Soft Power in Japan–China Relations

State, sub-state and
non-state relations

Utpal Vyas

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Soft power has tended to be overlooked in the field of international relations, often dismissed as lacking relevance or robustness as a theoretical concept. This book seeks to expand upon the idea of 'soft power' in international relations and to investigate how it actually functions by looking at three case studies in Japan–China relations during the post-war period. These cases involve the action of Japan's soft power in China due to the activities of agents at three levels in society: the state level (an agency of the central government), the sub-state level (a local government), and at the non-state level (a non-governmental organisation).

In addition, a major theme of the book is to examine the role of important international actors whose roles are not covered sufficiently in international relations discourse. Utpal Vyas demonstrates ways in which soft power is a useful analytical tool to understand relations between China and Japan in recent times. The case studies help to reveal the complexities of interaction between China and Japan beyond the usual state-level analyses and offer a valuable resource for the study of Sino–Japanese relations and IR in general.

This book will be of interest to academics and postgraduate students in Japanese studies, Chinese studies and International Relations.

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Acknowledgements

It is a huge and humbling task to acclimatise oneself to the historical processes, events and fundamental ideas which have led to our current globalised political environment, and attempting to do this has been a fascinating and eye-opening experience. It is even more difficult to try and organise and express one's own thoughts and ideas about these on paper (or on a computer screen), and many people have assisted me directly or indirectly in this process. The research behind this book has been carried out over a number of years, during my PhD research and afterwards; hence there are too many people to thank everyone for their time and support, but I would like to mention some in particular.

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Note on text

All Japanese and Chinese names are written with the family name first. Long vowels in Japanese words are represented with a macron, except in place names well-known in English, such as Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe.

All translations from Japanese or Chinese to English are the author's unless otherwise stated.

British English spellings are used throughout, except for direct quotations, names and titles, where the spelling is kept as in the original text.

Abbreviations and acronyms

AAPA	American Association of Port Authorities
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUICK	Asian Urban Information Centre of Kobe
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCTV	China Central Television
CIA	United States Central Intelligence Agency
CJFA	China–Japan Friendship Association
CLAIR	Council of Local Authorities for International Relations
CNN	Cable News Network
CPC	Communist Party of China
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
FTA	free trade agreement
G7	Group of Seven
GDP	gross domestic product
GHQ	General Headquarters (of Allied occupiers of Japan after the Second World War)
HIA	Hyogo International Association
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPE	International Political Economy
JANIC	Japan NGO Centre for International Cooperation
JCFA	Japan–China Friendship Association
JET	Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme
JETRO	Japan External Trade Organisation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JIRCAS	Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Sciences
JLTP	Japanese Language Test of Proficiency

KBS	Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai (International Culture Promotion Association)
KEI	Kyushu Economy International
KICC	Kobe International Centre for Co-operation and Communication
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
Mercosur	Mercado Comun del Sur (Southern Common Market)
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
MEXT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MIC	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NHK	Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai (Japan Broadcasting Corporation)
NPO	non-profit organisation
ODA	overseas development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OJCFA	Osaka Japan–China Friendship Association
PFT	Peace and Friendship Treaty
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
RIETI	Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SJCFF	Sasakawa Japan–China Friendship Fund
SPF	Sasakawa Peace Foundation
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
US/USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1   Introduction

International relations and the era of globalisation

International relations and the shape of the global system have changed dramatically since the end of the Second World War. In the decades after the war, ideological, economic and technological innovations have variously caused changes to the dynamics which exist between different countries, cultures and societies.

After the dust had settled from the war, it was clear that the USA was by far the pre-eminent nation in the international system. With its military, industrial and natural resources, it emerged from the war as a hegemon. However, the subsequent economic growth of other countries in Europe and East Asia led to its economic dominance gradually being eroded. Technological innovation in other countries, not least in the USSR with its nuclear weapons, space and missile programmes, also reduced the dominance of the USA in the military sphere. Since the collapse of the communist and socialist alternatives, which culminated in the break-up of the USSR in 1991, broadly liberal values such as democracy and free trade have spread around the world, paradoxically contributing to the decline of the relative economic and ideological dominance of the USA.

This cascade of events has caused scholars studying the international system to repeatedly try to produce overall theories of international relations to better enable them to predict and explain change in the global system, and how countries influence it. These theories have inevitably been products of the prevailing international environment (see Cox 1981, 1986), and so have changed according to circumstances. Academics' ideas about the nature of power in international relations have, therefore, also changed according to these events; notably, scholars have again been rethinking their ideas on power since the end of the Cold War, particularly with the increasing pace of the phenomenon of globalisation.

This chapter will firstly summarise the background of this study, by discussing the context of the global system and international structure in which this study's conception of power is based. Subsequently, the topics on which the book particularly focuses will be considered, namely soft power, Japan–China relations, and the coverage of non-state actors in international relations. The research questions and hypotheses which the book strives to address will then be

detailed, and an explanation of the three-level agent structure used as a theoretical basis will be given. Finally, the structure of the book will be outlined.

The changing face of power in international relations

The term 'power' in international relations has, for the most part, been a realist concept; the word suggests a rather negative image of an anarchic, zero-sum world where might is right, and only the strong win (Morgenthau 1952, Waltz 1979, Mearsheimer 1990, 1994, Grieco 1997). The intricacies of state interactions have usually been analysed in Machiavellian terms of which country will be able to control the other's actions in the end, whether through direct force or through more indirect coercion. In fact, many politicians and leaders still seem to think in these terms, as can be seen through the direct military action taken by countries such as the USA and UK in Afghanistan and then Iraq in recent years, or by the rapid build-up of arms and military technology which is taking place in others, such as China and India (GlobalSecurity.org 2010).

However, globalisation has accelerated in the past few decades and in particular since the ending of the Cold War. This process of increasing trade, exchange of information and movement of people across national borders has been driven by technological changes and the advance of the idea of economic liberalism, and trailing behind it democracy, into many parts of the world (Doyle 1986, Doyle and Ikenberry 1997, Keohane and Nye 2001). The liberalisation of markets and the need for stable global institutions to oversee these processes has led to the liberalist alternative to realism gaining credence in international relations theory.

To many scholars, however, realism deals with one simplistic extreme, of a cold, cynical competition for survival, while liberalism is rooted in the opposite extreme ideal of altruistic co-operation. The post-Cold War world seems to present a complex situation which cannot be described by choosing just one school of thought, if this was ever possible. Theories which try to account for current circumstances, and which build upon some of the ideas of the liberalists and realists (as well as bringing in concepts from other social sciences such as sociology and psychology) have appeared, using labels such as 'constructivism' and 'critical theories' to describe their models of the global system (Hopf 1998, Wendt 1999, Linklater 1998, Cox 1996). These theories try to take into account various competing identities, interests, ideas and norms which interact to result in changes in the international system. Not only do they deconstruct over-simplistic theories of the past, but they also break down the units which were thought to represent the most important building blocks of the global system, namely states.

Constructivist scholars emphasise the fact that states consist of numerous actors and agents (even more so than liberalist scholars) – all interacting with each other according to their various interests and identities. Not only do central governments play a role in the global system, but other actors such as sub-state local governments, small and medium sized companies as well as large multinational corporations and various forms of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also increasingly been active on the international scene. Sub-state

local governments have used the newly developing ideas of globalisation to form links with similar local governments, as well as with other organisations, in different countries.

Other non-governmental bodies have become 'transnational' (Nye and Keohane 1971) that is to say, not only do they have operations in many countries, but borders between countries have also become to a large extent irrelevant to them. A transnational company such as Microsoft can have its headquarters in Washington State, a research centre in Beijing, back office processing in Bangalore and offices in over one hundred countries around the world, all working together without regard for national borders. Equally, transnational NGOs (such as Amnesty International or Greenpeace) are spread out around the globe in order to collect funds and carry out activities in a way so as not to depend on any one country, and in a way that pays little heed to national boundaries, as long as the boundaries are kept reasonably open by states.

In addition to these large transnational organisations, smaller groups and even individuals have begun to play a greater role in the global system. Technological advances in communications and travel have reduced the cost of communicating and even travelling between countries to such an extent that individuals can now play their own roles in international relations. Groups and individuals can exchange vast amounts of information across the internet instantaneously, using computers, mobile phones, and an array of other devices which are becoming connectable to the global information network. Meanwhile, millions of people are also moving physically between countries for tourism and work. While many of these processes have been occurring throughout human history, a crucial point which has only become apparent in the last few decades is the dramatic increase in the speed and scale of these processes in contemporary times.

The increasing relevance of soft power in the global system

It is within this context that the concept of 'soft power' was developed by Joseph Nye in 1990 (Nye 1990a, 1990b). Nye postulated the idea of soft power, whereby countries' attractive resources enabled them to set the political agenda, and so 'co-opt' other countries. In a further exposition of the concept, Nye (2004) gives as examples of US soft power the effects of Hollywood films, US ideals of freedom and democracy and other aspects of the country's culture.

Nye gives many examples of soft power resources (mainly from the US perspective), and talks at length about the role of the USA in the global system in terms of its soft power. However, he does not give a clear explanation of how he thinks soft power actually functions in international relations. It seems to be assumed that if a country has soft power resources, this alone will be sufficient to help its relations with other countries.

The idea of soft power has been slow to catch on among mainstream academics and politicians. However, there are now several studies which examine the idea. Chong (2004) utilises soft power ideas in his analysis of the 'Asian values debate' with regard to Singapore's foreign policy, but he too does not provide a mechanism

by which soft power is transmitted to other countries. Mattern (2005), in her argument disputing the 'softness' of soft power comes closer to a key ingredient in the mechanism, that is *communication*, but does not take this any further. Heng (2010) provides a useful overview of the various aspects and examples of soft power. Other writers (e.g. Shiraishi 1997, McGray 2002, Kurlantzick 2007) who have touched upon soft power also fail to detail a mechanism for its action. Aspects of soft power could also be covered by the term 'public diplomacy' (overlapping with 'cultural diplomacy') which has recently come back in vogue (e.g. Melissen 2005a, 2005b, Katzenstein 2002, Vickers 2004, Leonard and Small 2005, Vaughan 2005); however, these expositions are in general limited to action by states and appear to be more concerned with traditional hard power notions of the pushing of values through propaganda and persuasion (see Mattern 2005) than with the attraction of soft power as defined in this study.

Japan and its relations with China

In addition, most academic and journalistic literature on this topic has been focused upon the sources of US soft power. Nye himself, though mentioning other countries in his work, largely focuses on the USA, which is unsurprising considering his main expertise is in US foreign affairs. Only a few authors from other regions of the world have considered other countries' soft power, such as Chong (2004) on Singapore, Pocha (2003) on India and China, and Heng (2010) on Japan and China.

A country whose soft power is well worth investigating, but about which relatively little has been written in English language academic texts, is Japan. In 2009, the country was still the second largest economy in the world in dollar terms (it is likely to have been surpassed by China in 2010). Its output of ideas, technology, patents and cultural products is undeniably substantial and significant (Iwabuchi 2002, Shiraishi 1997), a point which has been realised by journalists who follow these themes (e.g. *Time* 1999), and is a hot topic within Japan itself, with even prominent government politicians trying to use these ideas to promote their own agendas (Asō 2006, *Asahi Shimbun* 2005).

A significant amount of English language literature on Japan's relations with China exists, in particular that which considers bilateral relations (mostly from politicians' or a diplomatic perspective) since the Second World War.[1] Some mention of non-government relations is made in this literature although mostly relating to how non-government actors were used for informal diplomacy. However, in the last two decades, non-government relations between Japan and China have increased greatly in number and importance in their own right – a point difficult to deduce from the small amount of English language literature written on the subject.

The relationship between Japan and China is a particularly pertinent one in terms of an investigation into soft power, due to the particular circumstances surrounding the relationship in the post-war era. For long periods of time, there has been a lack of official government relations between these two countries. In

the period after the Second World War this was caused by the ideological rift between socialist/communist and capitalist countries (which developed into the 'Cold War'), and Japan's dependence upon the USA, which emphatically opposed any engagement with the communist People's Republic of China (PRC) by its allies. In more recent years, a lack of good relations between Japan and China has caused them to suspend official contacts over extended periods of time, and surveys confirm a high degree of suspicion about each other's countries (e.g. Chicago Council on Global Affairs 2009). Hence, a focus on mechanisms which highlight aspects of communication and links between the two countries provides an alternative perspective on their relations, and on how soft power works between them.

The relevance of non-state actors in international relations

A further point which can be made is the relatively small amount of academic literature focusing on non-governmental aspects of international relations, although this has been changing in recent years. Particularly regarding Japan–China relations, but also with regard to many other international relationships, the majority of writings seem to focus upon relationships as seen through the actions of prominent politicians and government officials. To take the Sino-Japanese relationship as an example, the focus is often upon leaders' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, or on some other headline-grabbing statement made by a politician. While politicians and their daily actions and statements are clearly relevant to international relations, they are not necessarily more important than the many other actors who influence international relations. Hence, this book places prominence on other, no less important, but less well-known actors on the international stage, as detailed further below.

Research questions and hypotheses

The above background points to various questions which need to be asked by this study. Firstly, what is soft power, and how does it work? It is clear that many countries have soft power resources, but exactly how are these resources instrumentalised in practice? What is the mechanism whereby a country's soft power resources affect another country?[2]

In order to answer these questions, and having considered the meaning of power, a definition of what soft power is, and a new theory of how soft power resources are utilised and transferred to another country, need to be constructed. It is hypothesised that this process requires internationally active agents which somehow cause the soft power to be carried as information across links between countries. This book will consider this hypothesis in detail.

Questions which follow from this argument are, what kind of agents enable soft power to travel between countries? How do they do this? Are some agents better at this process than others? The book hypothesises that a variety of agents can perform these functions. In order to compare their functioning, a three-level

comparative structure is utilised, analysing a *state* agent, a *sub-state* agent and a *non-state* agent in turn.

Modern states have developed into collections of several varieties of components, comprising ministries, departments, agencies and more loosely linked semi-privatised entities. In this study, a state agent will be considered to be an actor which is part of, controlled by, or accountable to the government of a country.

Sub-state agents also come in a variety of guises. Actors most commonly termed as being at the sub-state level include municipalities, city governments and regional governments such as those controlling states (in federal countries), provinces and prefectures. Common characteristics of these bodies are that they control at least some of their own funds, or collect revenue directly from people in their areas. They are also often directly accountable to people in their regions, for example through the local election of mayors, regional governors or members of local councils.[3]

Non-state agents are independent, in terms of management and decision-making, from any state or sub-state body. In general non-state actors are (1) NGO-type organisations which are accountable to their members, and receive funding from their members in addition to other sources; (2) legally incorporated companies or other commercial organisations which are accountable to their shareholders or owners, and usually are run to maximise returns. There are many organisations which are a mixture of the two types, with some NGOs having commercial arms to raise funds, and some companies operating NGOs or charities. However, even within one group it is generally possible to separate the two types of organisation. It should also be noted that both NGOs and companies may be influenced by states, for example by receiving funding from the state, or by having executives or board members with extensive state connections. Additionally, states often have provisions for tax breaks to NGOs for certain defined purposes, which may influence an NGO's activities. However, non-state agents are at least nominally, administratively and legally independent of the state.

Three-level agent comparison framework

As detailed previously, the case of Japan's relations with China has been chosen to provide empirical data to answer the questions posed, using a three-level agent comparison structure to analyse it. Hence, it is necessary to now consider the relevant agents which function in the Japanese system, and how to analyse the chosen agents.

State agents in Japan

In Japan as in other advanced industrialised countries, the state consists of a wide variety of actors. The state is governed by politicians or other experts chosen by the Prime Minister (usually from among the parties in the ruling coalition) who is normally the leader of the party which prevails in popular elections. In past

times, the Prime Minister was obliged to choose his ministers from the strongest factions in the Liberal Democratic Party (which has almost invariably been the party with most members of the Diet since its creation in 1955), and if there were other parties in the government coalition, from those parties (Bouissou 2001). To some extent, a faction system still functions under the Democratic Party of Japan government, although not as prominently as previously was the case.

Each minister is nominally the head of a department of government (*shō* or *chō*). The various departments have their own cultures, and often long histories. They also act to some extent as bureaucratic factions of government, often working in competition against each other to attract funds and influence policies (van Wolferen 1993). Attached to each department are a variety of divisions and agencies, which are ultimately answerable to the Minister (*daijin*). Additionally there are a large number of 'independent administrative agencies' (*dokuritsu gyōsei hōjin*) which were created in 2003 as part of a financial efficiency-oriented reorganisation of government. These are theoretically more independent of the government than other agencies, but in fact are still directly answerable to it, and can still be seen as integral parts of the state. Of these, two agencies which act internationally in a significant manner (the concern of this book), are to be found in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) namely the Japan Foundation and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). There are some internationally significant agencies in other departments, of which a few examples are the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) under the jurisdiction of the Ministry for Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and the Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

For the purpose of this study, in order to test the soft power ideas proposed, the Japan Foundation was chosen as a case study (Chapter 5). The Foundation was created in 1972, soon after the normalisation of Japan–China relations, and is particularly oriented towards international cultural exchanges, including exchanges in the arts, education and academia. Although its initial role was to help improve relations with the USA, it has since then increasingly focused on Southeast Asia and China. Thus it is hypothesised that this state agent has a prominent role in the transfer or communication of soft power from Japan to other countries, including China.

Sub-state agents in Japan

A sub-state organisation in Japan refers to a prefectural government, or a municipal government (such as city governments, wards and villages).[4] Both of these types of body have elected leaders, a governor in the case of prefectures, and a mayor in municipalities. These local leaders are supported by elected assemblies. Larger cities are divided into sub-units called wards, which replicate the structure of other sub-state units (Stevens 2008, CLAIR 2010c).

Japan is clearly a centralised state, with the central government having control of most tax collection and distribution of funds. The trend through the 1990s was for local tax revenues as a percentage of total local expenditure to decrease, from 37.8 per cent in 1992, to 34.4 per cent in 2003 (MIC 2005), although this had increased again to 44.2 per cent in 2007 (MIC 2009). Most important functions of the state are centralised in Tokyo, and have been for centuries, since the Tokugawa shogunate moved the administrative centre from Kyoto to Edo (the old name for Tokyo) in 1603. The Emperor and his family were the last significant parts of the state to be moved to Tokyo at the start of the Meiji period in 1868 (Hall 1971).

Nevertheless, regional governments and administrations do have significant power in the country, including the administration of many aspects of social welfare, environment and with regard to people's everyday lives. Local governments account for just over half of all state expenditure (MIC 2009), and recent government policies seem to indicate a trend towards reducing the responsibilities of the central government in favour of regional and local governments. This is partly due to the precarious financial position of the central government and many local governments, and partly following trends in other industrialised countries. Local governments are being encouraged to merge with each other, to impose financial discipline and to find new ways of funding activities.

The local government of Kobe City was chosen as the subject of the second case study in this book (Chapter 6). A medium-sized city in Japanese terms,[5] in many ways it is a representative example of how local governments in Japan are trying to form international connections. Local governments are also now in competition to transform their sister city relationships and other international links to help their local economies, as opposed to merely using them for cultural exchange, and Kobe City is again representative of this trend. The city is historically well known for having an international outlook (the port has long been an entry point for Chinese and Western traders) and it was the first Japanese city to set up a sister city relationship with a city in China. The city now has well-established sister city and sister port relationships with Tianjin City in China, as well as other activities in the Yangzi Valley region of China, and so is a good candidate to investigate the links through which soft power is hypothesised to flow between Japan's and China's regions. The case study will be used to investigate the way in which soft power functions, and is also expected to throw light on the question of how soft power has concretely benefited Japan.

Non-state agents in Japan

A non-state agent in the Japanese context refers to an organisation which controls its own finances and actions, in a manner which is independent from the state. In Japan, there are several types of legally incorporated organisations which can come under this category, which are basically divided into for-profit (companies) and not-for-profit organisations (US International Grantmaking 2010, JETRO 2006); in addition non-incorporated informal citizens' groups can also be categorised as non-state agents. There are two main forms of company, the *kabushiki gaisha*

(joint stock company) or the *yūgen gaisha* (limited company), in addition to partnerships, and sole-trader companies. There are many types of not-for-profit organisation, of which just a few examples are the *shadan hōjin* (for the public benefit), *zaidan hōjin* (set up by an endowment given by a private individual or company), *gakkō hōjin* (private educational institution), *shakai fukushi hōjin* (for social welfare) and so on. A recent addition to these is the *tokutei hieiri katsudō hōjin* (NPO) which has simplified the process for citizens to set up small NGO-type groups. Each type of organisation is subject to different governance and tax rules, making the system rather complicated.

The term 'non-state agent' entails a variety of possible actors within the context of the Japanese socio-political system. In addition, the private/public distinction has not been clear in Japanese history. As is detailed further in Chapter 7, organisations which do not have links to the state, or could not be in some way controlled by it, have traditionally not been tolerated by the government. Although the distinction between state and non-state organisations has become clearer since Western influence began to be felt in the late nineteenth century, there are still some vestiges of traditional thought, such that the distinction between state and non-state actors is sometimes unclear. Nevertheless, this can also be said of some non-state organisations in Western societies which co-operate closely with the state, such as Oxfam which helps the UK government disburse food aid in developing countries (DFID 2009).

In this book, an NGO-type organisation has been chosen for the subject of the study on non-state agents. While companies can be significant agents of soft power, their pursuit of a brand image and profit is not always directly relevant to the soft power of a country. Often multinational companies purposely disassociate themselves from their home country's image in order to operate with a greater degree of freedom. This is especially possible in China, where Japanese companies have to be very careful in their use of potentially offensive national imagery (e.g. *Straits Times* 2003) and are even known to use Chinese joint venture partners' names rather than their own brands to downplay their Japanese image. NGOs tend to reflect the ideals of their members more, and in the case of Japanese NGOs operating in China, this is hypothesised as likely to be a positive image of mutual benefit or even selfless aid from Japan to China, in contrast to the companies' aim to extract profits from the market.

For this reason, a representative NGO with long-standing links to China was chosen for the third case study. This *shadan hōjin* is the Japan–China Friendship Association (JCFA), which was created soon after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, and has gradually built up a reservoir of goodwill in China due to its cultural exchange activities. It is hypothesised that the study of this NGO will demonstrate the role of the non-state agent in enabling soft power to function. The study will be used to help answer the research questions referred to previously, to test the idea that agents form links between countries through which soft power flow, and to investigate how these links are formed and function.

For all the cases, empirical data was gathered through interviews, the analysis of primary materials including reports and statistics published by the agents

studied and other relevant institutions, as well as extensive secondary sources including academic studies, newspapers and online resources published in English, Japanese and Chinese.

By providing a novel theoretical framework to study the case of Japan, and by empirical analysis utilising the three case studies as outlined above, this book hopes to make contributions in the fields of political power, international relations, and area studies.

It is not the intention here to produce an overall theory of power, yet it is hoped that the theory of soft power has been developed in original ways which contribute to the study of power in general, and to the ideas of constructivism – itself a complex collection of theoretical ideas which seek to describe international relations. Soft power theory, and the agency theory used together with it, are hypothesised to fit well within these constructivist ideas, and one aim of this book is to demonstrate this.

Additionally, each case study aims to contribute theoretically and empirically to particular fields. The research on the Japan Foundation contributes to the understanding of how state actors who are not part of the government, and in particular state promoters of cultural exchange, utilise soft power and operate in actual international relations and cultural exchange. The study on Kobe City aims to increase understanding of the growing importance of sub-state actors in international relations, and how they utilise soft power in their international activities. This case study also points to ways in which sub-state actors have been operating actively, and additionally co-operating with businesses, despite problems between the two governments, in a manner which is rarely highlighted in the current academic literature. Finally, the investigation of the Japan–China Friendship Association and NGOs in general aims to provide information about NGOs in international relations, and how they utilise soft power. These chapters will provide information which helps illuminate the way in which Japanese NGOs in particular contribute to Japan–China relations, even when there are no official state-to-state relations.

Structure of the book

This chapter has introduced the general background of the book in terms of relevant theories of international relations and the international structure on which the soft power ideas of this research will be grounded, as well as explaining the ideas upon which the empirical sections of the book are based. It has also noted the value of studying Japan's soft power in the context of Japan–China relations and discussed the lack of literature in English which considers the importance of links between the two countries from a non-governmental perspective.

Chapter 2 surveys the major schools of thought on power in international relations. It first considers various definitions of power which have been proposed. It then discusses the development of realist theories, including neorealist theories in international relations, by analysing their treatment of the concept of power, and how these theories' precepts are now less relevant in many cases due to

the unfolding of events in recent times. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the evolution of the liberalist school of thought in international relations, including neoliberalism. The analysis includes such liberalist concepts as economic power, institutionalism, interdependence and international political economy, among others. Finally, the chapter introduces more recent theoretical developments in international relations, namely the 'critical' theories, and constructivist theories.

Chapter 3 firstly offers a definition of soft power. Next a discussion of the nature of soft power is presented. This covers (a) sources of soft power, namely cultural attractiveness, the attractiveness of ideas and ideology and economic attractiveness; (b) agents of soft power, namely central government and its agencies, sub-state regional and local governments, and non-state organisations; (c) means of instrumentalising soft power, for example through the mass-media, communications and the movement of people; (d) finally the effects of soft power are considered. The limits of soft power are then briefly discussed. Next, with reference to Chapter 2, the reasons why soft power can be considered to be constructivist are analysed. Finally the case of Japan's soft power is introduced.

Chapter 4 provides information on the context of the empirical sections, i.e. the manner in which Japan–China relations have developed over time. It briefly reviews the historical trend of cultural exchange between the two countries, and then considers in more detail the problems experienced during the Cold War period, leading up to the restoration of official diplomatic, economic and cultural relations in the 1970s. Finally it gives an outline of the issues which currently affect bilateral relations.

Chapter 5 analyses the subject of state agents of soft power, using the Japan Foundation as its case study. Firstly the background to the establishment and purpose of the Foundation is discussed. Secondly, the range of its activities in China, and how they relate to soft power are considered, in terms of two categories: (a) the encouragement of Japanese language and Japan studies, and (b) the use of cultural exchange and promotion activities. Finally, the extent to which the Foundation can be seen as an agent of Japan's soft power in China, and how it demonstrates the mechanism by which soft power is transferred, is analysed.

Chapter 6 goes on to describe the role of sub-state agents in the transmission of soft power. It does this by first considering the role of sub-state actors in international relations through a discussion of the history of sister city relationships throughout the world. The chapter then reviews the growth of local government international relations in Japan. Next, the chapter analyses in detail the case of Kobe and its sister city relationship with Tianjin in China, in terms of the development of the relationship, and the kinds of cultural, economic and port-related exchanges which have taken place. Subsequently Kobe's relations with other cities in China through the Yangzi Valley Project are detailed. Finally these observations are considered in the light of the research questions and hypotheses which have been outlined in this chapter.

In Chapter 7, the case of non-state agents is analysed using international NGOs. Firstly the definition and development of international NGOs is summarised. The place of international NGOs in Japan and in Japan–China relations is then

considered. The specific case of the Japan–China Friendship Association's history, activities in China and structure is then analysed in terms of the research questions and hypotheses previously outlined. Finally, the manner in which Japan's NGOs act as agents of Japan's soft power is detailed.

The concluding chapter provides a summary of the findings of this study, and analyses them in terms of the research questions and hypotheses posed in this chapter, as well as in the context of the theoretical structure developed in Chapters 2 and 3.

2 Theories of power in international relations

Introduction

Issues of power in relations between different actors and societies have been debated since ancient times, when philosophers such as Aristotle and Thucydides deliberated on the nature of the world around them. The term 'international' may not have made much sense in those times due to the lack of a concept of the nation state as it is known today, but does this mean that the fundamental manner in which groups of people interact has changed? Have societies moved away from their ancient instincts of fighting for survival and to gain or protect territory? The debate among theorists often seems to boil down to the question of whether this is the case or not.

In order to consider how large groups of people in the contemporary world (such as states, and other organisations acting within and between states) interact with each other, and to create a foundation for an exposition of soft power, this discussion must start from the most basic factors related to the issues of power in international relations. Questions such as 'what is power', 'how do states interact', and so on, need to be addressed before more specific issues and practical consequences can be examined.

With regard to these questions, this chapter will first briefly consider general concepts of power, and then focus on a review of prevailing theories of power in the field of international relations. The chapter will concentrate upon reviewing ideas of power in each school of international relations in turn, discussing their main points and their relevance or otherwise in today's world, and why constructivist theory is the most promising foundation for further development of the ideas in this book. This discussion will then be used in Chapter 3 to argue further that constructivism is the most suitable school of thought on which to base an explanation of soft power.

Thus, firstly the realists' views of power will be discussed, then the liberalists' views, and finally the perceptions of more recent ideas embodied in critical and constructivist theories. For each school of thought the analysis will consist of a brief description of the theory, how the theory views sources of power, types of power use and finally the implications of each theory of power in terms of the international system. Finally it will discuss why these theories are useful,

inadequate or incomplete, and therefore why there is a need to explore alternative concepts such as soft power.

Definitions of power

The general notion of power has been defined in a variety of ways. The most common approach among scholars and other thinkers has been to equate power with some kind of authority, control, or imposition of will. In ancient times, Aristotle took it for granted that these qualities were inherent in power, and there was no need to elaborate upon the meaning of the concept. Machiavelli also used the terms 'strength', 'potency' and 'authority' in his work without defining these terms further. Max Weber believed that 'power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance...' (Weber 1968 [1925]: 53). C. Wright Mills declared that '[a]ll politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence' (Mills 1959: 171). For the most part, these theorists were considering power within the boundaries of a strongly defined community or state, rather than between states.

In more recent times, definitions of power have been phrased in more subtle ways, and power has been recognised as not only the result of control or force. Talcott Parsons, for instance, saw power less as the result of actions and more as 'a circulating medium, analogous to money, within what is called the political system ...' (Parsons 1986: 101). Hence, power could be accumulated in a manner akin to money, by actors forming relationships with other actors in the system. Hannah Arendt put the case for seeing power in other ways by noting that '[p]ower corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together' (Arendt 1986: 44). This was an argument in favour of a consensual form of power, rather than an imposed form. Lukes (1974) argues for a three-dimensional view of power which provides a framework for all of these views and more.

Among international relations scholars, the nature of power has also been discussed in many ways. A general theme behind these different definitions is the ability of the wielder of power to influence the outcome of a situation; more specific definitions are often dependent on the author's view of international relations. For example, the assertion that '[p]ower can be thought of as the ability of an actor to get others to do something they otherwise would not do ...' (Keohane and Nye 2001: 10) is open to the question of whether an actor making another act in a manner in which he may have done in any case is exerting power; according to the above definition this would not be so.

Power can also be defined in terms of how it is created rather than how it is used. Thus, according to Robert Cox, power is the corollary of production; power controls production, which in turn generates more power. All other social phenomena are the result of this relationship (Cox 1987). A definition of power can also point to the prejudices or inclinations of the definer – in this case, Cox

manifests Marxist leanings while Keohane and Nye, and Arendt, show tendencies towards a liberalist view.

A more general, or less prescriptive, definition is that offered by Susan Strange, according to whom '[p]ower is simply the ability of a person or group of persons so to affect outcomes that their preferences take precedence over the preferences of others' (Strange 1996: 17). Although this definition is least prescriptive, it is by the same token all-encompassing, and therefore must be refined according to the situation.

It is necessary to recognise that there are different kinds of power, and different ways in which it can be used. Additionally, power is not always a one-way process; its use will always have consequences or side effects upon the user. If an idea of consensus power is adhered to, logically it is not possible for an actor to use power without this power also affecting the user. Thus, the way in which power is defined in international relations also depends on the view taken of what kinds of power exist, and how states or other international actors interact using those kinds of power. In general, it can be said that international relations scholars' often conservative views of power have been influenced by the prevailing general theories within the field. Therefore, in order to evaluate ways of thinking about power in international relations, and although it has been noted that 'agreement on the core premises that underlie either of these traditions, or international relations theory generally, does not exist' (Kegley 1995: 3), these prevailing theories' points of reference regarding forms of power will be considered in turn.

Realism and neorealism

Traditional realism centres on the idea that the basic condition of the world is anarchy, and therefore that units of people must help themselves to survive. The most important units in the contemporary world are states, or nations. States look after their own interests and conduct their policy according to a narrow definition of national interest. Therefore, 'international relations is not a constant state of war, but it is a state of relentless security competition, with the possibility of war always in the background' (Mearsheimer 1994: 9). Such comments as these show that realists see the main source of power as being military power (Dunne and Schmidt 2001), with any other forms flowing from this. Stability in the international system can only be maintained by a 'balance of power' between states. These ideas have left little room for consideration of other softer forms of power, and the idea that only coercive forms of power are of any use within the international system has become ingrained in the minds of Western politicians, diplomats and many academics over centuries. As an adjunct to this, the concept of power itself has come to be seen as realist, without due consideration of other ways of viewing it (Barnett and Duvall 2005).

Realists claim that their idea of the international system of states being anarchic can be seen in scholarly works since classical times, in the writings of the Greek fifth-century BCE scholar Thucydides (Waltz 1979, Keohane 1986,

Gilpin 1988), through to medieval times in the work of Niccolò Machiavelli in the fifteenth century and Thomas Hobbes (Hanson 1984) in the seventeenth century.

Sources of power in realism

Realists believe that the nation state is the monopoly controller of power (ultimately military power) in an anarchic international system (a view shared by many historians, Kennedy-Pipe 2000). Realists have tended to trivialise the role of non-state actors, including terrorist groups or private military groups (Avant 2005). Although the emergence of Al Qaeda and other global terrorist networks has led realists to reconsider this position somewhat, and some take a more nuanced view of world politics (Schmidt 2005, Jervis 1998), they still tend to believe ultimately that nation states sponsor or have responsibility for such groups (Thompson 2002).

For realists, military power has been dependent upon the strength of the state which controls it, and therefore the state's ability to fund the maintenance of a strong and modern military system. Therefore the ultimate sources of power for a realist would be (a) the amount of material and economic resources a state can call upon specifically to fund its military strength, and (b) the resulting military strength which is produced (Schmidt 2005). These assumptions, which are often made by realists, preclude the possibility of co-operation between nation states which would reduce the need for massive military–industrial complexes, and generally fail to take into account the reduction in the need for such hard forms of power when co-operative relations between countries are strong.

Realist accounts of the need for these hard power resources often seem to refer to the ancient and long-standing acceptance of them. Thus ancient Greek philosophers are often invoked to back up their ideas. Thucydides' view of power, and account of the Peloponnesian war to explain it, is generally is said to have been concentrated upon the idea of military power (Gilpin 1988). Even more recent attempts to update and develop realist theory focus upon military power as the primary source of power. Waltz (1979, 2000) typified thinking among a large section of the American elite with his attempts to produce a systematic realist theory of international relations. Although the theory accounted for other types of power source, in particular the structural power embodied within the configuration of the international system, his ideas were still based upon the assumption that states are the most important power wielders, and that their power stems from military power. The idea of the international structure as an actual source of power does not emerge, and the importance of non-state actors (which had some importance even in the period when Waltz wrote his seminal work) was not acknowledged.

Another realist account of the international system was given by Gilpin (1981, 1986, 1988) who acknowledged changes in sources of military power over the centuries, from being purely based upon territory and agricultural prowess to being based upon technology and organisation. Nevertheless, he refused to acknowledge

that the international system had also changed, and asserted that military power was still the most important power source for states in the international system:

> [i]t does not necessarily follow that this change in the nature of warfare, as important as it surely is, has also changed the nature of international relations. The fundamental characteristics of international affairs unfortunately have not been altered and, if anything, have been intensified by the nuclear revolution ... In the contemporary anarchy of international relations, distrust, uncertainty, and insecurity have caused states to arm themselves and prepare for war as never before.
>
> (Gilpin 1988: 611)

These statements showed that Gilpin, as with other realists, had been unable or unwilling to grasp the changes in the global system and in technology which were increasing the importance of other sources of power in international relations, such as ideas, information and communications.

Types of power use in realism

Realists have universally assumed that the state is the only significant user of power. The state is seen as a unitary, rational actor, whose relationships with other states are the fundamental basis of the international system. Little attention has been given to relationships between states and sub-state actors (such as regional authorities and local governments) or to relationships between states and non-state actors such as NGOs and companies. Equally little attention is given to international institutions or putative supra-national institutions. Each state is seen to form alliances, agreements or adversarial relationships with other states purely in their own interests, and depending on their own military and material resources (Mearsheimer 1994, Morgenthau 1952).

Furthermore, realists' views of power use generally refer to the direct use of the relevant power resource, or what Strange (1996) referred to as 'relational' power use. This means that the only relevant use of power has been assumed to be when states actively do something towards or against other states. Indirect usage of power, for example directed towards non-state actors such as international institutions with the intended side-effect of acting upon other states, or the ways in which sub-state actors affect relations with other states, appears not to be contemplated (Katzman 2001). Strange's 'structural power' usage is therefore not easily combinable with realist theories.

Continuing the theme of emphasis on relational power use, realists have contemplated the use of military power as a legitimate method for a state to maintain its place within the international system. This can mean that a state will build up military power firstly for its own defence; it will then build up military power in order to deploy it within striking distance of another state, and so deter any attacks upon it, or otherwise implicitly threaten to use this power if another state should not act in accordance with its wishes.

Thus, realists believe a state may use the implicit threat of its military resources to bring coercive pressure to bear upon another state, for example using measures such as diplomatic pressure through ambassadors and other official channels, and general statements of condemnation of another state's actions. While the state may also utilise political and economic sanctions against another state, this is ultimately backed up and reinforced by military power, according to realists (Waltz 1979). Little reference is made in realist accounts to non-coercive uses of power which have become increasingly important, such as information exchange, attraction through ideas and the mutually beneficial construction of links for these purposes.

Implications of realists' ideas of power

Realists' views of the international system and of sources and types of power greatly affect their views of how power is wielded and used in that system. Given that realists believe in anarchy as the fundamental characteristic of the international system, they further believe that states can and will use their coercive power resources to maintain their status in the international system.

Some realists believe that states will build up power defensively; when they have enough military power to defend themselves, they will not try to acquire more of this power if it would jeopardise their security (Waltz 1979, Grieco 1997). Therefore, Grieco states that the realist assumption of anarchy means that 'most states ... will seek the minimum level of power that is needed to attain and to maintain their security and survival' (Grieco 1997: 167). So-called 'offensive' realists believe that states will continue to build up military power until they gain a hegemonic position in the world (Mearsheimer 1994). This could be seen simply as a difference between states regarding the meaning of defence; recent American doctrine has regarded pre-emptive action as a part of defence, such as the action which led to the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. This demonstrates the possibility that some countries feel the need to defend themselves by controlling the international system – hence the drive for hegemony. Nevertheless, the belief in an anarchical international system leads to the assumption among realists that states will build up certain minimum amounts of power as a priority.

Other realists believe that the effect of military power being the primary source of power in the international system is that states will strive to maintain a *balance of power*. This entails that states will always try to ensure that they can in some way balance another state's power, either by developing more powerful weapons, or by allying with other states to balance a particularly powerful state. Morgenthau was noted for his 'pessimistic' (Holsti 1995: 38) vision of international anarchy with the balance of power being the most defining aspect of the international system. He further asserted that

> ... one could go on and pick out at random any foreign policy pursued by the United States from the beginning to 1919 and one would hardly find a policy

... which could not be made intelligible by reference to the national interest defined in terms of power – political, military and economic ...

(Morgenthau 1952: 964)

Neither of these concepts allows for a situation such as that which has been constructed by the states of the European Union, where such notions of military hegemony or balance of military power are not relevant when considering dealings between member states. It is today inconceivable that even Germany and France would fight a war to settle a disagreement, although this has been a normal way of doing so for hundreds of years for these two countries. Therefore there is no need to maintain a balance of military power between them, or to strive for military hegemony within the EU. This lack of applicability of realist notions highlights their irrelevance in many situations in today's world, and the need to find other ways of describing international relations.

The neorealist, or structural realist theory espoused by Waltz (1979) took the basic assumptions of power used by realists, and added to them an international system composed of self-interested interacting units. A resulting effect of this view was that the balance of power was at its most stable in a bipolar system (Waltz 1979: 135), conveniently representing the military power balance of the international system at the time of writing. Although this point of view seemed to accurately *describe* the state of affairs which had existed previously, it is an example of a criticism often directed at the classical realists – that their theories were poor at *prescribing* policy.

Additionally, this form of realism could only be applied to the problems of the world in a short-term manner within a set historical framework. Although some realists such as E. H. Carr have acknowledged this, applying the theory only to a set period, writers such as Morgenthau and Waltz used realism as a 'problem-solving theory' which was applicable regardless of the historical conditions, and 'tacitly assum[ed] the permanency of existing structures' (Cox 1986: 244). In other words, within their theories they did not allow for the manners in which sources of power, types of power, and the use of power have changed over time, from the ancient Greeks' internecine wars to the modern-day period of international regimes, globalisation and the gradual spread of liberal democracy.

Vasquez has noted that realists did not contemplate that there would:

[emerge] from the ranks of the Communist Party of the USSR a leader who through a series of unilateral actions opted his country out of the struggle for power in the belief that peace was possible and that zero sum games could be converted into positive sum games.

(Vasquez 1998: 376)

That the rise and decline in the pervasiveness of realist perceptions of power seems to have reflected the current world-view of US administrations additionally points to questions about its universal applicability, and US bias.

Liberalism and neoliberalism

Liberalism as a collection of concepts derives from the ideas of philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, John Locke, and Jeremy Bentham in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the twentieth century it was developed by the so-called 'idealists' (such as Woodrow Wilson) who, after the First World War, were determined to change the international system in order to prevent such devastation happening again in the future. Despite being much maligned during the Cold War years, liberalism has in recent times received a boost from the end of the Cold War, and has been supplemented by 'neoliberalism' (Kegley 1995, Doyle 1995, Zacher and Matthew 1995, Doyle and Ikenberry 1997).

A central theme of liberalism is that individuals are free to make their own choices. Therefore, people's and states' actions are not necessarily dictated by an anarchical system, but they can co-operate by looking after each other's interests in order to bring about security for all.

Sources of power in liberalism

Liberalists have tended to concentrate upon the individual and actors other than the nation state in their analysis of sources of power in the international system. A corollary of this is that they do not consider military power to necessarily be the most important source of power.

In the contemporary world, liberalists focus upon economic power, consensual power (leading to co-operation) and institutional power (Kegley 1995, Weber 2001). If this view of power is focused upon, it can be seen that the power of the state is immediately reduced in comparison to the realist view. Although the nation state may nominally control more economic power than any other institution, in fact most of its resources are tied up in long-term commitments to its citizens, in the form of security, debt payments, welfare and the other societal functions that a legitimate, modern state must perform. Therefore the amount of economic resources it has available to mobilise and use to influence the international system in various ways becomes more comparable to large transnational companies, international institutions and other international non-state actors. This view of international relations is, however, highly skewed towards industrialised and economically developed democracies, between which some freedom of trade and movement has been achieved. It is therefore difficult to consider liberalist theories as being applicable to all areas around the world – the problem of historical contingency is still apparent here. Liberalist theorists have constructed their ideas of power based upon the circumstances in their own times and countries.

Consensus power is based upon the free choice of individuals to co-operate with one another. It need not be incompatible with the idea of competition, and is a necessary component of liberalist thinking. All power derives from the consensus of a group; even in a totalitarian state, the power-wielding dictator can only control that power with the co-operation of his administration and military (Arendt 1986).

The idea of actors' positions in international institutions as a source of power is based upon the view that these institutions have significant influence in the international system (e.g. Axtmann 2006, Willetts 1996). International institutions may include such bodies as the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, and other bodies which are the result of collaboration between national governments. However, they also include international bodies which may have been formed by global companies, or even groups of interested individuals. Examples of these would include technical standards bodies, such as ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), which administers systems which determine how domain names are indexed on the internet, or ad hoc consortia of companies which decide upon mobile telephony protocols. The ability of actors to control or influence the actions of these bodies can be seen as institutional power. Again, however, this source of power may not be available where there are few stable international institutions operating, such as in sub-Saharan Africa and other poor regions of the world – areas which liberalists do not often consider.

A final source of power in the liberalist view is interdependence. The interactions between individuals, sub-state actors, states and international organisations in the international system can be a source of power. Actors other than states have grown in importance, leading to a web of interactions between actors above and below the state level (Keohane and Nye 2001). These include non-governmental organisations, transnational companies, other international or supra-national organisations such as the EU or ASEAN, and also sub-national or regional authorities which have in many cases started to act internationally (see e.g. Breslin and Hook 2002, Jain 2004). This view of international actors draws from the idea that the individual and other sub-state actors have political power in the international system.

The idea of interdependence as a source of power envisages that states, institutions and other actors are linked by their transactions. These transactions include flows of money, people, information and other goods and services. The value of these transactions has grown to a point where actors and states are mutually dependent; this means that this interdependence has become a potential source of power, in particular for actors which are less dependent on a transaction than others. This source of power, while being a valid explanation of processes in developed and politically free countries, fails to take into account the situation in totalitarian states, with repressive regimes, further showing how liberalist theories are not universally applicable. This points to the need to embrace some of these liberalist theories but from a constructivist perspective which envisages them as a set of tools among others in order to understand the complexity of contemporary international power relations.

Types of power use in liberalism

A consequence of liberalists' belief in individualism is that power is seen to reside not just in monolithic states, but also in individuals, companies and other actors

formed by the individuals or companies. Power also lies in the relationships between these actors (Strange 1970, 1996, Keohane and Nye 2001).

Individual actors' accumulation and use of economic power thus affect the international system as much as actions by states. If an individual decides to buy a certain financial product, for example a share in a company, this is an act of power which leads that individual to have a certain amount of control in that company. On the international scale, this will have a negligible effect; however, if many individuals exercise this kind of economic power, the effect will be larger, and may even affect the actions of the company. The actions of the company in turn will affect other companies and organisations, and eventually the effects will be felt by states. The same is true of other organisations such as domestic or international NGOs, and supra-national groups and organisations which straddle the boundary between the public and private sectors.

The emphasis on economic power in liberalist theories tends to occlude other forms of power which are relevant between actors in the international system. The importance of power represented by ideas and information is often overlooked in liberalist accounts which are based on purely economic theories. This is also a criticism which can be levelled at another mainstay source of power in liberalist theories – institutional power.

As explained previously, an actor such as a state will gain institutional power by virtue of its position within an international institution. It gains this position by negotiation with the other states in the system, so as to gradually manoeuvre itself into a stronger position. This can be done through making economic contributions to the institution and by devoting attention to being politically proactive and thus raising its profile within the institution. It is likely that a country will have a stronger position through being a founder member of the institution than if it joins later on. This can be seen in the case of the European Union (Peters 1996), where founder members retained disproportionate political power within the EU bureaucracy long after other members had joined, partly due to inertia caused by the slow-changing nature of large bureaucracies, but also due to the original member states' representatives in the bureaucracy leaning towards the selection of their own preferred candidates for jobs.

An actor can then use this position to affect the outcome of international negotiations. If a nation state engages in negotiations which will lead to an international treaty or other set of rules being established, it can exert its institutional power to ensure the rules are favourable to it. Similarly, a company can use its position within an international consortium to ensure that its needs are met when the consortium decides on an international standard.

Liberalists believe that states can, through institutions, engage in co-operation for their mutual benefit. The essence of international organs such as the United Nations is that international security is best safeguarded by some form of international co-operation and consensus rather than by unilateral actions.

While these liberalist assertions are valid within certain contexts, for example when explaining how or why states form international institutions, the simple proposal that an actor gains power by manoeuvring in international institutions

does not explain why and how this occurs, as is possible by using constructivist theories.

Implications of liberalist ideas of power

Individualism, co-operation and institutionalisation

Liberalists' ideas about power relations lead to a belief that states can co-operate in the international system, and that anarchy is not its basic situation. Liberalist theories based on the individualist view of power relations outlined above, but also based on the idea of co-operation, lead logically to the formation of international institutions.

Immanuel Kant's ideas are often evoked in depictions of liberalism (Doyle 1986, Zacher and Matthew 1995, Onuf and Johnson 1995). Kant believed that, despite difficulties leading to wars, revolutions and so on, in the end nature forces people to co-operate to ensure their survival, as they learn the lessons of war and conflict. Doyle's research has shown that no liberal regimes (according to the Kantian definition) have fought a war between each other since the late eighteenth century (Doyle 1995: 90). As they acquired broadly representative governments, these states have eschewed war as a means of settling disputes with each other in favour of negotiation. These observations provide powerful evidence in support of Kantian liberalism and therefore the idea that coercive power is not necessarily the most important source of power as realists suggest.

Kant's theories and ideas embody the liberalist view of power relations explained earlier. There is strong emphasis on the individual's political power being the basis of a republican state. The idea that individuals should be able to trade with others freely, even with foreigners, comes from the emphasis on the importance of the economic power of the individual. Finally, the ideas of the liberal zone of peace (Doyle 1995) reflect liberalists' views on co-operation, and the power of international institutions such as treaties and organisations.

The liberal zone of peace is an idea which has been picked up by many liberalists trying to counter realist arguments of universal anarchy (cf. Rosato 2003). This zone of peace can be said to have come into existence due to the realisation of Kantian liberalism. In liberal democracies, individuals are free to express their political and economic power, and at least in relation to other democracies, they have done this by opting for peace. Economic competition still thrives, but the element of consensual power can be seen in that true economic competition can only occur in a system with certain ground rules, i.e. international laws or practices.

The liberalist view of international power relations reached a high point of influence after the First World War, when leaders and other politicians began to see that a comprehensive and strong international system of co-operation was the only way to avert further disaster – leading to the doomed League of Nations advocated by US President Woodrow Wilson.

Some of Wilson's ideals survived with the later development of the United Nations, and theories of 'liberal institutionalism'. This was a strand of thought

pursued by people who believed that the only way to ensure peace and spread liberal democracy was through the use of strong international institutions. In the period after the Second World War, theorists such as David Mitrany (1948) and Ernst Haas (1968) argued that institutions could be developed initially by encouraging governments to co-operate in certain spheres of policy such as trade. This was to be influential in the development of the European Union, and the development of this group of countries, as well as other regional groupings such as NAFTA (Corrales and Feinberg 1999) and ASEAN based on institutional power and economic power, seems to have led to a revitalisation of liberalist theories. This new liberalism, or 'neoliberalism', takes ideas from Kant, Wilson, and their contemporaries, but also responds to realists' arguments, by emphasising international institutional power as a means of controlling an anarchic international system. In order to refute realists' pessimistic assumptions about states' behaviour, however, neoliberal institutionalists have concentrated on staying close to the realists' arguments. The result is that neoliberalism seems to differ little in many ways from neorealism (Smith 2002).

Both assume that some kind of international institution is needed to control the anarchic system (unlike classical liberalists who did not recognise anarchy in the international system); neorealists believe that it will not be possible to construct an effective institution, while neoliberalists believe it will be possible. Grieco (1988, 1997) emphasises the argument that states will always be concerned about their competitors' relative gains in the international system, and so will not wish to co-operate with each other. Additionally, states will 'cheat' to increase their relative institutional power, and other states will therefore decline to act multilaterally.

> Realism's identification of the relative gains problem for cooperation is based on its insight that states in anarchy fear for their survival as independent actors. According to realists, states worry that today's friend may be tomorrow's enemy in war, and fear that achievements of joint gains that advantage a friend in the present might produce a more dangerous potential foe in the future.
>
> (Grieco 1988: 487)

Grieco's statement of the disagreement between neoliberalists and neorealists shows the main difference between them, that is their conception of the nature of people and states. This fundamental distinction draws from their more traditional predecessors of classical realism and liberalism.

International political economy and interdependence

International political economy (IPE) is the study of political and economic links between a variety of actors in the global system which has been based on liberal ideas (Katzenstein *et al.* 1998), although some realists have also contributed to the debate (Gilpin 1971). The processes of globalisation, the development

of international structures and increasing interdependence have increased the importance of the idea of IPE in recent decades, although its precepts have been relevant throughout modern history.

IPE theory suggests that as the volume of trade and capital flows between economically liberal states has increased, the importance of trade in international politics has also increased. The idea that relations between states are driven by trade (economic power) rather than military power is a challenge to classical realism. Another challenge to realist views of power relations is that the increased importance of international trade has also increased the power of non-state actors, particularly transnational companies (Strange 1996).

A further concept deriving from liberalist views of power is shown in the idea of interdependence (Keohane and Nye 2001, Baldwin 1980) in the global system, between states and non-state actors. Keohane and Nye distinguish interdependence from 'interconnectedness':

> [w]here there are reciprocal (although not necessarily symmetrical) costly effects of transactions, there is interdependence. Where interactions do not have significant costly effects, there is simply interconnectedness.
>
> (Keohane and Nye 2001: 8)

They use the example of power relations between the USA and Canada (Keohane and Nye 2001: 144), a useful showcase for the theory, as the volume of transactions between the two countries is very high and therefore issues of interdependence become very important when considering how these countries make decisions on the use of power between them. However, the processes of globalisation have not yet proceeded to the point where trade between other countries is as high as that between the USA and Canada. In fact, in many large economies, the amount of trade as a proportion of GDP is quite low, although it has increased dramatically in recent years. Even in this period of accelerating globalisation, in 2007 just 14.7 per cent of the USA's GDP was from trade, while the figure was 16.8 per cent for Japan (OECD 2009), despite the widely believed vulnerability of that country to export and import fluctuations.

Strange (1996) also utilised ideas of interdependence to analyse the international system. She distinguishes between 'relational' power and 'structural' power. Relational power is power used by one state upon another, by such means as military, economic or diplomatic pressure; in other words, relational power is used between states or groups of states directly. Structural power is more indirect, and is used by a country to manipulate and control international structures which have arisen from interdependence. These include financial and trading regimes and international political arrangements, such as the WTO or Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Structural power, once established, can be longer lasting than one-off relational power use. A kind of structural power is that which is embodied by international institutions. International institutions originally created after the Second World War are a case in point, reflecting the relational power of states in that period. The

United Kingdom retains structural power which is arguably much greater than its current reduced relational power would suggest. Its permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council and strong position in the Bretton Woods financial institutions, which resulted from being on the victorious side in the Second World War, still enable it to influence world events in a manner disproportionate to its economic size and population; this is in marked contrast to the defeated countries such as Germany and Japan.

Another consequence of liberalist views of power has been the development of free trade areas (FTAs). The members of the European Union (EU) pioneered the implementation of liberalists' views of international power relations, with their gradual surrendering of state power to supranational and regional bodies, along with the deepening of their trade links.

The example provided by the EU has been watched closely in other regions of the world, leading to the spread of liberalist ideas of the importance of co-operation (consensus power) and trade (economic power). Concrete examples of the results of this spread include the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) FTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Mercosur (Common Market of the South) in South America.

Thus, the development in international structures, and the consequent increase in the availability and use of structural power resources for many countries, has increased interdependence in the international system. However, the lack of further development of groups such as ASEAN, NAFTA and Mercosur along the lines of the EU shows how it is necessary to consider the interests and identities of the actors involved to explain how they progress.

The debates which were started by these views of the international political economy and interdependence began to show how a simplistic separation of international relations theories into realist and liberalist categories was becoming increasingly difficult and irrelevant. The ideas in these theories are very relevant to today's globalising world, and yet they cannot provide a framework to help explain international relations in all areas of the world. IPE and interdependence theories ultimately seem mostly relevant to relations between liberal democracies, and while hinting at the roles of non-state political and economic actors in the international system, they do not provide a framework to explain the influence of NGOs and other international actors. Hence, constructivist and some critical theories have dispensed with artificial realist and liberalist distinctions of international relations, and it is contended that they are more suitable to provide a base for an investigation of soft power.

Critical theories

Depending upon which theory of international relations we subscribe to, our ideas about the nature of power can be very different. However, as Cox (1981: 87) has said, '[t]heory is always *for* some one, and *for* some purpose'. That is to say, a theory is often developed with the intention of supporting the theorist's view of how policy should be implemented; it is impossible for a theorist to create a

theory which does not embody their own values. This needs to be borne in mind when considering how a writer defines power.

So-called 'critical IR theorists' see the idea of international relations theory in fundamentally different ways from mainstream writers. Taking many concepts and ideas from critical social theory as developed from sociological perspectives (Adorno and Horkheimer 1997 [1947]), Anievas 2005, Weber 2005), they reject the positivist views of contemporary realist, neorealist and neoliberal writers. Critical theorists believe not only that theories reflect the circumstances in which they were developed, but also that facts are products of their historical framework (Smith 2001). From this perspective, they are suspicious of any claim of universality by any theory. Therefore a critical theorist might say that realist theories such as Waltz's were products of the bipolar cold war system; the fact that they did not predict or allow for the changes after the collapse of the Soviet Union tends to confirm this.

They therefore reject the assertions of realists regarding international anarchy and the monopoly of the state in international affairs. Critical theorists seek to not only describe the situation facing states now, but also to search for indications of change in the international system (Anievas 2005: 136). As Linklater notes, '[c]ritical perspectives seek to identify the prospects for change in global politics – latent though they may be at present' (Linklater 1998: 22). In this way, critical theory follows on from Marx's philosophy of looking for seeds of change in the current system, and encouragement of its reform

Sources of power in critical theories

Critical IR theorists' views of power in international relations, while difficult to place within a consistent theme, stem from their rejection of mainstream theories' inherent biases. They often take their inspiration from the manner in which Marxists criticised the workings of the international capitalist system, although Marxism itself is also generally rejected.

Thus, power relations are defined through the analysis of the manner in which ruling elites or classes dominate other groups in the global system, and in the analysis of language used in international discourse (Weber 1990, 2001, der Derian 1990, Shapiro 1990); in discussing these issues, writers such as Wittgenstein, Foucault, Derrida and Habermas are often cited (George and Campbell 1990, Weber 2005, Anievas 2005, Smith 2001, 2002). Issues such as the position of women in international relations theories (Elshtain 1985), and inequality in the global system are also used to analyse power (Hurrell and Woods 1999).

While the nature of their scholarship means there are few overall theories on power in international relations, two prominent critical IR scholars, Robert Cox and Andrew Linklater, have produced such ideas. Cox's way of looking at power relations (e.g. Cox 1977, 1987, 1996) is derived from a class-based view of societies, influenced by Marxism and the early twentieth-century Italian writer, Antonio Gramsci's work. Cox's theories embody the idea that the structure of a society and its economic systems profoundly affect its relations with other societies – also a theme of the study of IPE.

Cox distinguishes between three sources of power. Firstly 'state-centric' power, approximately meaning the power accrued to and exercised by the government or administration of a state, generally in the form of military or other direct enforceable power. Secondly he refers to the 'economic-welfare' sphere of power relations. He characterises this power in the way a state directs and develops a society or responds to its pressures, and in modern terms defines it as financial policy, which in turn affects other states. His third category of power source is 'social power' which refers to relationships between social classes or groups, within and across state boundaries (Cox 1977, 1981).

> Now, as a consequence of international production, it becomes increasingly pertinent to think in terms of a global class structure alongside or superimposed upon national class structures. At the apex of an emerging global class structure is the transnational managerial class ... class action penetrates countries through the process of internationalisation of the state.
>
> (Cox 1981: 111)

Linklater's ideas of power relations in the international system share the characteristic of Cox's ideas of looking at historical frameworks, and the long-term progression of international power relations. However, whereas Cox's ideas stem from a class-based analysis, Linklater's ideas appear to stem from a conviction that while realist viewpoints were more relevant in the past, liberalist viewpoints will be more relevant in the future.

In an extension of the liberal democratic zone of peace theory extolled by Doyle (1986) and others, Linklater (1998) proposes that the seeds of a post-Westphalian international order are visible. He rejects the notion that nation states are the only way to visualise communities and hence their relations. Consequently for Linklater, non-state actors are major power sources within this new order.

Types of power use

In an international context, Cox's 'social power' refers to the power of rich producer states and their elites' dominance of poorer countries. Rich countries use their economic and structural power to ensure that industrial production which is dangerous to human health and to the environment is situated in poor countries which have less international clout; they also use this power to ensure that developing countries do not have an international voice.

Linklater views use of power in the international system from a different perspective. He envisages a fluid system, where nation states do not have great control. Instead, non-state actors such as financial institutions, transnational companies, international NGOs and international institutions determine where and how power is used. The Westphalian system gave nation states 'monopoly power' over crucial elements of society, such as over military power, taxation, adjudication between people, representation of people in international society and therefore the authority to bind people into international laws. In the era of the

nation states' peak, the increased power of the state monopolies led to the exclusion from society of ethnic minorities who found themselves within the nation state's boundaries, and a reduction in the diversity of political communities; states had a 'homogenising' effect. The enforcement of notions of 'sovereignty, territoriality and citizenship' made the idea of alternative forms of political organisation seem impossible. However, Linklater sees evidence that power being used by non-state actors is changing the international situation.

Implications of critical IR scholars' ideas of power

Cox's definition of power is based on the idea of a controlling transnational elite. But what then of the rapid development of countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and, more recently, large areas of China? These formerly poor countries have reached living standards on a par with many industrially advanced nations (United Nations 2006). Cox assumes that these countries have only been able to gain power as a result of the actions of the transnational elite, led by the US hegemon, and that they are still in essence controlled financially by that elite through bodies such as the IMF and WTO. However, the contention that US largesse has been the only reason for, or even the major factor in, their development clearly belittles the skill and effort which has been applied by the people of those countries and, in some cases their leaders. The fact that the USA believed that Japan's economic future was to be a small power with little economic potential provides some evidence that its development into the world's second largest economy was not inevitable just because it had been given access to US markets. In fact the American policy of not allowing Japan to deal with the Soviet Union or China after the Second World War hampered its trading relations considerably.

   Cox believes that the hegemonic power of the United States has caused the current situation of international division between rich and poor, and calls for a multipolar international system as the only way to alleviate these problems (Cox 2004). However he does not take note of the fact that, by its own actions, the USA has created the conditions for a multipolar international system. Its liberal investment and relatively liberal trade policies since the Second World War have helped countries which were never seen to be part of 'the West' to grow in economic and political strength, thus diluting the 'transnational elite' and enabling poor countries to escape poverty. Those countries, especially in East Asia, have in turn sought to help other poorer countries to escape the poverty trap. Most notably in the past two decades, hundreds of millions of people in China have been lifted from poverty, and the same kind of effect is gradually being seen in India. If these two giant nations can eventually join the 'transnational elite' it will be difficult to defend the idea that such an elite controls the international system through hegemonic power.

   Linklater suggests that in the current era of globalisation the weakening of the Westphalian system of nation states has become possible through changes in power relations. The signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 is generally

considered to be the beginning point of the current international system, with nation states becoming the main political actors and sources of power. In previous periods, other units such as city-states and loose-knit confederations or empires had been predominant in Europe. With the advent of greater populations and more intensive conflicts between them, constant warring between states in Europe led to the conditions which favoured accumulation of military power to be controlled by a central authority, the nation state. As Linklater notes,

> [m]odern states outflanked their competitors – city-states and sprawling imperial structures – by striking the appropriate balance between the accumulation of coercive power and the encouragement of capitalist development.
>
> (Linklater 1998: 28)

Linklater proposes that a key element in the change in power relations between nations has been shown by 'arguments which suggest the obsolescence of war between the major industrial states' (Linklater 1998: 30). Evidence of the weakening of national monopolies' power consists of people's recourse to non-state and transnational groups to secure social and environmental protection. The growth of international human rights law has begun to infringe the state's monopoly control of justice. The nation state's ability to control the national economy has been undercut by globalised production and financial relations. The reduction in the state monopoly has also exposed the natural boundaries within states along ethnic lines and 'in several states the myth of national unity and coherence has been shattered' (Linklater 1998: 31). Although Linklater's vision of the reduction of the power of the nation state may be somewhat premature, he nevertheless identifies key trends in the global system. One key trend which he notices is that of minority peoples insisting on their recognition:

> [a]cross the world – and largely because globalisation disseminates similar political projects and creates a common stock of political resources and ideas – minority nations, indigenous peoples and migrant organisations fuel "the politics of recognition"... these new movements seek global support ... to create universal norms which establish the principle of respect for cultural differences.
>
> (Linklater 1998: 32)

In fact, Linklater's vision seems to be some distance in the future; even in a place such as the European Union, where freedom of movement across borders has been a long-standing principle, the reduction in states' monopoly power has not discernibly led to an increase in cross-border political communities. His arguments nevertheless have some merit, and contain strong indications that neorealist assumptions of international anarchy and the nation state are not universally applicable.

A problem common to critical theorists, therefore, is the lack of any theoretical framework to explain current international power relations and their effects.

The emphasis on looking at the global system from a broad historical viewpoint has disadvantages, in that it does not help to understand or describe events and processes which are happening at the present time in the world. With the increasing lack of relevance of many classical realist and liberalist concepts of power relations, it has been necessary for a set of theoretical tools which take a more detailed view of power from a human perspective, and also a broader view in that they embody both realist and liberalist concepts. These are collectively known as constructivist theories.

Constructivism

'Constructivism' is a relatively recently developed concept, or approach, which tries to introduce some more esoteric ideas from philosophy, sociology and psychology about how people's ideas, interests and identities affect international relations (Wendt 1999, Hopf 1998, Kratochwil 2000, Guzzini 2000, Checkel 2004, Lukes 2005). It suggests that the system of international relations is not inherently anarchic, as is assumed by realists, neorealists and neoliberalists. In fact the international system, as with domestic systems, is defined by the ideas and ways of thinking of the actors involved in them. Hence, if key actors within a system strongly believe it is anarchic, then it will be. States are constituted by people, and therefore the states themselves are constructed from ideas and ways of thinking. Wendt's social constructivism theory is state-centric; states are still the most important actors in international politics. However it does not deny the importance of non-state actors (Wendt 1999: 9). Other writers such as Hopf (1998) have also considered constructivism in international relations and how it might be used as a practical tool to understand international power relations.

Sources of power

The most important source of power, according to constructivists, derives from political actors' identities, ideas, and interests (Wendt 1999, Lukes 2005). Therefore, if a state is inclined towards territorial expansionism, military power will be important to it, whereas if a state is inclined towards building wealth, economic power will take precedence. The inclinations of a state are built up by prevailing ideas, norms and the distribution of interests (Wendt 1999: 103). The actors within the state also have beliefs and identities which have been created according to the prevailing structures and norms within that state.

Therefore sources of power could also be said to be forces which shape those ideas and norms. These forces control dissemination of information and knowledge; specifically they would include such structures and agents as the education system, mass media and to some extent agencies in state governments which regulate them, among many other actors.

However, in addition to this emphasis on identities, interests and so on, most constructivists would admit the importance of sources of power which have been identified by realists and liberalists, such as coercive power, institutional power

and structural power (e.g. Barnett and Duvall 2005, Hopf 1998). These forms
of power are often considered in constructivist accounts, but explained by and
defined in terms of constructivist language. This all-encompassing character
of constructivism makes it a more practical set of tools than either realism or
liberalism, which even in their later incarnations concentrated too much upon
certain kinds of power relations to the detriment of the study of other varieties.
These properties also make it the most suitable set of tools to consider soft power,
a concept which does not fit well into established realist or liberalist theories.

Types of power use

It follows from Wendt's assertions that to utilise, affect or change people's ideas
and interests represents the use of power. Clearly, people's ideas can be changed
by a multitude of factors, whether coercive or consensual. The use of force or
sanctions by one state against another would change both states' ideas about each
other. Changes in the educational curriculum of a country in order to influence
its citizen's knowledge of another country would constitute the use of power;
this kind of power use is seen around the world where nations wish to promote
nationalism among their people, or certain preconceived views of other countries.
Equally, the use of propaganda against another country would affect that country's
citizens' knowledge, and possibly affect anyone else who was to be subject to
such propaganda. A lack of action can also change people's ideas and interests –
Lukes (2005) cites the example of the US decision not to sign the Kyoto Protocol
on climate change as changing many people's and states' ideas about the USA.

   Central to Wendt's theory, however, is the notion that nation states are the
primary wielders of power in the international system. Power may be used by non-
state actors; however, Wendt believes that ultimately all power is still channelled
through states due to their still overwhelming presence in the international system.
This is a highly debatable point, considering how transnational media groups and
other organisations which are outside state control can have a great influence on
people's ideas in societies with any freedom of expression. Indeed, there have
been many criticisms of Wendt's state-centred approach, and other aspects of his
approach to power in international relations (e.g. Kratochwil 2000), and in fact
most constructivist scholars do not seem to take the idea of the state as the only
important actor in the global system. Non-state agents are recognised as important
users of power within the literature (e.g. Barnett and Duvall 2005, Lipschutz
2005, Lukes 2005) and all actors and structures are seen as important in a way
which cannot be attributed to realist and liberalist accounts. Therefore, again
constructivist tools seem appropriate to explain soft power, which is clearly not
the exclusive preserve of states; points which are considered further in Chapter 3.

Implications of constructivist power use

The fact that states have different policies towards each other depending upon
their beliefs about other states shows that realism does not apply in all situations.

For example, countries such as Britain and Germany within the EU patently do not expect to go to war with each other in the foreseeable future; there has been no build-up of military power directed at each other since the Second World War. A similar statement could be made about relations between many other liberal democratic countries. Therefore these countries' beliefs about each other have directed policy-making.

The 'critical theorists' also take the view that a theory such as realism cannot apply in all situations. Cox's (1981) argument that realism is a theory which reacts to problems which have occurred, and does not propose possible alternatives to the current power distribution in the world tends to agree with Wendt's proposition that beliefs structure theories.

If Wendt's theory, that social structures are constructed by ideas and are therefore changeable, and Linklater's (1998) theory that state boundaries are no longer so important are applicable, they could provide a new theoretical basis to describe how power is used by actors, through the dissemination of ideas, culture, ways of thinking and ways of living. The Soviet Union's strong influence in Europe after the Second World War was based upon the perceived attractiveness of the ideology of communism and the promise of a new way of life for people. The USA's influence around the world has been driven by its ideals, transmitted through Hollywood films, and other cultural exports. People in oppressed states have been drawn to the idea of democracy, free speech and wealthy lifestyles.

However, the fact remains that Wendt's theory is state-centred. In the end, his theory subscribes to the ultimate power being that of violence, the use of which is monopolised by states. He anticipates criticism of this assertion:

> "State-centrism" does not mean that the causal chain in explaining war and peace stops with states, or even that states are the "most important" links in that chain, whatever that might mean ... The point is merely that states are still the primary medium through which the effects of other actors on the regulation of violence are channelled into the world system. It may be that non-state actors are becoming more important than states as initiators of change, but system changes ultimately happen through states.
>
> (Wendt 1999: 9)

Despite toying with the use of ideas and culture as the bedrock of international relations, Wendt clings to the essentially realist notion that even within the liberal democratic zone of peace, the state's power over organised violence (i.e. military and police power) is in general the most important foundation of international relations (Wendt 2005).

Ted Hopf (1998) carries the idea of constructivism further, by suggesting ways in which it could be used to explain commonly used examples which have been explained unsatisfactorily by mainstream theories. He observes that the classic balance of power argument used by realists is not empirically correct; states do not balance their power against other friendly states. Britain does not consider the need to defend itself against the USA and vice versa. Therefore a 'balance

of threat' argument has been used in recent realism – states balance their power according to size of the threat they see emanating from other states. This would appear to be susceptible to a constructivist argument which can see that the perception of a threat is dependent upon the norms, ideas and preconceptions of other states' identities which are prevalent. Hopf uses the example of the US stance against communist third-world states during the Cold War. The USA identified those states primarily in terms of their communist characteristics, and its actions reflected its own self-identity as being anti-communist. However, European states identified those third world countries as former colonies, or 'economic actors' and therefore their actions towards them were different. An example could be Vietnam, where France was initially involved primarily as an outgoing colonial power, whereas the USA later became involved primarily to halt the communist advances in Vietnam.

Hopf goes on to cite the problem of the security dilemma in international relations, whereby states are said to act realistically by increasing their defences to deter attacks, but thereby increase the likelihood of attack by causing other states to build up their own military power. Hopf contends that realists see this uncertainty as a constant, about which nothing can be done, but that a constructivist would see the uncertainty as a variable, which can be investigated by means of consideration of the involved parties' identities, norms and practices.

He further suggests applications of constructivist theory to liberalists' concerns. The first case is that of neoliberalists' concern over how international institutions function, and how to maintain them. Hopf says that:

> ... one of the more enduring puzzles for neoliberalists is why these institutions persist past the point that great powers have an apparent interest in sustaining them. Their answers include lags caused by domestic political resistance to adjustment, the stickiness of institutional arrangements, and the transaction costs entailed in the renegotiations of agreements and the establishment of a new order. An alternative constructivist hypothesis would be that if the identities being reproduced by the social practices constituting that institution have gone beyond the strategic game-playing self-regarding units posited by neoliberalists, and have developed an understanding of each other as partners in some common enterprise, then the institution will persist, even if apparent underlying power and interests have shifted.
>
> (Hopf 1998: 184)

Hopf's underlying premise is therefore that states and other actors build up ideas about each other in order to predict others' behaviour and tailor ways in which they should use power appropriately.

Other constructivist scholars concentrate on a wide variety of the effects of their interpretations of power. Such effects as globalisation and regionalisation are explained through power created by identity and interests (Lincicome 2005, Eaton and Stubbs 2006), the rise of a global civil society (Lipschutz 2005) and so on. The somewhat limited perspective of realist and liberalist theories becomes

apparent when the constructivist approach is utilised, and it is this embracing of the complexities of the global system, rather than the reductionist tendencies of the previous theories, which makes it most relevant to present-day power processes, including the idea of soft power.

Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to review and evaluate the relevance of traditional and newer schools of thought on power in international relations to the global system today, and thereby to choose a suitable foundation upon which to develop a theory of soft power in the next chapter. The conclusion which must be drawn from this analysis is that the development of constructivism (and other related schools of thought) in recent years reflects the growing irrelevance to today's global system of purely realist or liberalist theories.

It has been shown that the general trend in academic writing increasingly criticises realism for its pessimism, lack of vision and even inaccuracy. The backlash has been against realism's turn towards positivism, and a narrower, more simplistic view of international relations exemplified in particular by Waltz (1979, 1993) but also by Gilpin (1988) and Mearsheimer (1994). There is no doubt that many realist insights into the international system have chimed with events in the past, in particular during the Cold War, and as many power wielders around the world still hold to its precepts, it will continue to influence much policy-making.

Nevertheless, realist arguments have failed to deal with the profound changes around the world which have been happening to the process of how people identify each other and other countries. The increasing pace of globalisation and the spread of new information technologies mean that among groups of countries, foremost among which is the EU, common identities can be formed relatively rapidly; war, military power balancing, and other such concepts which classical realists proposed are no longer relevant to power relations between those states and societies. Even outside these close-knit groups, the power of instantaneous and graphic news coverage to change peoples' ideas about relations with other countries is underestimated. In democracies where this is commonly available, voters may no longer contemplate their own countrymen, and in many cases even people of other nationalities, dying in their tens of thousands in wars far away, especially after the traumas of the Vietnam War, one of the first wars to be covered in detail by colour television news programmes. Even though democracies will still continue to intervene in the manner of the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, wars which involve large numbers of casualties even on the opposing side will be quickly met with substantial anti-war demonstrations in democratic countries, with subsequent damage to leaders' electoral chances. Hence there is a need to consider the interests and identities of all parties involved when considering international power relations.

Because of these technological changes and the resulting spread of information and ideas about people in other countries, liberalist ideas seem to be more relevant. The liberal 'democratic zone of peace' is likely to continue to be peaceful, or at least

free of wars within the zone. Even in non-democratic countries, regimes may risk revolution if they do not consider public opinion, which can be mobilised quickly through the internet or wireless communication links. The relatively peaceful popular revolution in the Philippines, which ousted President Joseph Estrada from power and installed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, came about in large part through normal, dissatisfied people sending each other text messages on mobile phones (Rafael 2003, *Time* 2001), and is a stark example to corrupt or illiberal leaders of the power of new communications technology. Hundreds of thousands of anti-Estrada demonstrators were able to converge through text messaging and internet communication to protest against his corruption and remove him from power on 18 January 2001.

Equally, the efforts of the Communist Party of China (CPC) to block information on the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003 were stymied by the ability of internet-savvy Chinese to access information about the disease and pass the information on to the much larger number of Chinese people owning text message enabled mobile phones (*BBC News* 2003).

In relations between liberal democracies and non-liberal states, realism may still have useful things to say, and it would be naïve to dismiss realists' concerns regarding the threats and dangers to democratic regimes by illiberal dictatorships (or vice versa), and of other potential military conflicts around the world. Nevertheless, it would be equally naïve to dismiss the global appeal of democracy and liberalism throughout the world, the liberal zone of peace, and the spread of access to new communications technologies. These factors call for new ways of looking at international relations.

Neoliberal institutionalism (classical forms of liberalism are not currently espoused by mainstream international relations scholars) may have some useful contributions to make; regional groupings such as the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Mercosur and the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) show that there is a definite contribution to be made by top-down regionalism. International institutions such as the World Trade Organisation have potential to contribute to international order. The United Nations also has some potential to become a real actor on the international stage, if there is the will among its most influential members to achieve this. Neoliberalism's general focus upon economic power, transactions and international institutions also has relevance in a world where liberal economic policies are widespread, global trade continues to increase and international institutions are still functioning actively. However, neoliberalist theories tell us little about international relations which are not defined by trade, economics and institutionalism; cultural exchange, exchange of ideas and the importance of values and interests are not catered for by these theories.

Real integration and change in the current global system are occurring through the actions of normal people, their organisations, and their networks. In this sense, concepts in international political economy and interdependence theory are more useful guides to the future of international relations. Linklater's post-Westphalian vision is also a relevant though perhaps somewhat extreme view of the future

international environment. Equally, Wendt's and Hopf's conception of norms, ideas and practice as drivers of change in societies can help us understand the contemporary international situation. The fact is that the internet (in particular social networks), multi-channel television and other new technologies as mentioned above are contributing to the establishment of new norms across the globe, among which norms against international warfare may even be developing (Mueller 1991).

Having developed from theories of interdependence and critical theories, constructivism takes further a recognition of the increased complexity of the global system in modern times, when so many factors not controlled by states or ruling elites can lead to changes in international relations. Not only actors themselves, but the interests, values and norms of every actor which affects a country's international relations must be considered and taken into account, rather than simplified into a model which, while being easier to contemplate, does not apply to any real-world situation (as was attempted by Waltz and other neorealists).

Considering the reality of these issues, new ways of thinking about power in international relations must be developed using constructivist themes. These new ways of thinking must take into account the sometimes bewildering pace of technological change in human societies, despite the difficulty in confronting it. The current era of rapid social change throughout the world, and therefore international relations, is without precedent in previous eras. This book uses constructivist tools to investigate one increasingly relevant way of thinking about power, postulated by Joseph Nye (1990a, 1990b), which is the notion of 'soft power'. In the next chapter the idea of soft power will be reviewed and expanded upon.

3 Soft power: what is it and how does it function?

Introduction

The idea of 'soft power' comes from the distinction between coercive policies and co-operative policies in international relations. Although soft power itself is not new, its increasing significance has only come to be recognised in the last decade. The term was first coined by the American academic and former Assistant Secretary of State for Defence in the Bill Clinton administration, Joseph Nye, in his 1990 *Foreign Policy* article (Nye 1990a). Since that time he has expanded upon his ideas in further articles and books (Nye 1990b, 1991, 2002, 2004).

Academics, politicians and writers around the world have come to realise the potential of soft power theory (Drifte 1996, Chong 2004, Takenaka 2000, McGray 2002, Lukes 2005), and have used it to back up their own policies and theories, although in some cases without a complete grasp of the concept. In particular, ideas of soft power have been seen recently as potent tools to counter the hard-line neorealist doctrine of many recent American policies (Cox 2004). Others have criticised Nye's ideas as being little more than another realist excuse to push values and cultures on to other countries (Mattern 2005).

In order to help answer the questions initially posed in Chapter 1, and as the soft power theory developed in this study does not aspire to be an all-encompassing theory of international relations, it is necessary to ground the study in terms of a world view, or a basic theory of international relations. Having reviewed the prevailing theories in the previous chapter, the ideas espoused by social constructivism have been found to most closely represent a world view which can accommodate a theory of soft power. Nye's (1991, 2004) own expositions of soft power come from the view of a policy maker, with US foreign policy problems clearly in mind. Additionally, soft power is not explained by Nye in detailed theoretical terms, as Lukes (2005) also argues. From Nye's previous work (Keohane and Nye 1997 [1977]) it can be seen that his perspectives come from a liberalist point of view; however, as suggested by Hopf, 'Nye's conceptualisation of "soft" power could be usefully read through a constructivist interpretation' (Hopf 1998: n17). As soft power relies upon the transfer of ideas, information and norms from one country to another, and upon the identity of both countries involved in the transfer, constructivist theories

embody useful tools which help to understand it. Therefore in this chapter, the relevance and applicability of soft power theory will be explained, with reference to constructivist theory.

Firstly, the meaning of the term 'soft power' itself will be considered, leading to a working definition of soft power. Secondly, soft power will be considered in terms of its sources, agents, the ways in which it is used, its effects and limitations. Subsequently, with reference to Chapter 2, the use of constructivist ideas to explain soft power will be justified. Following this, the reasons for the use of Japan as a test of soft power theory in this study will be explained. Finally, the chapter will be summarised briefly.

What is soft power?

The idea of 'soft power' encompasses a wide range of activities which are influential in the fields of international politics and political economy. Nye (1990b, 2004) describes soft power as 'co-optive', as opposed to coercive 'command power':

> [c]ommand power can rest on inducements ("carrots") or threats ("sticks"). But there is also an indirect way to exercise power. ... This aspect of power, that is, getting others to want what you want – might be called indirect or co-optive power behaviour. It is in contrast to the active command behaviour of getting others to do what you want. Co-optive power can rest on the attraction of one's ideas or on the ability to set the political agenda in a way that shapes the preferences that others express ... This dimension can be thought of as soft power ...
>
> (Nye 1990b: 181)

Thus, soft power is power which has the consent of both or all parties effecting it or being affected by it. Therefore, it is founded upon the (liberalist) idea of co-operation in relations between parties.

An alternative way to define soft power would be to contrast it against its natural corollary: hard power. Hard power consists of coercive activities, the most obvious of which are military activities. The use of force or coercion to obtain an outcome is the traditional basis of the idea of power; as was shown in the previous chapter, the idea of power has been assumed to be coercive by realists through the ages and so a distinction has not been made between soft and hard power.

Coercive hard power can be characterised by the use or threat of use of soldiers, weapons, and other military hardware to force an opponent to behave in a certain way through subjugation. Even if military force is not utilised directly, the positioning of military assets near a country, or the targeting of weapons systems upon it inevitably forces the target country to behave differently. The behaviour of nuclear-capable countries (in particular the USA and the Soviet Union) during the years of the Cold War was a prime example of this; the fear of being exposed to potential military coercion was an important factor leading to the build up of vast reserves of nuclear weapons on both sides in order to deter its use (Sagan 1996).

However, hard power is not monopolised by military forces. Other coercive methods used by governments to force a change in behaviour include economic and political pressure. Economic sanctions are applied to pressure countries into changing their trade policies, but also to make them change unrelated policies such as those regarding the rights of their own citizens (for example against South Africa during apartheid and China after the Tiananmen Square incident) or to make them acknowledge past wrongs (e.g. Libya, Economist Global Agenda 2003). Political pressure can be applied by refusing diplomatic contacts, or by refusing to acknowledge a regime's authority, as was the case with many Western countries in regard to the People's Republic of China before the US rapprochement in 1972. Although these methods may sometimes be necessary or useful for countries wishing to influence other countries, for example when they are under direct attack or feel they are likely to become so, they are certainly not 'co-optive'.

Therefore, it can be said that soft power represents other co-operative activities which occur between nations, and in turn affect the practices and norms of those nations. These can include such activities as cultural exchanges, educational exchanges, and economic and political co-operation.

Soft power does not only result from these active policies, but it also results from policies which create an environment for the exchange of ideas, services and goods. In particular cultural trade, trade in techniques, technology and educational goods promote this kind of exchange; however, ultimately all goods which have been manufactured or services which have been created carry people's ideas with them. These are ideas which have gone into the creation of those products, and are therefore inherent within them.

Soft power also emanates from the attractiveness of a country's identity. Identity in this case consists of a country's habits, practices and image (Hopf 2002, Wendt 1994), information about which has been transmitted through communication and discourse to other countries over a period of time. In this respect, people in one country may be attracted to the lifestyles, practices and ideas of people in another country, and thereby try to obtain or emulate them. The attractive country's identity therefore can be said to influence the attracted country. The most often cited example of this has been the attraction of American lifestyles to many people around the world; these are seen as embodying individual freedom and choice, concepts which may be especially attractive to people living in circumstances where they are oppressed politically or economically. This kind of American soft power, however, is mitigated by other aspects of US policy; in areas of the world where the USA applies unwelcome hard power, its soft power is diminished. Nye notes that:

> Serbs eating at McDonalds supported Milosevic, and Rwandans committed atrocities while wearing T-shirts with American logos. American films that make the United States attractive in China or Latin America may have the opposite effect and actually reduce American soft power in Saudi Arabia or Pakistan. But in general, polls show that our popular culture has made the

United States seem to others "exciting, exotic, rich, powerful, trend-setting – the cutting edge of modernity and innovation" (*Economist* 2003).

(Nye 2004: 12)

Nye goes on to recount the case of a young Chinese activist who had the idea that going to court to complain was normal after watching American films of the courtroom drama genre (Nye 2004: 12).

However, in order for this attraction to be possible, a transfer of ideas still needs to take place; people in a country or area which is closed off from the outside world will not be attracted by ideas which are available in other countries, as they cannot know of their existence. Historically, there have been many regimes which have felt threatened by new ideas emanating from other countries; even in today's globalising world of high-tech communications, some regimes still try to control the flow of information to their citizens (Rodan 2003, Kalathil 2003).

Considering that there are a variety of definitions and types of soft power, it is also necessary to consider degrees of 'softness' (see Figure 3.1). Is one kind of power softer than another? How does this affect the ways in which we consider its usefulness, or effectiveness?

If hard power is coercive power, that is to say actions which would not be accepted by the people being acted upon were they not backed by force, then soft power consists of the transmission of ideas and information which are either passively accepted by the people being acted upon, or in fact positively encouraged by those people. The degree of acceptance or encouragement by the people affected

| US invasion of Iraq 2003 | G7 economic sanctions against China after Tiananmen Square 1989 | US support creation of NATO; Japan support from creation of ARF | Spread of Japanese idea of developmentalism in East Asia through ODA | Impact of Japanese pop songs in East Asia; impact of Hollywood films globally |
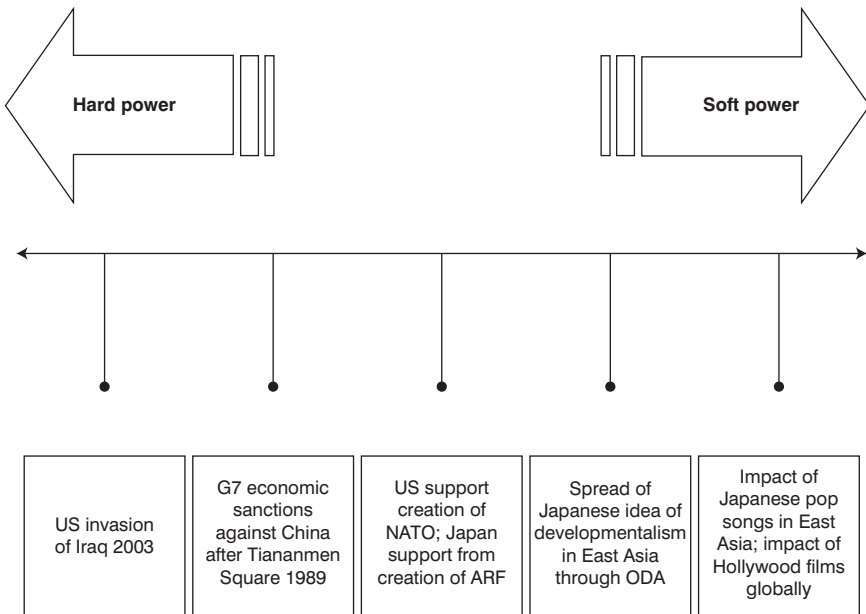
Figure 3.1 A continuous scale between hard and soft power

	Soft power	Hard power
Time taken to implement and see effects	Long	Short
Difficulty in controlling processes and outcomes	Difficult to control	Possible to control
Cost	Relatively cheap	Relatively expensive

Figure 3.2 A comparison of hard and soft power characteristics

by the use of this power could be regarded as an indicator of softness (Nye 2004: 8, Figure 3.2). For example, the use of overseas development assistance (ODA) by a country such as Japan in another country such as China could be considered a less soft form of power than the active consumption of Japanese cultural products by Chinese people. In the former case, the ODA-receiving country wants the aid Japan can supply; on the other hand, it also realises that taking the aid will enable Japan to influence its development and economy, a process which it is unlikely to be happy about considering their past enmity (see e.g. Austin and Harris 2001). In the latter case, people want to buy Japanese products or emulate Japanese lifestyles purely because they are attractive; the degree of political influence Japan may or may not accrue due to Chinese people's consumption patterns is of little concern to them (Searchina 2003). They encourage Japanese companies to sell more Japanese-style goods by buying more of them. Therefore, it could be said that in this case the influence of Japan on Chinese people's lives is less obviously intentional, and so softer. In the first case, Japan's intention to influence the affairs of another country is more pointed, and so less soft.

Soft power is therefore by definition, power which acts best in a gradual and subtle fashion. The use of this power is accepted in a natural manner; it cannot be pushed upon the receiver. A propaganda campaign pushed by an occupying power on to a non-accepting population is likely to be unsubtle, direct and received sceptically by the target population. Propaganda is unlikely to influence people to a great extent, and cannot be considered as soft power unless the receivers are actually receptive (in post-war Japan and Germany, common people saw the Western occupiers to some extent as liberators, and were open to messages of democracy and freedom).

However, a sustained image-building exercise carried out over many years and backed by concrete examples of genuinely co-operative intent is more likely to have a positive impact on the target, and ultimately to be accepted; this is an example of soft power (Chong 2004: 97). Both Germany and Japan have had to conduct such a sustained image-building campaign over many decades in order to rehabilitate themselves in the world's eyes after the Second World War. Of these two, Germany (Buruma 1994) would appear to have been more successful in building a good image and relationship with its neighbours; however, this may be connected with the more supportive environment which it found within the European Economic Community. Japan, by contrast, has had to rebuild its image with only American support (and pressure), although this is not to say it could not have improved its relations by formally apologising for its wartime actions more quickly.

An image building exercise is also likely to be more sustainable in terms of costs; the sustained application of hard power is extremely costly, both in financial terms, in the effects on a country's soft power resources, and in political terms, and so is unlikely to be sustainable for the long term. Relatively small investments in the building up of relations with neighbouring countries through ODA programmes have led to uncountable economic returns in terms of trade for aid donors; compare the hundreds of billions of dollars which are required for a modern war or the economic and military containment of a country, for little or negative return.

Taking all of these aspects of soft power into consideration, it can be said that the essential elements of soft power are the active or passive transfer between people of different communities of ideas and ideals, the willing acceptance of those ideas, leading to changes in the habits, practices and norms of the receiving communities, and the benefit which therefore accrues to the originator of the ideas.

How is soft power created and utilised?

The creators of soft power are various, consisting of individuals, companies, organisations and other parts of human society. This is in notable contrast to hard power, the monopoly on which, in established states, is generally held by the central government of a country in the form of military and paramilitary forces, and control over the ability to sanction other countries economically or politically. The use of soft power, however, in general does not have the potential to endanger its wielders, and is controlled much less by the state. This is not without exceptions; technology transfer is a kind of soft power which is usually monitored and controlled by states and companies which fear their own technology being used against them (Riciutti and Yamamoto 2004).

Together, these people and organisations create an atmosphere or pool of culture, ideas and norms which act as the source of soft power. This pool is the structural context in which agents operate to utilise soft power, the agents being government bodies, companies and NGOs. In particular, internationally active agents create links between countries, across which ideas and information are
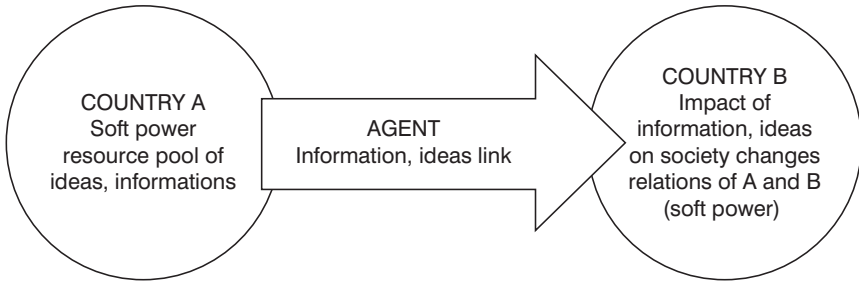
Figure 3.3 A schematic showing the operation of soft power

transmitted. The action of the agents affects the structural context; a body which uses the soft power pool can also add to the pool by its actions, thus changing the structure. This duality of agent and structure has been well documented (Wendt 1987, Giddens 1979, Meyer and Jepperson 2000, Hays 1994, Emirbayer and Mische 1998). Finally, the ideas and information which have passed into the receiving country enter into its society, subtly changing the ideas, values and norms which already exist there, as depicted in Figure 3.3. Clearly, therefore, the number and strength of the information links created by agents between countries will affect the quality and quantity of soft power transmitted through those links.

This process will now be examined further through detailed examination of the sources, agents, means of instrumentalisation and potential effects of soft power.

Sources of soft power

A society's cultural attractiveness is a vital soft power resource. This may be based on long-standing historical perceptions of long-lost culture (e.g. ancient Greek or British imperial culture), but it also develops from a societies' current values (for example liberal multiculturalism in Britain) which are attractive to outsiders. How a country or society is perceived internationally affects is soft power. As Katzenstein has noted:

> [t]he domestic and social environments of states … are the arenas in which actors contest norms and through political and social processes construct and reconstruct identities.
>
> (Katzenstein 1996a: 25)

In China, an internet poll in 2003 showed that 41 per cent of respondents felt few or no feelings of friendship at all towards Japan. However, about 20 per cent of the remainder said they felt close to Japan because they liked its fashion, *manga* comics and video games (Searchina 2003). In Silicon Valley on the US west coast, the highly dynamic environment meant that 'by 1998, Chinese and Indian engineers were running one-quarter of Silicon Valley's high-

technology businesses' (Nye 2004: 58); there are many other examples of cultural attractiveness increasing countries' soft power resources.

Linked to cultural attractiveness is the attractiveness of ideas and ideology (Spilimbergo 2006). A liberal, diverse and tolerant society has a positive impact on a country's image, in addition to helping its economy (Florida and Gates 2001, Quigley 1998). Foreigners attracted to a country may even learn its language and about its culture in order to gain new ideas (see Chapter 5 regarding Chinese learners of Japanese). Outside ideas which become institutionalised may drive new government policies including foreign policy (Goldstein and Keohane 1993). Government bodies as well as non-state organisations can be transformed by attractive outside ideas, as occurred to a great extent in Japan's Meiji Restoration (Beasley 1972, 1990).

'Ideology', although in modern times disavowed of by politicians, in its technical sense has been a driver of political and social change through history (Thompson 1990, Gerring 1997). Socialist and communist ideologies have been (and still continue to be) attractive to millions of people around the world, but even more attractive has been the ideology of economic liberalism; ideas of increased international trade and liberalisation of economies have led to the current trend of ever-deeper globalisation. Other ideologies such as developmentalism (Johnson 1982) and 'Asian values' (Chong 2004) have also attracted many followers. In most cases, pioneers of these ideologies have gained invaluable benefits in terms of international influence from them, demonstrating their value as sources of soft power. The Soviet Union gained from attracting many nations to its ideology, the USA has gained immeasurably from the spread of economic liberalism in the world, and Japan has gained influence through the attractiveness of its developmentalist ideas.

A more obvious source of soft power is economic attractiveness. A successful economy (which may derive from the ideas and ideology of its society) attracts visitors, investors, people looking for work, and people wanting to study the success. These people directly contribute to the successful countries economically, as well as to the soft power resources of their societies. Hence the waves of immigration which have occurred in the USA and most other Western societies, which have in turn fed into their economic success. Even in a case where countries have historical grudges, economic success can create respect; in a 2005 poll conducted by a South Korean newspaper in China, Japan's economy was rated its most interesting feature by 29.5 per cent of respondents (Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation 2005), showing the economy's importance in terms of soft power.

Agents of soft power

A pool of soft power, in the form of ideas, values and information, is created within a country through the endeavours of its people and organisations. In order for this to affect its international relations, agents need to make links between countries, and carry the information to other countries. Agents can be thought

of as actors with purpose based on their structural context (Wendt 1987: 359, cf. Meyer and Jepperson 2000: 101 n2); in this case agents use the soft power around them (their structural context) to support their activities in the other country. Their actions in turn affect their structural context.

The main internationally active agents which can utilise a country's soft power include central governments and their myriad arms, local authorities and internationally active non-state organisations such as companies and NGOs. These agents will now be examined in turn.

Central government and its agencies

National governments can exert soft power directly or indirectly. They can promote their country's image directly (as with the Japan Foundation, discussed in Chapter 5) or indirectly, by creating an environment where cultural, educational and other exchange links with other countries are easily made.

Governments advertise in other countries' media, promoting tourism (e.g. the Instituto de Turismo de España (2010) often advertises on television in the UK), or foreign direct investment to their own country (e.g. MOFA's Invest Japan! Campaign (MOFA 2010) which has been publicised in the USA and other countries). Governments often establish scholarship programmes to encourage students and researchers to visit their country, an example being the successful US Fulbright Program (Fulbright 1976). They also use their resources to establish cultural agency offices in other countries, examples being the Japan Foundation, the German Goethe Institutes and Chinese Confucius Institutes. Governments also provide funds for foreign citizens to become cultural ambassadors, such the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program, operated jointly by government departments and agencies (McConnell 2000). The provision of development aid, peacekeeping forces or dispute resolution experts to other countries also tends to promote the donor countries' images, and hence their soft power. Norway is a good example of a small country highly active in international peace negotiations (*Economist* 2003, Henrikson 2005) which has thereby burnished its peaceful reputation.

Indirect actions can be an even more effective way for governments to improve their country's image. Governments can create an open and welcoming environment for highly skilled people who bring new ideas and expertise with them (Florida and Gates 2001). This is also important to attract foreign investment by companies, which bring vast stores of ideas and information with them. Governments can also, through policy, create a domestic legal system which facilitates non-state actors' international exchange, for example by creating a simple process through which citizens can form small internationally active NGOs. Finally, governments can pursue regionalism and regionalisation (e.g. Dent 2008, Breslin and Hook 2002), encouraging the formation of regional groupings with other states through emphasising common interests. Such groupings tend to facilitate the building of information links, and hence the potential soft power of the states involved; the most advanced example of this is the European Union. In addition,

non-geographical groupings (such as the OECD or British Commonwealth) can also thrive and promote members' soft power in a similar manner.

Regional and local governments

If a good relationship exists between two countries, regional governments will be able to build links across national borders – a process commonplace before the rise of the nation state (Linklater 1998).

As globalisation and regionalisation progress, regions within countries are becoming more relevant as international actors. One example of this is the proliferation of 'sister city' links as detailed further in Chapter 6. Cities can promote their soft power (and hence their country's) by constructing international cultural and business links (e.g. Guichard-Anguis 2001). Another example is 'microregionalism' (Breslin and Hook 2002), where regions within countries link up with regions of other countries to encourage exchange and business. This is happening in some parts of East Asia such as the Pan-Yellow Sea Economic Zone straddling north-eastern China, South Korea and southern Japan (KEI 2002, Kyūshū METI 2003); in Europe in the Oresund region between Sweden and Denmark (Oresund 2004); and in North America between the USA and Mexico (Kado and Kiy 2004). Often these linked regions have complementary economies or historical connections. These linkages not only encourage business, but also the flow of ideas and culture, hence allowing the enhancement and action of soft power in the participating countries. Regional and local governments clearly have an important role as coordinators of these relationships and links.

In some cases, city authorities even act on a global scale, acting as agents for their citizen's soft power ideas and values (Alger 1990, 1997, 1999). The Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have continuously lobbied the UN and foreign governments to push for nuclear disarmament and to stop nuclear bomb tests (Alger 1990: 511). 'World cities' (Friedmann 1986) are able to create links around the world, thereby acting as agents for their countries' soft power, but smaller cities are also increasingly playing a role as globalisation processes proceed.

Non-state organisations: NGOs and businesses

The term non-state organisation covers a vast range and variety of institutions, associations, interest groups, foundations and companies. Some truly global endeavours have their own unique culture, but for the most part, organisations' values and ideas tend to reflect the values of the societies in which they were founded.

Local NGOs are small in scope but can collectively have an international impact. As Alger notes:

> changes have been taking place in the ways in which local people attempt to cope with the foreign policy issues of states ... Those involved tend to

be a small minority of middle class people who had some international education and sometimes some kind of international experience that sustains their concern for international issues. The traditional activities of these local "internationals" in the United States has been of three main types: relief and aid, exchange programs, and international education.

(Alger 1990: 505)

A thriving NGO community can contribute to a country's image, and create links around the world which will transfer the ideas and information vital to the action of soft power. Many larger global NGOs are associated with Western countries and their values; NGOs such as Oxfam or Greenpeace tend to have their headquarters in the West, and do most of their fundraising in rich Western countries (Oxfam 2002). Many Western governments also use NGOs to manage substantial proportions of their official ODA funds; the UK Department for International Development (DFID) in 2008/9 channelled £337,000,000 through NGOs (DFID 2009: 113). Therefore it can be seen that international NGOs are taken seriously by many governments around the world. NGOs can contribute to a country's soft power, but they can also cause damage to it, as was shown when the International Red Cross reported on the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American and British military forces in 2004 (ICRC 2004, *Observer* 2004).

Companies are also important agents of soft power, although this may be far from their primary purpose of making profits. Companies trade and invest internationally, and as with other organisations, they take their originating societies' culture and ideas with them, which may or may not benefit their businesses (e.g. *Economist* 2004). If companies are successful, they often contribute to their base country's soft power, as in the case of German cars or American software companies. However, in 2003, Toyota showed that companies can damage their country's soft power; in this incident Chinese people protested vehemently against Toyota advertisements showing Chinese tiger statues bowing down to its cars (*Straits Times* 2003).

Means of instrumentalising soft power

An important factor in the growing importance of soft power is the development of the means of its instrumentalisation. The speed and efficiency of soft power transmission has been increased greatly by new communications technologies. In addition, more traditional means of communicating information have also become cheaper to produce through technology. Newspapers, magazines and books have proliferated as the literacy rates of many areas of the world have improved along with economic development. Information and the means of its transmission have been commoditised, leading in turn to cheaper and wider distribution of culture and cultural products. In addition to this, technology has also increased the movement of people and goods around the world, through improvements in global transport and logistics infrastructure. These two main factors in the transfer of soft power will be examined here.

Mass media and communications

In the twentieth century, the mass media became the primary means of mass communication between different countries (Taylor 1997, Thompson 1990). In particular, the television has enabled people to learn about ideas and culture in other countries (Langdale 1997), and is even important for people living in foreign countries to learn about their surrounding culture (Li 2005). Increasingly, content from other cultures and countries has become available around the world, through multichannel cable and satellite television, as well as through global licensing deals.

One example of how soft power can work through television was the popularity and cultural impact of a South Korean soap opera, *Kyoul Yonga*, in Japan (where it is called *Fuyu no Sonata*, or Winter Sonata). The programme's storylines and its main characters led directly to a surge of interest in Korean culture (which had generally been disdained in Japan), as well as in Korean language during the early 2000s (*Japan Times* 2004, Daily Yomiuri 2004a) which has since been sustained. On the other hand, imports of Japanese culture into South Korea have been heavily regulated until recently, despite the long popularity of Japanese *manga* and *anime* there (Han 2001). This tends to show how South Korea has been wary of Japan's cultural soft power due to historical issues. Ideas and values are easily transmitted through animated cartoons, due to their general attractiveness and the ease with which they can be dubbed.

News channels also greatly affect people's images of other countries (Eldridge *et al.* 1997, Couldry 2000, Kabashima and Broadbent 1986). Not only their portrayal of other countries, but also the representation of the culture in which the news programme is based can have an impact. Countries' images can be negatively affected by news of disasters or societal problems, although a country seeking to cover up problems could also be seen as secretive and non-transparent. News of economic success, or sporting success on the other hand may encourage a positive image. The importance of the portrayal of the culture in which the news channel is based is also demonstrated by the number of international news channels which have been set up in recent years, mostly with state support. CNN was among the first global channels, and raised its profile during the First Gulf War in 1991; this was soon responded to by European channels which sought to project alternative world views in English, such as BBC World, Deutsche Welle TV, France 24 and others (Chalaby 2002). More recently, international channels in the Middle East (Al Jazeera) and Asia (NHK World, CCTV-9) have been established with similar purposes.

Films and music programmes are also important conduits for cultural values and ideas, and are spread through television and other media. Images of wealth and glamour are attractive to consumers of American MTV, or Japanese J-pop, and fans even go so far as to learn unfamiliar languages in order to sing their favourite songs in karaoke bars around the world (Mitsui and Hosokawa 1998). The commercial methods of the J-pop industry have spread through East Asia – another example of soft power (Iwabuchi 2003, McGray 2002, Ogawa 2001).

The more traditional printed form of mass media, such as newspapers, magazines and books, is still in some sections of society more influential than new media carried over the internet. The articles' edited quality is trusted, and one newspaper tends to reach a much larger population than any one website or service carried on a social network. Most people still prefer to read printed books and magazines, such as the Japanese *manga* which have spread around the world (*Washington Post* 2003, Shiraishi 1997, Lai and Wong 2001). Meanwhile, in developed countries as well as in some other emerging markets, the population of older people, who are more comfortable with traditional media, is increasing (*Economist* 2010).

Nevertheless, the internet is especially popular with younger people, and has some particular characteristics which make it an especially good medium for soft power transfer. Individuals as well as organisations can bypass official censorship, publish textual and visual information and ideas instantly across the world without regard for borders, and the information is available anywhere through an increasingly wide range of devices, of which the mobile phone is now most popular (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 2006, *Economist* 2003b). This means that authoritarian regimes are particularly vulnerable to internet-based soft power, shown by their increasing efforts to control the flow of electronic information from other countries, and between their own citizens (Li, Xuan and Kluver 2003, Lankov 2009, Kalathil 2003: 491, *BBC News* 2003, *Time* 2001, *Economist* 2006).

Movement of people and goods

As people move around the world and interact, they also carry and exchange ideas and values, facilitating the use of soft power (Befu 2001).

Business and academic conferences, international institutions and other venues for information exchange all provide hubs where ideas and information can be exchanged. Governments which encourage these kinds of international exchange also promote the production of ideas inside their own countries, which in turn may be influential abroad.

Societies also benefit from cultural and educational exchanges (Guichard-Anguis 2001, Spilimbergo 2006). Societies which participate in exchanges not only benefit from influencing others, but also benefit from the new ideas which enhance their own stock of knowledge. A similar process can be observed when migrant workers are allowed to freely move between countries. Countries which attract host workers benefit from the skills, labour and ideas which they bring; in time, the country of origin is also likely to benefit from the new skills which the migrant has learned, as they often maintain links with their home country or even return (see Figure 3.4). For the host country which has not had to contribute to the migrant workers' education, this is an especially cost-effective exchange.

Tourists may also carry ideas, although the mostly short-term visitors are unlikely to exchange more than superficial information between countries. Nevertheless, healthy tourism industries facilitate other exchanges, by reducing the cost of travel for everybody, and exposing people to other cultures and values.
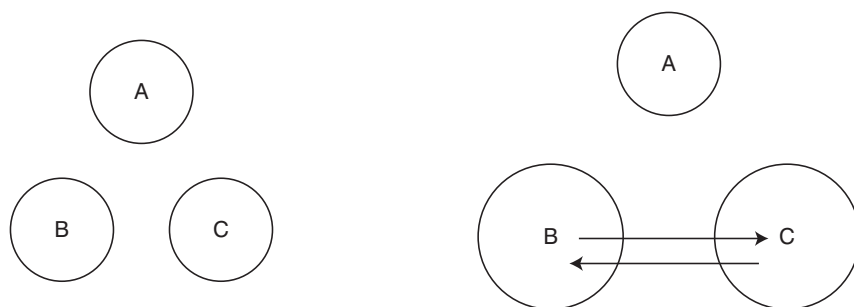
Figure 3.4 Ideas exchange – the circles represent countries, with the size of the circle representing each country's stock of ideas; countries B and C exchange ideas, doubling their stock, while country A does not partake in the exchange, and its knowledge base remains the same size

Goods, services and capital transported by companies between countries also carry ideas. While many companies try to project a global image on to their products (Iwabuchi 2002), inevitably products carry associated ideas and values from their cultures of origin. Transported capital, in the form of investments, is also associated with values, as companies show what values they place importance on through their investments. Methods of production, marketing and management are routinely transplanted by companies, along with many employees and their ideas required to implement them. All of these transported ideas have the potential to act as soft power.

Effects of soft power

Goldstein and Keohane discuss the effects of ideas on norms (legal and social) through their institutionalisation, in particular when the institutions in question are powerful:

> [r]egardless of how a particular set of beliefs comes to influence politics, use of those ideas over time implies changes in existing rules and norms. Ideas have a lasting influence on politics through their incorporation into the terms of political debate; but the impact of some set of ideas may be mediated by the operation of institutions in which the ideas are embedded ... In general, when institutions intervene, the impact of ideas may be prolonged for decades or even generations.
>
> (Goldstein and Keohane 1993: 20)

Hence, when soft power acts upon an institution, that is an organisation which is well established in a society, its effectiveness is amplified. This is likely to speed up the process by which ideas become established practices and norms within that society. The action of soft power on a society works in a similar fashion.

In contrast to hard power, whose effects will be seen almost instantaneously, the effects of soft power take time to become apparent. However, if soft power can be built up continuously the result can be very pervasive and long lasting (Chong 2004, Flack 1976). A country's identity, once embedded within the minds of people, can take a long time to change.

The effects of an application of hard power, such as military force or economic sanctions, can be seen quickly. The 2003 invasion of Iraq by US forces was a devastating example of this. However, it is debateable as to whether hard power can actually directly change the underlying culture of a country or people in a way envisaged by the country applying it, in a short time. Even when the USA bombed, invaded and occupied Japan during the Second World War, the underlying culture of the people did not change drastically. US forces tried to directly induce a multitude of changes in the organisation of society and industry, but many of these changes were ultimately short-lived as people and businesses for the most part returned to their traditional practices. Companies continued to work together in groups as they had done previously despite US attempts to break up the *zaibatsu* networks; old religious customs and practices continued.

However it is possible to say that while hard power is not as effective as soft power in the long term, the use of hard power conceivably may open up a country to the influence of soft power. US soft power arguably changed Japan, Japanese people, and Japanese culture much more dramatically and fundamentally in the post-war era than its hard power. American culture was consumed voraciously in Japan as people sought new ideas and directions (Beasley 1990). The impact of American consumerism and individualism is immediately visible in Japanese cities, and is particularly embodied in people who grew up after the use of televisions and video cassette recorders made American culture, ideas and norms accessible to all. In turn, these American ideas were appropriated, mixed with indigenous ideas until they were almost unrecognisable as American, and then re-exported around the world, in particular influencing people in East Asia, but in many respects also reaching the USA and Europe.

The sustained pursuit over decades of ideas such as high quality control in manufacturing, the maintenance of tight links between suppliers and manufacturers which is one of the characteristics of the Japanese *keiretsu* system (e.g. Gerlach 1992), and continuous innovation (*kaizen*) in manufacturing are some examples of Japanese soft power which are likely to serve the country well for many more decades to come. The term 'made in Japan' is a guarantee of high quality. The same is true for Germany, which is still well known throughout the world for the quality of its manufacturing. Other countries in East Asia such as South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore are well advanced in gaining similar reputations for quality in production and innovation in high-technology, while parts of India are pursuing a reputation for excellence in information services; the effects of these investments in reputation will be long-lasting.

Small countries which do not have the resources to utilise hard power to achieve influence in global affairs have realised quickly that the use of soft power is the best way they can improve their situations. Norway has gained a reputation

as a country which is helpful in negotiating settlements between warring parties, such as in the Philippines, the Balkans, Colombia, Guatemala, Sri Lanka and the Middle East (Henrikson 2005, Nye 2004, *Economist* 2003a). Switzerland, with a reputation for neutrality in world affairs, hosts the headquarters of a number of international organisations such as 28 United Nations bodies (Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs 2004) and the headquarters of the International Red Cross. Singapore has also managed to use its reputation for business acumen and orderliness to gain influence in East Asian discourse. China's former leader, Deng Xiaoping, authorised Singapore as a model for political and economic development, and China 'has specifically invited Singaporean public and private corporations to set up city-scale experiments in several industrial parks in the coastal provinces ...' (Chong 2004: 103).

The promotion of exchanges and dialogue between countries has profoundly long-lasting effects. A lack of knowledge about another country and its people is likely to breed mistrust and prejudice; if, through exchange and other contact, people of different cultures can learn more about each other there is less chance of conflict based upon irrational fear of the unknown (Flack 1976, Mukai 2003).

At the elite level, people who have deep knowledge and experience of neighbouring countries, and go on to become leaders in their own countries are likely to have a head start in maintaining good relations with neighbours. Soon after Tony Blair was elected Prime Minister in Britain, he was able to garner much local praise and admiration by addressing the French National Assembly in French (*BBC News* 1998), which he had learned while working in France as a barman in his younger days. Nye cites the example of the former US under-secretary of state for public diplomacy finding that half of the world leaders who joined President George W, Bush's 'coalition against terror' had passed through American exchange programs (Nye 2004: 110); there is also evidence that leaders educated in foreign democratic countries are especially good at passing on the soft power of democratic ideas (Spilimbergo 2006). Japan's JET exchange programme, which started during the late 1980s (McConnell 2000), is now one of the largest employers of UK university graduates, many of whom are now beginning to enter influential positions; a tactic which is very likely to be beneficial to Japan's interests in the future.

The ultimate example of the effects of this type of soft power can be seen in the success of the European Union. The multitude of cultural and political exchanges and co-operative programmes between its members has led to it gaining a reputation as a model of co-operation around the world, and has led to an increasing number of countries in Europe and on the periphery of Europe wanting to join it (Nye 2004: 77). This model of soft power techniques arose from the realisation that the use of hard power can only damage all sides involved, whereas the use of soft power creates a win–win situation for all involved.

As soft power takes a long time to build up, it also takes a long time to be rendered ineffective. To some extent, the attractiveness of a culture such as that of the USA is separated from the activities of its current administration. Even though anti-American feeling has been high in many countries due to its military actions

in recent years, American companies' products are still popular in those countries, reflecting the long-term trend. This is not to say that sustained use of military actions and other coercive methods has not damaged American soft power in the long term as well as the short term – global US companies have at times been worried that their brands are being damaged by their governments' military actions (*Financial Times* 2004).

The building up of soft power does not incur any particular extra costs on a country; in fact, the benefits it brings in terms of increases in trade and exchange of ideas mean that it can be a highly profitable exercise for all involved. The use of hard power is in stark contrast to this – the US Congress had allocated $162 billion for the invasion and occupation of Iraq just one year after the war started (*BBC News* 2004).

Another difference between hard power and soft power is in how they can be directed. The effect of hard power can be predicted fairly accurately; it sets out to achieve specific aims, which can be controlled relatively directly by the user, which is usually a government. Sanctions will be felt by the affected country immediately, and it will know who has applied them and why. The ability to control the application of hard power is a reason why it is favoured by politicians who are elected for short terms, and need to see results quickly in order to maintain their domestic popularity.

On the other hand, a soft power strategy will only work in the long term, requiring a succession of administrations to effect it, as the ideas which constitute soft power take time to become established as habits, practices and norms in the receiving country. The effects of the strategy will be to some extent unclear; it cannot be known whether a targeted country will reciprocate, or be at all susceptible to the charms of another country's culture. A case demonstrating this is that of North Korea. The closed nature of its society, and the manner in which all exchange of information and goods is closely controlled by the dictatorship has meant that even the determined application of the 'sunshine policy' (instigated by President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea) has had only a small effect (Lee 2004, cf. Kim 2002, Son 2006) over a number of years. The effects of soft power are much more likely to be seen in a relatively open, liberal country where a large number of people are free to trade with outsiders, and to exchange ideas.

The limits of soft power in foreign policy

The essential points of soft power capture the factors which contribute to economic and political success of countries. Countries which have built up well-respected identities, or national 'brands' (Olins 2005), using soft power and which have not negated them through coercive actions are generally respected in the international environment, and can reap the increased opportunities in trade in knowledge and goods which result. Countries which rely upon hard power are not respected so much as feared. The expense of enforcing exchanges based upon coercion or implied threats is liable to reduce the benefits of the exchange and cause potential for instability in international relations.

In some cases, it must be admitted that the reliance on only soft power as a means of conducting international relations will not be adequate. If a country or its close ally is attacked with military force, then it clearly must try to defend itself with force. In such a short-term situation, soft power is inadequate. In fact, the basis of soft power is to stop such an event happening in the first place. Additionally, if there is the possibility that a terrible tragedy, such as a genocide or other mass persecution is occurring or about to occur, then it may be justifiable on humanitarian grounds to use military force or sanctions to prevent catastrophe; in fact the norm of humanitarian intervention has been spreading around the world gradually through the action of soft power, as it is an attractive concept (Finnemore 1996). However, it must be remembered that there are certain conditions in which it will be difficult for soft power to act even without these tragedies.

Illiberal regimes

The use of soft power is wholly dependent on the possibility of the transfer of ideas by agents across links between countries. If a state is completely isolated or closed off from this kind of transfer, soft power will not be able to act. If it is not completely closed off, then soft power will be able to act a little. This is less of a problem than in previous ages; the advent of satellite communications technology and the internet means that ideas are transferable between virtually any location on the Earth (although some states are even attempting to control these information routes, Atkins 2003). However, if the equipment to do this is not available because it has been strictly forbidden by the regime controlling the state, as appears to be the case in North Korea, then there are few ways for ideas to be transferred. It is also difficult for ideas to be transferred through people in such a state; the movement of people into and out of the country is strictly controlled, and reportedly any foreigners entering the country are escorted by government 'minders' at all times. This makes contact with local people difficult (Lankov 2003).

Nevertheless, even in possibly the most illiberal regime in the world, some ideas are transferred. The small leakage of ideas into and out of the country is a consequence of the tight control imposed by the regime. This control encourages desperate people to use any means possible to escape the country, thus taking impressions of the culture and situation to other countries (Lankov 2009). In addition, the rulers of such states tend to reserve privileges for themselves, such as access to foreign culture and news. Kim Jong Il has been reported to enjoy watching satellite television and foreign videos. He has also travelled to China to observe changes in that country. This may have led to some changes being introduced in North Korea, such as some elements of a market economy (*Economist* 2002a). Therefore, the actions of soft power (in this case China's soft power) are visible.

Poverty and remoteness

In the case of widespread poverty, the limiting factor may not be the lack of a transfer medium, but the ability of people to own receiving and transmitting equipment, or the means to go to a place where outside ideas are freely available for all to see, such as a large town or city. Poor rural subsistence farmers living in remote areas are unlikely to be able to access outside ideas easily. Although they may meet travellers who carry news, the transfer of ideas happens at a glacial pace. Additionally, if a person is struggling just to survive and feed his family, he is unlikely to be able to search actively for outside knowledge. Therefore, the action of soft power would be almost negligible in these places. This situation is still commonplace in developing countries around the world such as China, India and many African countries, although the rapid spread of mobile communications technology even to remote villages is mitigating the problem (*Economist* 2009). As is shown in Chapters 5 to 7 of this book, most information links created by Japanese agents in China have been in the more prosperous, eastern areas; it is difficult for them to reach into the more remote western side of China, thus reducing any soft power effect there.

As has been outlined, soft power encompasses a wide range of ideas. However a common theme of mutual benefit through a certain convergence of ideas, norms and values is apparent, although the extent to which countries involved in this transfer of ideas benefit from the process is not necessarily the same. Nevertheless, soft power cannot be effective without the unforced consent, implied or otherwise, of the society or country on the receiving end of it.

Constructivism as a theoretical basis for the understanding of soft power

At this point the manner in which the soft power theory outlined above fits into a constructivist framework can be considered; equally, the inapplicability of other schools of thought to the study of soft power can be clarified.

Realists assume that nation states act as unitary agents which look after national interests (Morgenthau 1952, Waltz 1979, Mearsheimer 1994, cf. Barkin 2003) within an anarchical international environment. Neoliberalists also assume the condition of anarchy (Grieco 1988), while asserting that co-operation and interdependence can reduce the anarchy (Keohane and Nye 1997).

Constructivist approaches would agree with the soft power approach taken here, in that states are not assumed to be unitary (Ashley 1984, 1988), but consist of many different actors and agents. The extent to which an actor can use or wants to use soft power in other countries depends on its individual interests and identities. A typical state, for example Japan, often contains a contrast between the Ministry of Defence which is mostly interested in strategic hard power concerns, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is usually more interested in long-term diplomacy and hence utilising soft power methods; Japan is a good example of why a state should not be seen as one single actor (van Wolferen 1993).

Departments and their agencies in government therefore have different goals and ideas about soft power. Equally, different levels of government have different interests. Provincial governments in different areas of a country may value their cultural and economic links with different countries. In the case of Japan, local governments in the western Kyūshū region may emphasise Japan's soft power links with China or East Asia, while the government in Tokyo tends to have a more Pacific or even global outlook (Hook 2002). Hence in this case, soft power theory agrees more with constructivist approaches and liberalist approaches than with realism.

Constructivists also question the assumption that anarchy is the basic condition of the international system. Following the assertion that states are not unitary, it must be acknowledged that actors within states are not all following the national goals of the government or national leader. In the case of Japan, city governments' international activities and links have not been affected by the ebbs and flows of the central government's relations with China or South Korea, while the Japan Foundation as an actor closer to the central government has been more affected (see Chapters 5 and 6). Hence, soft power cannot be seen as solely emanating from the central government of a state, but as a force which is exerted by any internationally active agent. The central government may have a bigger soft power role than other actors if it is the strongest agent in a country, but the aggregate resources of sub-state and non-state actors may rival the central government in certain specific areas. Therefore, soft power will function whether states are strong or weak within the global system, and the presence of anarchy or otherwise is not a given, or indeed relevant to soft power theory.

Realist descriptions of international relations also stress the importance of material capabilities (Morgenthau 1952, Waltz 1979, Mearsheimer 1994) including military resources, natural resources and manpower. Realist theories tend to ignore intangible resources (Nye 1990b); ideas, culture, the attractiveness of identities and the influence of prevailing habits and norms must be considered if an overall picture of international relations can be built. Soft power and constructivism in contrast emphasise the importance of intangible links of ideas and information in the international system. Meanwhile, neoliberalists proclaim the importance of international regimes and institutions to stave off anarchy (Keohane 1984, 1989). Constructivist and soft power ideas however, recognise the importance of links between other internationally active actors, from state agencies down to individual people and their organisations. The movement of people between countries, and their communications across borders can only seriously be considered as to their influence on international relations through a constructivist approach, using the language of ideas, identity, habits, norms and interests (Hopf 2002, 1998, Katzenstein 1996b, Wendt 1999, Goldstein and Keohane 1993, Ashley 1988, Lukes 2005).

There are, however, several varieties of constructivist thought (Hopf 1998, Checkel 2004) and their differences are relevant to the question of how soft power can work. Hopf (1998) broadly categorises these into 'conventional' and 'critical' constructivism. Conventional constructivism attempts to maintain a

positivist attitude by emphasising that interests, identities and other precepts of constructivism, once deciphered, can become predictable and therefore be used as the basis of a more general theory. Wendt (1992), for example, takes the state as a given identity, whereas Ashley (1988) denies that this is possible. Critical constructivists therefore deny the possibility of generalisation or stability of identities and interests. Hopf (2002) himself tends towards a more conventional form of constructivism, concentrating his attention on the state. Other variations use the language of culture, ideas and practice, but aspire to keep to a positivist agenda (Katzenstein 1996b, Goldstein and Keohane 1993).

There is, however, a valid case for taking a centre line between these arguments. If one considers the state to have a singular identity with clear interests, it is undoubtedly the dominant actor on the international stage, and is likely to remain so for the near future. However, if one considers the state to be constituted of many disparate parts, each with their own interests and identities, its dominance is reduced. The resources, both financial and cultural, available to a single government department may be comparable to a large regional government in some states, or even a large non-state organisation such as a company. If a ruling administration maintains strong control over the state's various components, it may produce an entity with a more coherent, singular identity with clear interests. However, in most modern, industrialised democracies, it is arguably impossible for such a monolithic state identity to form, and to some extent at least, various parts of the state have different interests and identities. The state as a singular identity is most clearly visible when it has to respond to some attack upon its legitimacy by an 'other' (Hopf 2002, Berger and Luckmann 1966) such as in wartime, or other crisis seen to affect all people within the country. The theory of soft power as used in this book tends to veer more towards conventional rather than critical constructivism; actors exchange information, and this is clearly affected by the actors' identities and values. Therefore, it must be possible to determine those actors' identities and values to some extent, while recognising that they change constantly in a gradual way.

These constructivist points of view provide a basis for using the principles of soft power to analyse international relations. As Katzenstein has pointed out:

> Nye has difficulty articulating the relational implications of his concept of "soft power" and demonstrating empirically how it, and America's stipulated cultural, ideological, and institutional pre-eminence, is affecting different features of international politics ...
>
> (Katzenstein 1996b: 504)

However, using the tools of constructivism, the soft power aspects of international relations can be empirically analysed, as has been described.

Japan as an example of soft power use

When academics have talked about soft power until now, they have mostly focused upon the USA as the primary source of soft power around the world, with its globally successful film industry, its globally dominant companies and financial clout, and the increasing prevalence of English in international communication. Although these factors are unchanged, it is arguable that successive US administrations' policies on military intervention and the use of hard power tactics against other countries are increasingly eroding this soft power in many areas around the world (e.g. Nye 2004, *Financial Times* 2004).

While the soft power of burgeoning economies such as China and India is now being considered (Pocha 2003, Kurlantzick 2007), perhaps the most useful example in recent times of a large country which has had a foreign policy based primarily upon the use of soft power is that of Japan. This state of affairs has come about partly through the decapitation of its military capability after its catastrophic military defeat and subjection to US occupation after the Second World War. This condition has persisted due to the popularity of its 'peace constitution' which theoretically bans the maintenance of military forces (Hook and McCormack 2001) (although in practice this absolute ban has been reinterpreted so as to allow a 'self defence force' which is an army in all but name). Despite the almost complete inability to apply military power in any international negotiation, Japan has managed to become the second largest economy in the world. As it has also only rarely used sanctions in foreign policy, this success has come about largely due to foreign policies based on co-operation with other countries – one of the fundamentals of soft power.

Due to East Asian countries' suspicion of Japan's motives since its attempts before the Second World War to carve out an empire from its neighbours, Japan has had to be especially sensitive and patient in order to rebuild its image as a trustworthy partner in the region; this situation has made the use of soft power a necessity and the use of hard power very difficult. In the post-war era, it managed to sign reparations agreements, or agreements to give economic aid in lieu of reparations with most of the countries it had caused damage to during and before the war. These were to lead to the implementation of more considered aid programmes; as Japan itself developed and grew at a phenomenal rate in economic terms, it was able to pass expertise and technical help to other developing countries in the region (Arase 1995).

Not only was it able to give co-operative help directly to other countries in the region, but it also came to be admired for its economic prowess and ability to compete with Western economies. Its record in producing innovative new technologies and manufacturing processes (such as Sony's transistor and the Toyota Production System) added to its reputation and image, not only within the region but also around the world. Success bred success, and financial power and influence soon followed along with influence in international institutions such as the G7, the IMF and World Bank, the WTO and the UN (e.g. Drifte 1996, Wade 1996).

However, during the two decades since the explosive bursting of its economic bubble in 1990 and the subsequent regional financial crisis in 1997, Japan has realised that it faces an uncertain future in economic terms, relative to its post-war growth. Policy makers, Japanese and foreign academics and journalists have started to focus more on the longer term aspects of soft power as a means of strengthening the country's image and attraction in the East Asian region and beyond.

The former minister in charge of internal affairs and privatisation of the post office, Takenaka Heizō, has notably written about Japan's future use of soft power (e.g. Takenaka 2000). Takenaka emphasises the lifestyle and cultural aspects of soft power, and how they must emanate from within the society's structure. He therefore uses the argument that Japan must renew itself from inside, and build up its 'human capital' in order to be able to project soft power more effectively. This agrees with the argument that a country must build its image and attractiveness to achieve long-term success. Japan's use of ODA and other economic co-operation with East Asian countries in particular has been laudable and positive, but there has always been a niggling suspicion that it is carrying out these policies mainly to create new markets for its own companies to exploit. While this may not be a wholly bad thing for the receiving countries, they fear Japan's economic dominance in their markets, and loss of control over their own economies. The consequences of this kind of loss of control were in fact confirmed during the Asian financial crisis of 1997, when panicked selling of stocks and short-term assets was led by the large Japanese investors, deepening the crisis substantially in most countries in the region (King 2001).

A report was published in 2002 by Dentsū Sōken, a research institute owned by the influential Japanese advertising company Dentsū Corporation, about the use of soft power (Sodekawa 2002). The report attempts to measure Japan's soft power against fourteen other countries by specifying three categories of soft power – 'choice power' (control of markets and systems), 'leadership' (competitiveness in knowledge and science), and 'culture, society and lifestyle' (attractiveness and popularity). It then identifies a wide range of data (39 data sets) which demonstrate these characteristics for all of the countries and makes a comparison. Examples include income from tourism, importance of trade to GDP, number of transnational companies based in each country, CO_2 emissions, and diverse others. It is difficult to ascertain whether this study truly can claim to measure soft power, as the reasons for the choice of each data set are not given and each data set is arbitrarily given equal weighting. However, it is nevertheless a useful indication of the importance that is now being attached to soft power by companies as well as academics.

In the last few years, academics and journalists interested in Japan have reflected upon the influence of Japan's lifestyle and modern culture throughout East Asia (Iwabuchi 2003, Tadokoro 2003, Ishizuka 2003, McGray 2002, *Time* 1999, Shiraishi 1997). They cite the popularity in East Asia of Japan's *anime* cartoons, *manga* comics, pop singers, television dramas and merchandise based on popular Japanese characters, and consider how it affects Japan's relationship

with East Asian countries. The fact that this popularity has spread to young people even in South Korea (Hanson 2004) and China (*Straits Times* 2004), the countries which most strongly remember Japanese wartime aggression and cultural imperialism, gives an indication of its attractiveness.

Tadokoro (2003) considers how to look again at cultural soft power as a possible foreign policy resource. He acknowledges the difficulties of harnessing soft power as a direct resource, but comments on a certain 'cultural affinity' (*shinkinkan*) that East Asian countries have with Japan more than the USA, and how Japan may be able to use this to spread its cultural values such as artistic freedom and other aspects of its civil society. Japan may not be able to 'spread' its culture actively in order to influence other countries as envisaged by Tadokoro and others (e.g. Asō 2006). However, by maintaining an atmosphere of artistic freedom and dynamism (more in tune with ideas expressed by Takenaka 2000) such a culture will be attractive to other countries in the region. Japanese culture will then continue to naturally spread through the region, as it has been doing. Attractive ideas embodied in Japanese society, such as freedom of expression or the questioning of authority and tradition, may be absorbed in other countries.

Soft power by its nature is not a one-way process, and it is clear to see some other East Asian countries' cultural and ideological soft power working in Japan. By becoming an attractive source of ideas, a country also necessarily opens itself up to outside ideas. Before the period of Western domination, Japan is known to have absorbed ideas and culture gleaned from China, Korea and other neighbours. Now that these countries are again coming to the fore, and producing culturally exciting ideas, Japan is naturally starting to import such ideas again. Such a process can be seen, as mentioned previously, in the recent popularity of South Korean culture, catalysed by pop bands (BoA), films (*Shiri*) and television dramas such as *Friends* (Iwabuchi 2002) and *Fuyu no Sonata* (Winter Sonata). The popularity of the latter clearly led to greatly increased sales of Korean language textbooks and increased Japanese tourism to South Korea by young and old alike (Daily Yomiuri 2004a).

Naturally, due to its (until recently) greater economic clout compared with other countries in East Asia, the influence of cultural soft power has been more likely to flow from Japan to East Asia than in the other direction. Japanese language and other culture such as pop groups, films and TV dramas (Iwabuchi 2002) have been increasing in popularity in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea in the past decade. South Korea has been legalising the import of Japanese culture in the last few years, after decades of suspicion. The import of popular music from Japan only became legal in 2004 (*Korea Times* 2004), while the import of non-animated, and non-age restricted Japanese films became legal in 2000 (*Japan Times* 2004). While Japanese pop culture was a novelty in East Asia, and it was fashionable to consume it, it may have generated more interest. However, while it now appears to be becoming a normal option in places such as Hong Kong and Singapore (Iwabuchi 2002), and no longer fashionable, this is an indication that Japanese culture is now rooted as a permanent influence in these countries, along with American or European culture – accepted by many people rather than just people who are specifically attracted to Japanese culture.

However, Iwabuchi (2002) suggests that Japan's recognition in recent years of its growing cultural influence has led to a kind of 'soft nationalism', whereby it is taken as a given that Japan should try to use its soft power to further its national interest, an observation supported in recent times by conservative politicians (Asō 2006) and academics. While this option may seem attractive to Japanese nationalists, who hanker for the days of imperial glory, the fact remains that this kind of soft power is not available to be pushed as a policy tool which has specific results. Culture which is pushed upon people will not be accepted, and so cannot be called soft power. Culture which is inherently attractive and interesting will have influence.

Iwabuchi also disputes the premise that the spread of Japanese popular culture has any meaning in terms of East Asians being attracted to Japan itself:

> ... it matters not that Japanese animations and TV programs are eagerly consumed. It is argued that a sense of yearning for Japan is still not aroused in Asia, because what is appreciated, unlike American popular culture, is still not an image or idea of Japan but simply a materialistic consumer commodity.
>
> (Iwabuchi 2002: 34)

Nevertheless, it seems clear that it is not necessary to induce 'a sense of yearning for Japan' in order for Japanese ideas to have an impact and influence on countries where they are accepted. An idea produced in Japan and accepted elsewhere is inherently Japanese until it is modified or adapted by the receiving culture. Hence it is not necessary for the receiving country to like or dislike the fact that the idea is Japanese; as long as the idea is accepted in itself it will have some influence, however small (Hirano 2000). The gradual accumulation of influence engendered by these ideas is soft power.

Conclusions

This chapter has looked at the concept of soft power, and considered the questions of 'what is soft power?' and 'how does soft power work?' using the language, ideas and tools of constructivism. It has theorised that soft power is constituted from the attractiveness of ideas and culture within a country which have been produced by individuals and utilised by agents, both governmental and non-governmental, which channel it towards other countries across information links. The mass media (including new forms of electronic media) and the increasing movement of people between countries have been described as the primary methods of transfer, or instrumentalisation, of this soft power. The fundamentally constructivist nature of soft power theory has also been analysed, and finally reasons to use Japan–China relations in order to study soft power have been explored.

In order to empirically investigate the questions posed and theories suggested in this chapter, this study will concentrate upon the use of soft power in three case studies in Japan's relations with China. The case studies will utilise the theory posited in this chapter to explain the action of soft power from the perspective of

some of the agencies which channel it, namely a state level government agent (the Japan Foundation), a sub-state level city authority agent (Kobe City), and a non-governmental organisation (the Japan–China Friendship Association).

As noted in Chapter 1, Japan's relationship with China has been troubled at the state level, in particular since the visits by Prime Minister Koizumi to Yasukuni shrine (where several war criminals' spirits are enshrined, along with those of many other soldiers killed in Japan's wars since the latter half of the nineteenth century). Koizumi was never able to make a state trip to China due to disagreements over these visits. Nevertheless, trade and exchange of culture and ideas between the two countries continued to flourish despite these problems, and soft power has continued to act through agents such as those mentioned above. The following chapters will investigate these issues and their background in more detail.

4   Japan's political and cultural relations with China

Introduction

Japan and China are the countries from which empirical evidence is used to consider soft power's role in international relations in this book. In order to better understand how soft power has worked in Japan's relations with China in particular, the historical context of Japan–China relations will be considered and outlined in this chapter.

In general terms, the foreign and economic policies of both Japan and China are of concern to countries all around the world. The size of their economies is one reason for this; in dollar terms Japan is the second largest economy in the world, with China poised to overtake it in 2010 (*Guardian* 2010), although when the relative prices of goods and services is taken into account, China has a far larger economy than Japan (CIA 2010). Thus, their international policies have the scope to affect many if not most countries around the globe. However, it is not only their direct foreign policies which are of interest. Attention must also be paid to their bilateral relations, which necessarily affect their individual economies and foreign policies and thereby that of their trading partners across the world, in addition to affecting the overall stability of the wider region.

This chapter therefore endeavours to give an overview of the current state of relations between the two countries. In order to accomplish this, it first briefly covers the history of their relations, then considers the major issues which affect their relations at the present time, and how they relate to the remainder of the book.

History

For two thousand years or more, Japanese and Chinese people have been interacting and exchanging knowledge. For most of that time, the dominant country in the relationship has clearly been China. Monks and scholars travelled from China to Japan, often through the Korean peninsula, bringing information and ideas about the outside world, including knowledge of written language which led to Chinese characters being adapted to Japanese language for written usage, to the relative backwater of the Japanese islands. Japanese leaders have also occasionally

paid tribute to the Emperors of China in order to access knowledge of distant places and events, and technology. In the Chinese tributary system, states which acknowledged China as the dominant power were often rewarded lavishly with gifts from the Chinese Emperor (Verschuer 1999, Hall 1971, Fairbank 1942). However, this long-term unequal relationship led to a certain cultural superiority complex among many Chinese (Ijiri 1990: 639), who often refer to 'little' Japan even today.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Japanese leaders and dissenters alike had observed the events occurring in China, which was being slowly dissected by the European powers amongst themselves, and had become fearful of a Western invasion of Japan. Rebellion by regional leaders dissatisfied by the central government's dithering response to the arrival of the American Commodore Perry in 1853 (Hall 1971) led to the overthrow of the Tokugawa feudal military regime, and the beginning of the Meiji Restoration in 1868 (Beasley 1972). This was a project to build a strong nation state along the lines of the European powers, in order to attempt to resist being controlled by them. The new Japanese regime was determined to import Western technology, and while granting some trading concessions to Western powers, it also sent representatives to the USA and Europe (the Iwakura Mission) to gain information. Within a few years, the government had hired about 3000 foreign advisors to help its national modernisation programme (Hall 1971: 287).

During this time, the Chinese authorities were also attempting to deal with the Western powers, myriad internal rebellions caused by the weakness of the Qing dynasty, and to modernise their political system. However, in stark contrast to the situation in Japan, conservative forces and internal strife stymied attempts of reformers to revitalise the country (Fairbank and Goldman 1998: 219). As a result, a conflict between the Japanese and Chinese armies over control of Korea led to the Chinese navy being routed by the Japanese in 1894.

By 1910, Japan, with its newly modernised army and political system, had joined the Westerners in the practice of imperialism by annexing Taiwan, Korea, and establishing through force a military presence in mainland China (Duus *et al.* 1989, Young 1998, Yamane *et al.* 1996). In the years up to the Second World War, Japanese military leaders gained control of large areas of north-eastern China, as well as Korea, causing widespread suffering and large numbers of deaths. This period of Japanese military occupation is a major reason for many currently unresolved issues between Japan and China (Wang 2005, Rose 1998, 2005).

After the first Sino-Japanese war had been concluded and a peace treaty signed, Chinese leaders became eager to learn why Japan had been able to defeat it, and began encouraging more study about Japan and Japanese knowledge (Xu 1997). The struggling Qing administration sent many thousands of students to Japan to study these factors between 1896 and 1905 (Wang 2005: 84). What until then, for thousands of years, had been a one-way flow of ideas and soft power from China to Japan suddenly reversed, with Japanese ideas and skills heavily influencing a generation of elite Chinese students, who at that time admired Japan for its strength against Western colonial powers (Chi 1980). Future leaders such

as Zhou Enlai (Lee 1994) were among these students who would eventually help to improve Japan and China's relations.

Groups involved in the setting up of the first Chinese Republic also received support from Japan. Revolutionaries who had been exiled by the Qing dynasty were often based in Japan, including Sun Yat Sen and his activists. They received financial support from both the government and interested private citizens in Japan (Young 1980).

While these students and future elites were in Japan, they absorbed much of what Japanese scholars had learnt of Western societies and technologies, in order that they could use the knowledge to improve the future situation of their home country. Many new Chinese words describing these new ideas and knowledge are therefore derived from Japanese neologisms, which were in turn derived from Western languages (Chung 2001, Seely 1991).

While many Chinese people retain their superiority complex with regard to Japanese culture for historical reasons, the history of Japanese and Chinese development since the arrival of the Western powers in East Asia, and the contrasting fortunes of both countries in modern times has caused many in Japan to look down on Chinese people and their culture (Ijiri 1990). These mixed feelings about each other's cultures have been a significant factor in many modern problems in relations between the two countries, and will not disappear easily.

Post-war relations

After Japan's defeat and occupation by Western forces in 1945, it was forced to withdraw from China (including Taiwan) and Korea and align its interests with Western countries, and particularly the USA. During the ensuing Cold War, Japan was encouraged to establish trade links and political relations with other US allies in the region, while being discouraged from establishing links with communist countries such as China and the USSR. Therefore, the Japanese post-war alliance with the USA was the main reason Japan and China did not restart diplomatic relations until 1972 (Mori 2006).

The fact that the post-war occupation of Japan was dominated by the USA for its duration ensured that Japanese politicians and citizens were focused on learning about the USA, its culture and its people, in order to try to understand how it would be best to deal with the country then and in the future. The USA became by far the most important trading partner for Japan (Tanaka 1991: 11), while China's share of Japanese trade dwindled to tiny proportions. This was particularly so when internal change and turbulence in China, caused first by the civil war between the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party, and then by Mao Zedong's policies of continuous revolution, ensured that China was focused mostly on domestic problems. China's wariness of Japanese and US motives, in addition to its growing domestic cultivation of nationalism and the importance of building a strong state able to defend itself against foreigners, made it sensitive to perceived slights, causing instability in relations.

There were many people in Japan (Tanaka 1991: 43, Rose 1998: 44) who wanted to recognise the People's Republic of China (PRC) which was established by the Communist Party in 1949, including Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida (Johnson 1986: 403). However, the support of the USA for the Nationalist Party, which had set up a capital in Taiwan and claimed to be the legitimate government of the Republic of China (ROC), meant that Japanese politicians had little choice but to recognise the ROC in 1952 against their better judgement (Jain 1981: 7) and therefore forgo official diplomatic links with the regime in Beijing. This recognition of the ROC was against a background where the USA had gathered its allies to conclude the 1951 San Francisco Treaty, which determined the peace settlement to be imposed upon Japan. Neither the ROC nor the PRC were invited to take part in the Treaty negotiations due to uncertainty over which regime legitimately represented China.

With the onset of the Cold War, Japan's trade and political relations were officially restricted to the group of 'free world' countries which were allied to the USA. At the beginning of the Cold War, many Japanese people displayed ambivalence to the ideologies of both sides; although most mainstream politicians and voters were opposed to communism, there were also many who either had sympathy with communist ideals, or were pragmatists who would have preferred to deal with the PRC regardless of ideology for the purposes of trade and Japan's own national interests and independence (Mendl 1978: 14). Nevertheless, due to the fact that Japan's foreign policy was almost totally controlled by the USA (Barnett 1977, Tsukasa 2006), in practice the Japanese government had no choice but to join the USA and its allies in their refusal to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Communist regime in China. As part of this process, and in an effort to contain the communism which US policy makers saw as threatening large swathes of Asia, Japan was encouraged to remilitarise as quickly as possible in order that the USA could use it as a base against communism in the region (Dower 1995, Hook 1988).

In 1952, the USA ensured that the Japanese government under Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru signed a peace treaty with the Nationalist regime based in Taiwan rather than recognising the newly established PRC in Beijing, despite the reluctance of many Japanese politicians to do this (Tsukasa 2006, Mendl 1978). According to which leader was in power, Japanese governments' stance towards the PRC varied between ambivalence or neglect (Prime Ministers Kishi Nobusuke, Satō Eisaku) and that of active encouragement of non-official contacts and professions that normalisation of relations was necessary (Prime Ministers Hatoyama Ichirō, Ishibashi Tanzen, Ikeda Hayato) (Jain 1981, Mendl 1978, Tsukasa 2006). Therefore, as is discussed further in Chapter 7, the task of constructing and maintaining links between the two countries was left to non-governmental organisations and interested individuals, although their ability to do this was dependent on the current government's attitudes, due to the need to obtain special permits to travel between the two countries. This was shown by the sudden drop in exchanges (Soeya 1995: 89) between the two countries for several years after 1958, ostensibly due to the 'Nagasaki flag incident' (when a PRC flag in Nagasaki

was pulled down by a right-wing youth, the Japanese government admitted it did not regard the PRC flag as a legal foreign national flag), but in fact caused by the Chinese government's anger at the rejection of its demand during negotiations on the Fourth Japan–China Private Trade Agreement that the flag of the PRC should be allowed to be flown by Chinese ships entering Japanese ports (Soeya 1995: 83) in addition to Kishi's generally pro-Taiwan, pro-America stance (Jain 1981, Mendl 1978).

This situation was to continue until the normalisation of diplomatic ties between Japan and China in 1972. Until that time, both governments used individuals, political party organisations and NGOs to maintain unofficial contacts with each other, although the Chinese government was particularly enthusiastic about encouraging these activities (Wu 2003); early examples of this are the use of the Chinese Red Cross Society to negotiate with Japanese NGOs regarding repatriation of Japanese nationals (Jain 1981: 19), and the conference between the China Medical Association and the Japan Medical Association in November 1955 (Tian 1996: 240). In particular on the Chinese side, the organisations involved in the exchanges were either directly controlled by or connected to the government or ruling party, (such as the China Committee for the Promotion of International Trade, set up in 1952, and the China–Japan Friendship Association, set up in 1963; Park 1976). Individuals such as Premier Zhou Enlai, and Liao Chengzhi (of the Central Committee of the CPC, and also head of the Chinese Red Cross Society) (Radtke 1990) were also directly involved in organising exchanges from the Chinese side. The Chinese government additionally had an explicit policy of supporting certain groups (including political parties such as the Japan Socialist Party and Japan Communist Party) and individuals in Japan in order to encourage links with or influence events in Japan (Wu 1995). On the Japanese side, the groups involved were often left-wing and so had sympathies with the Chinese regime, or were against the domination of Japan by the USA, and so were not controlled or influenced by the central government (Soeya 1995: 90, Barnett 1977).

In the same period, Japan was successfully concluding reparations and peace treaties with most countries in the East Asian region which had been affected by its militarism, thereby boosting its trade links, and its own economic development (Brooks and Orr 1985, Arase 1995). In addition to this, Japanese programmes of cultural exchange were heavily biased towards the USA; Japanese leaders thought it was vital to establish long-term links of trust and understanding between Japan and the USA, for future security and economic development. While the government professed to understand the importance of re-establishing links with the Chinese mainland in the long term, it was wary about encouraging links to be formed too quickly while domestic turmoil in China continued.

Meanwhile, China and its people were enduring the effects of Mao Zedong's ideas on development and industrial policy. The famines which resulted from his 'Great Leap Forward' were to lead to millions of deaths from starvation and disease. Its main ally in the region was the USSR, although relations between the two countries were always prickly and deteriorated quickly due to ideological differences which developed in the 1960s (Petrov 1983). The Chinese government

viewed Japan as being controlled by the USA (Radtke 1990), and tried to initiate strategies which could encourage people in Japan to stage their own communist revolution. Left-wing groups in Japan, such as the Japan Communist Party, were supported and granted meetings with Chinese leaders (Kuriyama 1976). The leadership tried to encourage a variety of people-to-people exchanges between Japan and China (Hoadley and Hasegawa 1971), partly with these intentions, through friendship groups in China which it established for that purpose; these initiatives were seized upon by Japanese businessmen and other groups who were interested in re-establishing links with China for their own reasons (Lee 1978). In the 1960s, acknowledging the decreasing possibility of socialist revolution in Japan, China's leaders made efforts to increase trade links with Japan. Through so-called 'friendly trade' and 'L-T trade' (Park 1976), and with the support of prominent Japanese LDP politicians who supported Japan–PRC ties, it tried to obtain goods which were no longer available to it due to the breakdown in its ties with the Soviet Union. This was successful to some extent, but the advent of the Cultural Revolution in China, brought about by Mao and his Red Guards, led to the cessation of most exchanges and trade with Japan and other countries.

Thus, it can be seen that during the post-war period, relations between Japan and China, both economic and cultural, were sometimes at the mercy of internal issues in China, and at other times, when China was in periods of relative stability, subject to the constraints of the Cold War and the ideological divide between the two countries.

These connections which were formed in that time have often been referred to as 'half government, half private' (Wu 2003: 282) diplomatic links, and it was in this way that trade was restarted between Japan and China through semi-official (according to the Chinese) or unofficial (according to the Japanese) trade agreements signed by ostensibly non-government actors in 1952, 1953 and 1955 (Leng 1958, Soeya 1995) and continued later through the use of 'L-T' or later 'memorandum' trade (see Chapter 7), based upon non-government agreements in 1962 and 1968 respectively (Jain 1981, Park 1978).

These information links between the two countries have led to connections which in turn acted as a base for the later blooming of exchanges between Japan and China. The links were developed as official relations were formed and strengthened, and were maintained despite the occasional lapse in government diplomacy. Due to these early links, the action of soft power through various agents was already occurring long before the 1972 diplomatic normalisation, and the 1978 Peace and Friendship Treaty (PFT), as demonstrated through the activities of the Japan–China Friendship Association discussed in Chapter 7.

Re-establishment of diplomatic relations

By the 1970s, the Japanese economy was far larger than China's; China had just emerged from a period of political and economic turmoil under the leadership of Mao Zedong, and was again eager to develop trade links with Japan. Many politicians and other groups in Japanese society had continued to push for closer

links with China for a number of years (Jain 1981, Lee 1978), and even Prime Minister Satō had envisioned diplomatic recognition in the near future (Johnson 1986: 412), but the forces which finally led to the establishment of diplomatic relations initially came from outside Japan. Many Western countries had already begun to establish links with the PRC, including France in 1964 and Canada in 1970, and in 1971 President Nixon secretly sent an envoy (Henry Kissinger) to Beijing to discuss a visit to China.

Other momentous events in Asia had been contributing factors, including the US difficulties in the Vietnam War, and the eventual and sudden devaluation of the dollar which occurred when Nixon unilaterally broke its link with the price of gold. Additionally, China had been admitted to the United Nations as a permanent member after a long campaign for recognition, replacing the Republic of China regime in Taiwan, in 1971. These factors led an increasing number of Japanese people to believe that their country needed to establish links with China for the sake of its own economic and military security in the future (Tanaka 1991). While the pro-US and anti-communist government of Prime Minister Satō Eisuke had been reluctant to establish ties with China at first and was unable to establish ties due to poor relations with Chinese leaders later on (Hsiao 1974: 106), his successor, Tanaka Kakuei, made it an aim of his administration to establish ties with the PRC – partly in response to public opinion (Johnson 1986: 410). Business leaders had also seen Western countries' trade with China increasing, and were pushing the government to enable them to increase trade.

From China's point of view, it had fallen out with the Soviet Union over border clashes and divergences in ideology, and so Chinese leaders believed that it was necessary for security to establish better ties with the USA and its allies against the USSR (Tanaka 1991: 63, Hamrin 1983: 214). China was worried about Soviet overtures towards Japan (Falkenheim 1979), and additionally did not want to provide any reason for Japan to become a nuclear state itself (Jain 1981: 99). Domestically, there was a pressing need to find technological know-how for the advancement of its economy, and to strengthen its position against the Nationalist regime on Taiwan; Japan would be a ready source of capital and technology for these purposes. In order to gain these advantages, Chinese leaders were ready to soften their opposition to Japan's trade with Taiwan, as long as the Beijing government was recognised as the sole representative of China, of which Taiwan was one part. In the eventual Joint Communiqué establishing diplomatic relations which was signed by Japan and China in 1972, China also agreed to waive claims to war reparations (MOFA 1972, Mori 2006: 76), and outstanding territorial disputes, such as the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, were not mentioned – disputes which would continue to cause problems for relations in the years ahead (Cheng 1984: 105).

In the subsequent years, various economic agreements were reached on fisheries, aviation, shipping and trade. In addition, cultural exchange programmes were started in earnest, with sister cities' links being arranged (see Chapter 6) and other cultural exchanges organised. However, progress towards the PFT which had been envisioned in the 1972 communiqué was slow. This was partly

explained by domestic developments; in China Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou Enlai had both died in 1976, and a power struggle was taking place between factions of the Communist Party. In Japan, the ruling LDP was battling with the Lockheed scandal in which Tanaka Kakuei and other former ministers were accused of accepting bribes from the American aerospace company. In addition to this, Chinese negotiators were pushing for an 'anti-hegemony' clause in the treaty, which although not explicit, was aimed at preventing the Soviet Union was gaining influence in the region (Park 1976). Japanese leaders did not want to cause difficulty with the Soviets, and were also worried that such a clause could cause problems with its relations with the USA in future, and so demanded a vaguer clause against any hegemony in the region (Jain 1981: 109) – which China could not accept. To add to these problems, the leadership of the Soviet Union were campaigning against the inclusion of such a clause in the treaty, which they suspected would be against their interests (Falkenheim 1979: 1214).

Nevertheless, by 1978 Deng Xiaoping had consolidated power in China, and Fukuda Takeo had become Prime Minister in Japan and was interested in completion of the treaty, which he hoped would give him and his LDP some credibility at home. Japanese businessmen were also eyeing the increasing trade between China and Western countries with concern, and contrasting it with their own increasing trade frictions with the West (Johnson 1986: 416). Chinese leaders continued to be concerned about Soviet influence in the region (including in Vietnam), and wanted to improve its relations with the USA; it is said that US leaders were also supportive of the treaty and told Fukuda to not worry about the 'anti-hegemony' clause (Tanaka 1991: 101); hence pressure for the conclusion of the treaty was coming from various sources.

In return for China waiving its claim to war reparations, Japan agreed to provide economic aid in the form of grants and cheap loans, to help rebuild and develop China's economy (although this was never formally acknowledged as being in lieu of reparations, Mori 2006: 116, Ijiri 1990: 642). This development aid from Japan to China was to be a significant factor in China's rapid development (Austin and Harris 2001, Arase 1995, Inada 2002), especially during the 1980s.

China's rapid economic growth since then has led to the restoration of its position in the global economy. Meanwhile, the relative stagnation of the Japanese economy in the 1990s has continued during the first decade of this century. These economic conditions, in addition to the historical considerations mentioned earlier, have in large part contributed to the current relationship between Japan and China, with its positive and negative aspects, as will now be described.

Current issues

While they may not be the most pressing or important problems between Japan and China on a day-to-day basis, issues related to history are the most persistent, and even when they are not being sensationalised by the media, they form a basis for an undercurrent of discontent between the publics of the two countries (Rose

1998, 2005, Ping and Lin 2005, Wang 2005) which occasionally affects official relations, trade and other exchanges.

The educational systems of the two countries emphasise different aspects of history, with that in China concentrating on the Second World War while paying little attention to changes in Japan in the post-war period. In Japan, young people have been taught mostly about pre-modern history (when China was seen as the regional bully), and know little about Japan's early twentieth-century aggression (Wang 2005). To add to this, nationalist populist politicians in both countries have often played upon people's historically based prejudices for political gain (Austin and Harris 2001). All of these points have together created an environment where young people in China and Japan are thought to be more and more diametrically opposed on questions of history, leading to such problems as the student anti-Japan demonstrations in the Spring of 2005 (Mori 2006).

The issue which has had the most prominence in the years since the PFT is that of the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. The shrine became a symbol of the nationalist state Shinto religion in 1879, and was used to enshrine the souls of those who had died in Japan's wars (Nelson 2003). In 1979, it was revealed that the remains of several convicted war criminals from the Second World War had been moved there and since then, any time a Japanese leader has visited the shrine it has led to protests from the Chinese government and public against a revival of Japanese 'militarism' (Wang 2005: 140), due to a perception that the worship of dead war criminals reflects a lack of remorse for their wartime deeds, and a 'provocation' of countries which suffered from Japanese militarism (Ping and Lin 2005: 9). The shrine itself is backed by nationalist right-wing organisations, and contains a war museum which defends Japan's invasion in the Second World War of many East Asian countries, saying that Japan was 'liberating' them from Western imperialism (Nelson 2003). The former Prime Minister, Koizumi Junichirō, made a point of visiting the shrine once every year after he was elected. Because of this, no senior Chinese government official would negotiate with Koizumi directly over any matter, leading to a virtual freeze on high-level government diplomacy from 2001 to 2006. Japanese Prime Ministers since Koizumi have made it a point not to visit the shrine, lowering tensions, although many other Diet members and senior politicians continue to visit.

Another prominent issue left over from the war is that of compensation for Chinese women who were coerced into prostitution for the Japanese army during the Second World War (Rose 2005). Many of these women have sued the Japanese government for compensation, only to be refused on the grounds that all claims for wartime compensation were waived by China in the 1978 Japan–China Peace and Friendship Treaty (Amnesty International 2005). Other issues include unexploded Japanese bombs and chemical weapons which are occasionally found in China, and Chinese survivors of Japanese wartime atrocities who still try to obtain compensation from the Japanese government, and are still on the whole denied this (Rose 2005, Austin and Harris 2001, Ijiri 1996).

While all of these issues are said to be historical problems, the way in which they are highlighted, hushed up, or otherwise ignored by the Chinese

government and Japanese establishment reflects more upon the current political priorities than on what actually occurred in past historical events. In China, the Communist Party clearly no longer has a communist or even socialist ideology to lean on. Its continued capitalist liberalisation of the Chinese economy since Deng Xiaoping attained power in 1978 has led to China becoming the world's fastest growing large economy over the past twenty years or more. However, due to the reforms, an increasing gap between the super rich and the poor in China has led to discontent, including thousands of protests every year against social conditions (Chen 2006, Guo 2001). To ensure its legitimacy as the sole political power in China, the Party has developed its nationalist and populist credentials. In order to do this, it has used its reputation as the party that defeated the Japanese occupiers in the war, and this is also reflected in the 'patriotic' education which all Chinese children are given (Wang 2005: 130) where much emphasis is given to the Communist Party's fight against the Japanese army in the war. The party needs to constantly remind its citizens of this, and often raises the possibility that Japan may become militaristic and expansionist again in order to ensure its own survival.

This is far from the current reality in what is now a generally pacifist Japan, but the CPC is helped in its depiction of an increasingly militaristic Japan by certain right-wing nationalist groups in Japanese politics and society. These groups range from those which represent relatives of soldiers who died in the war, to groups advocating a stronger Japanese military presence in the world, or increased patriotism among Japanese citizens, to be instilled through the education system. Many of these groups have strong connections to the long-powerful Liberal Democratic Party, and therefore have had influence over government policy (although the election of the DPJ to government in 2010 may have weakened their influence); in addition, LDP education specialists have tended towards promoting conservative views of Japan's history in school textbooks (Johnson 1986: 424), the periodical revisions of which have also caused continuous controversy since the PFT (Rose 1998). It is widely believed that Koizumi originally visited the Yasukuni Shrine to gain the support of influential right-wing groups (Nelson 2003), while his successor, Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, was well known to support the strengthening of patriotism, 'moral' education, as well as increasing the strength of the Japanese military (Abe 2006).

Unsettled territorial issues left over from the war also play to the strengths of nationalists in both countries. A small group of islands, called the Senkaku in Japanese, and Diaoyu in Chinese, are claimed by Japan, China and also Taiwan. Japan claimed the islands in 1895 as part of Okinawa, whereas China and Taiwan claim they were historically part of Taiwan. This dispute only became clear in 1969, after a UN report claimed large gas reserves in the area (Jain 1981: 122); in 1972 the occupying US forces handed over control of the islands to Japan along with Okinawa. The islands remain contested, with nationalist groups from China, Taiwan and Japan occasionally landing on the islands and planting flags or buildings there. In the last few years, in concord with its recently more assertive foreign policies, the Japanese government has taken more direct control over the

islands, using the Coast Guard to detain and deport Chinese protesters from them (Deans 2000, Su 2005).

While this territorial issue has historical overtones, it points to an arguably more substantial and modern problem faced by the two countries in their bilateral relations – energy competition. Again on a disputed maritime boundary, both countries have found oil and gas reserves in the East China Sea just north of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. China has already started drilling the reserves in an undisputed area, but Japan claims the extraction will affect reserves in its claimed exclusive economic zone (EEZ). In 2005, the Chinese navy made a show of force in the area, with one of their ships targeting a Japanese reconnaissance plane (Curtin 2005, *Economist* 2005). Behind these tensions is the growing need for both countries to find stable energy supplies for the future. China's quickly growing economy requires cheap energy to sustain it, while Japan's heavy reliance on unstable Middle Eastern oil reserves has led it to search elsewhere for energy. Energy competition has affected both countries' relations with Russia, as they compete against each other for an oil and gas pipeline which is to be built from Siberia either towards China or to Russia's Far East, where it would be nearer to Japan (Buszynski 2006).

Related to these tensions is a burgeoning arms race between China and Japan, with the related issues of US military forces stationed in Japan and Taiwan's status in the background (Drifte 2003, Hickey 2001). In security terms, the two countries are among the world's biggest spenders on defence. Although estimations of defence spending are difficult to make, especially in the case of China, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute estimates China to be the world's second largest spender, at US\$84.9 billion, while Japan is the seventh largest at US\$46.3 billion (SIPRI 2010). With China increasing its stock of nuclear weapons, buying new missiles and other advanced military technology from Russia, as well as greatly increasing the budget of its conventional forces every year, Japanese politicians are also looking to increase the strength of their armed forces. In addition to importing the latest technology from their US allies, there are also many government–industry programmes to develop home-grown aerospace and other military technologies. Linked to this is the space race which has recently begun, and proclamations on plans to reach the moon by both countries (*Time* 2005, *Economist* 2007).

A more positive aspect of their relationship is the amount of trade conducted between them, with trade increasing from \$18 billion in 1990 to \$232.2 billion in 2009 (JETRO 2010a).[1] In addition, China (including Hong Kong) has risen to become Japan's top trading partner, overtaking the USA in 2004 (MOF 2005), although Japan is some distance behind the USA as China's top trade partner, with \$366 billion in 2009 (US–China Business Council 2010). A particular feature of the economic relationship between the two countries is its complementary character. Japan's major exports to China are hi-tech electrical components, machinery, and car parts, while among China's major exports to Japan are low-tech electronics (especially office equipment), textiles, and food products (JETRO 2010b). Thus, Japan provides China with high value, high-tech equipment while

China provides Japan with large amounts of cheaply produced lower value equipment, food and raw materials.[2] In terms of value, Japan experienced a small trade deficit (in percentage terms) in 2009 of US$13 billion (although the figures are disputed – see Kwan 2006). Links between the two countries created through direct investment are also numerous. In 2008, China received US$92.4 billion of investment, and of this investment US$3.6 billion originated in Japan, ahead of South Korea and the USA (JETRO 2010c).[3]

While the economic relationship between the two countries is the most obviously positive aspect, and, practically speaking, probably the most important aspect of their relationship, trade tensions have inevitably also increased. Other previously mentioned aspects of their relations colour public opinion, not only with regard to political relations but also in everyday transactions. Japanese consumers are well known for their demanding tastes, and if this is added to a general impression that Chinese goods are of inferior quality, any media report of a quality problem in a product or food made in China can quickly affect trade in that item. Examples of scares in recent years have included toxins discovered in eels (*Asahi Shimbun* 2007a) and high levels of agricultural chemicals in spinach imported from China (*Japan Times* 2003). In turn, an impression is created in China that Japan (and other countries) are exaggerating the problems to restrict imports from China of certain goods and to try and block Chinese development (*People's Daily* 2007). From the trade statistics, this is clearly far from the case, but a certain growing nationalism in both countries merely feeds these impressions. To add to this, a fear of over-reliance on Chinese products and markets is leading many politicians and businesses to encourage trade and investment in other countries such as India and South East Asia as a countermeasure (*Asahi Shimbun* 2007b).

Mixed in with all of these factors is a fear among some Japanese people that China's growth will soon leave Japan behind economically, and that Chinese tourists and immigrants will eventually swamp Japan. These feelings have been shown in the many books on the 'China threat' which have been published in Japan (e.g. Amako 2006, Nakajima and Komori 2000).

In addition to the economic ties which demonstrate the bilateral relationship's importance, historical and cultural ties also bind the two countries together. The Japanese language has been heavily influenced by Chinese in past centuries, and although not often acknowledged, a significant number of words in the Chinese language have been influenced by Japanese in the modern era (Chung 2001, Wang 2005). There have been many long periods of good relations between the two countries through the ages, a point which is often used by officials and politicians on both sides when they are trying to be conciliatory and friendly to each other. Educational and cultural links have always been strong, and some of the current thriving links are detailed further in Chapters 5–7.

Waning influence in the East Asian region and beyond is also a point on which Japan is fearful for the future. A race to conclude free trade agreements with South East Asian countries, and around the Asia-Pacific region, has been continuing between Japan and China in recent years, and many smaller countries' governments in the region have shifted their foreign policies towards an emphasis

on relations with China. The Chinese government is also using its new economic clout to encourage investment by Chinese companies into countries around the region and the world, thus helping to increase their influence in global trade (*Economist Intelligence Unit Viewswire* 2007). If growing Chinese companies try to make large acquisitions in Japan, there may be a backlash in the country, as happened in the USA when China National Offshore Oil Corp attempted to buy the large US oil company Unocal in 2005 but was thwarted by the US Congress (Nanto *et al.* 2005), and as the few recent Chinese takeovers in Japan have shown (*Asahi Shimbun* 2010).

Prospects

As has been mentioned, most of the issues and tensions between Japan and China have elements of nationalism and cultural fear, based on historical events and cultural stereotypes built up over centuries. Nevertheless, it is often easy to forget the positive aspects of their relationship in the media frenzy which only emphasises the problems in both countries. The most important aspect, and an important basis for future co-operation, is the amount of trade and business investment being made by both countries in each other (JETRO 2007). Trade has not stopped growing despite the political difficulties between the governments, and each side realises that they need the other, now and in the future, for their basic economic livelihood. Both countries' economies are likely to have complementary characteristics for some time to come. Although there will eventually be increasing competition in high technology areas, there will also continue to be scope for co-operation between various industries.

Along with this trade is the exchange of people, in the form of tourism and business trips, and therefore the increasing number of personal links being formed between the countries at elite levels and among ordinary people (JATA 2007a, 2007b). Exchanges are not only organised by companies for tourists, but also by many regional and city governments for children and students; as will be explained in the following chapters, a large number of sister city relationships exist between the two countries which facilitate these exchanges (Jain 2004). Finally, NGOs are also helping to form links between the two countries (Takahara 2006). In Japan, international NGOs have thrived due to reforms in the last 10 years, while in China, despite government caution, NGO-type organisations are also starting to form (Wang *et al.* 2002). There is great scope for co-operation between these groups in both countries, in particular on finding solutions to environmental and social problems.

Nevertheless, some of the dangers mentioned previously have the potential to undo these links quickly. Despite some obvious recent social changes in Japan, it is a stable democracy, with strong social and economic institutions. In marked contrast, fundamental parts of the Chinese social and political systems are in a state of flux, and can hardly be called stable. Therefore, the relationship will depend to a large degree on how social and political reforms are handled by the Chinese administration in the next few decades.

Against this uncertain background, the importance of avoiding military tensions and other friction in bilateral relations becomes obvious, and there is increasing interest in both countries about the constructive use of soft power in international relations, in a manner which may smooth relations in the future. Hence, the remainder of this book will concentrate on soft power aspects of Japan–China relations.

5   The activities of the Japan Foundation in China

State-level agents

It is debatable as to whether a government or other state body can contribute in great measure to a country's soft power (Hirano 2000). It seems that more often governments can damage their country's image through interventions designed purely for short-term political purposes. Nevertheless, governments can improve the soft power of their country by focusing on domestic policies, which can make the country's image more attractive to outsiders and contribute to a national identity in the international arena.

However, state-level organs are often likely to try to use their country's existing soft power in order to facilitate their transactions and relationships with other countries. Governments trade on their countries' reputations and images in order to implement agreements with other countries, and to help them persuade other countries to follow certain paths. A prominent example is that of the EU member states persuading Eastern European countries to implement the EU's recommended economic policies based upon its member states' identities as fiscally prudent and prosperous states (Michalski 2005). Another example would be the US government using its country's reputation as a rich democracy to pressurise other countries to also become democracies.

How and by whom is soft power utilised at the state level in Japan's case? Can a government body act as a useful conduit for soft power, even though it will clearly be associated with the state and its sometimes controversial foreign policies? A large number of governmental departments and agencies use Japan's soft power in their dealings with other countries. These include departments and agencies dealing with foreign affairs, education, tourism, and industry. All of these agents attempt to use Japan's soft power to facilitate dealings with other countries, such as in attracting foreign students or tourists, in promoting Japanese diplomacy, or in helping Japanese companies prosper abroad.

The Japan Foundation is a pertinent example of a state-level agent of Japan's soft power. The Foundation was a special agency (*tokushuhōjin*) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan until October 2003, thereafter being re-formed as a nominally more financially independent quasi-governmental agency (*dokuritsu gyōsei hōjin*) (Japan Foundation 2003a) (although it has yet to assert any

independence from MOFA in terms of its policies). It not only tries to utilise Japan's soft power, but also tries to act as a 'catalyst' (Ishii 2002: 3) to develop Japan's image and relations with other countries through exchanges of people, and their ideas and information.

In this chapter, the Japan Foundation's activities in China will be focused upon as an example of the Japanese government's use of soft power. In the face of often frosty relations between Japan's and China's leaders, particularly under the leadership of Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō, the Foundation has continued to enjoy political support in its endeavours to carry out long-term programmes of exchange with China and to promote Japan's image, while at the same time seeking to act in a non-coercive manner.

In order to understand how the organisation tries to maintain this difficult balance, this chapter will firstly analyse the purpose and role of the Japan Foundation, including the conditions under which it was established, and the changes it has experienced since that time. Secondly, it will investigate the content and purposes of the Foundation's activities in China. Finally, the chapter will reflect upon whether and how the Foundation, through its activities, acts as an agent of Japan's soft power.

The establishment of the Japan Foundation

The Japan Foundation's roots are in the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai (KBS), a Japanese government agency which was set up in 1934 to help promote Japanese culture and spread Japanese influence through East Asia. The KBS was an active part of Japan's military government's strategy of promoting the 'Greater East Asia Prosperity Sphere' (Takahashi 1998), including the production of language materials for the areas under Japanese occupation at the time. After the Second World War, its activities were drastically curtailed due to Japan's ruined financial position.

The KBS was relaunched after the war as a private foundation sponsored by the government, and it continued to promote Japanese culture to some extent, but it was clear that its budget was not sufficient; in 1953 it received 2.6 million yen in government money (Japan Foundation 1990). Considering the fact that the value of the yen had dropped precipitously from pre-war levels, this budget was about one-thirtieth of that of the pre-war body.

In the years prior to the Japan Foundation's set-up in 1972, there had been many discussions regarding the need for an agency which promoted Japan's culture and exchanges with other countries more vigorously, with an appropriate budget. By the 1960s, and particularly after the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, although Japan was seen as having become an economic power, it was still not recognised as having any great influence around the world in terms of its diplomacy or culture. Voices inside and outside Japan were calling upon the Japanese government to exert a greater effort to promote and channel Japan's ideas and culture abroad, to complement its purely economic output. In 1958 (and again in 1963), the KBS added its own proposal to set up an international cultural exchange foundation,

with a substantial budget provided by the government, with a view to 'expanding foreign cultural exchange activities' (Japan Foundation 1990: 15).

In 1971, the Foreign Minister, Fukuda Takeo, toured seven European countries, only to continually hear comments from other foreign ministers and leaders such as, 'Japan has become such an economically powerful country – what is it going to do with that power? Surely it will use its economic power to become a military power' (Okamoto 2000: 12). In the same year, two actions by the US government combined to focus Japanese leaders on the need to increase international cultural exchange activities. The first was Henry Kissinger's visit to Beijing to start talks to normalise USA–China relations, and the second was the US decision to unlink the value of the dollar from the price of gold. The Japanese government did not have prior warning of either of these events, both of which would clearly have important consequences for Japan. It realised that the two 'Nixon shocks' showed there was a serious communications problem between the Japan and the USA, despite having believed that the USA was Japan's close ally. There was a real 'feeling of crisis that Japan would become isolated in international society' (Okamoto 2000: 12), due to the country having few close allies at that time.

In September 1971, the Satō cabinet's Foreign Minister, Fukuda Takeo, went to Washington to make a speech about Japan–USA relations. During a meeting of the Japan–USA Trade and Economy Association, he said:

> [t]here is a strong need for broad human and cultural exchange between Japan and the USA; a strengthening of exchanges between scholars, students, and cultural people, and an expansion of Japanese studies in the USA, and American studies in Japan.
>
> (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1971)

On returning to Japan, Fukuda instructed the Foreign Ministry to put in place steps to set up the Japan Foundation. In January 1972, at a meeting between the US President Richard Nixon and the Japanese Prime Minister Satō Eisaku aimed at finalising the US return of Okinawa to Japan, he announced the creation of the Foundation. He added that the creation of the Japan Foundation was welcomed by the US President (Japan Foundation 1990); this gave an extra legitimacy to Japan's moves to deepen links between itself and the USA.

The original stimulus for the creation of the Foundation from the government's point of view, therefore, seems to have been the need to deepen Japan–USA relations, to avoid 'communications gaps' and cultural misunderstandings in the future (Zemans 1999, cf. Katzenstein 2002). The more precise details of the Foundation's goals were to be formulated later, as the practicalities of setting up such an organisation were considered.

In MOFA, there was resistance to the idea of the Japan Foundation at first, as it was thought the Foundation would become a competitor in the creation of foreign policy (Umesao *et al.* 2002). However, this fear was allayed after it was argued that cultural exchange could be an extra tool of foreign policy, by increasing understanding between cultures and thereby helping to avoid tensions.

In the National Diet, the opposition parties agreed to support the setting up of the Foundation, with some reservations about where and how the Foundation's resources would be used; the only party which did not agree to the Foundation's establishment was the Japan Communist Party, which argued that it would just be a mouthpiece of MOFA, and that substantial actions were required to improve Japan's image, rather than just public relations exercises (Matsumoto 1972, National Diet of Japan 1972a, 1972b).

The Foundation's initial endowment was 10 billion yen, established by the government over two fiscal years, a figure which grew through government top-ups and capital growth to 106.2 billion yen in 2003 (Japan Foundation 2003a). The Foundation's budget for programmes grew from 183 million yen in 1972 to a record of 19.8 billion yen in 1992, thereafter falling to 11.8 billion yen in 2003 (see Figure 5.1). This drop in income was a result of falling returns on the endowment's investments, as well as government budget restraints due to the increasing level of public debt. As of 2008, it had risen somewhat again to 13.3 billion yen (Japan Foundation 2009), along with the slight recovery in Japan's economy, and some additional allocations from the government.

The KBS, in contrast, received 236 million yen in 1970, and in 1971 it received 265 million yen; a level of funding which clearly had not been sufficient to sustain enough cultural activity. The Japan Foundation's budget quickly grew beyond this level. As the KBS was to be dissolved at the same time as the Foundation was established, it was decided that the Foundation would take control of the KBS branch offices in Rome, Cologne, New York and London. Regarding the KBS staff, MOFA was at first reluctant to consider moving them all to the new Foundation, as it wanted the Foundation to represent a fresh start, but strong representations by the KBS union ensured that all staff were moved to the Japan Foundation, barring
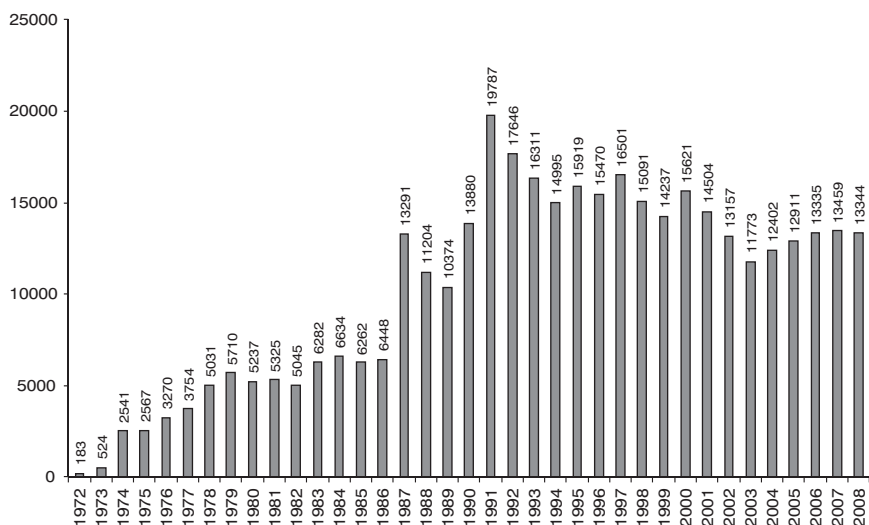
Figure 5.1 Japan Foundation actual programmes expenditure, 1972–2008 (million yen).
Data source: Japan Foundation 2003–2009
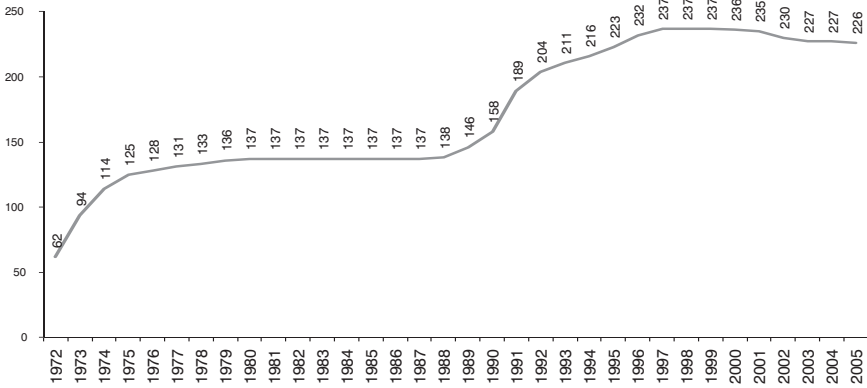
Figure 5.2 Number of staff at the Japan Foundation.
Data source: Japan Foundation 1972–2003a, 2004, 2005b, 2006.

a few older staff who took early retirement (Japan Foundation 1990: 18 n3). Thus, there was inevitably some continuation between the two organisations, although in the government there seems to have been a genuine intention to establish the Japan Foundation as a completely new agency.

In the years after its creation, the Japan Foundation was built up by its staff, and with the political and financial support of successive governments, as a credible organisation with substantial human and financial resources. Its activities have grown to cover a wide range of areas, such as human exchanges, Japanese studies, arts exchanges and media production, as will be detailed later. In addition, far from becoming a competitor to MOFA, the Foundation has reliably acted in accordance with MOFA's policies and goals, although some (such as Fujii Hiroaki, the former head of the Foundation's Board of Governors) suggest it should follow MOFA policies even more closely (National Diet of Japan 2002).

Nevertheless, in comparison with similar state organs of other countries, its budget and staff numbers are low. Although these numbers grew strongly after its establishment (Figure 5.1, Figure 5.2), by 1987, the budget was still just two-fifths of that of the Goethe Institute, and about one-eighth of the British Council budget. It had just 166 staff members compared with the Institute's 2764 staff, and the Council's 4402. In terms of its international presence, it had just 11 offices in foreign countries, compared with the Institute's 148 offices, and the Council's 136 offices (Japan Foundation 1988).

Its budget continued to increase along with the growth of Japan's economy and general internationalisation, hitting a peak in 1991, then stabilising until the mid-1990s when the Japanese government's finances started coming under strain from the prolonged recession. Due to public spending cuts and poor returns on investments, the Foundation's budgets started to decline in the late 1990s.

By 1997, the Foundation's programmes budget was 15.5 billion yen, substantially below the Goethe Institute's 25.6 billion yen, and far behind the British Council's 49.0 billion yen. The number of staff members had increased to

237 people, against the Institute's 2602 people, and the Council's 5188 people. The Foundation had 18 offices abroad, the Institute 140 offices, and the Council 221 offices (Japan Foundation 1997).

Since that time, the Foundation's budget first decreased to as low as 11.7 billion yen, due to the government's ongoing fiscal problems, then recovered to around the 13 billion yen mark in the years after 2003 (Japan Foundation 2009). Both the Goethe Institute and British Council (as well as the Alliance Française) derive significant proportions of their budgets from providing language instruction to individuals and organisations in addition to other commercial services. The Japan Foundation, on the other hand, does not carry out such activities on a commercial scale, which partly explains its lower budget and relatively small numbers of staff. Although it must be noted that the British Council (established in 1934), the Alliance Française (established in 1883) and other cultural exchange organs of former Western imperial powers have had a much longer time to establish offices, links and subsidiaries around the world, it can be seen that the relatively small scale of the Japan Foundation's activities reflects upon Japan's comparatively narrow range of interests in other countries, and the relative determination of the British Council and Alliance Française to promote their countries' languages as world languages (Phillipson 1992, Taylor 1997).

In the early 2000s the Foundation went through some administrative changes in common with some other government agencies (Dokuritsu Gyōsei Hōjin Seido Kenkyūkai 2001), which culminated in its formal status changing in 2003 from a special agency (*tokushuhōjin*) to an 'independent administrative corporation' *(dokuritsu gyōsei hōjin)*. Although these reforms are in some ways intended to enhance the independence of the organisation, the major reasons the reforms were carried out were to increase administrative efficiency, to align the Foundation's activities more with MOFA policies, and to enable the Foundation to attract more funds from outside the government (National Diet of Japan 2002). The reforms were not carried out to distance the organisation from the government, and the Foundation still works closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to coordinate its programmes with government policy (Kawano, A., personal communication, 3 August 2005, Japan Foundation 2003b). Therefore the status of the Japan Foundation as a state-level government agency has not changed.

Considering that the Japanese economy is about twice the size of the UK's, and about 1.5 times the size of Germany's economy, it can be seen that Japan still spends relatively little on cultural diplomacy (although this is difficult to judge definitively as other cultural exchanges are funded by different agencies and departments of the state, such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology). Nevertheless, over the past few years, the central government has again been trying to expand cultural diplomacy (e.g. *Asahi Shimbun* 2005, Asō 2006), although the actual reality is still a continuing situation of rationalisation and re-entrenchment at the Foundation.

The purpose of the Japan Foundation

The purpose of the Japan Foundation is laid out in Article 1 of the Japan Foundation Law (Law No. 48, 1 June 1972) as follows:

> [t]he purpose of the Japan Foundation is to deepen various countries' understanding of our Nation, increase international mutual understanding, encourage international friendship and goodwill, and efficiently carry out international exchange activities, thereby contributing to the improvement of world culture and human welfare.
>
> (Japan Foundation 2000: 11)

The structure and purpose of the Foundation were decided after officials had studied similar organs of other countries, such as the Goethe Institute of Germany (Katzenstein 2002), the British Council (Phillipson 1992, Taylor 1999, Leonard *et al.* 2005, Vickers 2004 and Vaughan 2005), and the Alliance Française (Hirano 2002). The purposes of these institutions are generally to promote their countries' language and culture around the world, but the emphasis and structure of their work differ. For example, the Goethe Institute seems to concentrate on promoting German culture, regardless of the language it is promoted in, whereas the Alliance Française treats French language promotion as its primary task (Umesao *et al.* 2002). Additionally, the Alliance is structured as a network of highly independent branches around the world, whereas other state cultural institutions operate a more strongly linked operation, with the policies of the whole network set by the head office in the home country, influenced strongly or even controlled by their respective governments. All of these organisations have similar, somewhat nebulously stated aims. Kagawa Takaaki, an official at the Foreign Ministry who was called on to supplement Foreign Minister Fukuda Takeo's responses in Diet questions on the setting up of the Foundation at the time, stated that:

> … if we look at the Foreign Ministries of foreign countries, most of them carry out such cultural exchange activities. Britain, Germany, France and Sweden have set up similar agencies, whereas in the USA and Italy, the foreign ministries carry out such activities directly.
>
> (National Diet of Japan 1972a)

In other words, one reason for the setting up of the Foundation was in order to emulate other countries' methods. Arguably these institutes are all state agents of their respective countries' soft power; they help channel ideas and information into other countries. Nevertheless, their methods and areas of focus differ substantially.

According to Yamazaki Masakazu, an academic who was closely involved with the setting up of the Foundation, it was emphasised at the start that 'we should put human exchange at the centre' of the Japan Foundation. However, the people involved should be 'not politicians or foreign ministry officials, but people

who can move opinion in their countries at an intellectual level' (Umesao *et al.* 2002: 7).

This kind of comment suggests a slightly different purpose than that outlined in the original Japan Foundation Law, which has a somewhat more lofty aim of 'increasing mutual understanding … and contributing to the improvement of world culture'. The aim of a state-sponsored organ such as the Foundation is inevitably likely to be linked, at least to some extent, with the national interest and benefit. Yamazaki's comment shows that the Foundation aimed to change opinions about Japan in other countries through exchanges.

This point of view is also clearly visible in the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee's (*Shūgiin Gaimuiinkai*) debates regarding the Foundation's establishment in the Diet, where both the party in government (the LDP) and opposition parties (such as the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ, *Nihonshakaitō*) and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP, *Shamintō*)) viewed the new entity as such a tool; for example, Sone Eki, a committee member from the DSP stated that:

> … I believe it is necessary that [the Japan Foundation] shapes [its activities] according to the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs … I would like to emphasise this demand.
>
> (National Diet of Japan 1972a)

In its own comments on the setting up of the Japan Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted:

> [w]hen we think of the international environment facing our country, there has never been a more urgent need to increase mutual understanding … In order to do this, cultural exchange with other countries, most importantly human exchange, is the most effective way to deepen people's mutual understanding. Additionally, in order to ensure that there is no opposition to these exchanges in other countries, our country should produce a fundamental base for the development of a long-term view of foreign relations … As our country's cultural exchange organisations, and their scales of investment, are extremely weak and must be drastically strengthened, the Government will establish a special legal entity, the "Japan Foundation" with an endowment of ten billion yen.
>
> (MOFA 1972)

This statement shows how the Japanese government was trying to steer the Foundation along a middle path, between being merely a tool of government policy, and being a completely independent organisation with no connection to the national interest. Debates in the Japanese Diet in the months before the establishment of the Foundation, however, record that opposition members of the Diet were concerned about the lack of a clear direction and clashes between different factions of government on policies. Members of the SDPJ and the DSP

were concerned about the fact that the Foundation's activities were to be biased towards the USA and certain South-east Asian countries, while ignoring the communist-bloc countries (National Diet of Japan 1972a, 1972b).

Hirano (1990) notes that cultural exchange in the past has not necessarily been associated with peaceful or egalitarian intentions; governments used state organs to promote their culture as being superior to other countries' cultures, for the purpose of their own aggrandisement as in the case of the pre-war Japanese government. However, he proposes that the meaning of cultural exchange has changed since then; the concept is becoming less of a top-down state-driven enterprise, and more of a bottom-up people-driven process, and that the Foundation must acknowledge this in its activities. It is also clear from looking at similar cultural bodies in other countries such as the British Council, that their primary purpose is to spread ideas and values from the home country into other countries; Phillipson (1992) goes as far as labelling this a continuation of imperialism through more modern and subtle means. The Japan Foundation equally focuses on spreading Japanese ideas and values, although it does facilitate the importing of ideas from outside Japan to a small extent, for example through its support for foreign scholars' public lectures in Japan.

Even with cultural exchange that is ultimately being promoted by a state, the methods of exchange show which kind of process is happening; even a state organ can enable the bottom-up type of exchange. If the cultural exchange is pushed too much by the state in a top-down approach, there is more of a danger that the policy will be coercive, not co-optive, that is to say an example of hard power rather than soft power. However, as will be detailed later, the Japan Foundation has managed to some extent to mitigate the problems of being a state-controlled organisation, and to increase the involvement of private groups and organisations in its activities (Kawano, A., personal communication, 3 August 2005) in order to encourage exchanges in which it does not dominate; however this facet of its programmes is still minimal. As Sugiyama (1990) points out, in order for cultural exchange to be effective, it is best carried out with a view to the long-term benefits; if programmes are carried out independently of short-term government policies and with consistent aims they will have a better chance of showing results. Cultural programmes carried out on a short-term basis – including those which each new Japanese Prime Minister has a tendency to establish (Katzenstein 2002: 18) in order to leave a legacy – are unlikely to produce a sufficient exchange of ideas and information in the desired manner, as the routes over which these ideas travel take time to build and maintain. Additionally, a breakdown in hard-won personal links through lack of funds will also reduce the effectiveness of programmes.

In the three decades since the Japan Foundation was established, it has developed a core of activities in which it specialises, and expanded its programmes around the world, although as noted previously, the number of branch offices it possesses in different countries is relatively small, and concentrated in the regions in which Japanese governments have placed most diplomatic importance – North America, Europe and East Asia (see Figure 5.3).

In East Asian countries, the Foundation's resources are mostly spent on Japanese language teaching activities (see Figure 5.4), in particular training
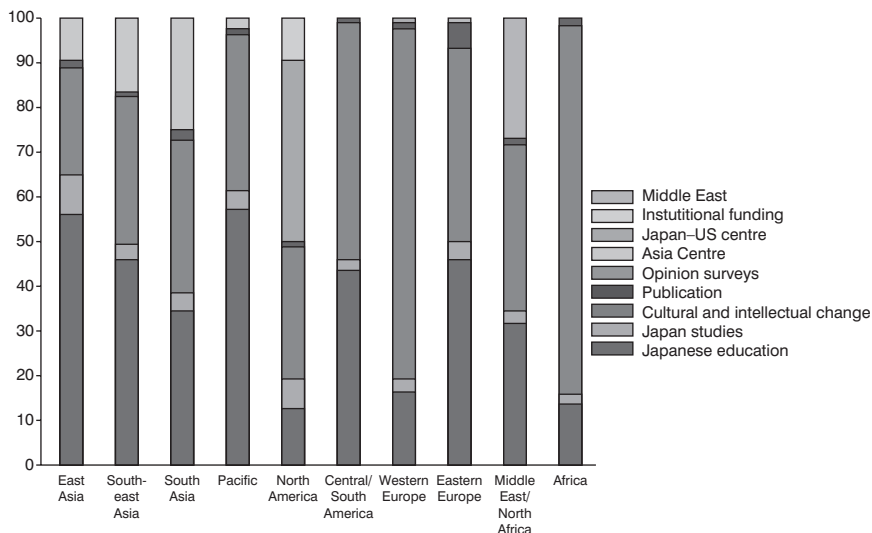
Figure 5.3 Japan Foundation expenditure by activity and region.
Data source: Japan Foundation 2003a.

teachers and producing teaching materials. In the USA and Europe, more of its resources are used in holding exhibitions, and organising other cultural exchange activities. Although the best way for a state cultural body to spread information and ideas about its home country is to promote its home language (Phillipson 1992), there is a lack of demand in Western countries for Japanese language teaching in comparison to East Asian countries, although the numbers of people learning Japanese has been increasing gradually in the last twenty years, in particular in Australia and New Zealand (Japan Foundation 2003a). In East Asia, the Foundation was responding opportunistically to high demand when it expanded its language teaching activities, which was created by the growth of interest in Japan's ideas and information, and due to the growing number of Japanese companies entering the region. In order to facilitate the teaching of Japanese, the Foundation concentrated on training local Japanese teachers to be able to train their colleagues, rather than sending many native Japanese teachers (Umesao *et al.* 2002). This was seen as an effective use of resources as it would not have been possible financially to send large numbers of native Japanese teachers to every country which asked for them. In terms of the processes described in Chapter 3, the people teaching Japanese are effectively agents for Japan's soft power who create links and connections between Japan and their Chinese students. Therefore, sending and relying solely on the Japanese teachers would only enable a limited number of links, and therefore a limited transfer of soft power. Training many hundreds or thousands of Chinese teachers of Japanese increases the number of links between Japan and China, which as previously noted is the key to increasing the transmission of soft power.
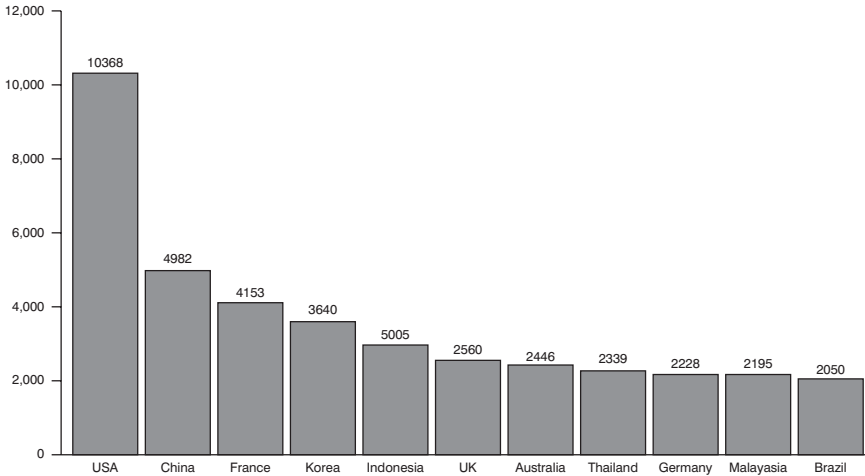
Figure 5.4 Japan Foundation expenditure (leading countries), 1999–2005 (million yen). Data source: Japan Foundation 2003a, 2004, 2005b.

Therefore, one of the purposes of the Japan Foundation until now has been, as it states, to further mutual understanding between other countries and Japan. But inevitably, as a state agency under the jurisdiction of MOFA, its main purpose has been to promote Japanese language and culture, ideas and information, and to enable smooth relations between countries for the furtherance of MOFA's foreign policies and Japan's general international relations. From MOFA's point of view, it is easier to deal with leaders who understand the cultural background of its diplomatic policies and positions, and it is also easier to conduct public diplomacy in other countries where many people have some understanding of Japanese culture (Melissen 2005b, Flack 1976). In recent years the Foundation has experimented with devoting more resources to multilateral understanding: the promotion of not only understanding of Japan, but also mutual understanding between other countries, especially in the East Asia region. As Yamazaki notes:

> … recently, at long last, at the Asia Centre [of the Japan Foundation] and elsewhere, trilateral exchanges have started … for example, with Japan's money, Thailand can communicate its culture to Myanmar and vice versa … [R]ather than just one to one relations with Japan, it is a significant development that [the Foundation] has become able to think about regions covering many countries as a subject [of its activities].
>
> (Umesao *et al.* 2002)

This more regional way of conducting cultural exchanges has been possible due to the Japan Foundation using a facet of Japan's soft power which has been built up in the post-war era: its reputation as a possible mediator or initiator of

meetings between groups of other countries (Dobson 2003). Nevertheless, since the Foundation's reorganisation in 2003, the Asia Centre, along with many other activities which were not deemed to be helping MOFA's foreign policies, was closed in order to reduce debts and rationalise the organisation (Japan Foundation 2004) – another indication of the limited extent to which a state agency can conduct a soft power programme.

The Japan Foundation and China

In 1972, after the first 'Nixon shock' to Japan of the USA establishing diplomatic contact with China, Japan itself quickly moved to establish its own relations, with the Prime Minister, Tanaka Kakuei, going to Beijing to establish diplomatic relations soon after the USA. This move was further encouraged by the second 'Nixon shock' – the drastic reduction in the value of the dollar against the yen (and other currencies) at the same time, without prior US consultation with Japan. Japan knew that it would have to reduce its dependence on the US market, and establish an economic relationship with China in order to help its own economy in the future.

In particular, the death of Chairman Mao Zedong in 1976, and the rise to power of Deng Xiaoping, helped Japan to negotiate the Japan–China Peace and Friendship Treaty, which was finalised in 1978 under the leadership of Fukuda Takeo, who had become Prime Minister and established his 'Fukuda Doctrine' (Japan Foundation 1990: 37, Hook *et al.* 2005) of nurturing closer ties with East Asian countries. As state agencies, the Japan Foundation and its predecessor the KBS had been unable to conduct exchanges with China while there was no diplomatic link, but the Japan Foundation was quick to establish links in China after the restoration of ties, and the first exchanges involved music and dance performance groups. Japan sent a *kabuki* dance group to Beijing, and China sent a Beijing Opera group to Japan (Japan Foundation 1990: 36), under the Chinese condition of 'reciprocity' (*huxiangzhuyi*) (Liu 2004: 397) whereby any cultural trip from Japan to China had to be reciprocated by a trip from China to Japan. This condition was most likely due to a certain wariness on the Chinese side regarding cultural infiltration by Japan; during the Japanese occupation of China, Japanese culture had been forcibly introduced into China. The reciprocity condition therefore guaranteed that the cultural exchange would not be a one-way process. However, this condition in some ways was an obstacle to Japan's soft power being channelled into China as the number of exchanges (and therefore links) was limited by the Chinese side's desire to promote cultural exchange rather than Japan's.

The Japan Foundation has, since then, tracked the development of China's society and economy with a view to conducting cultural exchanges, and finding opportunities to cultivate interest in Japanese culture in China. During the 1980s, there was a boom in Chinese interest in Japan due to it being seen as a model of development for China. Therefore, the number of people wishing to learn Japanese and read Japanese materials increased rapidly until the 1990s, when

Japan's economy was seen as stagnant and in trouble after the bursting of the economic bubble. This period was arguably the most fruitful in recent years for Japan in terms of the willingness of Chinese people to accept and digest its ideas, information and culture. The Chinese government was not hostile to Japanese interests, and in fact was eager to encourage the import of Japanese ideas and information (Taylor 1996, Yokoi 1996, Jackson 1996). Additionally, the Chinese respect for Japan's economic development and industry was at its peak. As has often been the case when good ties between the two countries are being encouraged by leaders, the historical cultural links between China and Japan were emphasised (although it may be more accurate to say that historically Japanese culture has been seen by the Chinese as a subset of Chinese culture; Wang 2005, Rose 1998), and so this commonality was a useful foundation upon which to base the communication of Japan's modern ideas and information. Nevertheless, the bursting of the bubble in the Japanese economy undoubtedly tempered respect for Japan's ideas in China, as well as in other countries.

However, by this time, China's own economy had started to modernise, and the country was becoming much more open to a wide range of outside interests. With the restructuring of the Japanese economy, including the outsourcing of production to China, this provided opportunities for the Japan Foundation and other agents to build links to China, and for Japan's ideas and information to again be promoted in China. In its 1997 Annual Report, the Japan Foundation noted that:

> [i]n recent years, as China's reforms and opening have advanced, remarkable economic development has been seen, and its interest in regional and international affairs has increased.
>
> (Japan Foundation 1997: 37)

By 1999, the Foundation was noting that:

> [a]mong city people who have gained economic latitude, the amount of resources used for education, entertainment and leisure has increased greatly as a share of the family budget, among which travel and school fees are notable as driving internal demand.
>
> (Japan Foundation 1999: 12)

This kind of development was and still is relevant to the Foundation, as the number of people who have the time and money to think about things other than daily chores and work has been increasing. It therefore follows that the number of people who may be interested in the courses it runs, its international cultural events, or taking up hobbies such as Japanese language learning, are increasing. This in turn opens up opportunities for the Foundation to find ways to channel Japan's soft power, i.e. its ideas and information, towards these newly affluent people. Clearly, the Foundation, as with other agents of Japan's soft power, is in competition with agents from other countries; nevertheless, due to Japan's cultural

and geographical proximity and its head start during the 1980s, the Foundation has had a number of successes despite Japan's so-called 'lost decade' of economic stagnation and restructuring.

A more apparent problem for the Foundation has been the recurring diplomatic spats between China and Japan regarding historical viewpoints; in particular the ever-present history textbook disagreements, visits to Yasukuni Shrine by prominent Japanese politicians and territorial disputes (Rose 2005, 1998, Ijiri 1996, Austin and Harris 2001, Howe 1996).

In its reports on the conditions of Japan–China relations, the Foundation has acknowledged the competitive international environment and difficult political context in which it is working. In 1999 it reflected that:

> … in the past few years, with revived confidence due to economic development and as a result of a tendency to look to Europe and American for ideas, intellectual interest in Japanese society and culture has declined …
>
> (Japan Foundation 1999: 13)

and in 2002 it reported:

> [i]n [China's] relations with Japan, there are several problematic examples of historical issues which have become obvious, leading to a temporary cessation of exchanges between a part of the two governments; it is difficult to say that stable exchanges are being maintained.
>
> (Japan Foundation 2002)

The fact that these problems have in some ways begun to affect the Foundation's own activities in Chinese universities in particular shows the difficulty it faces as a state agent of soft power; some universities are reluctant to advertise the fact that the Japan Foundation funds research widely. This is in contrast to funding made available by NGOs such as the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. There are also indications that research funding was withdrawn from Beijing University in recent years, possibly due to the Japanese government's poor image among students in China (Kobayashi, Y., personal communication, 13 March 2006).

Nevertheless, the Foundation is firm on the need to increase cultural exchange to alleviate the problems caused by 'a hardening [of attitudes] due to the influence of … the mass media …' (Japan Foundation 2001: 14). Comments such as these show that although the Foundation believes in the usefulness of cultural exchange and soft power, it realises that it has limited influence in such a large country as China, and very limited capacity to compete against the domestic mass media there, which is still mostly controlled by the state. Therefore it knows that the best way to maximise its resources and create the largest number of links between the two countries is to try to utilise and encourage trends seen as positive for Japan which have resulted from Japan's soft power, such as the increasing number of people learning the Japanese language, and young people's interest in popular Japanese culture, such as music, animation, computer games and fashion.

When trying to target a population of 1.3 billion people as exists in China regarding information about Japan and Japanese culture, it is extremely important to actively utilise mass media. In particular it is important to use the television media …

(Japan Foundation 2001: 14)

The use of television and film media to disseminate ideas, as well as public conferences and seminars, has also been due to a mixture of demand from groups in China and Foundation initiatives, in particular for educational and research purposes. Although the overall numbers using the media, or becoming involved in the exchanges, are small in relation to the populations of each country (Austin and Harris 2001), the people targeted are likely to be opinion formers and leaders, either currently or in the future. Additionally, the name of the Japan Foundation is attached to many events, and information about them can be spread much more widely than among just the participants themselves.

The Japan Foundation has also tried to maximise its resources by targeting 'intellectuals' and 'young leaders'. The 'activity plans' reports from the Foundation's Beijing Culture Centre in recent years have often mentioned the need to make connections (*paipuzukuri*) with China's intellectual community, and in particular young leaders, in order to increase the flow of Japanese ideas and information to China. One report notes that:

[a]s the public inclination to look to Europe and America strengthens, we need to target in particular members of the Beijing and Shanghai governments and related organs who have studied in Europe and America, and build networks to establish intellectual exchanges.

(Japan Foundation 1999: 13)

The report goes on to emphasise the need to reach people who are members of influential think tanks and other intellectual agencies with these networks.

One of the most potentially effective points about the Foundation's programmes in terms of utilising Japan's soft power is the fact that students who study on its programmes and courses are likely to be future business and political leaders (Betzler and Austin 1997). Even if the Foundation cannot reach the greater mass of the public in China, it will have helped mutual understanding and bilateral relations by having cultivated potentially influential Chinese with a good cultural understanding of Japan (whether the opposite will occur through the Foundation's current activities is, however, uncertain). Japan has generally had good relations with leaders in the region who have had contact with its society in their student days. Examples of leaders who have studied in Japan are Kim Dae Jung of South Korea, under whose leadership the South Korean economy was finally opened to Japanese cultural exports; Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and Lee Teng-Hui of Taiwan also had extensive contacts with Japan. Even in China, the late Zhou Enlai had studied in Japan, which was undoubtedly an influence on his relatively positive efforts to promote mutual understanding between the two countries.

As the Japanese economy has picked up strength again in recent years, and successive administrations pursue more assertive foreign policies, the Foundation's funding prospects may improve, although this must be set against the rationalisation occurring across the public sector due to heavy public debts. In any case, officials at the Foundation are considering seriously their future strategies to improve their ability to channel ideas and information from Japan to China. This includes such methods as using the media, in particular the internet,[1] to a greater degree to reach younger Chinese, and trying to contact Chinese students who have studied in Japan to form alumni networks in China (Togashi, F., personal communication, 3 August 2005). If these methods are successful in channelling Japan's soft power into new areas of Chinese society, the Foundation will have carried out its role as an agent of Japan's soft power; however, it is questionable whether they will be successful if the Foundation is simply seen as acting as a propaganda agent of the Japanese state.

Over the last thirty years or so in China, the Japan Foundation has concentrated in particular on the encouragement of existing demand for Japanese language study and research on Japan. Related to this has been the exchange of people, in particular students and scholars, and support for the publishing of textbooks. In addition to these main activities, the Foundation has also provided support for exhibitions, artistic performances and media activities and arranged conferences in China and Japan. These activities correspond closely to the major ways of instrumentalising soft power postulated in Chapter 3 – the use of communication links, and people to move ideas and information. The following sections will consider these activities and their significance in more detail.

Japanese language and Japan studies in higher education institutions

The Japanese and Chinese governments agreed in March 1979 to establish preparatory schools (*yobigakkō*) based in Chinese universities, for Chinese students who wished to study in Japanese universities. The first was established in Jilin Normal University, Changchun city in the northeast of China. The Japan Foundation, with support from the University of Tokyo (Okamoto and Zhang 2000) supervised the Japanese language education programme (also providing some native Japanese teachers), while the Japanese Ministry of Education provided courses in other subjects, and ensured that the programmes would meet requirements for students to enter Japanese universities. Most students initially were top students in scientific and engineering subjects (Japan Foundation 1990: 60), and a second school was started in the Shanghai Graduate School of Foreign Languages in 1980 with similar goals.

For the first five years, the courses targeted students wishing to take undergraduate courses in Japan. After this period, gradually the focus shifted towards those wishing to take masters and eventually also doctorate courses. The scale of the programme was not large, with around 80 students annually (40 of whom planned to finish their doctorates in Japan, 40 of whom were 'Japan–China co-operative trainee doctoral students'). Thirty-five ethnic minority students from

Xinjiang Province (Uighur region) were also accepted, in order to help promote development in that region. From 1996, post-doctoral students were also accepted.

These programmes were clearly established by the Japan Foundation to promote the long-term goal of establishing an elite group of young leaders, professionals and academics with specialist knowledge of Japan, its culture and Japanese language ('*chinichiha*') (Umesao 2002: 6), in the hope that as they moved into more influential positions in Chinese society, they would contribute to Japan–China relations. In this manner, the Foundation was using Japan's attractive soft power to recruit Chinese students, and then acting as a conduit or agent to transfer Japanese cultural ideas and language to Chinese society through the students.

At the same time, information about Japanese society and language was percolating through Chinese cities. In Beijing, Shanghai and other large cities, state broadcasters started showing Japanese language courses on television, and playing them on radio stations. In 1979, about 2.4 million textbooks were quickly sold out, with NHK Radio Japan being asked for additional texts to help meet demand.

The Chinese government had requested that the Japanese government provide native-speaking teachers to 37 universities around the country. While the Japanese government did not take this golden opportunity to spread Japanese ideas in China, the Japan Foundation established a centre in the Beijing Graduate Institute of Languages in 1980, with the goal of improving Japanese teaching in China, by training 120 Chinese teachers a year in the language. Eventually, in a similar manner to the academic courses mentioned above, the education courses were extended to cover masters level courses, and since 2002, doctoral courses. These were the first such post-graduate courses to be conducted in Japan studies in China (Xu 2002), and students were able to stay in Japan for six months under the scheme.

In addition, a 'resources centre' containing books, other information and data on Japan was set up in the same place, which was open to all scholars in China (Japan Foundation 1990: 62). This centre contained over 70,000 books by 2002, making it the largest collection of Japanese texts in China at the time.

Courses held at the Beijing Centre have been aimed not only at teachers, but also at central and local government officials and private enterprise managers. Research trips to Japan, and classes on Japan's politics, economics and society are held in Beijing University's Social Sciences department to give these students general knowledge of Japan. Most of the lecturers are educational specialists and teachers from Japan – around 600 professors were sent from Japan between 1985 and 2002 (Xu 2002). In this way, the Foundation targets a broad range of influential people in Chinese society, who will be able in the future to further transmit to others the information they learn about Japan. They will also be able to use the ideas and information in their work to affect the norms and values of people around them.

Based at the Beijing Centre, the Foundation also promotes the publishing of original research, and the translation of Japanese research into Chinese. Much of this research and translation is in the social sciences, such as economics,

management and social trends, which are of current relevance to Chinese society. Notable books which have been translated into Chinese include 'Environmental Economics', 'The Japanese Agricultural System', 'Internal Organisation Economic Theory', 'Revolution and Development in Japanese Enterprise Management', 'The Formation and Death of the Modern Family', 'Cultural Nationalism – Methods in Contemporary Japan's Identity' and 'Secrets and Shame – The Organisation of Japanese Society Communication' (Japan Foundation 2005); original research has included 'Historical industrial change in agricultural villages in Japan', 'Support for old parents in agricultural villages', and 'Japan's old peoples' welfare problems' (Beijing Ribenxue Yanjiu Zhongxin 2007).

These activities in one of China's elite universities demonstrate further how the Japan Foundation hoped to use Japan's soft power to cultivate Chinese people with a good knowledge of Japan, in the hope that they would create bridges between the two countries in the future. The Chinese students who have learned about Japan and the Japanese language to some degree also have some advantages in finding work when they return to the highly competitive graduate market at home (Wang 2005). Japanese culture and language courses initiated by the Japan Foundation have had some success in channelling Japan's soft power; however the results will not become clear until these students become more influential in Chinese society, perhaps in the next twenty to thirty years. The support of research and translation of books about Japanese society and culture is consistent with the Foundation's aim of encouraging the continuing careers of students who it has funded, and to encourage the development of experts with specialist knowledge of Japan. The specialists pass on information and ideas to other students and into society, thus facilitating the flow of Japan's soft power.

Promotion of Japanese language in schools and society

In addition to trying to encourage the formation of Chinese experts on Japan and its society, the Japan Foundation has also made significant efforts to try to increase the number of Chinese people generally who have some knowledge of Japanese language and therefore ideas. Part of its efforts focus on training Chinese school teachers from a wide range of primary and secondary schools in Japanese language. A programme of two-week summer holiday courses was started in 1996, in collaboration with the International Cultural Forum and local governments in the northeast of China, to help further this goal. The courses provide not only language training but also knowledge about the latest teaching methods, theories and other developments and current events in Japan (Japan Foundation 2003b). Young Japanese teachers are sent by the Foundation to take part in workshops and seminars, as well as being sent to regional seminars and longer courses held throughout China. Some Chinese teachers are also given the opportunity to travel to Japan to train.

The Foundation also produces or helps to produce textbooks for young Chinese people and the general public. Its efforts were of particular value in the early stages of the rapprochement between Japan and China. New textbooks were supplied in

1978, with the co-operation of the Tokyo University of Foreign Languages, and the national public broadcaster NHK. These books became bestsellers in China, and were seen as groundbreaking due to their use of slides and tapes distributed with the books. The texts were widely copied and distributed illegally – a sign of their popularity (Japan Foundation 1990: 66). During the 1980s in particular there was a boom in interest in Japanese language and society as it was seen as being economically and socially successful; the Foundation was among the first organisations to take advantage of this trend, although it could not respond adequately to the demand for textbooks and teachers due to budget constraints.

The Japanese Language Test of Proficiency (JLTP) is another tool that the Foundation has used to help promote the Japanese language in China. The JLTP is an internationally recognised standard test of Japanese language, primarily meant to measure academic Japanese ability. The Foundation first introduced the test in China in 1986, and during the 1990s numbers of people taking the test increased dramatically from 4297 in 1993 to 87,132 people in 2003, in 22 cities (Okamoto and Zhang 2000, Japan Foundation Beijing Office 2004). By 2009, the number of people taking the test in China was about 330,000 over the year (Japan Foundation and Japan Educational Exchanges and Services 2009). In part, the increase in these numbers may be attributed to the general increase in literacy and numbers of students in China due to its modernisation efforts and economic growth, but efforts of the Foundation to expand the number of test centres and provide teacher training and texts have also contributed. The increase has also occurred despite a general waning of interest in Japan and Japanese language since it became clear that the Japanese economic model was in decline during the 1990s. Moreover, the proportion of students taking the test at the top levels 1 and 2 is relatively high, showing that many students are taking the test for the purposes of entering university courses, or finding jobs. At times the Foundation has struggled to cope with demand for the test – in 2004 students had to be turned away at test centres due to a lack of capacity (*Daily Yomiuri* 2004b).

Hence, it can be seen that the Foundation has been acting as an agent for Japan's soft power in this case. Here, the attractive soft power resource is the Japanese language, which if learned can provide access to a wealth of information in the sciences, humanities and popular culture (Jiang 2006), as well as being an attractive tool for economic reasons. The Foundation has acted as conduit for this soft power, which has been accepted by Chinese people who want to learn Japanese for their own purposes in a voluntary manner. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether this will continue to be the case. As the Chinese economy grows, more people have access to education, and so more people may wish to learn foreign languages to improve their employability among other reasons. However, if Japan's economy continues to lag behind other countries in terms of growth and opportunities, it is questionable as to whether more Chinese people will wish to study its language.

Television and film

Apart from concentrating on improving students' Japanese language skills in China, the Japan Foundation has also implemented another strategy as part of its work as a soft power agent of Japanese culture. This is to introduce and encourage the popularity of Japanese popular culture in China, both traditional and modern. These activities help to reach people who may not be interested in language learning, but who nevertheless are potentially interested in Japanese culture for other reasons.

The Japan Foundation has tried to use exhibitions and mass media to bring Japanese culture to as wide an audience in China as possible given the constraints of its resources. In 1983, the Foundation worked with other organisations such as the Japan–China Video Network Company (which had co-operated with the Chinese authorities to put a colour television and video tape recorder in 500 places in 52 cities in China, including a video cassette about Japanese technology in the package), the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) and other smaller film companies to make and distribute films about Japanese society and life (Japan Foundation 1990: 157). Films about topics including Japanese agricultural techniques, men's working habits, modern young people's trends, women's and elderly people's issues have been distributed on video tape, and broadcast on Chinese networks. Other films were given to China's broadcasters to show as part of Japanese language study programmes, also showing topics about social issues in Japan (Japan Foundation 1990).

China was at the time in desperate need of help with regard to improving its crop yields and farming know-how in order to feed its fast-growing population. The Japan Foundation therefore was trying to promote Japan's identity as a high technology country with many skills resources, while also humanising the image with the videos of Japanese society and everyday life, in addition to promoting Japanese language learning. The dramas were used as examples of modern Japanese culture, which were relevant to new issues being faced by the modernising Chinese society.

The Foundation has also used exhibitions and cultural seminars to air issues of common interest, such as the protection of local film industries against Hollywood imports (Japan Foundation 1999: 13) and films dealing with environmental problems which have been faced in Japan. In showing these films at festivals, the Foundation noted 'as the Chinese film industry rebuilds its system to deal with marketisation of the economy and WTO membership, Japan's independent films have shown new examples and choices …' (Japan Foundation 2001: 15). These comments add to the impression that the Foundation was trying to appeal to modern Chinese elites who attended the film showings by referring to common social and environmental problems which both China and Japan face, and thereby reinforcing the idea that the two countries had shared problems. The fact these films also subtly suggested that Japanese society was more advanced in dealing with these issues, and so could teach Chinese people about them demonstrates a

difficulty that a cultural agency such as the Japan Foundation faces in trying to promote Japanese soft power without appearing to be condescending.

Traditional arts and popular culture

The Japan Foundation also uses performances of traditional Japanese arts to promote Japan's image in China. Such events are aimed at a small but educated section of China's population who may in turn be influential in relating their experiences to others. One example of such a show was held in November 2002, as part of 30th anniversary celebrations of the restoration of Japan–China relations. The tours which were chosen by the Foundation to perform in five cities in China showed firstly a performance using traditional Japanese instruments such as the *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute), *koto* (thirteen-stringed instrument) and *biwa* (four-stringed lute), and secondly an introduction to modern experimental music, mixing traditional and modern instruments. According to the Foundation's report:

> the performance was an effective cultural exchange event, which was able to contribute practically to the understanding of Japanese music's multifaceted nature, and relationship with Asia.
>
> (Japan Foundation 2002: 14)

Included in the programme were a conference on Beijing Opera, and a lecture for university students. According to the Japan Foundation, the programmes were well attended in each city, with over 4000 people watching the performances. The majority of people had never experienced Japanese traditional music before, but they 'sat silently and on edge in their seats during the performance' (Japan Foundation 2002: 15), and then started clapping their hands to the background music at the end. The events were apparently reported in all major newspapers in each city, and television stations, eliciting a strong response. In a similar way, modern and traditional dance performances have been used to show the contrast between 'old' and 'new' Japanese culture. On the one hand, events like these are used to reinforce areas of the supposed common historical culture of the two countries, and on the other hand the Foundation seeks to show Japan as modern, by showcasing the experimental art which Japan produces. The 'common history' theme has been used by Japanese and Chinese governments for centuries (Austin and Harris 2001, Rose 1998) to promote friendly ties, and the Foundation's use of these themes represents a continuation of these efforts. The soft power which the Foundation is channelling here is the idea of a common culture which, mistakenly or not, is widely acknowledged among the people of both countries. The Foundation has also supported popular music groups' shows in China, for example 'Glay' in the 2002 celebrations and a variety of other younger 'J-pop' groups in more recent years (Japan Foundation 2009, Ribenwenhua Zhongxin 2010).

In 2002 the Foundation made a particular effort to mark the fact that Japan and China had had normalised relations for 30 years. It organised 14 events and

contributed financially to 36 others (Japan Foundation Beijing Office 2004) which helped to promote its themes of modernity, traditional culture, and cultural commonality in China. The Foundation understandably utilises every chance to celebrate an anniversary to raise its profile; in 1998 and in 2003 the twentieth and 25th anniversaries of the Japan–China Peace and Friendship Treaty were used in a similar way to attract attention. At a time when the governments of the two countries were barely meeting let alone negotiating due to national posturing and historical differences, the Foundation was able to use its resources to try to promote an alternative image of Japan in China, hence showing the value of soft power methods even when traditional diplomacy is failing.

Conferences and seminars

One final approach the Japan Foundation uses to supplement its soft power programme is to hold or sponsor a variety of conferences and seminars. The conferences enable the Foundation to bring together prominent academics, professionals and policy makers to discuss topics according to its own agendas and preferences, thereby also enabling it to promote the Japanese government's preferences and values among political and cultural elites of various countries. In recent years there has been a trend to reflect a more regional approach, as with the 2002 Japan–China–Korea Future Leaders Forum, a conference designed to bring young leaders and intellectuals from these three countries to discuss common issues. This was a two-week conference, designed to help potential future leaders in the region network and discuss topics such as the North Korea problem, the United States' role in northeast Asia, factors hindering regional co-operation, problems which cross borders such as environmental issues, cross-border terrorism, asylum seekers, and finally economic co-operation, in a 'relaxed manner' (MOFA 2003a). Another example of the Foundation using the conferences to promote its values was the Japan–China–Korea NPO (Non-profit Organisation) Seminar held in March 2003, in co-operation with Chinese and South Korean NPO organisations (Japan Foundation 2002). The development of NPOs and civil society in China is of great interest to academics and policy makers in Japan and elsewhere as they observe, and in some cases seek to affect, the course of changes in China's society and political system. Hence, with this forum, the Japan Foundation was able to set the agenda, and thereby act as an agent for Japanese values of regional co-operation and civil society formation in this respect.

Another reason the Foundation has been trying to work with local NGOs in China is that it is then more likely to be able to gain co-operation or funding from groups from other countries which are not keen to work on projects involving governments, in particular the Chinese government. Nevertheless, the Foundation has come up against initial problems in dealing with Chinese NGOs, in that they were unable to agree to co-operate beyond making presentations about their activities (Kawano, A., personal communication, 3 August 2005). This may show a certain understandable wariness on the part of Chinese NGOs to work with the Japanese government agency, and demonstrate the limits of such

an agency's ability to act as an agent of Japan's soft power. It is only relatively recently that these kinds of conferences have been possible, as the flow of information between Japan, China and South Korea has become freer and less controlled by governments. The numbers of participants in these conferences and seminars are undoubtedly small, but numerous such meetings are sponsored or administrated by the Japan Foundation every year. Not only does this positively affect participants' perceptions of Japan as making an effort to co-operate, but the fact that the meetings are being organised by the Foundation is advertised in universities, research institutes and other influential organisations around China. The ability of the Japan Foundation to organise these multinational meetings shows that it is able to effectively channel Japan's soft power to show Japan as a country which can facilitate regional co-operation.

These seminars and conferences also demonstrate the manner in which the Japan Foundation acts as an agent of soft power according to the model proposed in Chapter 3. The source of soft power in this case is the pool of ideas and information which is held in Japan by academics, experts, politicians, students and others who participate in the conferences and seminars organised by the Foundation. The Foundation either utilises its own staff, or it utilises the participants in the conferences (who are Japanese, Chinese, or of other nationalities), to travel between Japan and China and transmit ideas or to communicate their ideas by publishing them. In this way, ideas and information are transferred from Japan to China, and thence spread gradually through the country over a long period of time, gradually becoming a part of the receiving culture's stock of knowledge.

Problems for the Japan Foundation

Despite its general successes, there have been problems with the Foundation's realisation of its goals, many of which are directly related to its nature as a state organ. In an outside evaluation of the Japan Foundation's performance undertaken in 2003, a committee of academics and representatives from companies and the media, stated with regard to its purpose:

> [t]he Japan Foundation proposes that its purpose is to 'increase international mutual understanding', but for this understanding to begin, first it is necessary for other people to have an interest in Japan. It is said that Japan is attractive, but it is important to keep this [attractiveness] as a fundamental base.
>
> (Japan Foundation 2003c: 1)

In respect of its role and accountability, it was said:

> [i]t is important that a role should be positively searched for [by the Japan Foundation] between the government, the public and other various organs of cultural exchange; and we hope the government will also take note of this … [W]e believe it is necessary for [the Foundation], as quickly as possible,

to improve its dissemination of information and thereby widen public understanding about its activities.

(Japan Foundation 2003c: 1–2)

These comments reflect the fact that the committee thought the Japan Foundation needed to become less a tool of the government, or an extension of the government's foreign policy, and more of an independent agent. In stark contrast to this, the Japan Foundation's own internal report reflected upon the need to work closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA):

> … in accordance with the Japanese Government's chosen foreign policy, and regarding the creation of a system which puts into practice activities which improve the effectiveness of foreign policy, the Foundation is currently revising part of its program and progressing in the choosing of which activities to concentrate upon. The Foundation, from the point of view of consistently putting into practice activities which are most necessary for foreign policy, and in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has a duty to urgently debate how to increase the liveliness of its work.

(Japan Foundation 2003b :1)

This position is reinforced by officials at the Foundation (Kawano, A., personal communication, 3 August 2005; Togashi, F., personal communication 3 August 2005), although they acknowledge the need to maintain some distance from the government's foreign policy objectives of the day. Therefore, it is debatable as to whether the purpose of the Japan Foundation in the future is likely to be more as an agent of governmental policy, or more as an agent of the Japanese public in the form of interested groups and representatives. As Hirano has noted:

> [i]n the law setting up the Japan Foundation, 'international' is a word which is often used; this implies only relations between states, and cultural exchange between 'nations' and 'states' as a basic concept. The Foundation has, until now, been a special agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucracy … it has not responded to the changes in the undercurrents [of international exchange].

(Hirano 2002: 121)

Hirano goes on to argue that the Foundation needs to become more transparent about its purpose and activities, so that the Japanese public can see how their taxes are being used.

Shiraishi (2002) also argues that the weakening of dictatorships across East Asia has enabled sudden growth in the middle classes, which has in turn led to the growth of NGOs and other private groups. This is also happening now in China's cities, the previously cited Japan–China–Korea seminar on NPOs being proof of this, and is a factor which the Japan Foundation knows it must take into account in its work.

Becoming more transparent and open will also improve the Foundation's ability to act as an agent of the Japanese people's soft power. If it is identified only with the state, and the Japanese government, its ability to tap into the soft power of the wider Japanese culture may be limited. Recent indications that some of the Foundation's funding activities may have suffered as a result of poor Sino-Japanese governmental relations are indicative of the problems of being too closely associated with the government of the day.

The reforms which are being undertaken by the Foundation's managers and its staff to become more transparent, more accountable, and less dependent upon public taxes for funds, are important steps towards these goals. By strengthening its legitimacy as an agent of the Japanese public, it can strengthen its role as an agent of Japan's soft power, whether in China or elsewhere. However, if it becomes no more than a tool of the government or of MOFA, then its legitimacy and Japan's soft power will suffer.

The Japan Foundation: an agent of Japan's soft power?

The main purpose of the Japan Foundation's activities in China is stated in the organisation's literature as being to deepen and increase mutual understanding (*sōgorikai*) between Japanese and Chinese people. Whether this is through promoting Japanese language and culture, or by encouraging physical exchanges or meetings of people between the two countries, the idea is that Chinese people who have concrete links and affinities with Japanese people and culture, and vice versa, will be less inclined to be unthinkingly hostile towards each other.

While this is a laudable goal, the necessarily limited resources of the Foundation, in particular since the mid-to-late 1990s, also limit the extent to which it can achieve this purpose acting single-handedly. In order to truly encourage cultural exchange between Japan and China and enable Japan's soft power to flow between them, the Foundation has in recent years slowly realised that it must support civil society groups to establish links across borders; it also needs to consider relations between different groups of people, rather than just between nation states (Kawano, A., personal communication, 3 August 2005, Hirano 2002, Riordan 2005). The fact that it has taken so long to make these changes reflects the inherent difficulties of a monolithic state institution in responding to new trends.

By offering sponsorship and support to groups or individuals who request it, the Japan Foundation is adhering to the principles of soft power. The people who apply for grants or sponsorship are not being coerced to do so by the Foundation; they are being attracted by Japan's soft power, which is then utilised by the Foundation, to steer them towards a range of activities it will sponsor. Rather than prescribing a narrow range of activities which could show it as an organisation coercively trying to plant an image of Japan into Chinese people's minds, especially in recent years the Foundation has tried to sponsor a wide range of activities and research, which allows people receiving the support to feel in control.

The attraction of the Japanese language as a language rich with technical knowledge, and as an important gateway to Japan, its history and culture, is a major part of Japan's soft power (Japan Foundation 2008). However, whether it can become a soft power resource or not is dependent upon the methods used to promote it, and provide access to it. If the language is forced upon people (as occurred in the early twentieth century in Japan's occupied territories) it is likely to become a negative influence on relations. The Japan Foundation's methods have in general been the opposite of this; the Foundation was, on the whole, responding to local demand and requests for help in teaching and learning Japanese, when it set up institutions and networks to achieve this purpose. The terms often used in the Foundation's reports and literature to reflect these principles are *genchika* (adaptation to local needs) and *genchishidō* (following the lead of locals). Equally, the encouragement of research into Japan's society and economy in China has been pursued in a co-operative manner, with the areas of research not limited to positive aspects of Japan but also its problems, and information resources being provided as requested. In sum, the Foundation performs well as an agent of the soft power of the Japanese language.

While the Japan Foundation itself employs many optimistic or even idealistic people whose aim is to promote mutual understanding between cultures, there are also many more conservative people (in particular politicians) who see it purely as a convenient tool for promoting Japan's image in the world, as is also the case in China. This point of view is clearly visible in the debates regarding the Foundation's establishment in the Diet, where both the party in government (the LDP) and most of the opposition parties (such as the Japan Socialist Party and the Democratic Socialist Party) viewed the new entity as such a tool, although they differed on where the tool should be used; the ruling LDP wished to use it to improve ties with the USA, while the Socialist and Democratic Socialist parties wanted to improve links with communist countries (National Diet of Japan 1972a, 1972b).

The Foundation's cultivation of influential young elites in China is a good use of its limited resources; such activities would be difficult for a smaller, less well-connected organisation to achieve, and such methods have proven to be useful for other countries (e.g. Flack 1976). Organising conferences, seminars and other meetings between Japanese and Chinese leaders and intellectuals is also a good way of utilising and enhancing Japan's reputation as a country which is interested in co-operation and mutual understanding. Although the overall numbers involved in these exchanges are small in relation to the populations of each country (Austin and Harris 2001), the people targeted are likely to be opinion formers and leaders, either currently or in the future. Additionally, the name of the Japan Foundation is attached to each meeting, and information about the meetings can be spread much more widely than among just the participants themselves.

The use of television and film media has been a mixture of demand from groups in China, in particular for educational purposes, and co-operative or mutual exchange on both sides in the case of film festivals and exhibitions. Dance and other artistic performances have also taken place as a result of co-

operation between the Foundation and private groups in both Japan and China. Despite the somewhat more cynical goals professed by politicians regarding the purpose of the Foundation, on the whole its staff's sensitive approach to cultural exchanges is likely to be an addition to Japan's soft power in the areas of China's society which the exchanges touch, although it may be difficult for a foreign (especially Japanese) state agent to have much impact in the Chinese mass media, especially at times when official bilateral relations are poor and the mass media of both countries focuses on issues of friction.

The manner in which the Foundation has conducted the above activities seems to agree with the hypothesised process of soft power use described in Chapter 3. That is to say, the Japan Foundation first identifies a soft power resource which can be transmitted to China; as outlined in this chapter, and as suggested in Chapter 3, these soft power resources consist of ideas and information related to culture (especially language), lifestyle, technical ideas, and the attractiveness of Japan's economic success. The Foundation then utilises people and many forms of media to create information links between Japan and China, and to transmit these ideas from Japan to China in a multitude of ways. The ideas then percolate into Chinese society over a long period of time, and seem to have helped relations between the two countries; the number of non-governmental people-to-people exchanges has been increasing greatly over the last three decades. While it is difficult to prove how much these increases have been helped by the Foundation's efforts, it is clear that the Foundation has had a significant role.

However, while it can be said that the Japan Foundation has tried hard to be an agent of Japan's soft power in China, ultimately it has had varying degrees of success. Its problems in being an effective agent of Japan's soft power in a country as large as China are sometimes compounded by a lack of clear purpose or focus (a problem also faced by other state cultural agencies), the lack of meaningful forms of evaluation of its activities which can measure their impact, and its nature as an agent of the Japanese state.

6   Kobe City's activities in China

Sub-state level agents

State-level organs are inevitably closely affected by the central government's official foreign policies. Hence, policies which reflect a growing unease about China's economic development and its growing military 'hard' power are likely to impinge upon state-level organs which deal in cultural exchanges or other exchanges with China. The rapidly dwindling provision of ODA (overseas development assistance) to Chinese projects is likely to affect negatively the activities of such state-level agents of Japan's soft power as JICA and the Japan Foundation.

However, sub-state level organs such as local governments and regional governments are less bound by national considerations in dealings with similar level organs in other countries. Once the general principle of sub-state exchanges between countries is accepted by the central government, it is generally the responsibility of those regional or local governments to develop the exchanges and relationships; hence the relationships are less likely to be affected by national policies than by the needs and hopes of the local government.

This observation is particularly relevant in the case of Japan and China. Since the signing of the Japan–China Friendship Treaty in 1978, the number of sister city and other sub-state level exchanges has expanded rapidly. The strength of these individual exchanges and relationships wax and wane, but are not greatly affected by the different cycles of international relations, which are dependent upon other factors, such as global interests and national identities. The identity of a city or other sub-state organ is distinct from the identity of the country as a whole (see, e.g. Alger 1990, 1999). In any country, cities and provinces have distinctive characters; distinctive dialects, economies, fashions, cultures, geography and histories. These characteristics enable us to identify these sub-state organs as having separate identities, even if put together they are represented by a state identity. Thus in Japan, the identity of Tokyo is easily distinguished from Osaka, and in China, Shanghai and Beijing have very different identities based on their roles and histories.

Therefore, in forming and maintaining their role as international actors through sister city programmes and other exchanges, sub-state organs such as local governments are likely to act as agents for their own, as well as their countries', soft power in these relationships. In addition, a sub-state local government is

highly unlikely to try to, or be able to use power in a coercive manner, as this would soon cause any mutual exchange relationship to be weakened or destroyed (as in the case of the Shimane–Gyeongsongbuk-do relationship[1] in 2005; *Japan Times* 2005). The main role of sub-state local governments as agents of soft power then, is to open channels of communication to allow the free movement of ideas and information, whether through the movement of data, people or goods.

In this chapter, the role of sub-state level local governments as agents of soft power will be investigated. In particular, the development of Kobe City's sister city relationship with Tianjin City, China, will be analysed as a representative case of this process. Firstly, the concept of 'sister cities' will be considered, including the history of the concept, its definitions and theories on the development of sister city relationships. Subsequently, the development of Japanese cities' international activities and relationships with other countries' cities will be explored. The chapter will then move on to consider the Kobe–Tianjin relationship in detail, including its development, content and future direction. Finally, using the example of Kobe–Tianjin, the role of sub-state local governments as agents of soft power in Japan will be discussed.

The concept of 'sister cities'

History of sister cities

Zelinsky (1991) argues that sister city-like relationships have occurred since well before this century, either officially or unofficially across borders, or in instances where immigrants have kept in contact with cities where they formerly lived, in particular between immigrant communities in the USA and other countries, and throughout history between geographically or economically linked communities.

However, the first formal 'sister city' relationships originated in the USA and Europe, an example being that between New Bern (South Carolina, USA) and Bern (Switzerland) (Menju 2003b: 49). In the aftermath of the Second World War, British cities formed relationships with other cities in Europe (Zelinsky 1991) which had been devastated, in order to pool ideas for reconstruction. Coventry formed a relationship with Stalingrad in Russia, Reading with Zaandem and Oxford with Leiden in the Netherlands. Bristol even linked up with Britain's former enemies in Germany, to form a link with Hanover in August 1947, sending it aid in the form of food and clothes (Cremer 2001).

The greatest push for the idea of the sister city came from the United States, in the post-war period. President Dwight Eisenhower promoted his vision of a 'people-to-people programme' at a conference in the White House, in 1956. He remarked that:

> … the problem is for people to get together and to leap governments – if necessary to evade governments – to work out not one method but thousands of methods by which people can gradually learn a little bit more of each other.
>
> (Eisenhower 1956)

At the time, there had been a temporary thaw in relations between the USA and the Soviet Union (Menju 2003b), and Eisenhower intended to take advantage of this by promoting sister city exchanges. The organisation which was established to organise this programme later grew into Sister Cities International, which became a separate, non-profit organisation in 1967.

Definition of 'sister city'

The term 'sister city' itself has been debated as an appropriate term for the kind of relationship it represents. Zelinsky (1991) tries to distinguish between the phrases 'twin city' and 'sister city', arguing that the former refers to cities which are geographically close, such as those along the Mexico–USA border and the Canada–USA border, although this fails to take into account the British English use of the word 'twin city' to denote precisely the same meaning as 'sister city'.

In Japan's case, the term *shimai toshi* is a direct translation of 'sister city'. However, in both Japan and in China, (the equivalent term in Chinese being *jiemei chengshi*), the characters representing the term imply a relationship between an older sister and a younger sister. Due to objections on the Chinese side to the implications of this, the less controversial (especially in its relations with Japanese cities) *youhao chengshi* or 'friendship city' is used (Jain 2004, Tianjin City 2010). However, as the purpose of this chapter is to analyse the role of sub-state local governments as agents of soft power, the term 'sister city' will be used to denote a relationship between two cities (or in many cases administrative divisions which include cities) which has been formalised by the local governments which administer them.

Characteristics of a sister city relationship

Sister city relationships are said to promote 'international friendship' (Menju 2003b: 48) and 'long-term partnership' (Sister Cities International 2010), although it is clear that other political aims are often involved. Some American cities have used sister city relationships to express disapproval of the central government's foreign policies, for example by twinning with cities in Nicaragua in the early 1990s (Zelinsky 1991), or to train officials in democratic methods after the Cold War ended in eastern Europe (Cremer 2001).

In Japan, Sakaiminato City (Tottori Prefecture) formed a sister city relationship with Wonsan City (Kangwon Province), North Korea in 1992 despite the lack of official state-to-state relations with that country (Li 2002, *Chūgoku Shimbun* 2000), and other Japanese cities formed links with partners in the Soviet Union (Jain 2005). Examples such as these show that sister city relationships can and do have a wider political meaning and effect on international relations.

In many cases cultural and trade links already exist between cities historically, and the sister city relationship is used to try and deepen the links. In the case of a link between a city from a developed country and a city from a developing country (usually the case between Japan and China), there may be a one-way flow of aid,

technical assistance and other advice (Zelinsky 1991) between the cities. Often, a large proportion of the people assisting the relationship are volunteers: citizens who are prepared to use their free time to encourage and organise exchanges.

In general, sister city relationships tend to have common characteristics in their arrangements, although there are differing theories on how they develop. According to Menju (2003b), sister cities are said to often go through several phases of activity within their relationships. Firstly local people and officials launch the relationship with formal ceremonies and high expectations, although concrete exchanges are limited to officials and closely connected civil society groups. Secondly, in the 'growth phase', more concrete exchanges are established, and general interest among citizens deepens. Thirdly is the 'stagnation phase' where interest dies down, and exchanges become routine and lack innovation. There may be disagreements between officials in the linked cities, and civil society groups worry about lack of public participation in exchanges. Many sister cities then go into a final stage of 'decline' where the relationship is only acknowledged with occasional anniversary events.

Menju goes on to note that this process is not always the case, and many cities are able to revitalise their relationships. The difficulties involve the small number of people willing to devote their time and energy into keeping the relationship going, and the difficulty in maintaining reliable relationships between officials in the sister cities. In the case of Japan, local government officials are often moved between posts without notice, making it difficult for them to build long-term relationships. As new staff have previously been in unrelated departments, 'rather than starting new activities, they tend to be fully occupied just by maintaining existing ones' (Menju 2003b: 55).

O'Toole (2001) argues that sister city relationships among Australian cities have gone through three stages since the 1960s and 70s. The first stage is the 'associative' stage, where the primary goals of the sister city relationship is to establish 'international friendship, cultural exchange, and a general international awareness' (O'Toole 2001: 405). The second stage is the less symbolic 'reciprocative' relationship, whereby cities establish educational exchanges to develop the cities and citizens' skills, and to enable structured youth exchanges. Finally there is the 'commercial' phase, in which cities try to take commercial advantage of their relationship, although this does not mean abandoning the former stages. O'Toole notes that cities in Australia are being gradually pushed to realise economic benefits from their relationships by outside groups and government policies.

Cremer (2001), however, cautions that the cultural and commercial aspects of a sister city relationship are inter-related, and too much emphasis on either side is 'not likely to result in successful sister city relationships'. Cremer argues for an 'integrated approach', combining cultural initiatives, trade, including activity among community members and local media, as well as leadership from the city government, as it is most likely to lead to a strong sister city relationship. The cultural aspects inspire interest in the relationship, while the economic aspects ensure that the relationship will grow strong in the long term.

In Japan, O'Toole comments, the economic aspects of sister city relationships have not yet been widely explored; as yet, sister cities are still responding to the pressures of internationalisation, although this is now changing (CLAIR 2010b). These pressures increased particularly during the economically and socially challenging period of the 1990s. During that time, Japan's economic bubble of the late 1980s had burst, and so the country was undergoing a long period of economic restructuring. As a part of this process, Japan's central and local governments were obliged to search for outside ideas, and foreign investment and expertise. This difference in external economic and social conditions between Japan and other countries mentioned in the literature may reflect the difference in models of sister city development espoused by Menju, and by O'Toole and Cremer. Menju's proposed model seems somewhat pessimistic, while O'Toole's and Cremer's models appear to have a more positive view of the chances of a successful sister city relationship.

However, it must also be noted that the characteristics of a sister city relationship are dependent upon many factors, including the location and size of the cities, their economies (and thus the potential for forming long-lasting deep commercial and cultural ties), and the personalities involved in building and nurturing the links. These factors in turn affect the breadth of the information links between the cities, and therefore the degree to which soft power can be effective.

Japan's local governments and their internationalisation

During the occupation by Allied (though mainly US) forces after the Second World War, the USA established libraries of American books throughout Japan. They also distributed 1300 film projectors to local governments and obliged them to screen films about US life and society. Finally, they sent soldiers to each prefectural office, starting 'foreign divisions' which arranged exchanges between the soldiers and the locals. These divisions were to evolve into the international departments in the local governments after the occupation (Menju 2002a). These actions represented a clear use by the USA of its overwhelming coercive power, in order to make Japanese people in the regions receive and accept the ideas and values present in US culture at that time. This would in turn create common values which would in the future ensure good relations between the two countries. In many cases, however, these activities were welcomed as an opportunity for outside contact by the local governments involved, especially considering Japanese people's need for US economic assistance and trade (Jain 2005: 70), and they were also to have long-term consequences in Japan's local governments' relations with cities in other countries by becoming model cases for other Japanese cities' international activities. The first sister city relationship in Japan started in 1955, when Saint Paul in the United States contacted the local government of Nagasaki in Japan. Nagasaki, a city which had been decimated by the atomic bomb dropped upon it by the USA in the Second World War, was apparently chosen in order to promote reconciliation and understanding between the two countries (Menju 2003b: 58 n4). However, this initial contact led to a string of

relationships between American and Japanese cities, and in the 1960s, between Japanese and European cities. By 1960 there were 30 relationships between US and Japanese cities, and 9 between European and Japanese cities; by 1970, the number had increased to 95 and 42 respectively (CLAIR 2000).

The first sister city relationships were said to have been initiated by a 'regional elite' (Watado 1993: 39) at the top of the local governments' hierarchy (and therefore in close co-operation with the central government) in order to improve links with the USA and Europe. Accordingly, the first such relationships were to a large extent ceremonial, with symbolic exchanges of top officials, eventually leading to cultural exchanges, but no further. At this time, most local governments in Japan had been concentrating their resources on providing basic services for people while the country recovered economically. In addition to this, local governments were tightly controlled by the central government (Jain 1996) and did not have the means to pursue independent policies.

Japan's economic growth, the drive to host the Olympics in 1964, growing citizens' interest in international affairs and external pressure led local governments to recognise the need to engage internationally (Watado 1993, Yoshida 1993). The central government was also responding to these pressures when it set up the Japan Foundation (see Chapter 5), but it did not have enough resources to help the local governments internationalise further (Jain 1996: 66). However, several local governments led the way in utilising their citizens' resources to internationalise, in particular during the 1970s, when Japan was encountering popular opposition to trade in Southeast Asia, and reeling from shocks to the global trading system (Hook *et al.* 2005). The most advanced governor was Minobe Ryōkichi, who visited the PRC and North Korea to help reconciliation. He also hosted a conference of regional governments and mayors in 1972 (the first international conference to be hosted by a local government; Yoshida 2001: 45), which was instrumental in promoting reforms addressing the problems of long-term Korean residents in Japan (Jain 1996: 63), and pushing for reductions in nuclear arms at the UN and other organisations.

Further international conferences were subsequently organised by local governments focusing on problems faced commonly by cities in different countries, such as environmental pollution, living conditions, and transport policies. Other regional leaders proposed the idea of *minshūgaikō* (people-to-people diplomacy) (Nagasu and Sakamoto 1983, Jain 1996), and the idea of each regional town promoting a famous product in order to raise their international profile, an idea which became popular in many other Asian countries.

By the mid- and late-1970s, the number of cities and regions carrying out international exchange activities, and the quality and breadth of their activities had increased greatly. Many local governments carried out exchanges which were not necessarily guided by the national foreign policy; for example Niigata City provided the lead in forming sister city relationships and starting cultural exchanges across the divides created by the Cold War, in North Korea, and the Russian Far East of the Soviet Union (Kushiya 1994). Ōyama district in Ōita Prefecture sent young researchers to Israel to study the *kibbutz* farms (Watado 1993); 16 cities

established relations with cities in the Soviet Union despite the Cold War and resistance from the central government (Jain 2005).

The normalisation of relations between Japan and China in 1972 led to the establishment of a few pioneering sister city relationships between Japanese and Chinese cities, in particular the first one between Kobe and Tianjin and others such as between Yokohama and Shanghai. The signing of the PFT in 1978 led to a further increase in sister city relationships even between smaller towns and regions in the two countries (Jain 2004).

In the 1980s, Japan's surging exports were causing friction between it and many other countries and the sudden rise of the yen had encouraged migrant workers to seek employment in Japan. Local governments and citizens had become aware of the need to engage people in other countries through these events, leading to increased interest in local level cultural exchanges (Watado 1993). These activities were fuelled by the belated endorsement of the central government; at first, the central government had been wary of allowing local governments to deepen their international links by opening offices abroad (Jain 2004: 23), but the general trend in the central government was towards recognising and encouraging these links (Ebashi 1993: 46).

Legally, local governments' responsibilities did not cover arranging international activities, although they were not specifically barred from doing so (Ebashi 1993: 47). Nevertheless, several other laws implied that they could partake in international activities, such as the law establishing JICA, which stipulated that JICA should liaison with local governments. This legal basis was used by some local governments, such as that of Nagasaki Prefecture, to send volunteers out to other countries for the purpose of international co-operation activities. Further laws were also passed in 1988 stipulating circumstances in which local government staff could be sent abroad (for example to deal with sister city relations and international co-operation activities).

However, the most important development to help local governments' international activities was the setting up, in 1986, of the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR). This was established as an agency nominally outside the control of the Ministry of Local Government, by a conference of local governments, with its main office in Tokyo, and branch offices in twelve large cities and all 46 prefectures in Japan (Jain 1996: 69). CLAIR also began setting up branches in cities around the world, such as New York, London, Paris, Seoul, Sydney and Beijing by 1997 (CLAIR 2003). Many of the staff in the overseas offices were 'old boys' of the Ministry of Local Government, and they were able to help guide local governments' sister city relationships and other international activities. CLAIR, in co-operation with the Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Education, was instrumental in setting up and carrying out the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme in 1987, which employed young foreign graduates to teach English in schools and help with local governments' international activities (McConnell 2000).

According to Jain (2004), this proactive behaviour on the part of local governments was due to their increasing feeling that the central government was

not considering seriously the threat of globalisation to local economies. Local governments had decided to organise themselves to be able to deal with their own specific needs. Their pursuit of international (especially economic) links independent from central government control could also be seen in the context of their long-term struggle for greater freedom from the central government.

Partly due to the belated encouragement by the central government, and partly due to the increasing drive to 'internationalise' many aspects of life in Japan, sister city relationships (and prefectural exchanges with other countries' regional governments) increased dramatically through the 1980s and 1990s (Yoshida 2001, Jain 2005). In 1987 only 26 prefectures plus Tokyo had an international department, but by 1993 all 46 prefectures plus Tokyo had one. These international departments employ people fluent in foreign languages, and often include at least one foreigner in their staff (for example, using people employed through the JET Programme).

In 1970 there were a total of 165 sister city type relationships between Japanese local governments and foreign countries' local governments. By 1980 there were 372, in 1990, 829 relationships, and by 2010, 1586 relationships (CLAIR 2010a). Hence, the number of relationships has continued to grow steadily, although the rate of growth fell sharply after the 1990s. The money available to local governments for their international activities, however, peaked in 1995 at 120 billion yen, thereafter falling to 103 billion yen in 1999 and stabilising (Jain 2005). This reflects the economic stagnation experienced in Japan during the 1990s and 2000s, and in particular the budgetary cutbacks experienced by local governments in the latter half of the 1990s in response to rising public debt at both central and local levels. Due to these budgetary problems, many local governments have transferred their international responsibilities to other organisations such as foundations, NPOs or quasi-NGOs, and are prioritising their various sister city relationships to concentrate on the most important (Ichinobe, H., personal communication, 16 January 2006).

Development of local government links with between Japan and China

In the 1970s and 80s, the USA was by far the most common source of sister city relationships for Japan (CLAIR 2000). Even in the late 1990s, in terms of the number of relationships, the USA was ranked number one, with around 30 per cent of all relationships. This was clearly due to the overwhelming influence and target activities of the USA in Japan since the post-war occupation as recounted earlier. However, after the 1978 Treaty with China, the number of sister city relationships with Chinese cities increased rapidly. By 1998, 19 per cent of all relationships were with Chinese cities or provinces, and in 2010, 21 per cent (see Figure 6.1). Considered in terms of the amount of money committed to the relationships, China was number one, taking 34 per cent of the expenditure available for sister city activities, while the USA took 27.5 per cent in 1998[2] (Yoshida 2001: 32). By 2002, the Chinese share was at 35.5 per cent, with the USA at an increased 34.6 per cent (CLAIR 2005a), despite the much decreased overall budget.[3]
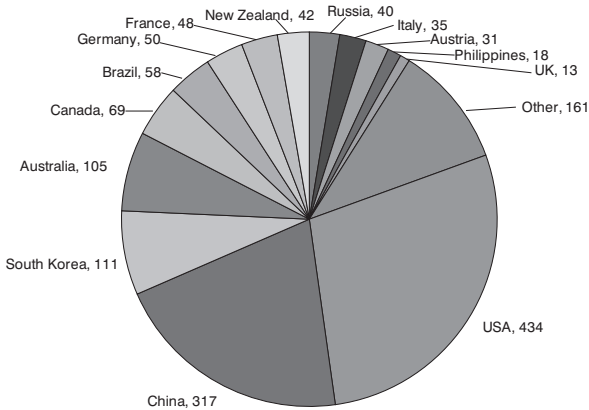
Figure 6.1 Number of Japanese sister city relationships by country.
Data source: CLAIR 2010a

These trends clearly indicate the growing importance to local governments in Japan of having relationships with Chinese cities and provinces (as well as the continued importance of the US relationships). The growth of the Chinese economy, in particular in the areas along the eastern seaboard region, has been a major source of income for Japanese companies, and in recent years has accounted for much of Japan's economic growth (Woodall 2004).

The development of Japan's local government links with China started, as mentioned previously, with Kobe–Tianjin in 1973, and Yokohama–Shanghai later in the same year. Both Kobe and Yokohama are large cities, with a history of being open to international exchange and trade, so it is not surprising that they took the initiative in this manner. Other cities and regions in Japan used their historical links to China to follow suit. Examples include Niigata's link with Harbin in 1979, Kitakyūshū's links with Dalian in the same year and Nagasaki's link with Fuzhou City (Fujian Province) in 1980. In Dalian, in the north-eastern Liaoning Province of China, there are still older people who speak Japanese due to Japan's invasion of the area before the Second World War, while commercial and cultural exchanges have occurred between Fujian and Nagasaki for hundreds of years (Jain 2005).

Chinese cities are keen to learn from Japanese cities about administration techniques, to attract investment capital, and to gain from technology transfers in order to assist their development. Japanese cities are particularly keen to gain markets for their companies, and to help Chinese cities to deal with environmental problems, which in many cases can affect Japan directly, such as acid rain caused by factory pollution. Kitakyūshū City is particularly experienced in environmental cleanup procedures (Kowata 1994), following its problems during Japan's high growth era, and has used this experience to advise Dalian City on a UN award-winning environmental clean-up of its water management systems and waste disposal systems (Kitakyūshū 2010).

As of 1999, Japanese cities and regions accounted for 21.4 per cent of all Chinese sister city relationships, demonstrating the attraction for Chinese cities of relations

with Japanese cities. Japanese local governments had a total of 38 exchange or trade promotion offices in Chinese cities (Yoshida 2001: 49), although these are not always necessarily placed in their sister cities or regions. These offices usually form good bases to develop deeper contacts between Chinese and Japanese local governments and companies, and often arrange meetings and trade promotion events to facilitate trade, investment and exchange of officials and business people. Jain (2004: 27) cites the example of Kanagawa Prefecture's office in Dalian, which provides cheap office space for Japanese companies investing in China, along with many other services including interpreting, secretarial work, transport and economic information. Kobe City's offices in Nanjing and Tianjin have also provided support for officials and businesses from Japan wanting to make contact with people in those cities, by developing personal contacts and gathering local information (Ōshiro, K., personal communication, 7 February 2006).

Chinese local governments, in contrast to Japanese local governments, often minutely plan their international exchange activities in order to obtain required outcomes, which often means that they are planned according to local business needs. Yoshida (2001: 84) cites the case of Liaoning Province, which successfully laid down a detailed strategy for surveying places in Japan which could help its industries develop, thereafter developing trade and investment relationships with those places. Liaoning Province is now the number two destination in China for Japanese foreign direct investment, a position which may reflect its former position as a Japanese controlled territory, and the consequently large number of Japanese speakers in the area.

Some Japanese cities have also developed ODA programmes with their Chinese sister cities (Yoshida 2001: 53). This has been done in the case of Kitakyūshū and Dalian. Both cities pooled resources in order to persuade the Chinese government and Japanese government to consider their environmental exchange programme as a candidate for ODA. Having done this, in 1996, JICA began working in co-operation with Kitakyūshū city to investigate environmental policies, monitoring, water management systems and pollution reduction programmes. In 1997, after a meeting between Japanese and Chinese government officials, their exchanges were labelled as a 'Japan–China Environmental Model City Programme', which was allocated funds in the fourth yen loan programme, of 40.5 billion yen, turning it into a major project. While this kind of project is not yet common between sister cities, there are an increasing number of similar examples (CLAIR 2005b) which demonstrate Japanese cities' soft power in terms of attraction of their ideas and information.

History of Kobe's relationship with Tianjin and other Chinese cities

As indicated previously, Kobe City was the first Japanese city, and in fact the first local government in the world, to form a sister city relationship with a Chinese city. Around the same time that the Japanese and Chinese central governments were considering normalisation of diplomatic relations, in 1971, the Mayor of Kobe City (Miyazaki Tetsuo) announced his intention to seek a Chinese city to establish a

sister city relationship with. He then conveyed this intention to Liao Chengzhi, the head of the China–Japan Friendship Association (an organisation with close links to the Chinese leadership, which sometimes organised contacts between Japanese and Chinese officials despite the lack of formal diplomatic relations, see Chapter 7), and other relevant people. The Mayor of Kobe, along with several other mayors of larger cities in Japan, could see the direction in which bilateral relations were heading, and was eager to gain a head start in establishing contacts with China.

In 1972 Mayor Miyazaki, as the head of the Japan–China Young Persons' Exchange Swimming Group, visited China (*Asahi Shimbun* 1972). While there, he was able to meet Premier Zhou Enlai, and express his idea to form a sister city relationship. After this conversation, the idea of linking Tianjin with Kobe was proposed by Zhou. In May 1973, a representative group from Kobe City travelled to Tianjin to meet with the city's officials. They discussed how to start and conduct the relationship, including the important point of how to refer to the relationship, i.e. as a 'friendship city' relationship rather than as a 'sister city' relationship (Kobe City 2004f, Tianjin City 2010) as mentioned earlier. Other issues emphasised included the need to maintain and develop friendly relations over the long term between the citizens of both cities, and to start with currently practical and feasible exchanges which could be reciprocated fairly; the Chinese were still wary in dealing with Japan, as well as other countries which in past times had forced their cultures and presences into China.

In June of the same year, Mayor Miyazaki again went to Tianjin, this time as a part of a goodwill delegation including the mayors of Kyoto and Osaka. In front of an audience of people at the Tianjin People's Assembly Hall, he signed an agreement to establish sister city relations between Kobe and Tianjin (*Asahi Shimbun* 1973). However, a formal written agreement defining the relationship was not exchanged, as it was said that the relationship would only acquire meaning through actual exchange activities (Tianjin City 2010).

The importance of this relationship to the Chinese, and the attraction of Japan's ideas and information, was demonstrated clearly by the involvement of top level Communist Party officials, in particular Premier Zhou Enlai. The soft power model as proposed in Chapter 3 is applicable in this instance: the source of soft power was the attraction of Japan's advanced economic and technological skills, and the ideas and information which went along with those skills. One of the agents of this soft power was Kobe City, which was keen to offer itself as a link to Tianjin to help transmit some of these skills, in order to contribute to good political and economic relations between the two countries and cities in the future. At the time of the agreement, China was still suffering from the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, and there had been very little diplomatic contact with other countries. According to Tianjin City's account of the time:

> [t]he sister city relationship established by Tianjin and Kobe was the first bridge over the sea between China and Japan, personally built by Premier Zhou Enlai; it opened a new chapter of diplomacy between China and Japan, and started the construction of a new China, and the new idea of ties with

foreign cities … For seven years after Tianjin and Kobe established their sister city relationship, no other new sister city relationships were established. In these years China still was in "the Great Cultural Revolution" period; regional leaders could not go abroad much, and there was very little foreign contact, therefore relations with a friendly city gave us a very important channel to develop foreign relations as well as enabling the leadership to make contact with another country. Japan became the main country which Tianjin leaders visited at that time.

(Tianjin City 2010)

Additionally, Kobe was eager to become the first city to link up with a city in China, as was shown by the number of times Kobe representatives flew to China to arrange the agreement. This was at a time when Japan had only just recognised the People's Republic of China diplomatically. Kobe had had a long history of international trade, and being one of the most cosmopolitan cities in Japan, it was enthusiastic about renewing its links with China.

During the course of the relationship, exchanges between Kobe and Tianjin settled down into a discernible pattern of themes. The first method of maintaining the relationship has been the visiting of officials from each city, and the performance of official ceremonies and functions. Exchanges of animals between the cities' zoos have been an important symbol of the relationship. Sports exchanges, particularly by young students, and other educational exchanges have also cemented the relationship and other cultural exchanges involving the media and arts have occurred. Further on into the sister city relationship, practical exchanges became more important, in particular dealing with the management of their ports (both cities being major ports in their respective countries). Other technical exchanges involving research visits and exchanges of knowledge in business, industry and commerce then developed. In more recent years, trade has been a major focus in the relationship. Finally, in the years after 1995, Kobe City has tried to expand its network of relationships in China, using the experience it has gained with Tianjin. Examples and the meaning of these different types of exchange, as well as their demonstration of the validity of the soft power theory developed in Chapter 3, will now be considered in more detail.

Cultural exchanges

In order to build a new sister city relationship, a variety of exchanges is necessary. This was especially true in the case of Kobe and Tianjin, where there had been relatively little contact between Japan and China for almost 30 years. Hence local officials, schools and other groups have built up and continued to organise exchanges between the two cities.

Since the official signing ceremony in Tianjin, where 1900 officials from both cities attended, officials have kept up a regular schedule of visits (Kobe City 2004f). Clearly, the number of exchanges between officials was greatest in the first few years of the relationship, with a reduction in frequency thereafter. This

pattern is in line with the models of O'Toole (2001) and Cremer (2001) rather than that of Menju (2003b), and in recent years, official exchanges only occur on significant anniversaries. However, they were particularly important to develop personal relationships between officials in the two cities (Ueda, M., personal communication, 7 February 2006).

As the initial ceremonial exchanges were completed, more concrete cultural exchanges became the norm. An example of this was the animal exchanges which took place, involving fish, birds, a lynx, and a giraffe (Kobe City 2004f). There are many examples of animal exchanges being used to cement relations between countries, which are said to promote links and common interests between Japan and China (Renminwang 2001). China in particular is well known for its use of pandas in this manner (Mullan and Marvin 1999, *BBC News* 2005, *Taipei Times* 2006). Since the 1980s, the use of pandas for international diplomacy has been reduced due to protests about their commoditisation, but despite this Kobe has managed to borrow a panda on two occasions – once in 1981 for a cultural exhibition, and once for 10 years from 1998 to help Kobe recover from the 1995 Awaji–Hanshin earthquake (*Kobe Shimbun* 2000, Kobe City 2003a, 2005).

In addition to this, links are built through the initiation of exchanges of young peoples' groups, and the organisation of sports events and educational exchanges. Soft power links are built up as young people make connections in each others' countries, enabling the transfer of ideas, values and other information which will have an impact through these youths' lives. In fact, a sports exchange was used as the initial point of contact between Kobe and Tianjin in 1972. Schools also conduct exchanges; in 1995 after the earthquake children from Tianjin sent goodwill messages to their counterparts (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1995), and some schools have maintained links by themselves over the years. Higher educational institutions also maintain links, with universities first agreeing to student exchanges between Kobe and Tianjin in 1978 (*Asahi Shimbun* 1978). These exchanges can be for the purposes of language training, research or home stays, and in some cases teachers and professors have taken part in longer term exchanges. These educational links are now so entrenched that the city government no longer needs to interfere with the institutional arrangements in many cases, leaving them to become self-perpetuating (Ichinobe, H., personal communication, 16 January 2006).

Other cultural exchanges which lead to transmissions of information and hence soft power include media broadcasts and cultural exhibitions. Due to the Kobe–Tianjin link up, Beijing Broadcasting placed a one-hour programme into its New Year television schedule, broadcast in Japanese, called 'A greeting from the citizens of Tianjin to the citizens of sister city Kobe'. From 1981, a programme was broadcast by Radio Kansai (in Japan) in partnership with Tianjin Radio about such subjects as the Kobe–Tianjin relationship, Japan–China exchanges, Japanese life, and development in China. Every week for two years, a fifteen-minute programme was broadcast, with the fourth week being provided by Tianjin Radio. The programme was also said to be popular in Tianjin; Tianjin Radio covers not only Tianjin City, but also Beijing and Shandong Province, with an audience of

100 million people. The programme was said to be listened to by over 20 per cent of the audience. In China, both the Japanese version and a Chinese version were broadcast, and the programme was widely used in Japanese education as a text (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1993a). Another media tie-up was arranged between the *Kobe Shimbun* local newspaper, and the *Tianjin Daily* newspaper in 1985 (Kobe City 2004f). Additionally, on the twentieth anniversary of the Japan–China diplomatic normalisation, Tianjin television broadcast a special programme including an interview with the mayor of Kobe.

Museum exhibitions, such as the 'China's 5000 years of treasures' exhibition held in Kobe in July 1985, have been loaned between the cities, and film festivals, plays and musical performances have also been used to promote each city's culture in the other. In 1988 on the 15th anniversary of sister city ties, the first Japanese garden in China was built in Tianjin, and called the 'Kobe Garden' (Tianjin City 2010).

These cultural exchanges are particularly valuable in channelling Japan's soft power. The ability to put across new ideas and culture through mass media outlets such as television and radio is clearly a good way to reach as many people as possible. Exhibitions are also seen by a wide variety and large number of people, and the exchanges which non-governmental groups perform allow ideas and information to be transferred to groups in a specific and suitably targeted way. The model presented in Chapter 3 shows that the number of information links which can be created between two countries can help increase the amount of information and ideas flowing between them, in turn increasing mutual understanding and enabling the improvement of bilateral relations. With cultural exchanges including citizens and the media acting as agents for the ideas and information resources of Kobe City (as well as Tianjin), large numbers of links can be created, creating the conditions for soft power to have such an effect. In particular, positive coverage of cultural exchanges by the mass media have a great effect on people's values and hence on the effectiveness of soft power.

Port-related exchange

Ports are an important institution in both cities, driving their economies and acting as a symbol of the cities' prominence and culture. The port of Kobe was said to be the 'central port in Asia' during the 1980s, and Japan's leading port, but since then has been affected by Japan's relative economic decline amid global competition and the rise of other Asian ports such as Busan (South Korea), Hong Kong and Singapore. This decline was further accelerated by the damage caused by the Great Awaji–Hanshin Earthquake in 1995 (Kobe Port Restoration Symposium 1995), which instantly destroyed all of the port's container berths. In contrast, Tianjin Port, said to be the 'gateway to Beijing' due to its proximity, is now the fourth biggest port in the world by total cargo volume (AAPA 2010).

Since the 1970s, technical exchanges between Kobe and Tianjin have been instrumental in helping the development of Tianjin's port. In 1975, seventeen

delegates from Kobe formed a Kobe Port Goodwill Exchange group to visit Tianjin and make contacts with port officials there (Kobe City 2004f). In 1976 a group of seven people (including the vice-president of the Tianjin City Construction Council) visited Kobe in order to conduct a study of port technology. By 1980, the ports of both cities had agreed to make a formal 'sister port' agreement, and the following year, a delegation from Kobe went to Tianjin to advise the city on managing a modern container terminal.

In 1984, a group of twelve people from Kobe were asked to go to Tianjin (*Asahi Shimbun* 1984), in order to help solve increasing problems of congestion, and to form an 'urgent reorganisation medium-term and long-term plan' for the development of the port. After performing analyses and studies for four years, the team proposed a comprehensive plan for the development of the port, and it was 'precisely because of the adoption of the plan that Tianjin Port could effectively resolve the problems of congestion, and enter a new stage of development' (Enorth 2004). The team helped Tianjin in conducting dredging operations, to increase the depth of water at the port, and trained technicians in Tianjin in dealing with water management issues (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1993b).

The upgrading of the port was also beneficial for Japanese companies which were investing in Tianjin, the most prominent example perhaps being Toyota's car production plants and affiliated factories, which have been established there since 1997, demonstrating the value of Kobe City's activities for Japan. In 1984, Tianjin Port's capacity was just 10 per cent of Kobe's (*Asahi Shimbun* 1984). By 1993, Tianjin had one of China's largest container ports, and in 2003 it already had more than double the cargo volume of Kobe, including over 50 per cent more container traffic (AAPA 2005).

Since that time, exchanges of port technicians and officials have continued, from the Japanese side to gain information about Tianjin and China's development, and from the Chinese side to learn about Japanese practices and skills. Ceremonies and events celebrating anniversaries of the sister port arrangement have also been held at regular five-year intervals. However, due to the 1995 Great Awaji–Hanshin Earthquake, port trade which previously was handled in Kobe moved to other ports in Japan, in particular Osaka, Nagoya and Yokohama. Even 13 years after the earthquake, the amount of trade handled by Kobe port had still not returned to 1995 levels, even as other ports have continued to expand. In 1995 before the earthquake, Kobe port handled 2.80 million TEUs of container freight, while in 2008 it handled just 2.56 million TEUs (Kobe City 2004f, AAPA 2010). Nevertheless, the friendship port agreement between Kobe and Tianjin was renewed for a further ten years in 2005, and officials in Kobe and Tianjin ports maintain close links, which may help to encourage business in the future, especially considering that officials who originally made contact in the early 1980s are now climbing to higher positions within the local government hierarchies in both cities (Ueda, M., personal communication, 7 February 2006). These links will enable ideas and information to flow between the two cities as officials who are more familiar with each other will promote this flow, and hence enable the action of soft power.

In 1990, a regular passenger ferry service, the *Yanjinghao*, between Kobe and Tianjin was launched. The ship had been built by a joint Chinese–Japanese company based in Tianjin (Tianjin Jinshen Ferry Co.). This, the second ferry service between Japan and China, was to be run by a consortium jointly established by the two cities, and a company based in Kobe called China Express Lines, itself established by a consortium of Japanese and Chinese shipping companies. At the launching ceremony in Tianjin, Mayor Nie was reported to have said, 'The *Yanjing* will contribute towards the development of goodwill exchanges, and the economic and trade relations between Tianjin and Kobe' (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1990a), indicating the purpose of the ferry. The ferry was launched despite the events of Tiananmen Square in the previous year which had led to economic sanctions being enforced by the G7 group of countries, including Japan, and was undoubtedly a boost for China at that time. Kobe City's reaffirmation of its relationship with Tianjin, in the context of Japan's loose application of the sanctions, also helped Japan's image as a country trying to help China grow at that time. The ferry was in particular expected to help Chinese residents of Kobe (including students), researchers from companies and tourists to travel between Kobe and Tianjin cheaply (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1990b).

In fact, it is no doubt due to this ferry service that a programme, enabling the despatch of five researchers a year from both Tianjin and Kobe to the other city, was established in August of the same year, demonstrating the usefulness of the ferry service for exchange of ideas and information (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1990c). Countless other exchanges of people, products and ideas have also taken place since then due to the ferry service being available.

The exchange of information and ideas relating to port development through the sister port arrangement, and through the ferry service, is yet another example of the way in which Kobe City has utilised Japan's soft power, in the form of technical expertise in shipping, construction and systems management, to improve qualitatively and quantitatively the relationship not only between Kobe and Tianjin, but also between Japan and China. A port link is an important example of a link through which ideas and information can be transmitted. In terms of the theory described in Chapter 3, the source of Japan's soft power here is the pool of ideas and information mentioned above, while the agent has been Kobe City, which has nurtured its port links with Tianjin, and thereby created a vital link between the two cities and countries, through which ideas and information has been sent to enable the effects detailed above. At any time, strong port links between countries are vital indicators of good relations, and the importance of these links for the action of soft power to occur is also clear.

Economic exchanges and technical exchanges

Kobe City has been a pioneer in promoting trade and organising technical exchanges with Tianjin, in order to help its development, and thereby also helping Japanese companies make contacts and survey markets in the region.

One of the first visits to Tianjin for Japanese businessmen was in November 1974, when 21 businessman from local small and medium businesses went on a trip organised by Kobe City and local business associations (Kobe City 2004f). As the investment environment in China was difficult at that time, the link between Tianjin and Kobe was invaluable, for smaller and medium sized businesses in particular, to start sounding out the Chinese market for their products and services. In March 1976, the first trade exhibition of Chinese goods was held in Kobe (organised in co-operation with Tianjin City). In 1976 and 1977, even before the formal Japan–China Friendship Treaty of 1978, Tianjin City sold 105 and 123 tons of seafood products in Kobe.

Tianjin food products companies also took the opportunity to visit Kobe, and in 1984 a joint Chinese–Japanese venture (Marine Kobe) opened a restaurant in Tianjin. This was the first 'Japanese-style pub' in China (Enorth 2004), and it was hoped that Japanese culture would be appreciated by residents of the city, as well as the restaurant being used by Japanese people living there.

In 1985, Kobe opened a trade office in Tianjin, in order to help organise surveys and to help Japanese companies set up operations and enter the Chinese market. The Chinese central authorities, however, would not allow a foreign sub-governmental organisation to open an office in China, so Kobe City set up an entity called the 'Kobe City Industrial Promotion Foundation' and registered the office in its name in Tianjin (Kobe City 2001). The office not only acts as a base for Japanese businesses in Tianjin, but it also helps to organise and support cultural exchanges between groups in Kobe and Tianjin, official exchanges and ceremonies between the two cities, and the exchange of technical experts on research trips. Tianjin City also opened a trade office in Kobe, in March 1999, performing similar functions, although the office was opened with substantial financial support from Kobe City.

As a result of these efforts to promote trade with Tianjin, and other areas of China, a number of Chinese businesses have located offices in Kobe City's Port Island, a reclaimed island close to the city centre, including several businesses which were started by former Chinese students who studied in Kobe (see Figure 6.2). This has led Kobe City officials to start (since 2005) actively encouraging Chinese students to consider setting up businesses in Kobe, by creating networks of former students, and by providing a 'one-stop service' specifically for these 'old boys' which helps students plan their businesses (Ōshiro, K., personal communication, 7 February 2006, Kobe City 2006a). These activities are designed to further encourage links between Kobe and China through which information and ideas flow in both directions, enabling the action of soft power.

Kobe has also been active in sending experts to Tianjin to help develop its infrastructure, and to help it with pollution management. In addition to helping Tianjin build up its port, as detailed earlier, experts from Kobe have advised on, and researchers from Tianjin have visited Kobe to research about, sewage management, city planning, medical infrastructure, transport infrastructure, industrial and scientific techniques, and other areas. In March 1985, Kobe was able to gain ODA funding from JICA to send experts to advise Tianjin on underground
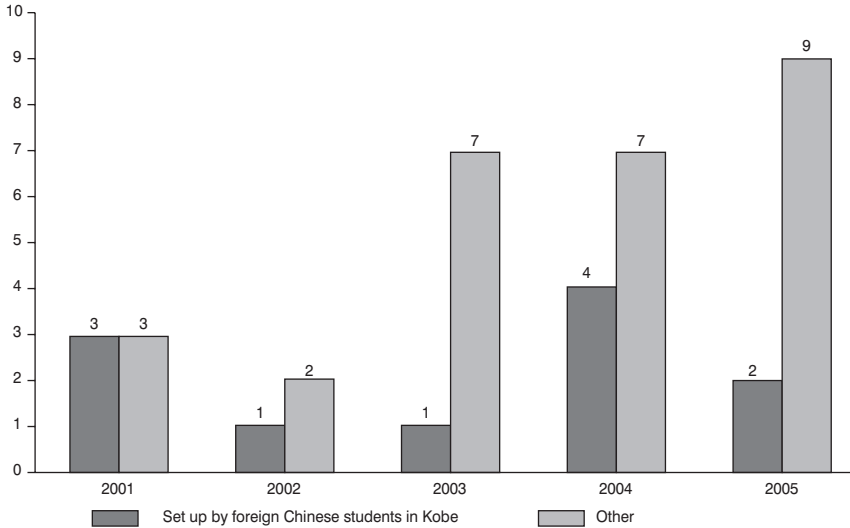
Figure 6.2 Chinese businesses set up in Port Island, Kobe.
Data source: China–Asia Business Department, Kobe City.

water management. In 1992, the Kobe Steel Production Union, with funding from Kobe City, invited 28 researchers from Tianjin to study for one year (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1992).

In Tianjin, there are a large number of previously 'state-owned enterprises', which were used to produce goods according to quotas decided by the central government. In response to their problems, Kobe experts have been sent to factories and companies in Tianjin to advise them on how to respond to supply and demand changes in a market economy, how to restructure companies to make them more efficient, and how to market and promote products. In October 1992, and again in 1993, a class of 50 local businessmen were given a series of seminars on marketing over a period of five days by an expert from Kobe.

Pollution in Tianjin, as in many other cities in China, is a serious problem, resulting from high-speed industrialisation. In particular, most of the energy used by businesses in Tianjin comes from coal-fired power stations, which create atmospheric pollution on a huge scale. In the summer of 1992, over a period of three weeks, researchers from Tianjin were invited to Kobe, and shown pollution reduction technologies in use at steel factories and power stations in the area, such as sulphur and nitrate scrubbing systems as well as water cleaning systems (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun* 1993b). The fact that this pollution produces acid rain which may also affect Japan means the help was not entirely altruistic, but such a broad approach to the development of its sister city has undoubtedly promoted an atmosphere of goodwill and co-operation beneficial to both cities in the long term.

In the medical field, Kobe City helped Tianjin to obtain ODA of 500 million yen from the Japanese government, to establish a Diabetes and Metabolism Research

Centre in Tianjin University, completed in 1998, and co-operative research was then conducted in conjunction with Kobe University Diabetes Research Centre, leading to the holding of an international diabetes conference in Tianjin by the teams (Kobe City 2003b). In 2003 an agreement was signed between the two cities to increase economic exchanges and co-operation in medical research and life sciences, in addition to other cultural exchanges over a period of three years. The medical and life sciences research is planned to be implemented in Kobe, in its new medical centre on the artificial Port Island. The city is expecting this industry to grow steadily as Japan's and China's populations age. As of 2010 there were about 170 medical research-related companies on the island (Kobe City 2010a), and Chinese companies are among those expected to invest in the centre (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun,* 25 October 2003).

These particular technical and business related investments are another good example of Kobe City being able to use Japan's soft power to open channels of communication and trade, which are of great value to both countries now and in the future. In China, the number of engineers and scientists is increasing rapidly, with the result that many cutting-edge scientific techniques are being developed there. This is an area where the use of Japan's soft power now may reap large concrete benefits for its society in the long term. The activities described above seem to agree with the soft power theory described in Chapter 3. Kobe City has, as an agent of Japan's soft power, proactively created links between itself, the city's businesses and Tianjin to transmit ideas and information to China. Such Japanese ideas as those contained in business management techniques, environmental values, and medical knowledge have been very attractive to officials, businesses and citizens in China. By creating these links and transferring some of its ideas to China, Kobe City has contributed towards creating common values and interests between the two countries which in turn contribute to bilateral relations. Evidence of this is the high level of investment which has been made by Japanese businesses in Tianjin and elsewhere, by former Kobe students setting up businesses in Kobe, and by the continuing friendly ties between Kobe and Tianjin, as well as between private groups in both cities.

Kobe City's expansion of city contacts in the Yangzi Valley area

Since the Great Awaji–Hanshin Earthquake of 1995, Kobe has been struggling to regain its former position as a major seaport in Asia. From a world ranking of six in terms of container traffic in 1994, it has sunk outside the top thirty as it has lost customers to other ports in Japan and East Asia (*Kobe Shimbun* 2004b, AAPA 2010).

Due to the effect of the earthquake on its trade and industry, the city decided to try and attract more business from China, by utilising Japan's soft power and attractiveness as a market. In order to implement such a strategy, the city formed the 'Shanghai–Changjiang Trade Promotion Project'. This project had been under consideration before the earthquake, but was implemented afterwards with a new energy. The project was initially organised by Japan's central government

in co-operation with Kobe City and the Hyogo Prefecture government, with local companies and associations providing the impetus and planning (Ōshiro, K., personal communication, 7 February 2006, Kobe Hanshin Kyōgikai 2010). Additionally, contacts in Tianjin City helped to develop the project.

A focal part of the plan was to develop relations with cities along the Changjiang (Yangzi) River basin, starting with Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan and further inland. A ship (the *Fortune River*) was to sail from Kobe to Shanghai, and up the river as far as Wuhan, in order to conduct trade with this rapidly developing region. The ship left Kobe and sailed up the Changjiang River twice in 1997. However, after that the ship was only able to go as far as Nanjing due to lack of demand. Experts said that the road network from Shanghai inland had developed rapidly, reducing the need for sea transport (*Kobe Shimbun* 2004a); in addition, the *Fortune River* was attracted by better trade prospects in Yokohama and other ports which compete with Kobe (Ōshiro, K., personal communication, 7 February 2006).

Nevertheless, as a result of the initiative, Kobe had made contact with cities deep into the Changjiang River basin, and formed relationships with them. By 2004, 23 Chinese cities from that region had established trade offices on Port Island, Kobe. In addition, Kobe City established a branch office in Nanjing to add to its previously existing office in Tianjin. These offices have been able to establish communication links and contacts which businesses and other organisations in Kobe can use to establish further links in China (Ōshiro, K., personal communication, 7 February 2006).

The 'China Business Chance Fair' initiative was also established in 1998, and held annually thereafter. This convention was to prove a success, and became the largest exhibition of Chinese products in Japan. Not only were businesses from Tianjin and the other cities targeted by the Project, but also delegates from other regions in China now attend the fair, to exhibit their products, take advantage of the networks, and take part in 'business-matching' activities which take place there. 'Mini-Trade Fairs' are also held by the organisation in China, attracting many local businesses and Japanese companies (Kobe Hanshin Kyōgikai 2010).

These initiatives have shown that Kobe has been able to utilise soft power to establish new contacts, trade and communications channels, even in the face of the economic ruin caused by the earthquake in 1995. The manner in which the city has created links with many Chinese cities in the Yangzi Valley, and enabled a transfer of ideas and information between Japan and China resulting in deepened ties between the two countries, demonstrates how the model described in Chapter 3 works. Despite some setbacks in the execution of its plans, the ability of the city to use Japan's soft power to promote the exchange of information and ideas in these cases has been notable, and in turn, the creation and expansion of these information pathways allows the further action of soft power.

The role of Kobe City's agencies and NGOs in sister city exchanges

A positive aspect in the sister city relationship between Kobe and Tianjin, and between Kobe and its other sister city relationships, is the extent to which it

involves local groups of interested people. In Kobe, the city government works closely with local NGOs, including trade associations, sports clubs, youth exchange groups, educational institutions and groups representing ethnic minorities.

Additionally, the sister city relationship encourages Kobe NGOs to act independently in forming their own relationships with groups in Tianjin. Examples of these include the Kobe YMCA, which in 2001 formed a partnership relationship with the Tianjin YMCA, and the Kobe Youth Association which has sent students on trips to Tianjin.

Kobe City has also delegated some functions, dealing with relations with sister cities and international activities generally, to agencies which act in a similar way to NGOs. These are often set up as foundations (*zaidanhōjin*), such as the Kobe International Centre for Co-operation and Communication (KICC), and Hyogo International Association (HIA). The Asian Urban Information Centre of Kobe (AUICK) is billed as an 'international NGO' although it was set up by Kobe City with some UN funding, and has the mayor of Kobe as its chairman. The city has also been trying to organise a citizens' group separate from the local government, to further the Kobe–Tianjin relationship, as has already been achieved for the Kobe–Seattle relationship (Ichinobe, H., personal communication, 16 January 2006).

A final example of the way in which the city is using NGO-type organisations to further links between Kobe and China is the main organisation used to promote exchange between Kobe and the Yangzi River Basin, the Japan–China Kobe Hanshin Changjiang River Basin Exchange Promotion Association (COKOYA). This group consists of business people, academics, and some officials from the local governments of Kobe City as well as the governor of Hyogo Prefecture, and strives to promote exchange between Kobe and the Yangzi valley (Kobe City 2006b, Kobe Hanshin Kyōgikai 2010).

While it must be remembered that many of these reforms are taking place in the context of local government cuts and rationalisation processes (Kobe City 2009), agencies and non-governmental organisations provide an effective way of connecting with local citizens, as well as dealing with NGOs and governmental agencies in other countries, and dealing directly with citizens of other countries. Thus, the city can use these agents to channel its own, and Japan's, soft power towards other countries at the local level. NGOs (and other similar groups which may have some element of central or local government contribution) are particularly suitable as agents of a country's soft power, in terms of their ability to create links between countries, and transmit ideas in a way which is unthreatening and non-coercive. They are, therefore, good examples of the model proposed in this book which describes how soft power is utilised in international relations (see Chapter 7 for further discussion of this). By encouraging NGOs to participate in the creation of links between Kobe and Tianjin, it can be seen that Kobe City has recognised this.

Issues in Kobe City's international activities

Some criticisms of Kobe's handling of exchanges have been made. In particular, in common with larger governmental bureaucracies, is the charge that the local government should not be performing activities such as trade promotion and giving aid to companies, as these would best be performed by private organisations and associations. On this argument, taxpayers' money would be best spent promoting services which directly benefited them, rather than on speculation that a local government plan would produce a benefit in the long term.

An example of the difference in thinking between local government officials and external assessors on this point can be seen from the internal and external evaluations carried out by Kobe City in 2004. With regard to the office which the city runs in Tianjin, the internal assessors state, firstly concerning the 'appropriateness of the project to the times (*jidai tekigōsei*)':

> [t]he recent development of China has been eye-opening, and Japan–China economic exchange is deepening. Within this trend, the role of the office is also moving towards economic exchange projects.
>
> (Kobe City 2004a: 2)

With regard to its 'appropriateness (*hokansei*)':

> [i]n order to enable this office … which has for twenty years cultivated valuable contacts, networks etc., to plan an increase in its activities, maintenance of its present form is desirable.
>
> (Kobe City 2004a: 2)

And its 'validity (*yūkōsei*)':

> [a]s China's remarkable development continues, the role of this office as a place of economic exchange is likely to increase even more.
>
> (Kobe City 2004a: 2)

The internal evaluators gave the office a top grade (out of four levels: 'competent (*tekikaku*)', 'somewhat competent (*yaya tekikaku*)', 'somewhat incompetent (*yaya futekikaku*)' and 'incompetent (*futekikaku*)') in each of four categories of assessment. In response to this, the external evaluators gave three grades of 'somewhat competent' and one of 'somewhat incompetent,' along with the comments:

> [i]t is necessary to question as to whether the City managing an overseas office for the purpose of trade promotion is in keeping with the times. In terms of international trade, this is not an activity which was should be undertaken by the City.
>
> (Kobe City 2004a: 2)

Similar comments were made with regard to the Nanjing office (Kobe City 2004c), and the 'China Business Chance Fair', with the external report suggesting that 'It is necessary to question whether taxes should be used for this activity' (Kobe City 2004b: 2). With regard to the joint Kobe–Tianjin Research Association activity (Kobe City 2004e), and research seminars held in China for local businesses, the external report was, however, more positive, although it pointed out the need to 'concentrate on especially good results' (Kobe City 2004d), implying that the concrete business results until now have not been sufficient for the outlay.

There is certainly room for the argument that certain services, including those of cultural exchange, would be better performed by privately managed groups and associations, or even for-profit companies. However, it can equally be said that the undertaking of cultural exchanges and trade promotion in a country such as China is a suitable task for a local government. The local government is likely to be much more responsive to local people's needs than the central government, and equally it is likely to be in closer contact with local businesses and their needs. It is also easier for a local government to target a small region in a country such as China in a way that the central government could not. Equally, in a country such as China, where private companies were frowned upon for many decades, a Japanese local government is likely to present a more acceptable face to Chinese officials and citizens than a large corporation, or an unknown NGO. Kobe City officials take the line that they are acting as public relations agents for the city and the country; and as they do not make direct profit or institute specific targets for their actions, they are able to deepen international links with a view to the long-term future (Ichinobe, H., personal communication, 16 January 2006, Ōshiro, K., personal communication, 7 February 2006).

However, China is no longer so hostile to private companies and groups, and it could be said that such organisations could be more successful in promoting trade and cultural exchange than a local government bureaucracy with many other priorities, and problems with public debts, in the future. The same cannot necessarily be said of all other countries.

Local government as an agent of Japan's soft power

Undoubtedly due to the pro-active use of Japan's soft power by Kobe City to help Tianjin's development right from the beginning of Japan–China relations in 1972, the city has been able to create a plethora of links between itself and Tianjin, to the benefit of both cities' citizens, and to the wider benefit of people in both countries. In addition, it is notable that the maintenance of these information exchange links has become a natural part of the relationship between Kobe and Tianjin; this is demonstrated by the fact that the 'international exchange department' of Kobe is no longer greatly involved with the links. Instead, the relevant sections of the city government deal with issues which affect them. For example, the education department or individual schools deal with student exchanges, or sports exchanges, while the trade department deals with business links, and the ports department

deals with port-related links (Ichinobe, H., personal communication, 16 January 2006). This deepening of the sister city relationship is conducive to maintaining healthy information links between the two cities, enabling the longer term action of soft power to occur.

Although national governments may have been reluctant at first to let local governments act independently, as the concept and role of local governments' international activities has become more widely known, they have been given more freedom to act according to their own needs while working within the national framework of trade rules and law.

The primary purpose of an agent of a country's soft power is to create an atmosphere where that country's information and ideas can flow freely and non-coercively to other countries. In the case of its sister city relationship with Tianjin, Kobe can be said to have performed this task effectively. Through official exchanges, sports and educational exchanges, exchanges of researchers and technical experts, and trade and business exchanges, thousands of people from Kobe and Tianjin have been able to visit each other's cities, and in many cases to exchange ideas with local residents. The soft power being utilised by Kobe in this cases is the collection of ideas and information encompassed by Japanese technical experts, educators, administrators, businessmen and artists among others, which have a wide impact throughout China when they are freely transferred.

The range of exchange activities which can be undertaken by the cities together is not limited in the same way as that of a government ministry, or a government agency such as the Japan Foundation or JICA. Sister city relationships can use cultural exchanges, but can also promote trade and business exchanges in conjunction with this, often linking the different activities, or forming contacts for the purpose of one activity through another activity. When city officials meet to celebrate an anniversary, or to co-ordinate a cultural exchange, they may also talk about business or other matters which may be of interest.

Linked to this is the relative calm of sister city relations in comparison with governmental relations. The activities of a governmental agency may be affected or even curtailed by problematic relations between the governments. An example of this was the turbulence caused by Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō's controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, or by other historical differences. While general governmental relations are affected negatively by these transient events, individual cities or regions may be able to ignore those events as being irrelevant to their own relations. Upon being asked whether recent anti-Japan demonstrations in China were having any effect on the sister city relationship, the mayor of Kobe replied:

> … Kobe City, the first city in the world to form a sister city relationship with Tianjin City, this year welcomes the 32nd year of this relationship. Additionally, the city has advanced many projects after the earthquake, with Shanghai and three provinces and one city of the Changjiang River Basin. Those links and our mutual bonds are not going to break, I think … In

concrete terms, Kobe has an office in Tianjin, and an office in Nanjing. We have not heard of any change in need of special attention from those places.

(Kobe City 2005)

Due to the efforts of Kobe and Tianjin local governments, the investment climate in Tianjin for Japanese companies has been very good. By 2004, sixteen enterprises from Kobe had invested in Tianjin, and the total investment of the 1467 Japanese companies in the city was 25.5 billion dollars (Enorth 2003). Equally, Kobe had attracted investment from Tianjin and other Chinese cities, helped by the trade offices established by Tianjin and other cities in Kobe.

Some over-ambitious schemes of the Kobe City government have been unsuccessful, such as the trading ship which was to sail up the Changjiang River. However, other schemes have been more successful, in particular the 'Business Chance' fairs, bringing local Chinese and Japanese companies together, and the joint project to upgrade Tianjin Port.

Although one local government authority can only have a very small role in channelling and utilising Japan's soft power to improve relations with China, the number of sister city relationships between Japan and China is large, and increasing. Cities, being the cultural and commercial centres in any modern country, are the places where soft power will have its most useful effects. Hence, the sister city relationship is an ideal way of enabling Japan's soft power to have a positive effect on Japan–China relations. For example, the relatively attractive and modern nature of life in Japan's cities, in particular Kobe City, is bound to make an impression upon Chinese visitors to the city, which they will take back with them to their friends and family, thus spreading ideas and information about Japan. Cases of local governments worsening relations between Japan and China, such as the Shimane Prefecture case referred to earlier, are rare.

According to Mayor Yada Tatsuo upon returning from a visit to Tianjin in 2003;

> … the relationship between Tianjin and Kobe, although there are now 220 sister city relationships between Japan and China, has often been referred to as the first model case, and is highly evaluated by the central governments. When I met the state councillor and former foreign minister, Tang Jiaxuan, in Beijing … he told me that … he could not forget Kobe City's co-operation activities and exchanges with China and Tianjin.
>
> (Kobe City 2003b)

These comments by such a highly placed leader in China show the appreciation for the kind of activities which Kobe has carried out with Tianjin.

The Kobe–Tianjin relationship is one example of many such relationships across Japan and China, which demonstrate the suitability of this kind of exchange between countries, and the suitability of local governments as agents of a country's soft power. These relationships also demonstrate well the mutual character of soft power, in that it is likely that both countries' attractions will make themselves felt over the channels of communication created between them.

7 The activities of the Japan–China Friendship Association in China

Non-state level agents

NGOs in their modern form have become important actors in international relations, whether acting independently of governments, or co-operating with them to pursue the NGOs' goals. Due to their flexibility and general independence from the state, they are also important agents of a country's or a society's soft power resources.

NGOs differ from state level or sub-state level governmental agents in that they are theoretically independent from any government in terms of their aims, and the methods they use to achieve them. They are generally only accountable to their members or sponsors in their actions (although these can be governmental bodies), and for this reason their purposes are usually quite narrowly defined, unlike governmental agents or local governments, which have broad remits. This in turn means that their efforts are directed in a focused manner in the fields in which they work, making them potentially influential in those narrow fields.

NGOs which operate internationally are often called 'transnational' actors, meaning that they are not truly based in one country. These actors can affect the international relations of any country in which they operate. Well-known examples of these truly global actors are Amnesty International (Buchanan 2002), Médicins Sans Frontières, Greenpeace, and so on. They can affect international relations by making decisions on where and how to spend their resources, which can be substantial. Most NGOs are, however, based in one or two countries and concentrate on local issues. These groups can also affect international relations by pressurising their governments to change policies.

NGOs which specialise in promoting relations between two or more countries have a substantial role in most advanced industrial countries. In some cases they work closely with governments, and in some cases they are completely independent, with many groups positioned somewhere between these two extremes. They tend to concentrate on promoting peaceful relations, such as cultural exchanges, language programmes, and creating personal links between countries. These groups can be said to act most directly as agents of a country's soft power in other countries.

In Japan, non-state groups have historically tended to be viewed with suspicion and suppressed (Hirata 2002, Pekannen 2004). However, in the last two decades, NGOs have begun to flourish, including internationally active groups (Takao 2001, Itō 1996, Menju 2002b) as well as smaller local groups (Haddad 2007, Pekkanen 2006). Cultural exchange-oriented NGOs have also bloomed, in many cases encouraged by governmental bodies. In Japan's relations with China, a particularly useful role has been played by these groups, due to the often difficult nature of the two countries' relations, in forming links between people in both countries. Among the many NGOs which attempt to promote relations between Japan and China, the Japan–China Friendship Association is a prominent example of a group which operates at the local and the national level, and which through its activities creates links between Japan and China and therefore acts as an agent enabling Japan's soft power to function.

In this chapter, the meaning of the term 'NGO' will first be outlined, and the development and role of NGOs in international relations briefly covered. The development of NGOs in Japan, and their international role will then be considered. NGOs' roles in Japan–China relations, in particular in the post-war era will then be reviewed. This will lead on to an examination of the case of the Japan–China Friendship Association, in terms of its development, international activities, and role as an agent of Japan's soft power. Finally, these findings will be used to analyse the broader role of Japan's NGOs as agents of the country's soft power.

NGOs: definitions and origins

What is an NGO?

The term 'non-governmental organisation' at first glance seems to cover too wide a body of groups to be meaningful. Questions which arise include whether companies, private military organisations, political parties, or religious cults could come under this heading. Additionally, the term seems to imply a complete lack of any governmental interference or involvement in these groups, despite this not always being the case.

Other terms try to circumvent these problems; 'non-profit organisations (NPOs)', 'the third sector', 'private voluntary organisations' (O'Neill 1989), 'civil society organisations', 'the independent sector', 'interest groups', 'pressure groups' and even 'new social movements' (Willetts 1996) among various others (Götz 2008) have also been used to describe similar concepts although all have their positive and negative points. The 'third sector' can be seen as an addition to the 'public sector' and 'private sector' terms commonly used to indicate government activities or business activities, implying a sector which is non-governmental and not-for-profit, although it may have links with government or business. 'Private voluntary organisations', often used in the USA, has overtones of religion, and excludes the many groups which employ full-time staff. 'Interest' and 'pressure' groups seem to narrowly define the purpose of the groups, while 'NPO' has similar problems

to 'NGO' in that it covers too vast a range of groups. 'Civil society organisations' and the 'independent sector' are too 'terminally vague' (Simmons 1998: 83) to be useful terms.

Nevertheless, there is a need to study the activities and influence of groups, nationally and internationally, which are nominally independent of governments and are not operating with the specific intent of making economic gains for themselves or shareholders. Hence, the term 'NGO' has come to be the most widely used to describe such groups; this chapter will therefore use the term 'NGO' while keeping in mind their diversity and the effect this may have on their role as agents of soft power.

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which deals with accreditation of NGOs to the UN, in Article 12 of the resolution regarding NGOs (Resolution 1996/31), states that:

> [t]he organisation shall have a representative structure and possess appropriate mechanisms of accountability to its members, who shall exercise effective control over its policies and actions through the exercise of voting rights or other appropriate democratic and transparent decision-making processes. Any such organisation that is not established by a governmental entity or intergovernmental agreement shall be considered a non-governmental organisation for the purpose of these arrangements, including organisations that accept members designated by governmental authorities, provided that such membership does not interfere with the free expression of views of the organisation.
>
> (United Nations 1996)

The resolution goes on in Article 13 to stipulate that NGOs should receive the main part of their funds from affiliates or members, with any voluntary contributions or governmental funds to be openly declared and explained satisfactorily to the UN Council Committee on non-governmental relations. In this way the resolution implies or assumes that NGOs will not be commercial, for-profit organisations. The Council of Europe, in its Convention 124 (European Convention on the Legal Personality of International Non-governmental Organisations) specifically states that such groups should have a 'non-profit making aim' (Council of Europe 1986).

In sum, it is widely agreed among diplomats and academics that 'an NGO is any non-profit making, non-violent, organised group of individuals or organisations' and that in the case of international NGOs (operating in more than one country), members may consist of companies, political parties or other NGOs in addition to individuals (Willetts 1996: 5).

Development of international NGOs

Religious and academic groups, both local and more widespread, have clearly existed for thousands of years in some form or another in and across many cultures around the world. The missionary groups formed by Europeans in the Middle

Ages to spread Christianity around the world are one example (O'Neill 1989). However, the modern form of formally organised international NGOs seems to have begun to appear around the last part of the nineteenth century. Groups such as the World Alliance of YMCAs (founded in 1855) were created to campaign on a wide variety of issues such as the slave trade, treatment of prisoners, human trafficking and other human rights issues (Seary 1996).

A group called the Société Internationale d'Étude, de Correspondance et d'Échanges was established in Paris in 1895 specifically to help develop good relations and exchanges across borders. The International Red Cross (1859), Save the Children (1920) and International Youth Hostel Association (1932) are other examples of early international NGOs, generally formed in order to provide relief from conflict, or otherwise to promote friendly relations between states at the grassroots level. From their origins, these kinds of international NGOs were created with the purpose of forming links between countries and in order to enable information about different ways of life and organising a society to cross into other countries – basic elements of the soft power theory outlined in Chapter 3.

Seary (1996) cites the reasons that the first international NGOs began to form as being related to the development of suitable legal systems which would provide a structure for such groups, and the ability of people to travel and communicate over longer distances to gather in committees and societies in Europe in the nineteenth century. Additionally, the growth of the middle classes meant that more people had time and resources to worry about other people's situations, even including people in other countries. Meanwhile, the whole idea of internationalism was dependent on the growth and strengthening of the concept of the nation state.

With the development of the League of Nations, and then after World War Two, the United Nations, international NGOs were recognised as legitimate contributors to the international system, including international relations, although there was some dispute between countries as to how far they should be allowed to participate. Finally in Article 71 of the original UN Charter, acknowledgement of their role was given, in limited terms, but in vague enough language so that international NGOs would be able to participate widely in the following years.

In the post-war years, the number of international NGOs exploded, this phenomenon being 'quite clearly … in reaction against the traditional system of interstate relations that was considered to have brought about the unprecedented tragedy' of the Second World War (Iriye 1999: 425). In 1948 there were 41 international NGOs accredited by the ECOSOC at the UN (Simmons 1998) whereas by 2008 there were 3187 NGOs accredited, with varying levels of access to UN proceedings (Global Policy Forum 2010).

These days, international NGOs' activities are often highly visible, with the larger groups conducting professional public relations campaigns on television and through other media, as well as other kinds of promotion, to achieve their aims and reach a wider audience. International NGOs have clearly become important creators of links and carriers of information and ideas, and therefore soft power, whether it is the soft power of a country, a culture or a set of values.

International NGOs in Japan

The development of NGOs in Japan

Acceptance and recognition of the role of NGOs, especially international NGOs, has become widespread only relatively recently in Japan. The English acronym 'NGO' was first used by the media in the early 1980s, although there was debate about how to translate the idea. The transliteration *hiseifu soshiki* gave a negative, passive impression of an unauthorised organisation (JANIC 2004: xiv). Hence other more positive terms were coined, for example *minkankōeki dantai* (JANIC 1988), or 'private group for public benefit'. The transliteration of 'non-profit group', *hieri dantai*, was favoured by the Japanese Diet when it finally passed a new law covering these groups. In recent times, NPOs are mostly seen as small domestic groups, whereas NGOs tend to be seen as larger international aid and co-operation groups. Considering the Japanese leaders' historical dislike of non-governmental centres of power, the term NPO also allows for possible government involvement, while NGO is originally a term used by the UN, and meant to exclude government supported groups. However, there is still overlap and confusion about the use of these terms.[1] Other terms from Japanese, English or a combination are also used according the situation, such as *gurasurūtsu soshiki* (grassroots organisation), *minkan dantai* (private group), and *shimin soshiki* (citizens' organisation).

Before the US occupation of Japan in 1945, Japan's Confucian preference for a strong state, and the lack of an evangelical Buddhist tradition (JANIC 2005) had precluded the development of NGOs. Small, community service groups such as the *buraku* existed, but these came under the control of Meiji-period governments which used them to implement new policies; hence they lost popular trust (Takao 2001).

Before 1998 only Article 34 of the Civil Code (created in 1896) dealt with NGOs, and barriers to their establishment were high (Asahi Shimbun Chikyū Purojekuto 21 1998: 203). Due to high capital requirements, strict controls on governance (Menju and Aoki 1996: 150) and onerous accounting guidelines subject to relevant ministry approval, only 28 NGOs had managed to acquire NGO status (allowing some tax advantages and public recognition) by 1994. However, despite these difficulties, some small citizens' groups were formed to initiate international activities.

In 1938 a group of Christian doctors was formed to care for refugees from the Japan–China war which had just started (JANIC 2004). During the US occupation, the authorities tried to encourage the formation of trade unions and other associations to encourage democratisation. For example, associations were formed throughout Japan to promote the establishment of UNESCO, firstly in Sendai in 1947, reaching 170 groups by 1972. The Japan–America Student Conference was also relaunched (it had existed before the war) in 1947, and other exchanges were initiated by Swiss and US NGOs to help Japanese citizens reconcile with these countries. These initiatives were to have a strong impression on the Japanese who were able to participate, leading to regional and local groups

starting their own exchange programmes or encouraging their local governments to start programmes (Menju 2002b).

Many informal NGOs were also later formed to deal with environmental and social problems; 'by 1970 there were as many as 3000 local citizens' groups dedicated to protesting pollution problems' (Takao 2001). Christian groups were again at the forefront of setting up international NGOs in the 1960s and 70s, firstly with the Japan Overseas Christian Medical Co-operative Service being set up to provide medical services in poor Asian countries in 1960. However, due to a lack of legitimacy and legal status, many of these groups were unorganised and unable to sustain themselves, and so the boom in civil society movements seen in the USA and other Western countries during the 1960s was not so evident in Japan, a factor which was exacerbated by the economic uncertainties caused by the oil shocks and the end of the post-war boom in the 1970s (Garon 2003). In 1979, after an influx of refugees from Vietnam and the surrounding countries to Japan, many NGOs were created by citizens to help manage the refugees' problems. This proved to be something of a turning point, with the number of internationally oriented NGOs increasing quickly afterwards (Hirata 2002).

Economic growth and the increase in individuals' wealth and mobility also enabled them to turn their attention to issues outside of their own daily lives (Itō 1996). In the late 1980s, the number of international NGOs spurted again, with the advent of such terms as 'internationalisation' (*kokusaika*) and in the 1990s 'globalisation' (*gurōbaruka*) catching the media's and the general public's imagination (Hirata 2002). Increasing numbers of small local groups dealing with international exchange and co-operation came into existence. Many of them started out as organisations helping out foreign residents and students, numbers of whom were steadily increasing. Many of these local organisations were started by or with the help of local governments. It is therefore difficult to call them completely non-governmental; although many of them are independent of their local governments, they often co-operate closely on policy. In addition to this, each prefectural government and city government has set up an 'International Exchange Association' which acts as an NPO, although policy is usually directed by the local government, and officials are often civil servants.

There were already 850,000 legally registered foreigners living in Japan in 1985, and this increased to 1.32 million by 1993. Through contact with these immigrants or ex-pat workers, Japanese people grew more aware of human rights problems in their own country, as well as in others. Not only did Japanese people come into closer contact with foreign cultures at home, they also travelled abroad in greater numbers, thus increasing interest in other countries, their problems, and their relationships with Japan (Menju and Aoki 1996).

The development of the internet, television news organisations and the increase in mass media outlets generally during the 1990s also increased the Japanese people's exposure to international news, such as natural disasters, civil wars and environmental problems in nearby countries. The 1991 Gulf War not only led the Japanese government to try to increase its 'international contribution (*kokusai kōken*)' (Itō 2003: 97), but also led ordinary Japanese citizens to think more about

how to assist people in other countries. A volcanic eruption in the Philippines in the same year, the 'UN Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (well attended by Japanese NGOs), and the Rwanda refugee crisis caused by civil war in 1994, were all reported widely in the Japanese media, leading to increased awareness of international problems among Japanese people. The development of new communications technologies also encouraged the formation of internet-based NGOs (Freeman 2003). External criticism of how Japan's international aid had been distributed, reflecting changes in international aid norms (Reimann 2003) also led to governmental deliberation on NGO policies and laws. The Japanese government additionally introduced new policies which encouraged citizens to donate money to NGOs, or to volunteer themselves. Nevertheless, this increase in interest and NGO activity was tempered by the economic depression being experienced in Japan during the 1990s.

The increase in awareness and activity led to campaigning by NGOs and individuals to reform the law relating to NGOs, resulting in the 'NPO law' in 1998 (see Figure 7.1). This was also spurred on by the 1995 Kobe earthquake, where large numbers of citizens and volunteer groups helped and provided relief
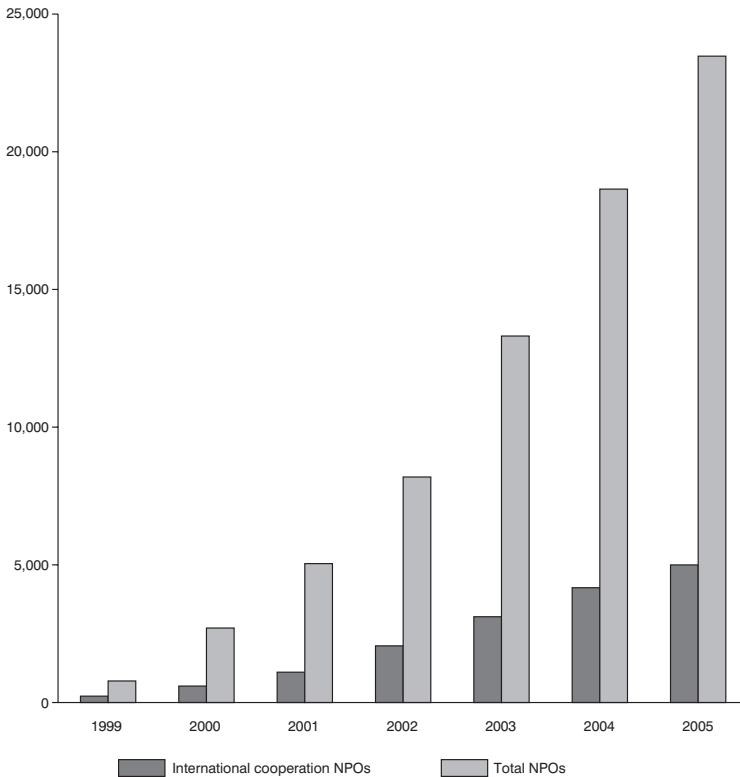
Figure 7.1 NPO growth in Japan.
Data source: RIETI 2005.

where the government had been slow to act. NGOs which had gained experience in disasters in foreign countries were also quick to help (JANIC 2004). The government (though initially needing to be spurred on by opposition parties) realised it needed to change the law to make it easier for people to set up and run NGOs. The new law stipulated twelve fields such as health, welfare, social education, local community building (*machizukuri*), promotion of culture and sports, environment, fire prevention, regional security, human rights and peace promotion, international co-operation, gender equality and networking among groups to achieve these aims (Asahi Shimbun Chikyū Purojekuto 21 1998). A qualifying NPO must have more than 10 members, with less than one third receiving remuneration. The groups must not promote religious or political ideas or campaign for or against the candidates of any political party or public office. Individuals or companies contributing funds to an NPO may be eligible for tax deductions, although this depends on the individual NPO and its arrangements with the tax authority. NPOs themselves do not have to pay tax on non-profit economic activities, and for for-profit activities they can receive special rates, according to their individual status (US International Grantmaking 2010).

In recent years, difficult financial conditions for international NGOs in Japan have continued. However, they have persevered in improving their management, and in developing new strategies to achieve their objectives, although there are still problems for small NGOs in these areas (*Kobe Shimbun* 2008). Many have joined international networks of NGOs to gain expertise, and cultivated ways of working with the Japanese government. In 1996, the first NGO–Ministry of Foreign Affairs meeting was held (MOFA 2003b) and in 1998 the first NGO–JICA (Japan International Co-operation Agency) meeting was organised (JANIC 2004). Even though the government's ODA budget was cut every year from 1998, the amount of support received by international NGOs through the ODA budget increased.

The NPO law and the tax system were further reformed in 2001 and 2002 to make it easier for NPOs to receive donations. Additionally, Japanese international NGOs' work in Afghanistan and Iraq has increased awareness of their activities further among Japanese people (Itō 2003).

NGOs in Japan–China relations

Analysing the role of NGOs in Japan's post-war relationship with China is a useful way to demonstrate the manner in which they have acted as agents for Japan's soft power, in particular because this relationship has been characterised by minimal governmental contact for long periods of time. Firstly, from the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, until the normalisation of diplomatic relations in 1972 and the establishment of a treaty in 1978 there were few direct government-to-government relations, and in this atmosphere NGOs were able to provide some vital links to maintain relations and allow the flow of information about Japan (and hence its soft power) to China. Secondly, in more recent times such as during the Koizumi administration in Japan from 2001 to 2006, direct

contacts between government leaders have been minimal mainly due to China's protests against the Prime Minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine. Therefore, NGOs again have been able to provide at least some avenues for the relationship between the two countries to continue at the grassroots level, and provide channels for the flow of information and ideas; in fact the lack of government relations has allowed NGOs to assume a larger role (Kutsuki, M., personal communication, 14 March 2006).

After the Second World War, Japanese people who had studied or worked in China led the way in the development of grassroots exchange organisations, and the same was true of Chinese people who had studied in Japan.

In particular, business people (many of whom had studied or worked in China before the Sino-Japanese War) knew that it was vital to keep some kind of relationship going between the two countries (Okazaki Kaheita Den Kankōkai 1992, Park 1978: 368, Jain 1981: 26). In 1949, the 'China–Japan Trade Promotion Association' and then the 'China–Japan Trade Promotion Diet Members' Union' were formed with this aim in Japan. The first organisation consisted of small and large businesses, and other associations and individuals interested in promoting links with China, including many linked to the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) or the Japan Communist Party (JCP). Many of these businesses had operated in China before the war, but had been damaged by the hostilities and were interested in re-establishing commercial links. The second organisation was a cross-party group of politicians, including members of parliament from several parties such as the Democratic Liberal Party (*Minshujiyūtō*), the Democratic Party (*Minshutō*), the Socialist Party (*Shakaitō*), the Communist Party (*Kyōsantō*), the Agricultural Workers' Party (*Rōnōtō*) and the Conservative Party (*Hoshutō*) (Furukawa 1988: 24). In the 1950s and 60s, non-governmental cultural exchanges were continued by local NGOs and academics. Groups set up during this time included the Japan–China Friendship Association in 1950, the Japan–China Trade Promotion Association in 1952, and the Japan–China Cultural Exchange Association in 1955. At the time, the Chinese government encouraged these links, as it was hoping to encourage anti-US elements in Japanese society and neutralists to push for stronger links between Japan and China (Iriye 1992, Wu 2003: 284, Passin 1963).

As a result of the politicians', enthusiasts' and businessmen's activities, in 1952 the first 'Japan–China Private Trade Agreement' was negotiated. The Japanese government did not have relations with China, mainly due to US pressure, but it was able to encourage this link-building by private citizens. In the next year a further trade agreement was negotiated by this group with China.

Also in 1953, the Japanese Red Cross Society, along with its Chinese counterpart the Chinese Red Cross Society, arranged for the return of 40,000 Japanese who had been stranded in China by the war, and for the return of the remains of many thousands of Chinese who had died in Japan. Two other organisations were given special passports by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help with this work; the Japan–China Friendship Association, and the Japan–China Peace Communication Association (Katagiri 1995, Leng 1958: 72, Radtke 1990: 104).

Non-governmental exchanges between China and Japan were further encouraged by the ceasefire agreement between North and South Korea in 1953 (Jain 1981: 31, Leng 1958: 57). In the same year the Japan–China Fisheries Co-operation Association was formed by several fishing companies from Fukuoka, Shimonoseki and Nagasaki, in co-operation with people close to the Ministry of Agriculture, to negotiate a fishing agreement. Although these negotiations necessarily involved representatives from the two countries' military forces (China's People's Liberation Army and Japan's Self Defence Forces) due to security concerns, the association managed to seal an agreement with the Chinese Fisheries Association (formed to respond to the Japanese proposals) in 1955, which was honoured by both sides despite the 'Nagasaki Flag Incident'[2] in 1958.

In 1955, the former Prime Minister of Japan, Katayama Tetsuo, went to China as the head of the 'Constitutional Protection People's Union Representative Group' in order to negotiate a cultural exchange agreement with the Chinese People's Cultural Association. This was to lead to the first Japan–China Cultural Exchange Agreement, and the forming of the Japan–China Cultural Exchange Association. From this point on, the number of cultural exchanges increased; dance, *kabuki*, ballet and other performance groups travelled to China under this agreement (Leng 1958). The Japan Academic Council was also active in inviting Chinese scholars to Japan (a rich source of new links for ideas and hence soft power to flow from Japan to China), in particular when Japan hosted important international conferences, such as the Asia-Pacific Health Convention, and the Humanities and Social Sciences Academic Convention in 1956 (Katagiri 1995). These non-governmental exchanges were, however, brought to a halt by the Nagasaki Flag Incident. In addition, the Chinese side were against Japan's security treaty with the USA, and continued to encourage the pro-communist elements in Japanese society.

Due to the sensitive nature of these moves to form new links and to restore old links between Japan and China, NGOs tended to be heavily influenced by governmental policies or restrictions, and members of these groups also tended to have close ties to government politicians or other political parties (Wu 2003, Park 1978: 373). The groups were also often viewed with suspicion by the occupying US authorities, in particular after China had intervened in the Korean War in opposition to the USA. NGOs, political parties and other associations were suspected of harbouring Chinese spies, and often harassed as a result. On the Japanese side, the groups involved were often left-wing and so had sympathies with the Chinese regime,[3] or were against the domination of Japan by the USA, and so were not controlled or influenced by the central government (Soeya 1995: 90, Barnett 1977). However, the groups managed to utilise some of Japan's soft power attractions by forming links with the Chinese, who wanted access to Japanese technology and products, in addition to their interest in influencing Japan's domestic politics.

From 1966, when the Cultural Revolution began in China, the number of exchanges dropped due to suspicion of foreign influences and spies by the Chinese authorities (Iriye 1996). However, after normalisation of Japan–China

diplomatic relations was achieved in 1972, several new NGOs sprang up to take advantage of the thaw in relations. One of the first to do this was the Japan–China Economic Association which was set up by a range of companies keen to do business in China (JCFA 2000). Others included the Japan–China Science and Technology Exchange Association set up in 1977 which organises exchanges of scientists, engineers and other technicians, and the Japan–China Junior Training Association set up in 1979, which gives scholarships to young people from China to study in Japan and organises workshop exchanges and technical exchanges, in particular related to business skills; these exchanges are a particularly useful way to transfer ideas and information (Mukai 2003, Mitchell 1986, cf. Li 2005). Additionally, new sources of funding also became available, in particular from government agencies such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA 2006, Kojima, G., personal communication, 15 November 2007), and the Japan Bank of International Cooperation.

As sister city relations developed between local governments in Japan and China (see Chapter 6), local NGOs were set up in Japan, often with the help of the local governments, which served to maintain and deepen the relationships between citizens in both countries (in addition to maintaining sister city relationships with cities in other countries). These groups and others also assisted foreign students, as the number of Chinese students going to study in Japan (and thus absorbing Japanese ideas and taking them back to China) increased along with the growth of the Chinese economy and education system in the 1980s and 90s.

In addition, with the growing awareness of environmental problems and poverty in China, and the development of civil society and NPO laws in Japan during the 1990s, a number of NGOs were established to help citizens contribute to dealing with these problems. One example of these is the Japan–China New Century Association, an NPO set up in 2001 to contribute to the solution of environmental problems in China, and to carry out youth exchanges between the countries using environmental themes. A few other examples include the World Greening Club (*Chikkyū Ryokuka Kurabu*), the Afforestation and Prevention of Desertification in Inner Mongolia Association (*Uchi Mongoru Sabakuka Bōshi No Kai*), and the Green Earth Network (*Midori no Chikkyū Nettowāku*), an environmental NPO which is active in Shanxi Province in China. These NGOs, acting as agents of Japan's soft power, create links between Japan and China, through which flow Japanese ideas and information about environmentalism (Takahashi 2005). These ideas in turn stimulate further activity in China which in the future will help to reduce the environmental impact of China's economic growth. This can be expected to directly and indirectly benefit Japan's own environment, which is currently threatened by dust storms and acid rain emanating from China; a clear example of the soft power of ideas and information being transmitted by NGOs.

Other NGOs have been created to try to deal with the problems created by the difficult relationship between the two countries' governments. One such NGO is the Asian Network for History Education, Japan, set up in 2001 to oppose a controversial new nationalistic history textbook approved by the government for use in schools. It is clear that many groups have been spurred by the unreliable

nature of government-to-government relations between Japan and China, and by the general realisation during the 1990s that the Japanese government was unable to deal with all of the country's problems. Another NGO which has tried to build links between the two governments is the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, through its Sasakawa Japan–China Friendship Fund (SJCFF). This fund has in recent times (since 2001) focused upon bringing officers from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and others from the Chinese defence establishment to Japan to study about Japan, its culture and to even visit bases; the level of knowledge about Japan in the PLA is said to be very low (Kobayashi, Y., personal communication, 13 March 2006), and so this is viewed as a vital step towards future understanding. It also enables new information links to be created between these officers and Japan, allowing the transfer of Japanese ideas and information, and so for the action of soft power. The SJCFF also brings young history scholars from China and Japan together for discussions on interpretations of history, and has funded regional Chinese officials' visits to Japan for over twenty years (Kobayashi, Y., personal communication, 13 March 2006).

All of these NGOs have demonstrated their usefulness in creating conduits for Japan's soft power. They all contribute to the transmission of ideas and information between Japan and China, and therefore enable Japan's soft power to reach and attract Chinese people. Each NGO can only act on a small scale in such a large country as China, but the growing number of Japanese NGOs in China can only increase their overall value as agents of Japan and its people's soft power.

The Japan–China Friendship Association

In order to investigate more deeply how Japanese NGOs create links which enable Japan's soft power to be transmitted to China, the case of the Japan–China Friendship Association will now be examined. This NGO has a long history of working as a promoter of Japan–China relations, and the manner in which it has enabled, and still enables, ideas and information to cross between Japanese and Chinese citizens is representative of the many NGOs which now operate between the two countries. Firstly the history and development of the NGO, secondly its recent activities, and finally the organisation's structure will be considered and analysed with regard to its role as an agent of Japan's soft power.

History and development

The JCFA has a long history of engagement with political and business elites in Japan and China, which has put it in a prime position to act as a soft power agent and link-creator between the two countries.

The group's first meeting was held in October 1949, ten days after the Communist Party had finally taken power in Beijing, and its first conference one year later. A wide range of delegates such as business people, artists, politicians and academics attended the conference, all of whom had an interest in creating links with the new China (Furukawa 1988, Seraphim 2007). The stated aims of

the JCFA were to promote peace and mutual benefit between the two countries, by using exchanges and promoting trade. However, its political leanings were clear, also stating that it wanted to 'reflect deeply upon the Japanese people's mistaken view of China' and to 'contribute to world peace' (JCFA 2000: 314). Participants in the organisation therefore included those who were primarily interested in restoring trade links with China, as well as those with sympathy for its new Communist regime. It was widely believed that Japan's economy could not recover after the war unless trade with China was re-established quickly (Dower 1995, JCFA 2000).

Despite its varied membership, the JCFA was soon labelled as a 'red' organisation by the US occupation authorities in Japan (GHQ), and investigations into its activities (JCFA 2000) were deepened after the USA became involved in the Korean War against the Chinese-backed North Korea. Members of the JCFA were barred from working in public office or large companies, and the general anti-PRC environment obstructed the JCFA's activities. Nevertheless, by 1952 it was able to organise a 'Japan–China Friendship and Culture Conference' in Tokyo, attracting 300 participants, and later it began sponsoring publication of essays and academic conferences which urged the normalisation of Japan–PRC relations.

The JCFA was able, through its contacts and links, to play an important role in the identification and return of Japanese people who had been stranded in China after the war (*zaikahōjin*). It also gained the co-operation of Beijing Broadcasting, the Red Cross as well as the Japanese government and other NGOs to help about 35,000 people return to Japan by 1958 (*Asahi Shimbun* 1953a, JCFA 2000).

In a similar manner, this time without co-operation from the government, the JCFA was able to help locate and return the remains of over 5000 Chinese who had died in Japan to their relatives in China, an activity which was continued until 1964. Partly as a result of these activities, the JCFA quickly gained admiration, in China (thereby acting as an effective agent of the values and ideals of its members in Japan) as well as in Japan, and the number of members grew. Notable among these was the support of the largest fisherman's union in the country, the Hokkaidō Fisheries Union (with a membership of 200,000 people), which hoped to encourage links between Japan and China in order that the Japan–China fish trade could grow.

In subsequent years there was a surge in exchanges between Japan and China. In 1954 the first notables from China to go to Japan since the war had ended were ten members of the Chinese Red Cross, despite the Japanese government's initial resistance. Continuous pressure from the JCFA, local governments and later, members of the Diet eventually pushed the government into allowing the visit. Finally, against a background whereby Japan had regained independence from the USA, and Prime Minister Yoshida (who had strongly supported the US authorities' aims) had been pushed from office, the delegation from the Chinese Red Cross were allowed into Japan in 1954.

In the years after these accomplishments, the JCFA continued to push at the obstructions to exchange between Japan and China. Along with other organisations,

it helped to organise the despatch of cultural groups such as traditional Japanese *kabuki* dance groups (*Asahi Shimbun* 1953b), while also supporting members in regional areas who wanted to establish trade links or exchange links with China, for example helping Nagano prefecture to sell silkworm larvae to, and import wheat flour from, China (JCFA 2000: 83).

The Association also kept consolidating its own organisation, with branches in all but five prefectures of Japan by 1956. Its branches kept organising film festivals and Chinese lessons in the regions, and other cultural exchange events, although the organisation as a whole experienced some financial difficulties and stagnation in the number of members due to the continued general wariness of Chinese communism and the 'red' label which had been attached to the organisation by the authorities.

The activities and efforts on the part of the JCFA during the 1950s undoubtedly improved its standing with the Chinese authorities and contributed towards its later efforts to convey Japanese ideas and soft power to China. By engaging with the new Chinese administration rather than ostracising it, the JCFA had set up a situation where it could build links with China which would prove to be invaluable in the following decades, not only in acting as channels for Japan's future soft power resources, but also useful in the inevitable task of normalising relations.

Despite the organisation's optimism regarding the resumption of ties between Japan and China, relations between the two countries became worse due to the ruling LDP's anti-communist, pro-US stance, and China's reluctance to countenance increased[4] trade and economic links without diplomatic normalisation. The Nagasaki Flag incident of 1958, as touched on above, also contributed to the Chinese cancelling previous trade agreements at this time.

In the 1960s, the JCFA became split by factionalism, in particular a faction connected to the JCP and therefore against relations with the CPC (as it had denounced the Soviet Union), and another faction close to the Japanese Socialist Party, which was pro-Beijing (Kuriyama 1976, Lee 1978). The organisation also started to become more activist, staging demonstrations and protests against the USA–Japan alliance in Tokyo and elsewhere. Through the 1960s, the organisation's leaders continued to keep in contact with leading figures in the Chinese administration (see e.g. *China Quarterly* 1960: 132), in opposition to the anti-China stance of the government during those times. In 1962, members of the LDP and the government who supported reopening trade links with China, acting as negotiators between the two countries, were able to help bring about a resumption in trade whereby payments were deferred on both sides (known as 'LT Trade' after the first letters of the Chinese and Japanese officials who devised the idea, and later 'memorandum trade') in order to maintain a façade that no actual trade was taking place, and so placate the USA and Taiwan (Sun 1987, JCFA 2000). The JCFA and other Japan–China exchange NGOs were to be given the role of recommending 'friendly trading companies (*yūkōshōsha*)' to conduct the trade. When the 'China–Japan Friendship Association (CJFA)' was set up by the Chinese authorities to implement the LT trade deal, the JCFA received a communication from the CJFA asking for its co-operation and help. Again, the JCFA was to be instrumental in the creation of links between Japan and China.

In 1964, the trade was cut short, due to China's opposition to the Japanese government's decision to support the US military intervention in Vietnam. However, in 1965, the Chinese authorities revived a previously considered plan (which had been shelved after the Nagasaki Flag incident) to conduct a youth exchange with the co-operation of the JCFA. The Chinese plan was to invite 500 youths, which the JCFA was asked to select from a variety of youth cultural exchange groups in Japan. Eventually, the JCFA managed to select 473 representatives, and despite some official Japanese reluctance to send so many youths to China at once, obtained visas for all of them. Because of the resistance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice, the selected youths had to be split into two groups. One group was sent to China in August 1965, while the other was sent in November. Both groups were formally met by Chairman Mao Zedong and Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, and were able to conduct exchange activities with a total of over 10,000 Chinese youths (JCFA 2000), in nine cities (Beijing, Dongbei, Xian, Yanan, Luoyang, Wuhan, Changsha, Hangzhou and Shanghai). This kind of exchange was especially useful in creating links between the two countries; the Japanese economy had entered its period of high-speed growth, and its soft power resources were increasing. Therefore, the more information about Japan's new success could be transmitted to China, the more its soft power could affect events there. Of course, it is important to remember that the Chinese administration was also eager to maintain some contacts with Japan in the hope of influencing it in an ideological and political manner, and the JCFA was a useful tool for this from their point of view (Sheldon 1968).

The youth exchange was planned to be carried out again the following year, when an invitation for 800 youths to visit China was passed to the JCFA. However, by this time, there had been an argument between the JCP and the CPC over the latter's denouncement of the Soviet Union's 'socialist imperialism' and the split in ideology between the Chinese and Soviet communist parties. Therefore, the JCP had stopped all exchange with its Chinese counterpart. As the JCP had infiltrated the leaderships of the various cultural exchange groups in Japan, including the JCFA, it was able to exert enough influence to prevent the youth exchange occurring, as the Japanese government was in any case reluctant to agree to give permission for it (JCFA 2000).

Incidents such as these gradually led the JCFA to split into two groups, one of which was allied with the JCP, and did not want to conduct exchanges with the CPC, while the other group (largely consisting of JSP sympathisers) vowed to continue to maintain a non-partisan agenda concentrating on continuing exchanges between Japan and China. In October 1966 the issue came to a head within the JCFA at a conference, leading eventually to a formal separation of the two camps (*Asahi Shimbun* 1966). The non-partisan section relaunched the JCFA, moved its offices and reregistered members. The JCP-allied section continued to use the same name, and so the relaunched organisation, for a number of years, added the label 'legitimate (*seitō*)'[5] to its name in order to differentiate itself.

The Chinese side at the CJFA immediately acknowledged the new JCFA setup, sending a message of support to the 'legitimate' group, and sending representatives

to their annual conference in 1967 (*Asahi Shimbun* 1967). However, struggles within the organisation continued, with some members protesting against the recommendation by the JCFA governors of 'friendly trading companies' which had links to the Defence Agency (JCFA 2000). The Association was also affected by the Cultural Revolution which had begun in China; its official stance was to support its ideals, although it declined to carry out any overt activities to further them. The infighting between factions who were in favour and those against the CPC's policies became stronger, and the confusion, which also spread to many regional branches, led to the group failing to carry out any exchange activities in 1969 (*Asahi Shimbun* 1969).

The JCFA was also unable to contribute to the process leading to normalisation of diplomatic relations between Japan and China in 1972, mainly because its more left-wing members were fundamentally unable to come to terms with the fact that the LDP government was conducting the negotiations. However, after normalisation had been realised, the CJFA invited the JCFA, along with other NGOs which had traditionally supported Japan–China exchanges, to a celebration of the achievement of normalisation. Representatives of the JCFA and the other groups were thanked for having contributed to the maintenance of exchanges between Japan and China, and asked to keep working for Japan–China friendship. The JCFA decided in 1973 at its national conference, that it would accept the historical significance of the normalisation, and orient itself to working in the new situation. It also pledged to go back to its original aim to encompass members of all political persuasions or professions to promote friendship between Japan and China (JCFA 2000: 270). In the same year, the JCFA in co-operation with the CJFA, helped the governors and mayors of two prefectures and five cities in Japan to visit China. They were introduced by the JCFA to the head of the CJFA (an influential member of the Communist Party leadership, Sun Pinghua), and held a meeting to discuss the setting up of sister city arrangements with selected Chinese local governments. In the following visits to China in June 1973 by the mayors of Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe, representatives from their local branches of the JCFA joined them to help organise their relations with Xian, Shanghai and Tianjin respectively.

Another development where the JCFA worked in co-operation with other NGOs and local governments was the use of ferries to carry youths to and from China. The JCFA worked in co-operation with the Japan Young People's Association (*Nihon Seinendan Kyōgikai*) to contact authorities in China and prepare the ground for these exchanges. Aeroplanes were also chartered to conduct these youth exchanges; in 1975 the first of these was organised by Sendai City in co-operation with the JCFA, called the 'Youth Wing (*Seinen no Tsubusa*)' (JCFA 2000: 273). These activities showed the value of the links which the JCFA had built up with China over the years, in particular with respected members of the Chinese elite. The links were now being used constructively and actively to create channels through which soft power could flow, in this case from Japan's regions.

Negotiations towards a 'Peace and Friendship Treaty' were proceeding apace. However, in 1975, the Soviet Union began to interfere in the process, warning Japan

against strengthening relations with China (Barnds 1976), implicitly threatening Japan against this by its military activities (Falkenheim 1979), supporting people in Japan who opposed the treaty (Park 1976), and causing the already hesitant leaders of the LDP, including Prime Minister Miki Takeo and others who had links to the Taiwan regime, to slow down the negotiations (JCFA 2000). Leaders in the JCFA and other interested NGO groups began to press for the quick negotiation of a treaty. In 1976 the Association held a conference in Tokyo with 23 other NGOs, in addition to their own group's regional representatives, to promote the need for a treaty. The regional groups of the JCFA in turn held meetings throughout Japan, in 60 locations for the same purpose. Another conference was held in Tokyo by the JCFA in 1977 in conjunction with the Japan–China Friendship Diet Members League, which attracted over 2000 politicians, businessmen and other interested people to push for a treaty, and regional chapters again held regional promotion meetings. The Japan–China PFT was finally ratified in 1978, in part influenced by US and Japanese fears of Soviet dominance in East Asia (Falkenheim 1979).

These activities by the JCFA in co-operation with other interested NGOs (see e.g. *Renmin Ribao* 1977) show most clearly the effectiveness with which non-governmental bodies can create links between countries with poor relations. While the external international environment may have been the most important factor in Japan and China's final rapprochement, organisations like the JCFA played a crucial role in forming links between the two countries and thereby enabling Japan's by then considerable soft power resources to begin affecting China in a much more significant manner than had been possible without the Treaty; although the necessity of a treaty to encourage exchange highlights the crucial role of governments in creating a basic environment conducive to the action of soft power.

Undoubtedly due to the legitimisation of links brought about by the 1978 PFT, the next decade was to see an explosion in exchanges between Japan and China, many of which the JCFA was involved in. In May 1979, the head of the CJFA (Liao Chengzhi) (Radtke 1990), in co-operation with the JCFA, gathered a group of 600 Chinese officials, including representatives from each department of the Chinese government, and 15 provinces and cities. The officials were taken on a ferry (named the 'Japan–China Friendship Ferry') around the Japanese archipelago, stopping at numerous cities around the coast over a period of one month. The representatives were shown and taught in detail about the current state of affairs in Japan, including its industrial characteristics, education, transport and healthcare systems (JCFA 2000).

The JCFA central office in Tokyo acted in co-operation with its regional offices around Japan, and local governments, to help organise the trip. They organised trips to almost 250 cities and towns, including activities and welcoming ceremonies, and made sure that the mayors of each city or prefecture were there to greet the visiting Chinese first. This project was certainly among the most important ways in which the JCFA had acted as an agent for Japan's soft power, by creating a multitude of links between Japanese and Chinese officials and ordinary people, and would not have been possible without the organisation's

long-term, close involvement in Japan–China relations. The contacts made by Chinese and Japanese people created communications links between the two countries through which soft power was able to flow. For the Chinese officials, learning directly about Japan's social, economic and technological achievements and seeing them with their own eyes was undoubtedly a powerful influence on their ideas regarding China's own future development, and the possibilities demonstrated by Japan.

At around the same time, the JCFA took the opportunity to reorganise its structure. Until 1978, the organisation had basically been controlled from the central office in Tokyo, which had issued directives to the regional offices as required. The reorganisation, announced at the 22nd and 23rd national conferences in 1979 and 1980, involved devolving more responsibilities to the regional offices. This reorganisation was designed to take advantage of the newly opened possibilities of exchange between Japan and China; with more independence and responsibility for their own affairs, local offices could quickly devise and organise exchange activities according to their situations. It was also hoped that the regional offices would be able to expand their own memberships with these reforms, and work closely with their local politicians and businessmen. In addition, the development of the numerous sister city relationships gave the regional offices an opportunity to 'act independently, according to their region's special characteristics' (JCFA 2000: 287).

Offices from each city or town were to gather together under a prefectural federation, and each prefectural federation would in turn gather under a federation covering the whole country. The system was meant to be more democratic, with each level electing representatives for the federal level groups, and it was hoped that the reforms would revitalise the organisation. At the same time, the JCFA dropped the term 'legitimate' from its name, in view of the fact that the JCP-allied group of the same name still did not have any relations with China, and so the two would not be confused.

In 1983, to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the PFT, the General Secretary of the CPC (Hu Yaobang) arrived in Japan. At a conference for young people arranged at his request by the JCFA and other related groups, he announced China's intention to invite 3000 young people from Japan to spend a week in China. The JCFA, along with other related groups, organised the trip by splitting the chosen 3000 into four groups, and sending each group to a different part of China. In return in 1985 the JCFA and other interested groups, with help from the Japanese government, invited 500 Chinese youths to Japan, including in the programme home stays with Japanese families. Since 1983, the JCFA has held conferences with the CJFA to discuss how to promote further exchanges between Japan and China in the new environment. These activities created links between Japan and China across which soft power could flow. Naturally, the links were two-way, enabling ideas and information to flow in both directions. However, the fact that a Japanese NGO was asked to arrange the activities shows how existing links made by the JCFA enabled this further building of links, and enabled more soft power to flow from Japan to China.

Arguably, since the normalisation of relations between Japan and China in 1972, the JCFA began to behave more like a modern NGO in terms of its approach to its activities and more neutral political stance. The organisation now specifically denies being influenced by political groups (Kutsuki, M., personal communication, 14 March 2006). However, the base of communications links and channels it has built up between China's leaders and notables and itself have served it well in the following decades, when it has more freely been able to construct links which carry Japan's soft power in the form of ideas and information to China.

Recent activities

The JCFA continued to expand its cultural exchange activities between Japan and China in the following years. In 1990, the JCFA celebrated its fortieth anniversary by holding a 'Japan–China Sister City Table Tennis Carnival' in Beijing in co-operation with the JCFA and other groups (JCFA 2000, *Asahi Shimbun* 1989). Seventy-six cities from Japan with sister city connections in China sent table tennis teams to the event. A similar event was held in Beijing for a 'Junior Table Tennis Tournament' in 1997. Additionally, the JCFA has been organising similar sister city table tennis tournaments in recent years; these involve each Japanese and Chinese city with a sister city partnership creating a table tennis team of young people. Each team then enters the competition to play against other Japan–China sister city teams. At the last event in 2005, roughly 100 sister city teams competed from across China and Japan, and in 2006, 150 teams were expected to compete (Kutsuki, M., personal communication, 14 March 2006). This is approximately half of all sister city relationships which exist between Japan and China. Each team consists of young people and their families who travel to Beijing (in total about ten members per team), and so about 1500 people participated in 2006. This kind of activity fosters many thousands of new links between Japan and China, through which soft power can flow. Many Chinese children are fascinated by Japanese youth culture (see e.g. Iwabuchi 2002, Wang 2005), and so it is likely that Japanese youths' cultural ideas are transmitted through these kind of relationships.

In 1995–98, the JCFA contributed to the renovation of Nanjing city's castle walls, which had been designated a World Heritage Site (JCFA 2000, *Asahi Shimbun* 1995). The president of the organisation, Hirayama Ikuo (a famous artist in Japan), wanted to contribute to helping relations between the two countries by aiding the project in Nanjing, the site of the Nanjing Massacre during the Japan–China war, as a gesture of friendship and reconciliation. The JCFA national federation supported his proposal to carry out the project, and raised funds. Hirayama also visited the reconstruction site, and painted pictures there, which he later exhibited in Japan to increase the project's profile. The collection raised over 80 million yen, while donations at the exhibitions, which were attended by 230,000 people, raised 4.7 million yen. Over 2000 volunteers also contributed directly by going to the site to help the construction. The completion ceremony in Nanjing was attended by many notables including former Prime Minister

Murayama Tomoichi among others. This kind of activity creates links between Japanese people and Chinese people through which ideas and information flow. In this case the soft power of particular ideas about conservation of heritage, and reconciliation between the two countries through co-operation was being transmitted through the JCFA's agency.

In 2005, the JCFA co-operated with JICA to bring 80 students from China to Japan for a one-week seminar. Out of the 80 people who were brought by JICA, the JCFA supervised 23, organising seminars related to 'regional promotion' (*Nihon to Chūgoku* 2005). Another kind of activity which has been implemented in recent years is the carrying out of exchanges with less developed, inland areas of China, in particular the ethnic minority areas. Firstly representatives were invited from and sent to Tibet in 1996, then to Xinjiang (Uighur minority area), Qinghai (Tibetan minority), Inner Mongolia (Mongolian minority) and Guizhou (Miao minority) in the following years. These visits helped the locals learn about Japan, and vice versa, creating links between the two countries which allow soft power to flow. In addition, the JCFA's regional branches raise money in order to provide funds for the education of poor children in these areas. Money is granted for the building of schools, provision of textbooks, and for scholarships. In this manner, the JCFA emphasises the building of links between people in both countries in order to transmit the ideas of co-operation and friendship which are espoused by its members and other people who work with it (Kutsuki, M., personal communication, 14 March 2006).

In addition, the JCFA continues to attract the attention of important members of the Chinese leadership, for example in 2000 when Zhu Rongji (the Premier of China from 1998 to 2003) attended a reception held by the JCFA in Tokyo, which was also attended by the Japanese Prime Minister at the time, Hashimoto Ryūtarō (*Renmin Ribao* 2000). This ability of the organisation to access the highest leaders is particularly useful when relations between the Japanese and Chinese governments are not so smooth. In 1989 the JCFA hosted a meeting between Chinese and Japanese officials in Tokyo, despite the lack of official diplomatic contact at the time due to the G7 countries' isolation and sanctions against China following the Tiananmen Square incident in the same year (*Renmin Ribao* 1989). More recently, in 2004 the Chief Governor of the JCFA, Muraoka Kyūhei, attended a ceremony in Heilongjiang Province, China, commemorating the first anniversary of an incident where a left-over wartime Japanese chemical weapon belatedly exploded in that area in 2003 (*Renmin Ribao* 2004, Rose 2005). At a time when Japan–China relations were said to be at their worst in decades due to rising nationalism on both sides, this kind of activity enabled links to be maintained between people in Japan and China, reminding Chinese through widely read media such as the *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*) that many Japanese people are remorseful about the nation's actions in China during the Second World War. In this case the JCFA acted as an agent of Japan's soft power by providing a link through which Japanese ideas of pacifism could be transmitted.

How the national and local structure of the JCFA increases its efficiency as an agent of soft power

In its early years, the JCFA was a centralised group, with a head office based in Tokyo which gave instructions to regional branches, which were established in most prefectural capitals around the country. This was partly due to the heavy emphasis on anti-government protests at the time, which required a centralised organisation to instigate.

However, after normalisation of Japan–China ties occurred, and with the signing of the PFT in 1978, its primary function returned to its original aims, that is to encourage cultural and business exchanges between Japan and China. To this was added its function of supporting the new sister city programmes which were springing up between Japanese and Chinese cities. Therefore, it enacted reforms to its structure, in order to devolve more responsibility to its regional branches, and to give them more independence. This was to enable them to respond to their local situations and work with their local governments.

In 2000, the JCFA incorporated itself as a *shadanhōjin* category NGO (public benefit corporation) under Japanese law. The organisation therefore now has a well-organised structure, with a board of governors, an auditor, and external and honorary directors, all of whom have had long careers involved in Japan–China relations as politicians, academics or business people. The organisation consists of a federation of affiliated organisations, which are the regional branches and offices. Some of these are incorporated themselves as NPOs and others are run by individuals. The governors are elected at the general meeting held twice a year, and the head governor is elected at the governors' meeting held twice a year.

The JCFA's budget in 2009/10 was about 440 million yen. It obtains the largest part of its income through its commercial activities, such as teaching Chinese and Japanese, and holding cultural or business seminars. Other income derives from members' fees, conference fees, grants and a small amount from an endowment (JCFA 2010). The federal, decentralised organisation of the JCFA contributes to its effectiveness in creating communications links with Chinese regions and smaller organisations. If all decisions and activities were being organised by a larger, centralised office, the links through which ideas and information could flow may be stronger, but would likely be much fewer than having each regional branch endeavouring to form its own links. Additionally, regional branches can adapt to their own needs, and the needs of their target organisations or areas in China much more nimbly, and so increase the efficiency of their links, and so the effectiveness of the soft power which flows through them.

The units which make up the JCFA consist of over 450 city, town and village bodies, which are grouped into regional bodies such as the 'Hokkaidō and Tohoku' group, the 'Kansai' group or the 'Chugoku and Shikoku' group and so on. Each local group independently acts as an agent of its members' and the surrounding region's soft power ideas and values. A typical example of a local JCFA group is the Osaka Prefecture Japan–China Friendship Association (OJCFA), incorporated as an NPO under the new law mentioned earlier. The branch was originally

established in October 1950, and was the first location to host a Japan–China Trade Promotion conference in 1952. It has also successfully held exhibitions showing Chinese products, the first of which in 1955 attracted 1.2 million visitors, at the time far surpassing interest in similar exhibitions in Tokyo (OJCFA 2000), thus creating a significant number of new links between businesses and people in the two countries through which ideas and information flow.

It runs an attached Chinese and Japanese language school; the Chinese classes were first set up in 1971 for local people, and now teach 300 students. It also sends students to China, runs speech contests and administers the official Chinese language test (*Chūgokugo kentei shiken*). Japanese language lessons have been provided since 1989 for about 100 students a year for a two-year course, most of whom go on to study in universities or colleges after graduation. Additionally the school has been providing Japanese lessons for Japanese returnees from China (for example Japanese children born in China).

The OJCFA has worked closely with Osaka city in establishing and running the city's sister city relationship with Shanghai. In 1974 the OJCFA was the leading organiser of a ferry trip carrying 400 delegates to make the first official sister city visit to Shanghai (OJCFA 2000). The organisation has also maintained links with the Shanghai People's Foreign Friendship Association (*Shanghai Renmin Duiwai Youhao Xiehui*) since 1981. Under this arrangement, the OJCFA co-operates with the Shanghai group to undertake several activities. For example, it sends people to Shanghai and receives visitors, invites *taijiquan* (a popular Chinese exercise based on martial arts) specialists to come to Osaka, and organises *taijiquan* sports exchange events in co-operation with the Osaka Taikyokuken Association and the Shanghai group. It also administers a foundation scholarship for one research student to come to Osaka every year; this foundation was established in memory of a Chinese student who died in the Kobe–Hanshin earthquake of 1995. Finally other exchange activities are carried out in co-operation with the Shanghai organisation, including school exchanges, calligraphy exchanges and medical exchanges. The OJCFA in 1992 organised the 'Osaka–China Year', where festivals were held in Osaka, and Japanese films and musical events were organised in Shanghai. The OJCFA carries out exchanges with six other provinces and cities in China. It also helps and co-operates with districts and towns in Osaka prefecture which carry out their own exchanges in China. Finally, it publishes its own newsletter, 'Osaka and China' six times a year.

The OJCFA, in its capacity as a member organisation of the JCFA federation, is typical of the other member organisations in its activities, and in the way it provides channels for the transfer of ideas and information between a local area in Japan and an area in China. This transfer of soft power enables the growth of personal and working links between Osaka and Shanghai businesses, organisations, and individuals in a subtly different, but no less important manner to the cities' own official links. The manner in which these local JCFA organisations conduct activities agrees with the model of soft power proposed in Chapter 3, i.e. they act as agents of the pools of soft power resources created by the people and organisations in their regions, by creating links with China to allow ideas and

information to flow between the two countries. They also demonstrate the mutual quality of soft power, as they also allow Chinese ideas and information to flow into their own regions.

Japan's NGOs as agents of soft power

The international NGO as it is known in modern times has had a relatively short history in Japan. Although independent groups have theoretically been able to develop relatively free from government interference since the end of the Second World War, in practice an unfriendly legal environment and a lack of information hindered their development until the last two decades. During the 1980s and 90s, a growing awareness of global issues and problems amongst Japanese citizens, the establishment of branches of NGOs from Western countries in Japan, and finally some action by the government to enact laws enabling the easy establishment of NPOs, has gradually created an environment where international NGOs both large and small flourish.

In the case of groups dealing with China, the lack of any official relations between the two countries in some ways helped the development of NGOs such as the Japan–China Friendship Association. In other ways however, such as the inability of individuals and groups to obtain permission to travel between Japan and China, or the lack of government interest in facilitating friendly contacts with China, this situation obstructed the development of international NGOs in the past.

After the normalisation of relations between the two countries, openings appeared for NGOs which were interested in rebuilding and deepening links between the countries in a way which governments could not. However, due to the problems with setting up NGOs in Japan, this activity was limited to large groups with substantial financial backing. Only in the 1990s and 2000s has it become possible for smaller groups to start up viable NGO projects to help link Japanese and Chinese citizens through environmental projects, educational programmes and other cultural exchanges. With growing awareness of how environmental pollution in China affects Japan directly in the form of sand storms and acid rain, as well as a growing recognition of the need to deepen understanding between the two countries' citizens regardless of governments' actions, the number of Japanese NGOs carrying out these projects is also increasing (Kutsuki, M., personal communication, 14 March 2006) and likely to continue doing so in the future.

How do these NGOs act as agents of Japan's soft power in China? Agents of soft power work by enabling the free and transparent transmission of ideas and information between countries. NGOs perform these functions in a wide variety of ways. Firstly, they open channels of communication between private citizens at the local level, without the direct interference of government mediators who may have political motives. The transfer of ideas and information can be potent when it occurs between individual people who communicate directly across borders, or even physically by meeting each other. Secondly, particularly smaller NGOs

are less likely to have any element of coercion in their activities as they must act together with local people in their target countries to achieve their aims.

Some larger transnational NGOs attract financial backing and members from around the world. In this sense they transmit the soft power of their members' cultural values, rather than that of a particular country. However, the vast majority of NGOs are small, local organisations; this is particularly so in Japan, and therefore they inevitably reflect the cultural values of groups within Japanese society (which tend to be Japanese values) and transmit these to countries such as China. The very fact that Japanese NGOs are working in China transmits the idea of non-governmental, co-operative activity to people who they work with on the ground, thus spreading this aspect of Japan's soft power.

Ideas such as environmentalism, respect for human rights, minorities and education are effectively transmitted by Japanese NGOs working in China in a non-coercive manner. Other NGOs provide conduits for the transmission of technological ideas and management skills which although from a narrow point of view may induce competitive pressures between the countries, from a longer term perspective shape and mould ideas and values in China in a way which can increase understanding between the countries, and thereby increase their potential for working together in the future. It can be seen that it was individuals and non-governmental groups who had created personal links between Japanese and Chinese people before the Second World War, who were among the most enthusiastic to repair ties there. This is due to the fact that they carried their knowledge of each other's countries' attractive ideas to other people, and managed to convince groups and governments that it was worth rebuilding ties.

The Japan–China Friendship Association has certainly been representative of how knowledge of each other's countries' cultures, ideas and other attractions can help overcome enmity caused by state activities. While it is clear that the group was affected by strongly politically motivated elements for long periods in the 1950s and 1960s, it was also a vital conduit for soft power to help rebuild ties between Japan and China. To some extent it was seen as a useful group by Chinese leaders who were eager to maintain links with Japan, but it also managed to maintain a profile in China's official media, such as the *Renmin Ribao,* which suggested to Chinese people that many Japanese people felt friendly towards them. In addition, its own early activities which pushed for the maintenance of ties between Japan and China, despite the seeming indifference of the Japanese government, represented the soft power of a significant segment of the Japanese people who were interested in rebuilding links with China. The attraction of these people's ideas was transmitted through the JCFA to influential people in China, in particular when its leaders were able to access influential CPC leaders such as Zhou Enlai and Sun Pinghua, helping to bring about the normalisation of relations despite seeming government prevarication.

Since normalisation, the JCFA has acted to expand the connections between citizens in Japan and China, utilising sister city relationships in addition to promoting its own exchange programmes. The JCFA's project to help rebuild Nanjing city's heritage site is a good example of how a co-operative project

helped by a Japanese NGO in China can carry positive, attractive ideas and values directly between citizens and thereby contribute to improve ties between the two countries. The group's other activities in promoting youth educational exchanges and longer term study are also models of some of the best ways to enable the transfer of soft power, and the group's activities as an agent of Japan's soft power in general validate the model proposed in Chapter 3.

The JCFA and other Japanese NGOs working with China clearly demonstrate the value of NGOs as creators of links for the transmission of information and ideas between the two countries, and therefore as agents of Japan's soft power. The challenge for Japan is for the government to continue to improve the environment for such NGOs, and for the NGOs themselves to continue to learn about improving governance, and to involve and educate citizens about the need for exchange of ideas and mutual co-operation between the two countries.

8   Conclusions

International relations are characterised in the mainstream media, and by many academics, as chiefly consisting of telephone calls and visits by national leaders and other policy makers in government, with traditional realist 'power politics' forming the background to their late-night negotiations and deals. Other actors and other types of power which are relevant to the international system are not given due consideration in these traditional analyses.

This study has used theoretical and empirical research in order to show that another type of power, namely soft power, is increasingly relevant in international relations in this globalising age. Moreover, government leaders and states generally are not the only important actors in the global system, even though they may be the actors which are most in the limelight. It has been shown that it is not only important, but clearly essential, that the vital role of sub-state and non-state actors be considered as a matter of course when analysing international relations, and the workings of the global system. Furthermore, the use of Japan's relations with China to provide case studies for the empirical research in this book has highlighted the importance of these two countries in international politics.

This chapter first summarises and discusses the findings of the empirical data from the case studies. It then goes on to consider these findings in the context of the questions asked in Chapter 1. The chapter subsequently goes on to consider the implications of these empirical and theoretical findings within the larger context of international relations and the global system. Finally, the chapter looks at issues which need to be considered in future research on these areas.

Soft power agents in Japan's relations with China

On the face of it, Sino-Japanese relations continue to be dogged by potential instability, often caused by narrow political disputes between the leaders of each country, and the temptation for politicians to appeal to domestic nationalist tendencies. The media in both countries, and many academics, follow the actions of these leaders and then make general conclusions about bilateral relations based upon them.

It is clearly unhelpful when the leaders of two of the most economically significant countries in the world are not on speaking terms, as occurred during

the years of the Koizumi administration. However, the unrelenting media focus upon the issues which ostensibly caused this problem did not facilitate our understanding of contemporary Sino-Japanese relations. Occasionally during that period, items in the mass media mentioned that the economic relations between the two countries were good, but this was played down. The stereotyped metaphor of 'hot economic relations, cold political relations' was used widely, without much consideration of the actual situation (Zhang 2006, Takamisawa 2005, Ogoura 2006). Even when government-to-government relations are relatively good, the continuing focus on a few actors in the two countries' governments ignores the mass of bilateral links, both trade-related and cultural, at lower levels of government and between regional and non-state actors. It also ignores the millions of links formed between the countries by individuals, whether tourists, students or business people, who travel between Japan and China every year and in many cases stay for months or years.

This seeming lack of general knowledge regarding the depth of relations between the two countries is itself detrimental to relations, with public opinion polls in both countries showing that people have a long-standing negative image of each others' countries; a fact that is not surprising considering the media coverage on both sides in the last decade (Cabinet Office 2010, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation 2005).

This book has demonstrated the necessity of considering the actions of actors other than governments in international relations, and one way in which they enable international relationships not defined by the principles of realism to function, i.e. through the use of soft power. In order to demonstrate this a three-level agent approach was utilised, comparing and analysing a state agent, a sub-state agent and a non-state agent in terms of the manner in which they enable Japan's soft power to flow through the creation of links between the two countries. The findings from each of these studies will now be summarised.

The Japan Foundation: an effective state agent limited by nationalism

The Japan Foundation is a state agent, although not one which is normally high in the public consciousness in the same way as government politicians and departments. It is accountable to the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and carries out activities in accordance with MOFA and the government's stated policies.

Chapter 5 detailed how the Foundation was initially established in order to improve Japan's relations with the USA, following the shock of President Nixon's actions in establishing diplomatic relations with China, and reducing the value of the dollar, without consulting Japan. Although the idea for such an organisation had been proposed by various figures inside and outside of government for many years before, the 'Nixon shocks' finally pushed Japanese leaders into allocating money and parliamentary time to set up the Japan Foundation.

The Foundation was well established, and also well placed, to commence the building of links between Japan and China by the time the PFT was signed by

the two countries in 1978. After establishing contact with the relevant cultural exchange bodies in China, the Japan Foundation set about systematically creating more links through which soft power could be transmitted, between groups and individuals in the two countries. It started off by sending *kabuki* dance troupes, and other traditional Japanese artists to perform shows in China, hence promoting the attractive idea that the two countries shared cultural traditions. The next stage was to help promote the Japanese language in China, where there was already a great demand for it in schools and in universities. Chinese academics and leaders alike recognised the need to be able to access technical knowledge in foreign languages in order to help develop the country's economy and society; the attraction of Japan was in this respect great, due to the country's experiences in developing its own economy through the twentieth century. While the Foundation was responding to demand and requests from China in setting up these links, it was aware that beneficial effects of this soft power strategy would be felt in Japan (as well as in China) in the future.

Due to the links being created, information regarding Japan and its language flowed into schools and universities around China. Firstly, local teachers of Japanese were trained by the Foundation (*genchishidō*); these teachers in turn trained other teachers, who taught students. The Foundation eventually made available funds to take the best students to Japan for further language study and other technical training. The next stage of the Foundation's educational programme was to make available funds for the new generation of Chinese Japan scholars to continue their publishing, debates and conferences in Japan and China.

In these ways, and through the Japan Foundation's direct support of Japan Studies centres in several universities in China, it was gradually able to create a substantial group of Chinese academics, professionals and leaders who had a deep knowledge of Japanese language, customs and culture (*chinichiha*). It had used the links it built, enabling information and ideas representing Japan's soft power to flow into China, thus building a group of people who would be able to act as a kind of bridge between China and Japan in the future. More than twenty years on from the start of these ambitious programmes, numerous young Chinese academics and others are contributing to the quality of exchange and debate regarding Sino-Japanese relations. It is certain that at least some of these individuals will, in the next two or three decades, reach higher administrative positions in government, companies and universities, benefiting not only Japan but also China in terms of their contribution to bilateral relations, and showing the concrete advantages of using soft power methods in international relations.

The Foundation has also tried to reach a larger audience in China by using the media to send information about Japan and its technical skills, culture and society through language programmes and documentaries which were shown on Chinese television during the 1980s. Images of Japan's capitalism, consumerism and its wealth were sent through the Foundation's links to a significant number of Chinese people during the 1980s and 1990s. Although the actual effects of these activities are difficult to quantify directly, it has contributed to Chinese peoples' image of Japan as an advanced industrialised country, and their curiosity about the country. As Chinese people have become more affluent, they have in increasing

numbers decided to visit Japan (Japan Tourism Marketing Co. 2006), in order to satisfy this curiosity, encouraged by their images of the country obtained from watching television, films and reading books (many of which have been translated with financial support from the Foundation).

The Foundation was clearly successful in the past in helping to channel the soft power of Japan's ideas and information into China, but its limitations as a state agent have become more obvious in recent times. Although the Foundation has nominally become an 'independent administrative agency', it can be seen from its policies and strategies that it is still unambiguously a unit of MOFA. Hence, problems that the Japanese government has regarding its image in China, and the image of its leaders in China, to some extent affect the Japan Foundation's abilities to function there. For example, at times the Japan Foundation has not been able to advertise its name widely in Chinese universities despite funding several programmes in them; in fact at one point during the Koizumi administration it was forced to quietly withdraw some support from a university in Beijing (Kobayashi, Y., personal communication, 13 March 2006). Although the reasons for this remain uncertain, it seems that it was at least partly due to the Japanese government's poor reputation among many Chinese students at the time. The Foundation itself has painted the reduction in support as part of its ongoing restructuring (Japan Foundation 2005), but this does not fit with its aim of trying to ameliorate Japan's image problems in China.

In addition to this are the problems caused by being under the control of politicians, many of whom think in uncomplicated realist terms. This can be seen in the debates in the National Diet which occurred when the Foundation was established, and when its budget is debated in committees of the Diet. Politicians on all sides of the debate tend to see the Foundation purely as a tool to promote Japan's image in China using methods akin to propaganda (i.e. coercive) rather than emphasising the Foundation's own broadly successful long-term approach, which has been based more on principles of non-coercive soft power.

The Japan Foundation has therefore been, in the past, an effective state agent of Japan's soft power, as it has been able to create strong links with China through which Japanese ideas and information have flowed. This has benefited Japan by helping to create an environment where Japanese people can communicate and trade with Chinese people, and travel to China, often using their own language. The mutual quality of soft power has also been demonstrated, in that Chinese people have benefited through access to Japan's ideas and information, for example academic, technical and business knowledge. Nevertheless, in an environment where there is a need to progress from these initial link-building programmes, it is questionable whether the Foundation, as a state agent, will be as effective in the future as it has been in the past. In particular, as long as both Japanese and Chinese politicians' images in each other's countries are poor, and nationalistic tendencies in both countries affect diplomatic relations and public opinion, this will affect the Foundation's ability to enable soft power to flow. If it can more indirectly support other organisations such as NGOs to carry on its work, it may improve its effectiveness in these respects in the future.

These points could be applied to state agents in any country; as long as state-to-state relations are in good condition and each country's people has a positive image of the other country, state agents can create links and effectively enable the transmission of soft power to the extent of their available resources.

Kobe City: a small but effective sub-state agent

Kobe City was investigated as a representative of a sub-state agent of soft power. Sub-state actors are not widely considered as important in international relations; however, Kobe was found to represent a good example of a sub-state actor which is internationally active as an agent of soft power.

Chapter 6 described how the city has built up links first with Tianjin City, on the east coast of China, southeast of Beijing, and then with the Yangzi Valley region, from Shanghai inland through Wuhan. At first this was done by establishing official exchanges between Kobe and Tianjin; gradually this grew into more cultural exchanges, such as the exchange of zoo animals, school children, and sports teams. These exchanges were well reported and reflected on in Chinese newspapers and on the radio, spreading goodwill for Kobe throughout the Tianjin area in particular.

Later, scientific and technical exchanges started to take place frequently; of particular note was the technical help given by Kobe to Tianjin to develop its port, which has since gone on to establish itself as one of China's largest ports. This has enabled trade with Japan to increase rapidly, enabling many Japanese manufacturers to establish operations there, including Toyota and its related companies which set up plants in Tianjin in 1997. This creation of links by Kobe City has enabled the soft power of Japan's ideas and information to act in China.

Additionally, the atmosphere of co-operation between Tianjin and Kobe enabled the latter to use its connections and goodwill to set up relationships in other parts of China. This was to result in the Shanghai–Changjiang Trade Promotion Project, whereby 23 cities in the Yangzi Valley basin set up trade offices in Kobe's Port Island area, while Kobe has set up an office in Nanjing, in addition to its existing office in Tianjin. This project was put into action after the Great Awaji–Hanshin earthquake in 1995 devastated Kobe and the surrounding region, in order to help with the economic recovery. Due to the development of this project, a myriad of new links have been created which enable Kobe's and Japan's soft power to flow into China. Links have also been created due to the successful business matching fairs held regularly by Kobe, which help Japanese and Chinese businesses find partners in both countries to help enter each other's markets. Positive benefits of these links have included business for Japanese companies in the Yangzi Valley and Tianjin regions of China, giving them a stake in the rapid expansion of the Chinese economy. Additionally, Chinese students attracted to Kobe to study through these links have further gone on to establish businesses in Kobe and other parts of Japan, which in turn have created more links for Japan's ideas and information to flow into China.

From these observations it can be seen that sub-state actors in Japan have much to offer as agents of Japan's soft power in other countries. One medium-sized city acting alone can create a significant number of links between Japan and China; if all of the cities in Japan, which have sister city connections or otherwise act internationally to a lesser or greater degree, are taken into account, they will clearly have a significant impact on the transmission of Japan's soft power, and on Japan's international relations in general.

In contrast to state agents, sub-state agents are unlikely to be associated with national politicians' prejudices or biases. Furthermore, they are unlikely to be seen as a threat to actors in other countries due to them not having any military resources or many other ways of using hard power. Hence, their ability to create links in other countries which can effectively transmit their ideas and information is enhanced in comparison to the state as an agent. As long as the state has created an environment where such links can be made without hindrance from the state itself, these sub-state agents can thrive as agents of soft power. In cases where there are no official state-to-state diplomatic relations, as with Japan and China before 1972, cities and other sub-state actors will not be able to create substantial links with other countries. Even in rare cases where this is attempted by a sub-state actor, it would be difficult to maintain links without the state's implicit agreement.

A final but significant problem which the sub-state agent has is financial. The resources which Kobe City can allocate to international activities have been reduced due to national policies being pursued by the state. In the guise of decentralisation, the state is in fact reducing the amount of tax revenue it distributes to local governments, which in practice has meant that the city can no longer sustain many international activities. It has reduced the number of overseas offices it maintains in sister cities, cut support to Chinese cities' offices in Kobe (Kobe City 2009) and is trying to delegate many international activities to NGOs or agencies loosely associated with the city; these processes are in large part due to recent budgetary constraints, a problem for sub-state actors throughout Japan.

This highlights a difficulty which sub-state actors can face in creating links with other countries – their degree of autonomy. Clearly, sub-state actors are ultimately controlled by the state; however, the amount of leeway they have to collect their own taxes and thereby fund international activities is crucial. In the case of Japan, only 44 per cent of local government expenditure is covered by taxes that local governments can collect themselves (MIC 2009), with the rest being controlled by the central government or other sources. Therefore, their ability to decide whether to allocate money towards international activities is curtailed by national policies. This autonomy question will be different in each country, but by their very nature, sub-state agents' activities may be limited in this way.

Despite these problems, it can be seen that, if they are allowed the freedom to act, sub-state actors can be effective agents of soft power in international relations.

NGOs and the Japan–China Friendship Association: the flexibility of non-state agents

The final case study (Chapter 7) examined the role of NGOs as non-state agents of soft power, and in particular the Japan–China Friendship Association as a representative of a non-state agent. The role of non-state agents in the global system has become more widely acknowledged in recent years, although it is less studied in the context of international relations. The JCFA and other NGOs were found to have contributed to the building of links between Japan and China, in a highly flexible manner not limited by diplomatic problems, thereby enabling the flow of information and ideas from Japan to China.

The JCFA established its position as one of the leading non-governmental organisations with a role in exchanges between Japan and China in 1950. During the years prior to normalisation of relations between the two countries, the JCFA carried out numerous cultural exchange activities, and helped to build people-to-people links between Japan and China, thereby creating goodwill in China, despite the difficult atmosphere which had been created by Japan's violent invasion of the country.

One activity the JCFA was able to use its links for was the finding of the remains of over 5000 Chinese people who had died in Japan during the war and before, and returning them to their families in China. In co-operation with other NGOs, it also helped to organise the return of about 35,000 Japanese people stranded in China after the war. The contacts and goodwill the JCFA had built up were further utilised to organise exchanges of sports teams, arts groups, and films between the two countries. The organisation was also able to maintain links through which information about both countries passed to contacts, for example through Hong Kong (at that time a British territory).

After a period of factional splits and disorganisation during the 1960s and early 1970s, the JCFA reorganised itself and managed to use the links it had maintained to assist with the building of new sister city relationships between Japanese and Chinese cities. In the following years it reorganised itself into a more decentralised structure in order that local chapters could pursue their own activities, using old links and creating new local links with Chinese regions to facilitate people-to-people exchanges and the flow of information between the two countries. One particularly notable activity it organised which enabled the flow of Japanese soft power into China was when the JCFA invited the officials from the central government of China and from the regions to make a trip around Japan, so they could view for themselves the advanced societal, industrial and technological progress which had been made in the previous decades. Another activity, which clearly shows the ability of the JCFA to transfer the soft power of its Japanese members' values and ideals, was the contribution of funds and Japanese volunteers towards the restoration of the Nanjing city walls in 1995–8. This activity created people-to-people links between thousands of Japanese and Chinese, in addition to transmitting Japanese ideas of conservation, heritage and co-operation to people in China through the direct links and through the media coverage.

The JCFA is an example of how NGOs in Japan have been able to act as agents of Japan's soft power. Various other Japanese NGOs act in similar ways to create links between Japan and China, through which information and ideas flow, enabling the action of Japan's soft power. A wide variety of NGOs act at different levels of society, with some links being formed between government officials, regional government officials, companies, institutions, and all sorts of private interested citizens with the help of these NGOs. The JCFA has created links at all of these levels, while some other NGOs focus on just one level. NGOs such as the JCFA and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation make a point of creating links between individuals, enabling them to meet face-to-face and exchange opinions and ideas. In the case of the state agent and even the sub-state agent there seems to be an air of formality covering exchanges, which usually involve formal letters, ceremonies or agreements, whereas NGOs appear to have more ability to create less formal relationships between people in both countries, thus enabling the smoother transmission of ideas and information between people. If two people are communicating informally, and perhaps meeting face-to-face, it is more likely that a wide variety of ideas and information will pass between them than if communication is carried out only through formal letters.

The number and variety of NGOs is a key point; this flexibility enables them to create a multitude of different kinds of links between the two countries. They are certainly not as restrained as state or sub-state agents by circumstances. Even during the period when no formal diplomatic relations existed between Japan and China, NGOs were able to bridge the gap between the two countries, and build links between people on both sides. This can equally be seen in recent years in terms of Japan–China relations. During the Koizumi administration there was an unusually low level of contact between top political leaders in Japan and China due to strong disagreements between the two regimes, such as in the matter of Prime Minister Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, and the Chinese government's apparent encouragement of anti-Japanese sentiment in China on several occasions. Despite these problems, which have certainly affected state agents' ability to maintain healthy links between the two countries as noted earlier, NGOs' activities have been almost totally unaffected. In fact, it seems that the lack of governmental contact has actually stimulated NGOs to increase their activities, and even increased the number of NGOs working on building links between the two countries; for example, the Japan–China Friendship Fund was created by the SPF as a result of the diplomatic breakdown caused by the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989.

These findings about NGOs in Japan could be applied to NGOs in any other country. As communication between groups of people, in various locations near and far from each other, becomes cheaper and even almost cost-free, it becomes increasingly feasible for like-minded individuals to form their own organisations which deal with issues of concern to their members. Governments in many advanced industrialised countries have deregulated or currently are deregulating their economies, leading to this kind of organisation being cheaper to set up, and freer from state interference than may have been the case in the past. Japan is a

case in point, where the state did not regard non-state organisations favourably until relatively recently; however, this can be said of many countries both at present and in the past. Hence, in this age of globalisation and liberalisation, NGOs seem to be the ideal agents of soft power. They do not usually have the means or inclination to act coercively; they create countless links between people and organisations across borders through which ideas, information and peoples' values can flow. This soft power which is transmitted necessarily reflects the values of the NGOs' members, but such is the variety of NGOs that a wide variety of people's ideas is transmitted, that is, no one NGO in a country has a monopoly over the ideas which are transmitted to another country.

Research questions and hypotheses revisited

The questions which were initially posed in Chapter 1 will now be considered.

What is soft power?

As explained in Chapter 3, soft power is the transmission of a country's or group of people's attractive ideas and information to another country by an agent, in a non-coercive or co-operative manner. As the non-coercive nature of soft power is an important point, the issue of who can decide what ideas or information is transmitted is also important. For the best effect, the receiver of the ideas decides what ideas to absorb; however the mutual quality of soft power is also important, i.e. it is most likely that both sides will benefit from the information transmission. In the case of the Japan Foundation, students want to learn Japanese, and the Foundation wants to encourage take-up of the language in China. In the Kobe City example, Tianjin wished to learn about port technology, and Kobe wished to help Tianjin and its port develop due to the prospect of good ties (both for business and other reasons) in the future. Hence, the transmission of soft power has been shown to often be a two-way process.

In the case of Japan, a large pool of such ideas and information are available to be transmitted. A few examples of these ideas and information which were found in the case studies examined in this book will now be considered.

Traditional and contemporary popular culture

As related in Chapter 5, the Japan Foundation's first activities in China included sending traditional *kabuki* dance troupes to perform in Beijing and other cities. Traditional musicians, such as *koto* players and *taiko* drummers have also been sent to China; the JCFA has supported this kind of activity, for example, by supporting an exhibition about the Silk Road in 2002 and various other art exhibitions and shows promoting the idea of shared cultural tradition (JCFA 2006). It seems that many Chinese people are interested in such performances and exhibitions, perhaps because they were not seen in China for many decades after the Second World War, until the resumption of diplomatic contacts. Additionally, Japanese

traditional culture is seen as strongly linked (or even derived from) traditional Chinese culture, and so the perceived common cultural roots attract audiences.

The Japan Foundation was also found to have sent modern films from Japan, depicting its contemporary culture, to China for display in film festivals and on television. These films attract Chinese who wish to know about modern Japanese people, society, trends and values, as again the ways in which Japan has changed since the Second World War were not widely known about in China until recently, partly due to the lack of material in the education system. Furthermore, the Japan Foundation has supported performances in China by popular Japanese ('J-pop') musicians whose music often attracts many fans there, and contemporary dance groups and exhibitions which attract many interested Chinese. These Japanese soft power resources are attractive to Chinese people, as they represent ideas of modern style, fashion, and consumerism in addition to their intrinsic artistic value.

Language and technical knowledge

The Japanese language was found to be very attractive to Chinese people for a wide variety of reasons. The Japan Foundation is a major provider of Japanese language training and scholarships both in China and Japan for Chinese students. NGOs also often offer scholarships for Chinese students to go to Japan to study the language at universities and schools.

The Japanese language is attractive due to the wealth of knowledge available in Japanese; in particular scientific and technical knowledge is very sought after by Chinese people who wish to find good jobs in the highly competitive job market in China. As Japan has been through its own period of rapid industrialisation, Chinese people are keen to learn from its experiences, in terms of technological, environmental and social issues. The vast majority of knowledge relating to Japanese experiences is only available in Japanese, which means that it is necessary to learn the language to take advantage of this. The attraction of Japan's technical skills and academic knowledge is also demonstrated by the success of the many conferences and discussion meetings which have been sponsored by the Japan Foundation, the JCFA and many other NGOs.

In addition, much Western knowledge has been translated into Japanese, and the Japanese language is thought by Chinese to be easier to learn than English, due to both languages using similar ideographical characters which originated in China. Many Chinese are also interested in Japanese literature, which reflects Japanese society and experiences.

Thus the language, for the various reasons detailed above, is an important Japanese soft power resource.

Ideas and ideals

Japanese society's modern ideals are attractive to Chinese people; in particular those which seem relevant to China's own current development and its related problems. For example, environmentalism is starting to become important in China, as leaders and citizens become more aware of the environmental degradation

which is occurring at an increasingly rapid pace throughout the country. Chinese local governments have appealed to their sister cities (including Kobe City) in Japan for ideas and assistance in dealing with environmental problems, based on the fact that Japanese local governments have had to deal with similar problems in the recent past. Many Japanese NGOs are also active in China in this area, co-operating with locals to solve their environmental problems.

Also linked to the problem of rapid industrialisation is the ideal of conservation of heritage. The JCFA's programme in Nanjing is one good example of how Japanese ideals and experiences of heritage conservation are attractive to Chinese, as more and more old buildings and neighbourhoods are being demolished, in particular by local governments keen on building new industry and commercial areas in China.

Many Japanese NGOs, by working in China, transmit ideas about international co-operation, civil society and human rights to locals; the JCFA's programme of work in ethnic minority regions of China is just one example of this. In addition, an example of a state agent which transmits these kinds of ideas is JICA, an agency of MOFA.

Another ideal which is attractive to the rising middle classes of China is affluence, together with consumerism and its attendant ideas. Students, who are sponsored to come to Japan by grants from various government departments and agencies including the Japan Foundation, NGOs, and through educational and sports exchanges organised by local governments and their schools, are exposed to the full force of a particularly Japanese style of consumerism, with its rapidly changing fashions, trends and imagery which are pushed by a bewildering variety of media outlets. These (not necessarily universally admired) values are also transmitted through the popular culture sent to China by the Japan Foundation and other organisations which support this kind of exchange.

These ideas and ideals collectively represent a vast pool of soft power resources for Japanese agents to utilise in dealing with other countries.

How is soft power instrumentalised? How does it benefit the acting country?

It was hypothesised in Chapter 1 that agents were involved in transferring the information and ideas outlined above into other countries. This was expanded into the theory of soft power detailed in Chapter 3. This proposed that agents create links between two countries (such as information links, physical links and people-to-people links) and transmit the ideas and information across these links from one country into the other country. These attractive ideas then diffuse into the society and culture in the receiving country, causing a range of benefits for the transmitting country. For example, people in the receiving country may feel encouraged to create further links with the transmitting country, or to put ideas into practice which may enable the two countries to interact in a more mutually beneficial way.

In the case studies, evidence was found to support these hypotheses. For example, the Japan Foundation, in providing ways for the Japanese language

to be taught in China, has enabled the language to become more widely known there. Students use their Japanese language skills to interact with Japanese people, whether in China or when working in Japan. This clearly makes interactions such as trade and communication easier for Japanese people.

Kobe City, in creating its links with Chinese cities such as Tianjin and in the Yangzi Valley, has sent information about its investment environment and attractions to Chinese local governments and companies, which have then set up offices in Kobe to facilitate trade and investment in the region. Kobe City's long cultivation of links with Tianjin has also enabled information about itself, and Japan more generally, to become well diffused in Tianjin which has attracted students to come and study there. Some of these students in turn have been successfully encouraged by the city to set up businesses in Kobe and other parts of Japan, further strengthening ties with China.

The JCFA, in contrast, has concentrated on creating personal links between its members (and their communities) and Chinese people by organising sports events in which both participate, co-operative environmental and heritage projects, and home stays for young people. With these activities, the JCFA has enabled the Japanese ideal of co-operation and information about Japan's people and society to disseminate among Chinese people. While it is difficult to evaluate in concrete terms the benefits of these individual links, it is likely that these ideas have some effect in the minds of their Chinese recipients, which will be reflected positively in their future views of and dealings with Japan and its people.

Which agents best enable soft power to be transmitted?

Some ideas regarding the way in which different agents can transfer ideas and information between countries can be discerned from the case studies.

The Japan Foundation, as a state agent specialising in cultural exchange, was found to be well resourced and connected, and so is able to create a large number and variety of links in a well-coordinated manner. Its funding programmes and directly administered activities in China all target slightly different methods of creating links in order to be as efficient as possible in this goal. Kobe City, on the other hand, has a much more restricted budget for its international activities, and therefore has had to use these resources carefully; this was demonstrated by its need to close offices in non-priority cities abroad, in order to concentrate on Seattle, Tianjin and other Chinese areas.

Nevertheless, the city has been able to build up long-term, good quality links between Japan and China. Individually, cities and other sub-state agents cannot compete with a state agent such as the Japan Foundation in terms of the number of links they create, but the sheer number of sub-state agents more than makes up for this, and the quality of the links can be as good as those of the state agent. As has been noted previously, the state agent is also affected by problems between Japan and China's governments much more than the sub-state agent, which in turn can affect the quality of its links. NGOs, perhaps even more than sub-state agents, are almost unaffected by government policies. They can create links even when

there are no state-to-state relations, as shown by the JCFA before 1972, after the Tiananmen Incident in 1989, and during the time Prime Minister Koizumi was in power in Japan from 2001 to 2006.

Despite the fact that NGOs (and other non-state actors) are becoming more and more important in international relations, the Japan Foundation, as a state agent, has had some difficulty in working with Chinese NGOs, whereas non-state agents such as the JCFA and the SPF routinely work with them. Kobe City does not have many dealings with NGOs in China, but has created links with other Chinese non-state actors, that is, companies.

Hence, if it is accepted that globalisation is proceeding apace, and therefore that non-state actors are becoming more important within the global system, it can be seen that non-state agents of soft power, and sub-state agents, have an advantage in terms of the links they can create across borders. With more links, there is more potential for soft power in the form of ideas and information to flow into other countries, thus benefiting the transmitting country.

Soft power, its agents and constructivism in international relations

This book has presented various new perspectives on the idea of soft power. A framework of how soft power actually works has been created and tested, using the idea of agents and their role in the transmission of the attractive ideas and information which are the base of soft power. Constructivist precepts have been used to analyse how soft power works by looking not purely at central governments and their actions, but at another kind of state agent, a sub-state agent and additionally a non-state agent.

The use of such concepts as ideas, information, non-state actors as well as state actors as a central part of this theory has emphasised the position of constructivism as an important part of the international relations literature. While constructivist precepts are now widely debated and accepted within the Western international relations academic community, this way of looking at the global system is not yet widespread among the more realist-leaning academics of Japan and China, where, for example, little attention has been paid to non-state actors.

In terms of theories of power in international relations, the importance of recognising non-realist ways of looking at power has been emphasised. The simple view that power is always a selfish and purely realist part of international relations has been countered with an explanation of different types of power which evoke mutual benefits and advantages for the user gained in a non-coercive manner backed up with empirical data on these processes.

The role of cultural exchange oriented state actors in international relations has also been recognised, including the way in which they act as agents of soft power, and their advantages and disadvantages in doing so. The role of sub-state actors in international relations has also been explored, and the importance of these actors in international relations has been highlighted in a way which is not often found in the current international relations literature, and their role as agents of soft power

within the global system has been explored in practical terms. The book has also examined the role of NGOs in international relations, again a relatively sparse area. NGOs' work across borders is often commented upon in the recent literature, but their actual role as actors in the international system is rarely discussed. Here, their role as agents of soft power has been explored.

Finally, the need to understand Japan–China relations and Japan's international relations more generally has been emphasised. Regarding the case studies used, the Japan Foundation as a primary grantor of research funds in the field of Japanese studies is not often analysed or criticised inside or outside Japan; this book has brought to light information allowing the Foundation to be understood more deeply. There is little academic literature specifically examining the Foundation and other agencies in Japan engaged in cultural diplomacy or international exchange, and so it is hoped this study has contributed towards rectifying this situation. Sub-state local governments as independent actors in Japan have also been studied by very few academics writing in English,[1] and the case study of Kobe City has therefore helped to uncover these actors' roles. Finally, little has been written about the Japan–China Friendship Association in Japanese or English, and little is known outside Japan about Japanese international NGOs or how they operate in China; hence it is hoped that this book has served to provide information and analysis of these NGOs and how they relate to Japan's international relations and soft power. It is also hoped that the comparison of these three types of actors has contributed to a deepening of knowledge about Japan's international relations

The importance of Japan's and China's bilateral relations in the global system has been emphasised, in the light of their growing political and (especially in the case of China) economic roles in the world. It is imperative that academics and others in the West realise the significance of these trends, in order to be able to deal with these countries constructively in the future.

Issues and possible areas for further research

In this study, a new way of looking at soft power and how it works has been proposed. Nevertheless, as with any study, a host of additional issues and questions have been created.

This book has taken the perspective of the user of soft power, and analysed the manner in which agents transmit ideas and information. However, it has not been possible to closely trace how the information becomes embedded in the society of the receiving country, and hence how it affects the receiving country directly. Goldstein and Keohane (1993) provide some more clues about the process for institutions, and studies such as Dobson (2003) provide more ideas about norms in international institutions, but answering this question for a whole country would require the use of opinion polls, or in the case of ideas which have been embedded in the past, a study of exactly where an idea was received and began to become a part of the receiving country's stock of ideas and information. After this, how the idea led to changes in the receiving society, and eventually to its international policies could be considered. The level of detail and close investigation required

for such research would make it a massive undertaking. It would also be of interest to compare many other kinds of different agents, such as individuals, different kinds of companies, NGOs, sub-governmental and governmental agents. Furthermore, to determine whether all soft power transactions work in the way proposed in the book, it would be necessary to take examples from a variety of countries. Finally, a historical study, which looked at the methods of soft power transfer in history to determine whether the fundamental ideas of this book had changed over time would also be of interest. These are projects which it is hoped will be investigated in the future.

Nevertheless, this study has provided a starting point to show how soft power acts in international relations, how constructivist ideas are essential parts of the international relations equation, and how non-coercive transactions can be a vital ingredient of relations between countries.

Notes

1 Introduction

1 Several comprehensive studies of post-War Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations exist in English, including Coox and Conroy (1978), Mendl (1978), Jain (1981), Barnett (1977), and Leng (1958). Many studies are available in Japanese and Chinese, of which a few examples are Mori (2006), Ishii *et al.* (2003), Soeya (1995), Tian (1996), Yamane (1996), Wu (1995), Tanaka (1991) and Furukawa (1988). Works which analyse contemporary Sino–Japanese relations from various angles include Wan (2006), Wang (2005), Rose (2005, 1998), Austin and Harris (2001), Taylor (1996), Howe (1996) and Whiting (1989).

2 A study of the impact of soft power on a country would be useful to test the theories presented in this book. However, it is considered that such a project would require data collection (opinion polls etc.) over many years on a scale which is beyond the resources of this study, and therefore this question will not be covered here.

3 In this book, the terms 'sub-state' and 'sub-state local government' will be used interchangeably to indicate this definition.

4 All of these types of sub-state agent will be referred to as 'local governments' in this book.

5 The population of Kobe City was 1.54 million as of January 2010 (Kobe City 2010b).

4 Japan's political and cultural relations with China

1 These trade statistics are particularly variable depending on their sources and methodology, but are nevertheless indicative of the scale of Japan–China trade.

2 Much of this trade is initiated and conducted by Japanese companies which have set up subsidiaries or joint ventures in China (see Austin and Harris 2001, Taylor 1996, Shambaugh 1996).

3 It is, however, difficult to determine the origin of investment labelled as coming through Hong Kong, the Virgin Islands and other off-shore tax-efficient sources.

5 The activities of the Japan Foundation in China

1 In 2006, a new internet-based initiative, the 'Japan Foundation China Centre' was launched in order to carry out this strategy: http://www.chinacenter.jp/ (Accessed 24 August 2006).

6 Kobe City's activities in China

1 In this incident, the Shimane Prefectural Assembly unilaterally asserted Japanese sovereignty over the Takeshima/Dokdo islands between Japan and Korea, which are controlled by South Korea, thus leading Gyeongsongbuk-do to cancel its sister city relationship with Shimane Prefecture.

2 This proportion increases further when it is considered that the cost of goods and services in China is less than one quarter of that in the US on average.

3 In 2003 (latest available figures), while the US share went down to 30.5 per cent, China's share plummeted to 22.6 per cent – most probably due to the SARS epidemic in China curtailing exchanges.

7 The activities of the Japan–China Association in China

1 In this chapter, the term 'NGO' will generally be used. However, when specifically referring to groups incorporated under the Japanese NPO law, the term 'NPO' may be used.

2 In this incident, a PRC flag was torn down and trampled upon during a trade promotion exhibition in a Nagasaki department store in May 1958. The police did not respond to the incident, and the Japanese government's attitude was that it was not an official flag (as they did not recognise the PRC), and so did not require a response. This attitude was to lead to protests and ill-will in China against the Kishi government.

3 Although a split between factions of the Japan Socialist Party and the Japan Communist Party, caused by the ideological split between China and the Soviet Union, was reflected in their affiliated cultural exchange groups (Lee 1978).

4 A small but significant amount of trade between Japan and China had restarted since 1949, and Japanese non-governmental business groups had concluded an agreement in 1952 with their Chinese counterparts regarding this (Iriye 1996).

5 The term JCFA will hereafter refer to the 'legitimate' group unless otherwise stated: the group allied to the Japan Communist Party conducted no subsequent exchanges, and had no further relations with China until a recent reconciliation with the CPC, and so is not considered relevant to this study of Japan's soft power in China.

8 Conclusions

1 An important and recent study which has examined this field is Jain (2005).

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