the states.

NGOs are not always “anti-” governmental organization, and can have various relationships with states. Young Dennis (2000) classifies state-NGO relationships into three categories, supplementary, complementary, or adversarial. According to Michael Barnett (2005), though the number of the NGOs has increased since the late 1980s, most of them have been increasingly seeking for cooperative relations with the states, rather than criticizing them. Especially, the NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region have

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a tendency to place too much emphasis on the relationships with the states. Many scholars estimate that increasing number of NGOs in the region would not have fundamental impacts on the existed state-centric order in foreseeable future (Heyzer 1995, 10–11).

Nevertheless, it is too early to conclude that the NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region have never attempted to overcome the existed state-centric order. This thesis seeks to give prominence to the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR), one of the earliest transnational NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region, and illuminates state-NGO relations in the region in the early days. Founded in 1925, the IPR was a unique organization in its special focus on the Asia-Pacific region, which was relatively neglected by peace organizations at that time, and then developed into the largest multilateral forum in the region during the Interwar Period.

The IPR was also a novel organization in its membership and its purpose. First, its membership ranged universally inside and outside the region, including Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Hawaii, New Zealand, the US, Korea, the Philippines, Britain, France, the Netherlands, and the Soviet Union. It also included observers from the League of Nations and the International Labor Office. During its pre-war halcyon days, the IPR was one of the largest transnational organizations, which was equal to the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), as an advisory body for the League of Nations whose mission was to promote international cultural/intellectual exchange between scientists, researchers, teachers, artists and other intellectuals. Until it closed its doors in 1961, the IPR held an international conference every 2 or 3 years, total 13 conferences (Honolulu, 1925 1927; Kyoto, 1929; Shanghai, 1931; Banff, 1933; Yosemite, 1936; Virginia Beach, 1939; Mt. Tremblant, 1942; Hot Springs, 1945; Stratford-on-Avon, 1948; Lucknow, 1950; Kyoto, 1954; Lahore, 1958) in order to discuss a wide range of regional issues which might be possible cause of conflicts, drawing together a total of 1500 leading intellectuals from both the Asia-Pacific and Europe (Hooper 1994, 112–113).

Secondly, and more importantly, the IPR was launched with a radical purpose of building a “Pacific Community,” a transnational civil society in today’s word, through frank and rational discussion among leading intellectuals from all over the region. Though the majority of IPR members were national elites who maintained close ties with the governments, they believed that they could keep enough autonomy from the governments and independently pursue an idealistic regional order. At the IPR international conferences, the participants were required not to be “country representatives” whose mission was to fulfill national interests, but to be “transnationalists” who were free from narrow nationalism, and were ready to have frank discussions relevant for regional peace.

With deteriorating international situations in the 1930s, however, the nascent cooperative atmosphere faded out, IPR members gradually lost their autonomy from the governments, and became just another defenders of national interests. During WWII, many IPR members even willingly served the government to win the war, utilizing their knowledge and expertise on the Asia-Pacific region accumulated thorough participating in the IPR periodical conferences and research activities.

As the Cold War was intensified, McCarthyism cast great suspicions of “pro-Communist” organiza-

tions, and the IPR became one of the principal targets. After the “fall” of Nationalist China in 1949, the McCarthy movement investigated and blamed “pro-communists” in the government, universities, and international organizations. In 1952, Senator Pat McCarran formed the investigation committee of IPR activities, and concluded that IPR was responsible for the “fall” of mainland China to communists. These charges had no substantial grounds, yet caused a fatal damage to the activities of the American Council of the IPR, which had played central roles in the activities of the IPR. Though the IPR still continued to operate after WWII, and held total 4 conferences respectively in Stratford-on-Avon (1948), Lucknow (1950), Kyoto (1954), and Lahore (1958), they did not gather as much international attention as the prewar conferences, and funding sources and membership constantly declined. Finally in 1961 the IPR was forced into dissolution.

## 1. Literature Review

How can we evaluate the 40 years history of the IPR, especially its changing relationships with the governments? It is only recently that the history of the IPR has gained scholars’ serious attention. Especially in the US academia, the IPR had long been regarded as a mere tool of US cultural imperialism under mask of transnationalism (Arnove 1982; Berman 1983; Fisher 1983). Certainly, despite its multilateral structure, the research activities of the IPR hugely depended on Rockefeller Foundation, one of the largest philanthropic organizations in US. It is estimated that the IPR received approximately \$1.5 million to 18.8 million from Rockefeller sources for operating expenses and international research program during its lifetime (Woods 1999). Nevertheless, it does not necessarily mean that all the activities of the IPR were under the control of the US. Among various private research organizations founded after WWI for better understanding of international relations, the IPR was distinctively idealistic and transnational in its approaches to international relations, reflecting long tradition of internationalism of its birthplace, Hawaii (Hooper 1980). Certainly after the headquarters were moved from Hawaii to New York in 1934, US influence on the IPR research activities was becoming strong, yet even after that, each national council maintained its own research programs.

The unprecedented rise of NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region after the end of the Cold War finally made scholars aware of its important precedents—the IPR, and several important scholarly works were published (Woods 1993). Pioneers such as Hooper (1994, 1995), Yamaoka (1994, 1999), and Katagiri (1994, 1999, 2003, 2008), utilizing plenty of archival materials, challenged the biased views on the IPR, and emphasized its positive contributions to nurturing nascent regional cooperation. Though they admitted that the 1920s was the golden age for the IPR in the sense that it could be most faithful to its original transnational ideals, they also gave sympathetic views on the IPR in the 1930s, which gradually lost sight of its original transnational goals in the midst of rising international tensions. Defending a nationalist turn of the IPR in the 1930s, they stressed that in the world where nationalism became a dominant ideology, IPR members had no choice but to follow national policies.

In the 2000s, however, scholars began to analyze the history of the IPR from more critical perspec-

tives. Akami (2002) analyzed not only the activities of the IPR but the dominant ideology permeated among the members, using plenty of archival materials in the US, Japan, Australia, and Britain, and concluded that the majority of the members had quite conservative ideas about race, gender, class, and nation state. Akami also challenged the previous works as to why the IPR participants ultimately discarded their original transnational ideals, and chose to follow national policies after the 1930s. While the earlier works emphasized the predicaments of IPR members, who did not have almost any choice but to follow national policy in the mounting international crisis, Akami argued that IPR members, the majority of whom were national elites, did not have any serious doubt on serving country, or even regarded it as their mission. It was only natural that in the time of international crisis, they did not hesitate to follow national policies. Akami critically pointed out that the “status [of the IPR] as ‘non-governmental,’ ‘non-official,’ or ‘private’ did not mean much unless one examines whom they were ultimately serving. . . . The IPR’s agenda as a non-state agency did not mean setting challenging alternative channel for state-to-state relationships,” stressing that IPR members *voluntarily* rather than reluctantly chose to promote what they regarded as the interests of their nation-state in international arena (Akami 2002, 13–14).

This paper basically shares Akami’s critical analysis that the IPR was certainly a *non*-government organization but not an *anti*-government organization. Nevertheless, instead of just negatively evaluating IPR members after the 1930s as defeated or self-deceived idealists, the paper tries to illuminate their dilemma over the state-NGOs relations, which can be summarized as the choice between staying *out of the politics* or get *into the politics*.

In the 1920s, when optimistic hope for a new regional order was widely shared among the members, IPR members found their mission to stay *out of politics* so as to independently pursue its own transnational ideals. Facing the turbulent international crisis of the 1930s, however, many members found its “Pacific Community” ideal as outdated, and decided to venture *into the politics*. They strengthened their tie with the government in order to reflect their voice in policymaking process, believing that they could make invaluable contributions to their governments with their knowledge and expertise on the Asia-Pacific region. The history of the IPR clearly reveals the enduring dilemma of the NGOs; stay *out of politics* in order to pursue higher ideals, or get *into politics* in order to realize even a part of their ideals in policy-making process.

## 2. The Birth of the IPR—A New Approach to International Politics

World War I had critical impacts not only on the previous international order but on people’s views on future international peace. After the war, people increasingly suspected the validity of old type secret diplomacy, which eventually could not prevent the war, and sought for new methods of conducting international politics. One of the major attempts was the League of Nations, which was founded as a result of the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919.

As far as governmental organizations are concerned, the Asia-Pacific region remained uninstitution-

alized even after the foundation of the League of Nations. Though the League of Nations was expected to be an universal organization, its core members were European countries, and thus its main focuses were laid on European issues. Certainly the Washington Naval Conference, which was held in 1921–22 in order to discuss regional security in the Asia-Pacific, contributed to stabilizing the region, but it did not bring into being a permanent regional organization.

In the 1920s, however, there were significant developments of the NGOs in the region, and the IPR was the most important initiative among them. In 1924 the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) of Hawaii, utilizing its regional networks, organized an international conference of private citizens from Australia, Canada, China, Korea, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, and the US with the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and friendship. The success of this gathering led to the establishment of the IPR as a permanent organization in 1925, which involved not only YMCA members but leaders from all over the region, regardless of race, religion or political status. The headquarters, the International Secretariat of the IPR, were located in Honolulu until they were moved to New York in the 1934.

Accordingly, national councils were founded in each participant country. The Japan Council was established in 1925, and 55 members were named to it. Many of them were academics and businessmen, who had actively committed to promoting US–Japan friendly relationships. Among the members there were some prominent figures in each field, such as Eiichi Shibusawa, Junnosuke Inoue from business and financial sectors, Inazo Nitobe a prominent Japanese liberal intellectual, and his disciples from academia (Katagiri 1994; Yamaoka 1994).

After becoming a permanent organization, its original Christian coloring soon faded out and the IPR developed into a secular organization designed to offer a multilateral forum to discuss practical issues for regional peace. For the first international conference held in 1925, 109 national delegates from Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Hawaii, New Zealand, the US, and some colonized countries such as Korea and the Philippines, and 31 official observers gathered in Honolulu. After the first conference, the IPR expanded its membership to the nations outside the region, such as Britain, France, Holland, which had colonies in the region, and eventually Soviet Union. The second conference was held again in Honolulu in 1927, and 137 delegates and observers from the League of Nations and the International Labor Office participated in it (Hooper 1994).

The novelty of the IPR can be understood only when we look at the historical contexts after WWI. Today, many people regard informal dialogues by non-governmental actors only as a supplement to governmental dialogues, if not irrelevant to international relations. We should not, however, mechanically apply these contemporary understandings to the IPR. After WWI, people lost their faith in politicians and diplomats, whose primal mission should be to fulfill national interests rather than creating a more peaceful world, and came to regard non-governmental actors as an ideal actor for transcending narrow nationalism and promoting peace (Iriye 1999, 2009). The formal announcement of the first IPR meeting summarized the novelty of the IPR as following;

...a body of men and women deeply interested in the Pacific area, who meet and work, not as representatives of their Governments, or of any other organizations, but as individuals in order to promote the well-being of the peoples concerned...its main efforts will be devoted to collecting and elucidating the facts of international significance, which, by their influence in guiding public opinion, may assist constructively the development of the countries concerned; to urging the improvement of legal and administrative procedure where present methods tend to hinder international harmony and good feeling; and promoting international friendship by personal association and by the study of economic, educational, social, political, moral and religious conditions with a view to their improvement.<sup>1</sup>

The announcement even said that if financial resources would permit, scientific investigations which might be “purely academic for the present, although ultimately of vital importance” should be undertaken. Following this principle, each national council undertook various research projects on possible causes of regional conflicts and summarized these results for each periodical conference, which greatly contributed to the formation of Asian-Pacific studies in the US (Hooper 1988; Thomas 1974). IPR members firmly believed that discovering objective “facts” on the region and having rational discussion based on them would be the most reliable way to realize a stable peace in the region.

At the IPR international conferences, participants from different national councils presented research papers and conducted round-table discussions on a variety of subjects related to the region. The principles of the round-table discussion were best summarized by H. Duncan Hall, a leader of the Australian group as following;

The business of the Institute will be to submit the most complex international problems in the Pacific area to a patient and impartial, scientific investigation. Its attitude is scientific rather than controversial. It is a permanent “fact-finding” body...A body which adopts the method of scientific investigation and seeks to get down to fundamentals cannot hope for immediate and spectacular results, but its results are likely to be more-far-reaching in ultimate importance than those of any ephemeral international conference...<sup>2</sup>

As a “fact-finding” body whose main function was diagnosis rather than prescription, the IPR was expected to refrain from proposing any resolutions or remedial courses of action which might have even appearance of supporting particular policies. These basic principles were confirmed repeatedly at the successive conferences. At the second conference in 1927, Sir Frederick Whyte from Britain emphasized;

We here are not concerned with the execution of policy nor are we responsible for the diplomatic action of our respective governments. We are therefore able to seek the truth in all things. It is the

proclaimed function of the Institute of Pacific Relations, (A) to search for the facts out of which all policy is born, and (B) when the facts are known to examine all national policies without prejudice in order to see whether they really correspond with the facts...<sup>3</sup>

According to the preliminary draft, which was circulated before the Fourth Biennial Conference (1931) with the purpose of clarifying the history, purposes, and the methods of the IPR, the IPR “merely provides a forum for frank discussion of controversial topics and steadily adheres to its policy of taking no corporate action of any kind beyond the concerted advancement in understanding of the problems.” It even said that the membership of the IPR was intentionally made up of diverse elements so that the approach to unanimity of opinion necessary for political action would be impossible to achieve. Not only the IPR as an organization but each IPR member was also expected to stay *out of politics* and be autonomous from government intervention. According to the draft, each national council should refuse official backing or sanction, receive modest funds only from private subscriptions, and include only “private individuals, privately financed” who had “no connection with, or help from, any of the governments.”<sup>4</sup>

### **3. IPR in the 1920s: Staying out of Politics to Pursue Higher Ideals**

The First Conference in Honolulu was filled with optimistic hope for a more peaceful regional order. Certainly, there were potential conflicts such as anti-Asian immigration laws in the US and Australia, and the rise of anti-imperialism movements in China, but the region seemed overall stable. The Washington naval conference successfully limited the size of the navies of Britain, the US, and Japan, and eased the naval race in the region. The US and Japan, despite the immigration problem, nurtured strong economic ties. Backed by these cooperative international situations, many participants at the first Honolulu conference expressed their optimism for a newly emerging peaceful Asia-Pacific, contrasting with Europe, which, according to them, had been contaminated with “old politics” and finally devastated themselves with the world war.

At the second conference in 1927, which was held again in Honolulu, one member from each country gave a statement on their visions for future Asia-Pacific. While their views were diverse reflecting each background, they shared basic visions for future Asia-Pacific. First, many participants believed that the increasing importance of the Asia-Pacific region in near future. Masataro Sawayanagi, President of the Imperial Educational Association of Japan, declared that “The Pacific Ocean is gradually becoming the center of the world, and Japan is firmly lodged in the thinking of internationally minded people as one of the important Pacific Powers. As such, Japan’s future is inseparably linked with the slowly unfolding destiny of the great Pacific area.”<sup>5</sup> British delegate, Sir Frederick Whyte also stressed that “it has become a commonplace in recent times to say that the future of peace and war lies in the Pacific.”<sup>6</sup> Frederick W. Eggleston from Australia stressed that the Asia-Pacific should become a “pacific” sea just its name suggested.

It is frequently said that the Pacific is the area in which the next war will take place. In my opinion such a statement is as misleading as it is mischievous...The Pacific nations are widely separated by the ocean. They are not crowded together like European countries. Do not let us argue from European analogies or be dominated by a European psychology in these matters. The spaciousness of the Pacific is a factor of safety. If there is no bankruptcy of statesmanship, the Pacific should be made an arena pacific in fact as well as name.<sup>7</sup>

The excitement of the participants for the IPR as a new approach to international politics was best expressed by the following statement of Herbert Croly from US, a well-known editor of the *New Republic*.

(The IPR's) function is really novel and more radical than these delegates seemed to realize. It is an experiment in the use of the understanding in elucidating and integrating political relationships. If it carries on its work with any success, it may eventually exercise an important influence on the world affairs in the Pacific.

Croly even stated that the IPR was an embryo of a future "Pacific Community" which would overcome the limits of European-based League of Nations.<sup>8</sup> Croly's "Pacific Community" ideal reflected his disappointment for postwar Europe. During WWI, Croly enthusiastically supported President Woodrow Wilson's intervention in the war, hoping that his idea of "New Diplomacy" would replace European non-democratic and aristocratic "Old Diplomacy." Croly's hope was, however, betrayed by the Versailles Peace Treaty in 1919, which was apparently backed by victors' intention to keep Germany as weak as possible. The League of Nations without the US was, according to him, nothing but a new version of Holy Alliance. Convinced of the failure of peacemaking in postwar Europe, Croly began to search for a new arena and a new way to implement US idea of "New Diplomacy," and eventually found the Asia-Pacific region and the IPR as such.

In the 1920s, even the Japan Council, which received one-quarter of its operating funds from the Foreign Ministry, and maintained strong ties with the government since then, shared transnational idealistic visions with the other participants. Yasaka Takaki, One of the prominent scholar on American history teaching at the Tokyo Imperial University, emphasized the significance of the IPR saying, "The IPR might become a product of the modern civilization called the Pacific age...Some people seem to regard the goals of the IPR as mere fantasy, yet from my experience at the first Honolulu conference, I became confident that the purposes of the IPR is one of the greatest human enterprises, and it will make significant contributions to advancing human civilization at the most appropriate time."<sup>9</sup> Even at the third conference held in Kyoto from October 28 to November 9, 1929, during which the stock market on Wall Street collapsed and the long depression followed, such optimistic views were basically unchanged. For example, Nitobe expressed his hope for the rise of the Asia-Pacific age, refer-



ring to thalassic and oceanic civilizations in the Atlantic as its predecessors.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4. IPR in the 1930s: Losing Autonomy from the Government

The deepening international crisis after the Great Depression, however, changed the atmosphere of the IPR significantly. Countries raised tariff barriers, and increasingly turned toward national autarchies. The optimistic hope for regional cooperation permeated among IPR members in the 1920s had entirely gone. Especially, the Japan Council tightened its relations with the government. They frequently consulted with the government over Manchuria problem. Before the Kyoto conference, Nitobe, as the Japanese Chairman, received a message from Foreign Minister Kijuro Shidehara, and a briefing from Vice-Minister Shigeru Yoshida (Katagiri 1994, 55).

The heightened political tensions between Japan and China, which eventually led to the Manchurian Incident in 1931, made it almost impossible for the Japanese IPR members to keep staying *out of politics*. Before the fourth conference, which was planned to be held in Shanghai in 1931, Japanese members tried not to include the Manchurian problem in the conference program. At the Shanghai conference, which was held a month after the Manchurian Incident, Japanese members employed almost the same arguments as the official imperialistic views on Manchurian problem (Katagiri 1999, 66–88). As Sandra Wilson points out, they were not necessarily forced to follow official positions. Certainly, it may be appropriate to call them as “internationalists” in the sense that they sought for more cooperative international relations, yet they were never anti-imperialists. They saw little or no contradictions between advocating international cooperation and defending Japan’s “legitimate interests” in China (Wilson 1992, 521). After Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933, the IPR conference increased its importance for the government as one of the few diplomatic channels left for Japan, and the Japan Council was increasingly put under government influences.

Nevertheless, even in the midst of the international crisis, the original stance of staying *out of politics* had not entirely lost from the IPR. The summary statement of the roundtable discussion on “diplomatic relations in the Pacific” at the 1929 Kyoto conference declared;

The Institute of Pacific Relations is not a diplomatic body. It has no official connection in any way with governmental policy. Its genius is educational rather than political. None of its officers or members hold positions of official responsibility; but on the contrary, when official positions are accepted, that fact has been taken as necessitating the resignation from the Institute of the individual concerned. The fact must also be restated emphatically that the Institute, as such, does not engage in the search for solutions of pressing political problems...<sup>11</sup>

The statement warned toward the members who “may use the new light gained from their fellow members in the round-tables to bring whatever influence they have in their private capacities to bear on their home governments,” and stressed that the IPR “merely provides a forum for the exchange of

ideas and opinions.” These cautious attitudes toward “politicization” persisted even in the 1930s. The preliminary draft for the Shanghai Conference in 1931 stressed;

Ever since, the Institute has lived dangerously choosing for its main subject of discussion at each conference the hottest and most controversial issue of the moment...It is perhaps inevitable that this attack upon problems which are the subject of so much political controversy should lead to some misconceptions of the nature of the Institute’s discussions and their purpose. It has been suggested that the Institute is departing from its original purpose of scientific study and becoming a political organization. It has been characterized as “amateur” or “unofficial” diplomacy and even compared with the League of Nations... [However]The atmosphere of the discussion is distinctly non-emotional...<sup>12</sup>

The pamphlet prepared by the Secretariat for the fifth conference in Banff, Canada in August 1933, expressed a serious warning toward “a growing tendency...for certain groups to use the administrative unit to formulate and advocate group opinions on matters under discussion,” and endorsed the original principles of the IPR;

Individuals participate [in the IPR]...industries, corporations, organizations, and governments do not...The institute is not...concerned with immediate results and therefore by its own constitution prohibits the passing of resolutions or the making of recommendation in the field of public affairs ...What the Institute loses in its academic remoteness from immediate burning issues, it gains by a more basic and consequently sounder method of procedure...<sup>13</sup>

At this stage, even Japanese members did not entirely gave up efforts to restore international peace by strengthening regional security frameworks. Before the Banff conference in 1933, Takaki and Yokota Kizaburo, Professor of International law at the Tokyo Imperial University, who had cast serious doubt on Japan’s justification of Manchuria Incident on the ground of “self-defense,” jointly submitted a preliminary paper entitled “Some Consideration on the Future Reconstruction of Peace Machinery in the Pacific.” In this paper, they argued that the fundamental cause of current instabilities in the Asia-Pacific region could be attributed to inadequacy of the regional peace machinery, especially lack of instruments for alleviating economic injustices which might cause conflicts between “Have” and “Have-not” nations. Then, they described the Manchurian problem as “the conflict of Chinese and Japanese nationalism,” adding that “nationalism was not only at the root of the Manchurian problem and the difficulties at Geneva, but also at the bottom of practically all of the problems of the world,” and emphasized the necessity of reconstructing peace machinery based on “liquidated nationalism and revitalized internationalism.”<sup>14</sup>

By the late 1930s, however, the Japan Council lost their trust in IPR entirely. Facing the Sino-Japa-

nese War, the Secretariat launched a new research project called "Inquiry," with the purpose of clarifying "objective" facts about the conflicts between Japan and China and promote better understanding on them. Though Japanese members at first agreed to it unwillingly, increased suspicion toward the IPR and heightened political tensions eventually made them to quit the membership.

### **5. IPR in the 1940s: Getting into Politics to Influence Policymaking**

As WWII was approaching, however, each national council even willingly strengthened their ties with the governments. The American Council, though it still tried to keep a certain degree of independence, openly advocated that their research activities should be "of the maximum use to the maximum number of governments."<sup>15</sup>

After the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941, the IPR, as the largest research-oriented institution specializing the Asia-Pacific area, was highly regarded by US government as an important source of knowledge and expert personnel on the area. In December 17, 1941, Robert G. Sproul, the chairman of the American Council, made a statement outlining the American Council's fundamental policy in the wartime, and emphasized a "fresh opportunity" that the war gave to the Council.

The officers and staff of the [American]Council...believe that the war situation, far from negating the purpose of the Council, lends new and crucial importance to its program of study and widespread discussion of the issue at stake; that such activities, in fact, form a vital party of a democratic war effort...the American Council...believed that its years of efforts, developed to building up a body of knowledge and a group of persons with a broad understanding of the Far East, will now make possible a unique contribution in the emergency...<sup>16</sup>

Finding that Washington was "woefully unprepared" to meet the immediate and pressing wartime needs for factual data, expert opinion and linguistic competence on the Asia-Pacific region, the American Council provided all kinds of intellectual resources such as publications, libraries, and expert personnel to government agencies. During 1941 and 1942, IPR research results were published in around 50 volumes, which were widely circulated among the government agencies and defense agencies. The sales of the IPR publications just handled by the American Council alone rose from \$11,800 in 1941 to \$25,000 in 1942. The members of the American Council were recruited into official advisory positions on the Far Eastern problems. Close relationships between the IPR and the government agencies ultimately led to the establishment of a joint office in Washington D.C. with the purpose of close liaisons between IPR members, the government agencies, the Embassies, and the other Allied countries.<sup>17</sup>

During the WWII, the IPR held two international conferences, the eighth conference held in Mont Tremblant, Canada in 1942, and the ninth Conference held in Hot Springs, Virginia, in January 1945. Because of their informal character, these two conferences were increasingly regarded by the governments of the Allied nations as an important forum to discuss wartime policy and postwar planning,

and were attended a large number of government officials. Though these officials attended in private capacity, they were considered by the other attendees as country representatives (Woods 1993, 32). For example, at the Mont Tremblant conference in 1942, there was Stanley K. Hornbeck, an adviser to US Department of State, and the former Chief of Division of Far Eastern Affairs in Department of States. At the Hot Spring conference in 1945, there was Sir. George Sansom, a well-known Japanese specialist from the British Embassy. The conference documents and roundtable reports were sent to the governments for reference.

The IPR participants clearly recognized that the outbreak of WWII changed its traditional “non-political” nature fundamentally. The preliminary report for the Mont Tremblant conference emphasized that the next conference would become “an important departure from previous IPR practice” in the sense that it would have many persons holding government positions, and approved the “politicization” of the IPR;

This step [inviting many government officials] was considered necessary because so many of the competent, authorities in the field of Far Eastern and Pacific problems had gone into government service and because without the presence of some officials, the discussion on such a topic as cooperation of the United Nations in the Pacific would inevitably be unrealistic, if not actually misleading. As it turned out, the presence added greatly to the seriousness and sense of responsibility in the round tables without appreciably lessening the frankness and vigor of the discussions...<sup>18</sup>

## Conclusion

In 1925, the IPR was launched as an idealistic project which aimed at challenging the state-centric international order, and ultimately building a “Pacific Community,” a transnational civil society in today’s word. In its early period, IPR members shared the belief that non-governmental actors could be free from consideration on national interests, and the IPR should maintain its “non-political” nature in order to pursue its higher ideals.

In the 1930s, however, the members began strengthening their ties with the governments, and gradually lost their autonomy. The IPR became nothing but a supplementary forum of the official diplomatic channel, and IPR members became just another defenders of national interests. As the international situation deteriorated, they increasingly found it hard to express different opinions from the official ones. Especially, Japanese members came under heavy influence of the Japanese government, who began to regard the IPR as an important forum for internationally isolated Japan to justify its actions in China.

During the WWII, IPR members even willingly contributed to formulating their governments’ wartime and postwar policies with their knowledge and expertise on the Asia-Pacific region accumulated through the previous research activities. Especially, the American Council regarded the Pacific War as a “fresh opportunity” for them, and provided all kinds of intellectual and human resources to US gov-

ernment.

It should be noted that, however, even in the 1920s, the IPR was not a truly “people-oriented” organization. Certainly, in principle, the IPR emphasized the diversity of its membership saying that, “each [national] group aims to represent a cross-section of interests in its own country. There are no political affiliations, and an effort is made to include women as well as men, business as well as academic leaders, labor men and capitalists, social workers and men of affairs.”<sup>19</sup> Most of IPR members, however, belonged to elite class including former prime ministers and former high-ranking government officials, and enjoyed strong connections with the governments. Certainly, they advocated that peoples, not governments, should be a central player in creating a new regional order. When they mentioned “peoples,” however, they meant only a handful of educated intellectuals, and what they saw uneducated and unenlightened “mass” was excluded. They shared government’s contempt toward the “mass” and negative feeling toward their participation in politics and diplomacy, believing that only elites who had enough skills and knowledge were able to successfully handle with these vital issues for the nation. Nitobe’s following outspoken statement is a typical expression of elitism permeated among IPR members from the beginning. “It is not upon the largest number of people we can depend for the maintenance of peace, but upon the thoughtful few who can lead the masses.”<sup>20</sup> Due to strong sense of elitism and distrust towards the “mass,” they could not maintain critical stances toward the government during the period of crisis, and eventually turned to the government rather than to peoples as a means to preserve their influence in the society.

Today, transnational NGOs are increasingly becoming a visible actor in global politics. According to the Union of International Associations, the number of international NGOs increased from less than 200 in 1909 to more than 20,000 in 2005, with much of the growth occurring since the 1970s (Hermann, et al. 2012, 1–2). Transnational NGOs have grown not only in number but also in their influence in international arena. Scholars increasingly point out how transnational NGOs have changed the landscapes of international politics.

Nevertheless, with regards to *what kind of* changes transnational NGOs have brought to the existed international order, scholars have been seriously divided. While Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) and other pioneer work emphasize their positive contributions to international politics such as spreading global norms and promoting conflict resolution, recent studies have put more emphasis on critical analysis, and cast serious doubts as to whether they have really challenged the existed state-centric order (Chandhoke 2005).

However, here we find the permanent dilemma of NGOs between staying *out of politics* and getting *into politics*. Some people may say that the most important role of transnational NGOs is to criticize the existed state-centric order and to replace it with more people-centered order. Therefore they should maintain critical stances toward the governments. The other people may argue that transnational NGOs should be more realistic and strategic, keeping and even strengthening cooperative relationships with the governments so that they can have maximum influences in policymaking process

and realize even a part of their original goals. As this paper shows, the IPR continued to face this dilemma, and gradually found its mission in getting *into politics* in order to influence policymaking process.

When we envision the future regional order in the Asia-Pacific, we can no longer ignore the roles of transnational NGOs, which have constantly increased its number and influence. However, in order to estimate their real influences on the existed regional order, we should closely look at their relationships with the governments, and their attitudes toward the existed state-centric order.

With the unprecedented rise of transnational NGOs, the Asia-Pacific region, though slowly, is heading toward IPR's ultimate dream of "Pacific Community"? Or, despite the increase in number, transnational NGOs are not likely to bring significant changes to the existed state-centric order? Only through the detailed analyses on states-NGOs relations, we could know the answer. The history of the IPR contains lots of useful lessons and thought-provoking episodes as to future possible roles of transnational NGOs and their possible influences on the regional order.

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## Note

- <sup>1</sup> *Institute of Pacific Relations, Honolulu Session, June 30–July 14, 1925. History, Organization, Proceedings, Discussions, and Addresses* (Honolulu: Pub. by the Institute, 1925), pp. 26–27.
- <sup>2</sup> H. Duncan Hall and J. B. Condliffe, *What of the Pacific? A Searchlight on its Problems* (Sydney: John Fairfax and Sons, 1925), p. 3, Institute of Pacific Relations Papers.
- <sup>3</sup> Sir Frederick Whyte, "Opening Statement for the British Group," in *Problems of the Pacific, 1927: Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, Honolulu, Hawaii, July 15 to 29, 1927* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1928), pp. 23–29.
- <sup>4</sup> J. B. Condliffe, "Handbook of the Institute of Pacific Relations," in *Problems of the Pacific, 1931: Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, Hangchow and Shanghai, China, October 21 to November 2* (Chicago: The University Chicago Press, 1932), pp. 522–24.
- <sup>5</sup> Masataro Sawayanagi, "The General Features of Pacific Relations as Viewed by Japan," in *Problems of the Pacific, 1927*, pp. 30–33.
- <sup>6</sup> Whyte, "Opening Statement for the British Group."
- <sup>7</sup> F. W. Eggleston, "The Viewpoint of Australia on Pacific Affairs," in *Problems of the Pacific, 1927*, p. 4.
- <sup>8</sup> Herbert Croly, "The Human Potential in Pacific Politics," *Ibid.*, p. 578.
- <sup>9</sup> Yasaka Takaki, "Taiheyou Kankei Chosakai no Setsuritsu ni Tsuite," *Gaikojiho* 42 (October, 1925), p. 67.
- <sup>10</sup> Nitobe Inazo, "Opening address at Kyoto," *Pacific Affairs* 2 (November, 1929), p. 685.
- <sup>11</sup> *Problems of the Pacific, 1929: Proceedings of the Third Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, Nara and Kyoto, Japan, October 23 to November 9, 1929* (Chicago: The University Chicago Press, 1930), pp. 212–13.
- <sup>12</sup> J. B. Condliffe, "Handbook of the Institute of Pacific Relations," in *Problems of the Pacific, 1931*, pp. 526–27.
- <sup>13</sup> *A Guide to the Banff Discussions* (International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1933), pp. 5–6.
- <sup>14</sup> Yasaka Takaki and Kisaburo Yokota, "Some Consideration on the Future Reconstruction of Peace Machinery in the Pacific," in *Preliminary Paper Prepared for the Fifth Biennial Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations to be Held at Banff, Canada, August 14th to 28th, 1933* (The Japan Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1933), pp. 11–14.
- <sup>15</sup> Edward Carter to Quincy Wright, November 27, 1937, Quincy Wright Papers. Carter ran the American Council from 1926 to 1949.

- <sup>16</sup> *The IPR in Wartime: Annual Report of the Secretary of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations 1941/1943* (The American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1946), p. 8, IPR Papers.
- <sup>17</sup> *The IPR in Wartime*, pp. 9–10, 15.
- <sup>18</sup> *War and Peace in the Pacific: A Preliminary Report of the Eighth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations on Wartime and Post-war Cooperation of the United Nations in the Pacific and the Far East, Mont Tremblant, Quebec, December 4–14, 1942* (International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1943), pp. v–vi.
- <sup>19</sup> J. B. Condliffe, “Handbook of the Institute of Pacific Relations,” in *Problems of the Pacific, 1931*, p. 522.
- <sup>20</sup> Inazo Nitobe, “Democracy and War (August 25, 1932),” in Nitobe, *Editorial Jotting* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1938), p. 391. The similar statement was found in numerous articles such as “People’s Democracy” (June 10, 1931) *Ibid.*, pp. 212–13. “Has Democracy Failed?” (October 3, 1933) *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.

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