



***Topic: Thoughts of Pre-War Cultural Diplomacy:
Japan's Policy Toward China during the 1920s***

Taro KUWABARA, PhD candidate

Waseda University

In this presentation, I will analyze Japanese intellectuals' idea of Japan's cultural diplomacy toward China in the 1920s from a diplomatic point of view. By so doing, I consider whether a government should be involved in international cultural exchanges and, if yes, to what extent it should get involved.

After WWI, the anti-Japanese movement in China became one of the most challenging problems in Japan's diplomacy. In 1923, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set forth the TaiShi Bunkajigyo ("Cultural Policy toward China"). One of this policy's objectives was to deal with the Chinese people's growing negativity toward Japan. But this policy failed to accomplish that goal because many Chinese interpreted the policy as a cultural invasion.

Some Japanese intellectuals argued that eliminating the political aspects from the Cultural Policy toward China would be impossible. Therefore, they tried to shift the public's attention toward the so-called "people-to-people diplomacy" approach and non-governmental actors.

For cultural diplomacy, it is not necessary (or possible) to eliminate its political color completely. However, the more people from their respective countries feel that the government is controlling their cultural exchanges, the more cultural diplomacy will provoke negative feelings.