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The state-in-society approach to the study of democratization with examples from Japan

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How does an undemocratic country create democratic institutions and transform its polity in such a way that democratic values and practices become integral parts of its political culture? This article uses the case of Japan to advocate for a new theoretical approach to the study of democratization. In particular, it examines how theoretical models based on the European and North American experiences have difficulty explaining the process of democratization in Japan, and argues that a state-in-society approach is better suited to explaining the democratization process' diverse cultural contexts. Taking a bottom-up view of recent developments in Japanese civil society through the close examination of two cases – one traditional organization dating from the pre-war era (neighbourhood associations) and one new-style group formed in 2000 (Association of New Elder Citizens) – this article illustrates how Japanese citizens have democratized their political culture at the grassroots. The state-in-society approach to democratization is particularly useful for the study of democratization processes in non-Western countries where the development of democracy requires not only the modification of a traditional political culture but also the development of new, indigenous, democratic ideas and practices.

Keywords: civil society; comparative politics; comparative democratization; democracy; democratization; grassroots organisations; Japan; political culture; political theory; state; society; volunteerism

Contemporary Japanese democracy is not merely a pale reflection of American and Western European liberal democratic traditions. It is a rich political system with a long history that is the product of a collective response by both state and society aimed at addressing pressing social and political problems, resulting in the mutual transformation of state and societal institutions, values, and practices. Contemporary perspectives on democratization are predominantly rooted in Western European and American historical experiences. Since these countries were the first to build democracies, it is quite reasonable for our concepts of

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democracy and the way that we expect democratic formation to occur to be influenced by these early democratization experiences. However, this Euro-American perspective is no longer adequate. Polities on nearly every continent, representing a multitude of religious and ethnic communities, have now experimented with democratization, and many have successfully democratized. Unfortunately, theoretical models have not necessarily kept up with this profound transformation in the global political landscape.

This article argues that the state-in-society approach to democratization is better able to account for the experience of late democratizing countries than many Western-based accounts. This approach offers a framework for understanding how the ideas of democracy are transformed into the practice of democracy, and how the practice of democracy transforms the ideas of democracy. Both the ideas and the practice of democracy are historically and geographically situated; they are a function of the time and place where they are created and recreated, and they are in constant motion. As one of the earliest non-Western, non-white, non-Christian countries to adopt a democratic constitution Japan offers an excellent opportunity for a theory-building case study to explore this process of democratization and uncover some of the important factors that empower a polity to democratize.

The first section of this article will offer a review of the literature and explain how the state-in-society approach is useful for the study of democratization. The second section will show how traditional theories of democratization have difficulty explaining the process in Japan and provides a brief explanation for why the Japanese case is particularly useful for developing a new approach. The last section will examine the process of democratization at the grassroots level in Japan through a close examination of two civil society organizations. The first, neighbourhood associations, were fully incorporated into Japan's fascist imperial state and have since, slowly, transformed into fully functioning democratic organizations. The experience of this group highlights the difficulties of transforming an undemocratic (even anti-democratic) civic organization into a democratic one.

The second example is the New Elder Citizens, a much newer organization that formed in 2000. While this group was democratic from its inception, it had the challenge of incorporating not only (relatively) new liberal democratic values and practices into its organization, but it also had to find ways to include and honour important traditional political values and practices as well. The first group tells the story of how traditional (pre-democratic) political ideas and practices have been transformed into democratic ones and liberal democratic ideas and practices have been modified to accommodate traditional ideas and practices. The latter group tells the story of how newly formed civic organizations create groups that represent a hybrid of liberal democratic and traditional political values and practices. Both examples demonstrate the benefits of the state-in-society approach to the study of democratization and the difficulties of traditional democratic theory to explain these democratization experiences.

Before moving on I want to offer a few comments about my methodology. This article is drawing on information collected during approximately three years of

fieldwork in Japan during which I conducted more than 200 interviews with government officials, nonprofit leaders, and volunteers, and collected many reams of paper and electronic gigabytes worth of official documents as well as formal and informal publications put out by the nonprofit groups. Out of approximately 30 organizations whose leaders and/or members I interviewed, I have selected two groups to highlight here. I have selected these groups because their experiences illustrate the inadequacies of traditional theoretical approaches and the benefits of the state-in-society approach for the study of democratization.

Building democracy

While acknowledging that democracy is an ‘essentially contested concept’,¹ perhaps the most commonly used definition of democracy comes from Abraham Lincoln who defined it as ‘government of the people, by the people, for the people’.² Thus, in order for a country to be democratic, its leaders must be drawn from among its citizens. The public must select those leaders through some kind of free and fair electoral process. And, the government must be held accountable to the people.

One of the core arguments of this article is that while Lincoln’s general concept of democracy must hold in order for a country to be considered democratic, the local manifestations of that concept are specific to time and place and are dynamic. Who are the people? Do they include women? Ethnic minorities? Gays? Foreigners? A polity’s answers to those questions changes over time and place. The political battles over who is included in that category of ‘people’ are fundamental to the struggle for and about democracy; they are ongoing and never ending. Exactly what it means for the government to be ‘of, by, and for’ the people is equally contested and a polity’s answers to those questions also change over time. Although it is possible to come up with a standard, idealized, abstract definition of democracy, as I have done in employing Lincoln’s, one of the fundamental projects of this article is to demonstrate that the idea of democracy and its practice are highly specific to local context.

Lincoln’s definition of democracy draws attention to the two ‘sides’ involved in governance: the government and the people. Theories of democracy have generally focused on one side or the other. Theories that are rooted in ‘the people’ are particularly concerned with the values held by citizens, often tracing their intellectual roots to Alexis DeTocqueville’s famous observation of early nineteenth century America as recorded in *Democracy in America*. In his section on political associations DeTocqueville discusses how children are taught from infancy to be self reliant, to form private groups to solve collective problems, and to be suspicious of governmental authority. The importance of additional democratic values such as equality and freedom are discussed at length in many of the other sections of his book in political, economic, as well as social contexts.³

Picking up on DeTocqueville’s emphasis on the importance of education in the formation of democratic values, John Dewey and other early twentieth century

American pragmatists developed concrete systems of education that would promote democratic values around the world. Indeed, for Dewey, a primary goal of education was to inculcate these values among the citizenry so that they had the 'habits of mind and character' that would enable democracy to flourish.⁴

More recent theorists have been able to take advantage of advanced statistical methods and large cross-national surveys to test relationships between individual values and democratic outcomes. In his contribution to modernization theory, which posited a linear path from economic to democratic development, Seymour Lipset argued that education was the greatest predictor of democratic development.⁵ Subsequently, Almond and Verba used the cases of five democracies (US, Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico) to argue that democracies are promoted by a 'civic culture' in which citizens are active and have high levels of interpersonal trust.⁶ Once again, education was found to play an important role in the transmission of this pro-democratic culture. Ronald Inglehart⁷ has also supported these findings with extensive statistical analyses based on the large World Values Surveys database now spanning nearly three decades from 1980. Inglehart and others using his surveys have found strong correlations between certain values such as tolerance, interpersonal trust, and norms of equality with the endurance of political democracy.⁸

A second group of scholars concentrate more on the state in their analyses of democratization. In fact, many contemporary scholars studying the democratization process focus their efforts not on individual citizen values but rather on governmental institutions. Within this group of scholars one subset are part of the 'rational choice' school that examines political behaviour as the collective outcome of rational choices of individual actors seeking to maximize their preferences. These rational actors, whether they are leaders or citizens, make choices within the constraints of their institutional environments. As a result, democratization is viewed as primarily a function of the institutions that structure the choices available to different political actors.

Margaret Levi has studied early democratizers from this perspective.⁹ She has argued that the democratic franchise expanded in Europe and the United States as a direct result of the desire of non-democratic rulers to stay in power and increase their revenue. Rulers had to concede greater political power (parliamentary power and broader suffrage) in order to obtain citizen compliance with military drafts and cooperation with higher tax collection. Many other scholars who emphasize the importance of state institutions on the development of democracy focus their examinations on electoral systems as the fundamental institutional guarantor of representative government. Joseph Schumpeter¹⁰ has put forward a minimalist definition of democracy as a political institutional arrangement in which leaders are selected by competitive elections.¹¹ Others have examined how relatively slight modifications of the electoral system can result in significant variations in governance structures. For example, Arend Lijphart (1984) has found that countries with majoritarian (winner-take-all) electoral systems have tended to have much stronger executive branches, a two-party structure, and a contentious

decision making process that favoured the majority.¹² Countries with a proportional representation electoral system have tended to have weaker executive branches, a multiparty structure, and a consensual decision-making structure that favoured minority rights.

A third group of scholars do not focus their inquiry directly on the state or society but rather on the amorphous political and civic space between the two, that is civil society. Although this literature often claims its roots in DeTocqueville's study of associations, the most recent upsurge was touched off by Robert Putnam's *Making Democracy Work*, which argued that social capital and civic culture were the keys to making democracy work.¹³ His study of Italy found that in spite of very similar electoral and governmental institutions, democracy worked much better (higher rates of public participation, less governmental corruption, etc.) in the north than in the south because the former had a more democratic civic culture and higher levels of social capital than the south.

Although she takes a more state-oriented perspective, Theda Skocpol has also examined how the practices of civil society have affected the quality of democracy in the United States, in other words what people are actually doing on the ground rather than merely formal institutions.¹⁴ In particular, a shift from old-style chapter-based federations in which members gathered face-to-face in regular meetings to new-style advocacy organizations where people largely participate by sending in a cheque and reading a newsletter, has 'diminished' political participation in the United States.¹⁵ Other critics have pointed out that a strong civil society does not always have a positive effect on democratic development.¹⁶ Thus, in addition to the design of governmental institutions and citizen values, civil society's influence on democratic development has become a rich area of research for scholars of developing countries.¹⁷

One of the reasons why Japan offers such a marvelous opportunity for a theory-building case study is that these three theoretical perspectives have very different things to say about Japanese democratization. Indeed, the picture that they paint is so diverse, it is very similar to the famous allegory of the blind men who are touching different parts of an elephant and cannot recognize that they all have their hands on the same animal because what they feel is so different.

Divergent perspectives on Japan's democratization

Theories of democratization have widely divergent perspectives on the question of the development of democracy in Japan – from some perspectives such as those examining socio-economic context or institutions, it is a 'most likely' case for democratic success, while for others, such as those focusing on political culture, it seems 'least likely', even impossible.

In 1947 when its current constitution was adopted, Japan had many of the contextual factors that have been found to support new democracies, such as enjoying especially high levels of education and (prior to the devastation of the war) economic development.¹⁸ The country also did not face many of the conditions that

have been found to undermine democratization efforts such as ethnic heterogeneity, insecure borders, or a history of being a colonial subject.¹⁹ Thus, from a structural or contextual perspective, democracy in Japan was a likely, almost inevitable development.

Scholars who place primacy on the importance of state institutions have a positive outlook toward Japan's democracy, since its constitution was designed largely by Americans and many of the key democratic institutions – free press, independent judiciary, democratic educational system, constrained and local police force, etc. – were implemented under the Allied Occupation.²⁰ Because contemporary Japanese democracy was designed by an occupying force and implemented by a small set of elite politicians, Japan has often been characterized by scholars as a 'top-down democracy'.²¹ From this institutionalist perspective, Japanese democracy was accomplished by adopting a new set of democratic political institutions that mimicked Western models; the process was relatively quick, and the results very successful.

The question of Japan's democratization looks very different from the perspective of theories that put their emphasis more on citizen values and indigenous cultural practices. This was the perspective of many occupation officials who were designing the document that would become Japan's post-war constitution. Although they were hopeful, they were also highly skeptical of their own efforts and many thought the project to be merely a dream that was unlikely to succeed. As Joseph Grew, undersecretary of state and former US ambassador to Tokyo phrased it at the time, 'from the long range point of view the best we can hope for in Japan is the development of a constitutional monarchy, experience having shown that democracy in Japan would never work'.²²

From this vantage point democracy in Japan was unlikely to succeed, and indeed many scholars who take this values perspective on democracy call into question whether even contemporary Japan has a 'real' democracy. In nearly all cross-national studies of 'democratic values' Japan trails behind other advanced democracies because its citizens have a set of values that are often characterized as 'illiberal' and 'undemocratic': for example, the Japanese remain skeptical of individual freedom, have a strong preference for social order, favour an interventionist rather than a limited government, and show a reluctance to engage in public protest.²³ As such, in cross-national studies of democratic values, Japan is usually found at the very bottom of the list of advanced democracies, and often mixed in with countries that are not considered democratic at all.²⁴ Thus, from the perspective of citizen values, it was not only highly unlikely that Japan would ever have become a democracy, it becomes somewhat questionable whether even contemporary Japan should count as a democracy.

A similar conclusion is reached when one surveys the literature on civil society in Japan. With very few exceptions,²⁵ scholars both inside and outside the country have concluded that Japan's civil society is substantially lacking. It is not only lacking the kind of advocacy organizations that are thought to be the key to the pro-democratic effects of a robust civil society, but it has considerable institutional constraints against the proliferation of those types of organizations.

Why has the literature on democratization come up with such very different predictions and portraits of Japanese democracy? Arguably, the foundations of all three theoretical perspectives on democratization – state institutions, citizen values, and civil society – are rooted in Euro-American philosophical and historical experience. However, theoretical models rooted in a Western perspective are unlikely to be able to fully explain how democracies have come about in non-Western countries. Nor can they clearly account for the types of democracies that have formed in those societies because those governing systems represent an amalgamation of liberal democratic and indigenous political traditions.

It is precisely because conventional explanations do not fit Japan that makes it such a useful case from which to build a new approach to democratization. The Japanese experience not only offers the chance to develop new ways to think about democracy, but it also provides a chance to answer enduring issues related to the interaction among the theories above. How do state institutions transform citizen values? How do new citizen values change governmental institutions? What is the role of civil society in these processes? Examining democratization in Japan and theorizing about how the process in that country may reveal a new perspective on democratization and offer insight into classic questions about state society–civil society political interactions.

State-in-society approach to democratization

This article uses the state-in-society approach formulated by Joel Migdal to develop a new theoretical approach to the study of democratization.²⁶ The state-in-society approach was first developed to help explain politics in the developing world. Frustrated by a discipline that often assumes a unitary and coherent state actor and focuses almost exclusively on formal institutional relationships, all of which are problematic assumptions when examining developing countries, Migdal developed the state-in-society approach to the study of politics. The key assumption of this approach is that states emerge from and are part of the societies in which they are situated. Thus, while states include ‘the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory’, the ‘actual practice of its multiple parts’, may or may not be consistent with that image.²⁷

The state-in-society approach grew as an effort to understand the politics of undemocratic and developing countries, and has thus far only been applied to examine politics in those contexts.²⁸ Indeed, neither ‘democracy’ nor ‘democratization’ is even indexed in the book *State in Society* (2001) where Migdal offers the most developed version of his theoretical approach. Although it was not its original purposes, the state-in-society approach has many elements that can, once further developed, be very helpful in explaining the apparent paradoxes revealed in explanations of Japanese democracy. Thus, this article uses Migdal’s state-in-society approach as the basis for a new theoretical approach to democratization. This approach, I argue, is better suited for explaining democratization in non-Western contexts than other theories currently available.

The state-in-society approach conceptualizes the state as embedded in rather than independent from its society. Migdal advocates a process-oriented approach to the study of politics that explicitly examines the *practices* of a state in addition to the *image* it portrays.²⁹ This article takes up that suggestion and demonstrates that an examination of practices can provide a necessary link between institutions and values in the study of democratization. Those practices also illuminate the important use of symbolic politics and rituals for changing the images that citizens and governments have of citizens, civic organizations, and government. In the state-in-society approach to democratization developed here, the democratization process is a long one involving the mutual transformation of state and societal institutions, values, and practices. Thus all three elements – institutions, values, and practices – are equally important to the democratization process, and they interact with one another. To reiterate, unlike the democratization literature discussed above which has tended to focus on either institutions or values and has at times neglected practices, this approach integrates all three and shows how they affect one another.

The following is an ideal-typical version of the process through which different political actors from state and society interact with one another to transform their undemocratic political system into a democratic one. The process begins with a political crisis – caused by endogenous or exogenous forces – that acts as a catalyst for the development of a new political system. At that moment political actors, both elite and grassroots, draw on multiple political resources from foreign and indigenous sources to craft the institutional structure of a new political system. Through a contested process that challenges the institutional constraints of the previous system, the new system is designed to meet the needs of their society.

For this transformation to count as the beginning of a democratization process, the new institutions must contain the beginnings of core democratic institutions³⁰ – for example, a free press, equal political rights for citizens, free and fair electoral system, and independent courts – that will act as the foundation for the development and proliferation of democratic values and practices. The new institutional structures will then promote a number of new democratic political values such as political equality, individual liberty, and social responsibility.

As these values are disseminated through society they will be modified in order to accommodate important traditional political values present in that particular society. For example, a liberal democratic value of political equality that emphasizes equal treatment for men and women, may be modified to become an understanding of gender equality such that men and women should have equal opportunities and be treated fairly and appropriately rather than the same.³¹

Similarly, traditional political values will also be modified in order to accommodate new liberal democratic values. To take the same example, traditional values may require men and women to have distinct roles and accordingly distinct civic organizations may be modified so that formerly all-male groups become more inclusive by creating a place for women, while at the same time women's roles within those groups may remain distinct from men's. Thus, traditional civic

organizations may become simultaneously more inclusive and diverse as they democratize.³²

Political institutions and values are manifested in the practices of governmental and societal organizations. Over time, organizational practices may be modified as a greater proportion of members and leaders have inculcated democratic values. New, pro-democratic practices may in turn reinforce the development and proliferation of democratic values. Once the number of political elites who have inculcated democratic values and have grown accustomed to democratic practices reaches a critical mass, then they are likely to have the opportunity to begin the process of institutional change anew. This new generation of political actors may take steps to remake fundamental political institutions in order to bring them into better alignment with the democratic values and practices now prevalent in society and make them more relevant to contemporary life.³³ As was the case for the earlier generation of reformers, these leaders may utilize a wide array of political resources drawn from both foreign and indigenous sources to help (re)create a political system that addresses their current needs. The democracy created out of this process will, once again, be an amalgamation of the indigenous political culture as well as Western-influenced liberal democracy.

Every step of this process is contested, sometimes peacefully, sometimes violently. Indeed, one of the benefits of the state-in-society approach is that it does not assume that the process of harmonizing diverse interests is a smooth one. Rather, it 'zeroes in on the conflict-laden interactions of multiple sets of formal and informal guideposts for how to behave that are promoted by different groupings in society'.³⁴

With a multitude of political values to choose from, leaders challenge each other about which ones will be institutionalized and what form those institutions will take. Some citizens and elites will oppose the reforms as new institutional structures restrict and restructure old ways of doing things. Their resistance and their innovation to overcome aspects that they do not like may take multiple forms, many of which are incompatible with one another. Societal groups compete for influence as they attempt to spread political practices consistent with their emerging value system. Savvy political entrepreneurs tend to make the most of opportunities created by accidents and serendipitous occasions and promote their own visions of the future. Some of them succeed in having those visions take root in the popular consciousness; most fail. Both the content of policies and the process through which they come about have unintended consequences that may not even become apparent until decades later. The process is often messy, painful, inspiring, and long.

One of the greatest benefits of this state-in-society approach to the study of democratization is that it does not privilege Western ways of thinking and doing over non-Western ways. Democratization is treated as a collective response to contemporary political problems, a process that must necessarily be renewed in all countries as societies change over time. By requiring a researcher to ground his or her study of a particular state in the society from which that state emerges, this

offers an analytically rigorous way of incorporating culture into the study of politics. This is particularly important in studies of democratization where the terms of the discussion have been largely dominated by the lens of Western, liberal democracy.

Bottom-up democracy in Japan

Traditional theories of democratization have a difficult time explaining the emergence of democracy in Japan. As discussed above, these theories can analyse the Japanese case – they can look at its institutional system, try to measure its cultural values, and assess the vibrancy of its civil society – but the conclusions that they draw are quite different from one another and hard to reconcile. Using the state-in-society approach to examine Japan's democratization gives us a better understanding of how the Japanese have transformed their undemocratic political system into a democratic one.

One of the greatest weaknesses of the current theories of democracy is that they tend to be rather stagnant – a country either has the correct institutions, values, or civil society organizations – or it does not. It is largely impossible, analytically, for these theories to account for democratization in a context of relatively consistent institutional structure. Similarly, cultural values are usually treated as a given, so the dynamic transformation of values – the modification of pre-democratic values to accommodate democratic ones or the transformation of democratic values to accommodate important traditional values – cannot be captured by current theories.

Finally, these theories can explain the democratization of a country's civil society landscape as long as new democratic civil society organizations (by which it is meant advocacy organizations found commonly in the West) are introduced and the old, pre-democratic civic organizations disappear. There is no way to account for the transformation of undemocratic civic organizations into democratic ones or the creation of 'hybrid' organizations that embody both new liberal democratic values and practices as well as values and practices that predated the introduction of democracy.

Rather than attempting to retell the broad story of Japanese democratization writ large, this next section will focus on the experience of two grassroots civic organizations: neighbourhood associations, and the New Elder Citizens. These groups would not be a subject of research for traditional theoretical approaches because those theories tend to focus on macro trends to the neglect of micro-processes. The experience of these organizations highlights both the weaknesses of traditional theoretical approaches as well as the strength of the state-in-society approach for studying democratization. Of paramount importance throughout is the role that every day practices play in linking institutional change to value change. These groups' experiences also highlight the cultural diversity of democracy. Creating a theoretical framework that can allow researchers to capture, account for, and explain this diversity is one of the primary benefits of the state-in-society approach to democratization.

Neighbourhood associations

Neighbourhood associations are by far the largest form of civic organization in Japan; an estimated 90% of all Japanese belong to their local neighbourhood association (about 115 million people).³⁵ Their widespread membership made the democratization of these groups vital to the democratization of Japan. A counterfactual example makes this clear: If this community organization to which 90% of all Japanese belong had retained its pre-war authoritarian political culture,³⁶ it would have been very difficult, even impossible, for the wider Japanese political culture to have democratized.

Neighbourhood associations in Japan act as an umbrella organization for community organizations and activities in a given neighbourhood and serve as an important pipeline of communication between local governments and their residents. Membership is based on residence in a particular small, walk-able neighbourhood or a defined building structure such as a condominium or apartment complex. The associations themselves undertake a wide range of activities from those intended to strengthen community ties such as summer festivals and sports days, to those related to public safety and sanitation such as night patrols and recycling campaigns, to more aesthetic and practical responsibilities like maintaining community green spaces and roads.

The associations are organized in a hierarchical structure such that the most local comprises a small residential unit (for example, a city block or single apartment complex), and the heads of the local groups form a district committee, the heads of the district committees form a city committee, the heads of the city committees form a prefectural committee, and the heads of a prefectural committee comprise a national organization. Although a structure exists at a national level, the power of these groups is primarily local and seems to stop at the city level. Thus, while there are several national organizations and none of them can claim to speak for all neighbourhood associations, there is only one city- or town-level association committee in any given municipality which can and does speak for all of the lower-level associations in that municipality.³⁷

Historically, neighbourhood associations trace their origins to the family grouping system that was introduced from China in 645 AD. It was expanded and formalized into the feudal Five Family Unit System of the Tokugawa period (1600–1868), where its primary functions were revenue collection and the administration of governmental sanctions.³⁸ During the rapid industrialization and urbanization of the Meiji period (1868–1912) the associations became more voluntary and were primarily aimed at improving the lives of residents through mutual-aid projects, working with the government on social welfare issues, and advocating with the government and private industry to improve local sanitation and environmental conditions. With the rise of militarism during the Showa period (1926–1989), membership was made mandatory for all households, and the organizations were given specific roles related to tax collection, distribution of rations, recruitment, and other tasks related to the home-front during wartime.³⁹

The neighbourhood associations' formal structure fell apart with the dissolution of much of the Japanese government after the war. Although there were some voices within the occupation administration who saw these organizations as having the potential to enhance the democratization effort in Japan,⁴⁰ the prevailing view was that the organizations were inherently undemocratic, had been critical to the 'success' of the totalitarian government, and should be eliminated. John Masland, a Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP) staff member writing in 1946, summed up the prevailing view among occupation officials:

The neighborhood association system thus is characteristic of totalitarianism and is contrary to the principles of democratic society. Under this system all Japan is organized in one vast hierarchy from smallest cell to the entire nation. Membership is compulsory and the individual is placed at the bottom of a series of commands reaching from the national ministries, through the prefecture, city, town and village to the hamlet, street association and neighborhood group.⁴¹

The organizations did not disappear, however. In the desperate and chaotic environment of the immediate post-war years, the groups helped the Japanese bureaucracy with information dissemination, public health, and rations distribution.⁴² The groups re-emerged immediately after the occupation's ban expired in 1952, and they continued to provide residents an institution for social cohesion and offered mutual aid to one another.

During the early post-war period although membership was technically voluntary in that it was not legally required, there was considerable pressure to join. Furthermore, although most groups held elections or decided leadership based on consensus, the leadership was generally chosen to reflect the patriarchal, social hierarchy of the neighborhood – everyone knew who was going to become the next leader, the post was often passed down from father to son, and meetings were often held in the chief's house since the organization frequently did not have a building of its own or the chief's family owned the building. Finally, while the local government did not have any formal, legal authority over these groups, the local and national bureaucracies relied on them heavily to promote various campaigns aimed at economic development, public health, education, etc. In other words, at the end of the war although the groups were no longer instruments of an imperialist military regime, they were far from being democratic organizations.⁴³

Indeed, although there was a slow, gradual shift throughout the post-war period, I argue here that many democratic practices were not fully incorporated into the groups for another 40 or 50 years, until the democratically educated post-war generation began to assume leadership roles and the groups began to have to compete for members and influence with other types of civic organizations. It is important to note that the changes outlined below occurred even while the institutions governing and organizing neighbourhood associations remained largely unchanged. One of the most valuable aspects of the state-in-society approach to democratization is that it reveals these pro (or anti) democratic

changes in citizen values and practices even in a context where the more obvious political institutions remain identical.

Democratic adjustments manifested themselves in these organizations in a myriad of ways, but two in particular deserve special attention: diversification of membership and equalization of the hierarchical authority structure within the group. Historically, the core members and leaders of neighbourhood associations tended to be either self-employed men or farmers who lived and worked in their neighbourhood. These two categories of people began to disappear in the late 1960s as the Japanese economy shifted toward a more urban, service-oriented structure, and more women entered the workforce (Figure 1).

These shifting demographics have required neighbourhood associations to alter their recruitment patterns. In particular, they have had to accommodate a more urban population that spent less time physically in the community since they were commuting to their jobs far from home. They have had to adjust their internal culture to appeal to younger Japanese citizens who were less willing to spend time on the bottom rung of a social hierarchy. Similarly, as the number of local farmers and self-employed men shrank, neighbourhood associations have had to become more open to women's participation and leadership.⁴⁴

Neighbourhood association membership is nearly universal in Japan, so both men and women have long been active in the organizations. Unfortunately, there are not yet systematic data on the leadership structure of neighbourhood associations, but the limited number of interviews that I conducted in 2001, 2002, and

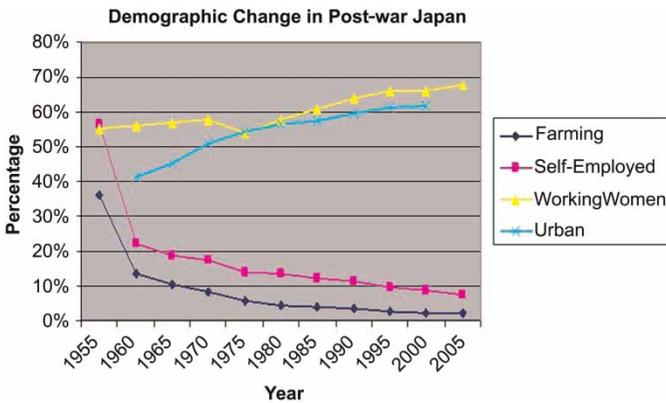


Figure 1. Demographic change in post-war Japan.

Source: Data from Japanese Historical Statistics: for farming and self-employed author calculated as a percentage of total employed population <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/jyutaku/2003/pdf/15-4.pdf> (Japanese, accessed 12 February 2008) and author calculated percentage of population living in densely inhabited districts as a percentage of the total population <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/chouki/zuhyou/02-06.xls> (Japanese, accessed 36 March 2008). Working women are as women ages 20–59 who are active in the workforce (calculated from chart 1A International Labor Organization statistics, http://laborsta.ilo.org/data_topic_E.html (accessed 16 October 2008).

2006 (20 neighbourhood association members or leaders from 10 different associations in six different municipalities), suggested that the top leadership is still male-dominated. Of the dozen or so neighbourhood association chiefs (both block and city level) that I interviewed, only one was a woman, and that was of block-level association – all of the city-level chiefs I spoke with were men.

The one woman neighbourhood association chief that I met was in her early 50s, very strong and outspoken. Not surprisingly, she came from a largely urban community, and her district was a large condominium complex filled primarily with younger, two-income families where husband and/or wife commuted to nearby Osaka for work; there were 1000 residents/members in her association. This gender disparity in the top leadership is likely to be partly a function of the fact that the unit of membership is still largely by household rather than individual (91% of organizations nationwide are organized this way), especially in more rural areas.⁴⁵ Women are active in lower levels of the organization, as committee-chiefs, project organizers, as liaisons with government offices and other civic organizations, and in a host of other capacities.

Since women were already members (although not leaders), the biggest challenge for the neighbourhood associations has been to find ways to incorporate young people and commuters who might not spend much time in the neighbourhood into their organizations, and to get them to stay. With democracy and greater freedom also came the ability to quit. The neighbourhood associations' solution to this problem has been to foster a sense of community responsibility, teaching young people the value of their community and their obligation to it.⁴⁶ They have also diversified their activities, especially in the urban areas where maintaining a high membership rate is most difficult. In the words of one neighbourhood association chief in an urban district, 'There is a lot more going on [now]: The disaster prevention groups, roads, school liaison groups, acting as a pipeline to the government, etc. Before, there weren't so many projects. The main purpose was to preserve the village, but now there is much more going on.'⁴⁷

Neighbourhood associations have also had to change their internal authority structure. In the words of one city-level association chief, 'In the post war period [the position of neighborhood association chief] was really a revered position – kind of like a boss. But now, it is much more like a servant of the people.'⁴⁸ Thus, the idea of what it meant to be a community leader had to be reconceptualized in a more democratic way – from local boss to a public servant. This change had already been under way, but was assisted by a 1994 change in the Local Autonomy Law, which enabled the incorporation of neighbourhood associations. Overnight the 'community buildings' that had been used by the neighbourhood associations for generations but were formally owned by a single person, usually the head of the association, were now owned by the association itself.

On a deeper level, there has been a generational shift in the membership, and especially in the leadership of the organizations. During an interview I conducted in 2006, in response to a question about the relationship between the

democratization of neighbourhood associations and broader Japanese society, a block-level neighbourhood association chief, Kojiro Shioji, remarked with the following explanation:

The neighborhood association democratized at the same time as society; they both did it together. There is a big difference between the people who are 80+ and the people in their 50s and 60s. The latter grew up in a democracy, whereas the former grew up in non-democracy. So, as the generation changed, democracy became real. Society wasn't used to democracy initially. Like all people, they didn't want to change their lifestyle. The neighborhood association was the same way. Then, as they got used to democracy, both society and the neighborhood association changed.

Before, the system was one where the older people pushed down – it was that kind of society. The younger people grew up thinking that everyone is free, but they didn't have as much power as the older people. As the younger people got power, now you see the changes, more freedom, more free competition, etc.

How does it happen? How do you get used to democracy?

The most important is that they got educated in school about democracy. Then, when they became 50 and 60, they have society's power. In Japanese society, the generation in their 50s and 60s are the ones with the most power, so when this generation became 50 and 60 – in the last 10 years or so – they came to the peak of society's power.

Because of their previous ties with the authoritarian, wartime regime, the democratization process for traditional organizations has required that they change not only their internal structure and practices but also their relationship with the government. As has already been indicated, this transformation has been dramatic. In 1946, the SCAP official described these groups as the 'bottom rung of a series of commands'.⁴⁹ Sixty years later, the contrast is striking. According to one neighbourhood association chief whom I'll call Mr Nagano, there has been a complete reversal of power – from state initiated policies to civil society initiated policies. 'It used to be that the city would ask us to do things, to cooperate with them on projects, and now we decide things to do ourselves... We decide what our problems are and then try to solve them, asking help from the city when necessary.'⁵⁰

Mr Nagano was describing a shift of power from the government to civil society. Rather than the city identifying a problem, crafting a solution, and then asking the traditional groups for help, the process had been reversed – the neighbourhood association would identify a problem, craft a solution, and then ask the city for help.⁵¹ Just as one would expect of a democracy that emerged from a political system like Japan's where a close state-society relationship has long been valued, both the government and civil society groups are still working closely together to address the needs of their community even if the nature of that relationship has changed.

Mr Nagano located the timing of this change to be three or four years prior to when I spoke with him in 2006. Why did it change then? I asked. Smiling proudly,

'I became the leader [of the city neighborhood association]. There was different leadership.' He then went on to describe a wide range of initiatives that he and his organization had undertaken from changing the city's recycling collection and waste management systems to developing new social services offered to residents in the city.

Mr Nagano's new style of leadership and his new view of the appropriate relationship between his organization and the government were, of course, partly due to his individual personality. They were also a function of demographics. His attitudes were consistent with others of his generation – he was the first city-level chief in his city who was a member of the democratically educated generation born after 1939, so his attitudes about the value and importance of civic activism contrasted with his predecessors'. Additionally, unlike all of his predecessors, who had come from neighbourhood associations representing the more rural districts of his city, Mr Nagano came from one of the newer, more urban districts. Although the population of the urban districts had exceeded that of the rural districts for almost two decades, their political power had not been sufficient to get their representative to the chief position of the city-wide neighbourhood association council. He was the first one. Therefore, the more assertive relationship that he was forging with the government represented multiple power shifts: between the civic organizations and the government, between pre-war and post-war generations of leadership, and from a rural to an urban constituency.

Mr Nagano represented the new, post-war, urban generation in his understanding of his role as civic leader. However, that understanding was not based on a sense of individual rights or a need to check government power, as one might expect from a similarly situated civic activist in the United States.

How does your neighborhood association help Japanese democracy?

It is important to feel like you should do what you can, on your own. If you always ask the government, it costs a lot of money... [The members'/volunteers'] way of thinking is to do something for others. They are bringing up this feeling. This is one of my themes. All of the volunteers think like this. Democracy is my responsibility. The neighborhood association does a lot for [promoting] this [idea].

Individuals are important, but they are important because of what they can do when they join together not because of what they do or have separately. As examples of how the neighbourhood association promoted the idea of democracy as each person's responsibility, he talked about regular (five times a year) city clean-up efforts in which 'pretty much everyone participates', the all-city and local sports days, and the all-city and local summer festivals. These public symbols of community, the rituals of participation are important not just for building social capital but also for reinforcing the more traditional aspects of Japanese democracy.

One of the ways that these newer democratic ideas move from civil society to the government is through socialization and political learning. As observed by

Tocqueville nearly two hundred years ago in the context of early American democracy, civic associations act as political training grounds for future democratic leaders.⁵² The civic skills of listening to constituents, assessing needs, using diplomacy to craft policies, and negotiating policy implementation are almost always learned and practiced in civic associations before an individual is elected into public office.⁵³

I was forced to laugh at the (seeming) stupidity of my question when I asked one rural city's recently retired city council chairman whether he had belonged to any civic organizations in the city. Mr Kihara looked at me as if to say, 'which ones haven't I been part of', and then held up both hands to count off the organizations on his fingers: Young Men's Association – 20+ years, PTA – 16 years, Volunteer Fire Department – 20+ years, Neighbourhood Association – division leader or chief for 16 years. . .

You were involved in a lot of groups. Which was the most useful preparing you to be a legislator? Which one gave you the skills you needed?

[After thinking for a while] The neighborhood association leader sees all of the problems in the community. He has to bring them to the legislators. You get to understand the city and other problems in a broader way.

Many more people belong to and participate in traditional civic groups than in any other type of organization in Japan. In terms of numbers alone, neighbourhood associations can be viewed as the bedrock on which Japan's democracy has been and is being constructed. The democracy that Japanese citizens and leaders are building is fundamentally Japanese. It represents an integration of newer, liberal democratic ideas, institutions, and practices with older ideas, institutions, and practices that predated the introduction of democracy. The result has been the emergence of a kind of democracy unlike that found in the West. For the individual citizen it emphasizes the importance of self-cultivation through study and the development and carrying out of civic responsibility. For organizations and the government it values the pursuit of harmony in inter-personal relations and maintaining symbolic practices. Traditional organizations contribute to the development of this democracy by embodying these practices – opportunities for study and service, to extend and deepen interpersonal relations, and to participate in public rituals. They also contribute by inculcating Japan's future political leaders with liberal democratic as well as traditional political values and practices.

Association of New Elder Citizens

Since the passage of the Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (NPO Law) in 1998, there has been an explosion of new nonprofit organizations – more than 35,000 have been incorporated since the law took force. These groups represent the full range of civil society that one would expect, from small, local groups aimed at helping disabled people in their town or preserving a local variety of tree, to internationally-oriented groups engaging in human rights advocacy or performing

development work abroad. The proliferation and rising profile of these newly incorporated nonprofit organizations has fundamentally altered the civil society landscape in Japan.⁵⁴

One very successful new organization is the Association of New Elder Citizens (*Shin Rōjin no Kai*). As with many other newly formed organizations, it has a very different organizational structure and ideological orientation than the traditional neighbourhood associations described above. Unlike membership in a neighbourhood association, which is nearly automatic and is completely a function of where you live, membership in the New Elder Citizens Association is entirely self-directed. Rather than joining because of a feeling of civic responsibility, members tend to join because they think it will be fun, have an interest in the particular activities of the group, or have a friend who is already a member.⁵⁵

The organization's activities are also quite different from those found in traditional civic groups like neighbourhood associations. Rather than acting as an umbrella group that serves a wide variety of needs facing all of the residents in a particular area, it is very specific and focused on the needs and interest of its members – active elderly. Although its organizational structure and pro-freedom agenda reflect liberal values, it also retains a significant commitment to traditional Japanese values such as promoting self-cultivation and development and community service. Its activities reflect both sets of political values, and the organization itself can be seen as a hybrid organization that includes both liberal democratic and traditional Japanese values and practices.

Founded in 2000 by Doctor Shigeaki Hinohara as an outgrowth of his Life Planning Center, which he founded in 1973, the group is an incorporated nonprofit organization. It had nearly 5000 members nationwide in the summer of 2006 when I visited and was adding them at the rate of about 100 per month. Its main headquarters is in Tokyo, where there are four staff members, and there are 16 branch organizations in the rest of the country.

Dr Hinohara is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of St Luke's Hospital in Tokyo. He is very famous in Japan, not only for his numerous publications (he has written dozens of books ranging from plays and poems to self help manuals to technical medical studies), but also because he played a very high-profile role in the rescue effort in the aftermath of the Sarin gas attack in Tokyo in 1995. With a vivacious personality, he is a dynamic public speaker advocating for and inspiring higher quality living for older people.

When I met with him in his office in the hospital in Tokyo he explained that when the war ended the life expectancy in Japan was 68, so on average, people would retire at 65, rest for three years, and then die. Now, the life expectancy in Japan is 82 for men and 85 for women, so people typically have twenty years of life after they retire. That is a long time. Furthermore, these people 'don't have to be busy with work and family, so they can do many things. They have been freed from their restrictions/obligations, so they can really do what they choose'. The motto of the New Elder Citizens is 'from now' (*kore kara*). Unlike traditional seniors' clubs, which are more geared to maintaining a local community,

the new seniors are dedicated to doing something new, forming a new community, and making new friends.⁵⁶ When I spoke with him in 2006 Dr Hinohara had just turned 95 and was taking up golf for the first time.

The organization is involved in a wide range of activities. Many of them are related to self-improvement and education. In conjunction with the Life Planning Center there are weekly seminars related to health and aging. I attended two English language circles and interviewed participating members. There are also hiking circles, reading groups, and environmental preservation efforts. Although no one used these words, these activities were all aimed at continuing the process of self-cultivation⁵⁷ and improving interpersonal relations with the other members.

Another main activity of group members is to reach out to young people and teach them about the horrors of war and the importance of peace. Since many of the members are in their 80s and remember the war well, they are well positioned to talk to young people about their experiences. However, this kind of education does not just consist of an old geezer lecturing to the youngsters about how hard life was in the old days. Here is how Dr Hinohara described what happens when he visits a class of children:

We talk to ten year olds. You know, when you're ten, you can really understand things.

I ask them: 'What are you doing with your life?' I tell them that you have your life, and your life is your time. So, how do you spend your life?

They then tell me the things they do: eat, play, study, sleep, etc. So, I say to them, all of these things that you're saying are for your own self. How about spending some of your time (your life) for other people? For example, you could help your mother, maybe do some cleaning or something. Humm. . .they think about that. Then I pass out a piece of paper and ask them to write down what they would do if they were to spend a bit of their time for other people.

What do they write?

Help mom; make neighborhood nice and clean; save money to give to people; be nice to the animals – all sorts of things. So then I tell them to go out and do these things. You know, this is how we can stop war – you start with the children. Get them to think about how to use your time for other people. Then, when they become twenty and become able to vote, they will have ideas about this, it will have an effect.

This is a grassroots method. Don't just be oppositional to everything. Respect all things as valuable.

The activity, language, and methodology described here represent a combination of liberal democratic and traditional Japanese political values and practices. The context is one where an elder person teaches younger people about the world and both sides are treated with respect. Volunteers are concerned with peace, interpersonal relations, and improving their communities. All participants see themselves as intimately connected to their families, communities, country, and world. All of these are core traditional Japanese values. And yet, Dr Hinohara is self-conscious of his political activism. He is utilizing a grassroots method to affect individual voters so they will make good political decisions in the future when they have the power to affect change – a very liberal democratic idea.

Dr Hinohara sees his New Elder Citizens as not just a single organization but part of a worldwide social movement. He speaks to crowds of thousands in Japan and abroad (since 2003 he has travelled to the United States, Australia and Korea). Tickets to the events usually cost about US\$10. His purpose is not to raise money for himself or his cause, but to get his message out: Life is not over when you're old; it is just beginning. You can enjoy life. You can improve yourself. You can make a difference in your community, in the world.

New-style civic organizations in Japan are not merely Western implants. Whether they are local branches of international organizations, such as the YMCA or Greenpeace, or whether they are home-grown groups, such as the Association of New Elder Citizens, these organizations do not operate the same way as their counterparts in Western democracies. Although they may prioritize liberal democratic values and practices over traditional Japanese ones, successful groups have found productive ways to combine multiple sets of values. Unlike the experience of traditional organizations which were forced to change an existing value and institutional structure to accommodate the arrival of liberal democracy in Japan, new-style groups have been able to create hybrid organizations from their inception. In doing so, they are contributing to the re-creation of Japanese democracy in the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

Dominant narratives of Japanese democratization focus on the creation of democratic institutions that copied Western models and on their subsequent endurance throughout the post-war period. Their primary example is Japan's 1947 Constitution, which was almost entirely written by Americans and has been in force, without amendment, since. This article has argued that this kind of narrative, in which Western models are held up as an ideal standard, misses important elements of the democratization process in Japan in particular and in non-Western contexts more broadly. Furthermore, the emphasis on state institutions to the exclusion of state and societal values and practices prevents scholars from a deeper understanding about the process of democratization; the ways that states and their societies adjust and adapt political institutions in response to changes in social and political life over time.

This article has used the state-in-society approach developed by Joel Migdal (2001) to develop a new theoretical approach to the study of democratization. From this perspective the democratization process is a long and iterated one in which state and society engage in a mutually transformative process utilizing a wide array of political resources from foreign as well as indigenous sources in order to create a new political system that can address their country's needs. The particular mechanisms through which that mutual transformation takes place are specific to the time and place where the political change is occurring. In Japan, the rise of a democratically educated generation to positions of power in government, business, and civil society has been particularly important.

The state-in-society approach to democratization has several advantages for students of democracy. First, it emphasizes the process through which democracy is indigenized. When examining a democratizing country, the focus of research becomes how the indigenous political system is transformed by the introduction of democracy and how democratic ideas and practices have likewise been transformed through their encounter with indigenous political culture. Democratization thereby becomes a process through which new democratic values, institutions, and practices can be harmonized with indigenous political values, institutions, and practices to create a new political system in which the government is directed by and held accountable to its polity. One would expect the new democratic political systems that are created out of these processes to be as diverse as the societies from which they emerge.

A second major advantage of this approach is that it offers an analytically rigorous way of incorporating culture into studies of comparative politics. The state-in-society approach to democratization, which takes as its premise that states are intimately connected to and emerge from their societies, suggests that a close examination of how indigenous political institutions, values, and especially practices interact with new, liberal democratic ones, can help explain how political cultures evolve. Cultures are not fixed; they change, sometimes dramatically, over time. This theory of democratization requires that scholars examine the process through which political culture changes. Furthermore, culture is not a causal agent; it is a context. Therefore, this theory helps explain how different kinds of democracy emerge from different cultural contexts and how those different cultural contexts, in turn, reshape democracy.

A final advantage of this approach to democratization is that it creates an agency-driven model of democratization. Through its examination of institutions, values, and *practices*, the state-in-society theory of democratization is rooted in the actions of individual leaders and their civic and governmental organizations. Who creates democracy? Mr Nagano as neighbourhood association chief, Dr Shinohara as the director of the Association of New Elder Citizens, and millions of others like them who are hard at work making small changes at the grassroots level in their own communities that result in massive transformations in national political culture.

The state-in-society approach to democratization links together the three theoretical perspectives above. It shows how particular institutions can eventually lead toward a transformation of citizen values; how individual people, political leaders, and civil society organizations then act to change political practices so that they become more compatible with new understandings; and how, eventually, leaders can remake political institutions to make them conform to the new political values and practices that have become prevalent in society. Democracies do not emerge on their own, nor are they given from one people to another. Democracy is government 'of, by, and for' the people. The people are the ones doing the work; they are the ones that are creating and recreating democracies for their societies.

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Notes

1. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts'.
2. Full text of the Gettysburg Address can be found online <http://history.eserver.org/gettysburg-address.txt> (accessed 16 May 2010). For more discussion of the different and competing definitions of democracy see Bell, *Beyond Liberal Democracy*; Collier and Levitsky, 'Democracy with Adjectives'; Ketcham, *The Idea of Democracy in the Modern Era*; Schaffer, *Democracy in Translation*; Charles Tilly, *Democracy*; Zakaria, 'The Rise of Illiberal Democracy'.
3. Full text available online: http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/toc_idx.html (accessed 15 January 2008).
4. Dewey's volume that most directly addresses this question is *Democracy and Education* (1916). Full text available online: http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Democracy_and_Education (accessed 29 June 2007). Dewey spent several years living in Asia and has been highly influential in the development of political thought throughout the region. For a fascinating account of how his ideas influenced (and are influencing) Confucians, see Hall and Ames, 'A Pragmatist Understanding of Confucian Democracy'.
5. Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Democracy'.
6. Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*.
7. Inglehart, 'The Renaissance of Political Culture'; Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization*.
8. Ibid.
9. Levi, *of Rule and Revenue*.
10. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*.
11. For an excellent account of the analytical and theoretical benefits of utilizing this minimalist definition see Przeworski, 'Minimalist Conception of Democracy: A Defense'.
12. Lijphart, *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries*.
13. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*.
14. Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy*.
15. Ibid., 7–8.
16. Berman, 'Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic', shows how strong civil society in Weimar Germany contributed to, rather than inhibited, the rise of Nazism. For a more comprehensive study of civil society's influence on democratization in multiple countries, see Bermeo and Nord, *Civil Society before Democracy*.
17. See for example Cohen and Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*; Diamond, 'Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation'; Evans, *State-Society Synergy*; McCormick, Shaozhi, and Xiaoming, 'The 1989 Democracy Movement'; Norton, *Civil Society in the Middle East*, vol. 1; Norton, *Civil Society in the Middle East*, vol. 2; Salamon, 'Government-Nonprofit Relations in International Perspective'; Binnaz Toprak, 'Civil Society in Turkey'.

18. Compulsory elementary education was introduced in 1872, and by 1915 only 10% of Japanese 20-year-old conscripts were illiterate; poverty rates were also quite low, estimated to be only about 15% in the 1930s: Bramall, 'Living Standards in Pre-War Japan and Maoist China', 555, 563.
19. For a good review of the democratization literature, see Geddes, 'What Do We Know About Democratization after Twenty Years?'.
20. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, for a particularly good account of reforms undertaken during the Allied Occupation.
21. Curtis, *The Japanese Way of Politics*; Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*; Johnson, *Japan: Who Governs? The Rise of the Developmental State*; Pempel, *Policy and Politics in Japan*; Pyle, *The Japanese Question*; Yamamoto, *Deciding the Public Good*.
22. Quoted in Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 217–18.
23. World Values Survey Data, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/> (accessed 16 March 2010).
24. Curtis, Grabb, and Baer, 'Voluntary Association Membership in Fifteen Countries'; Munk, 'Measures of Democracy, Governance and Rule of Law'; Norris and Inglehart, *Islam & the West: Testing the Clash of Civilizations Thesis*; O'Loughlin et al., 'The Diffusion of Democracy, 1946–1994'; Starr, 'Democratic Dominoes'.
25. See, for example Haddad, *Politics and Volunteering in Japan*; Takao, *Reinventing Japan*, which both discuss Japanese civil society as vibrant.
26. Migdal, *State in Society*.
27. *Ibid.*, 16.
28. See Migdal, Kohli, and Shue, *State Power and Social Forces*, for an edited volume where contributors use this approach; single authored books that use the approach include Moustafa, *The Struggle for Constitutional Power* and Smith, *Hard Times in the Lands of Plenty*.
29. Migdal, *State in Society*; Migdal, Kohli, and Shue, *State Power and Social Forces*.
30. See for example Macedo and Shapiro, *Designing Democratic Institutions*; Cheema, *Building Democratic Institutions*.
31. See Li, *The Sage and the Second Sex*; and Nyitray, 'Treacherous Terrain: Mapping Feminine Spirituality in Confucian Worlds', for a discussion of how Confucian feminists are reinterpreting the meaning of equality.
32. For a more detailed case study that illustrates how one all-male traditional civic organization in Japan, volunteer fire departments, was transformed in this way see Haddad (forthcoming in *Journal of Asian Studies*).
33. For further explication of this generational change argument, see Haddad, 'From Undemocratic to Democratic Civil Society'; and Haddad, *Making Democracy Real: Power to the People in Japan*.
34. Migdal, *State in Society*, 11.
35. Keizai Kikakusho 2004, chart 3-1-7: http://www5.cao.go.jp/seikatsu/whitepaper/h16/01_zu/zu301070.html (Japanese, 25 March 2007).
36. For an excellent account of the mindset of ultranationalism during the war see Maruyama, *Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics*, ch. 1.
37. For accounts of contemporary neighbourhood associations see: Ben-Ari, *Changing Japanese Suburbia*; Bestor, *Neighborhood Tokyo*; Pekkanen, *Japan's Dual Civil Society*, ch. 6; and Kurusawa and Akimoto, *Chounaikai to Chiiki Shuudan (Neighborhood Associations and Local Groups)*, chapters 1, 5, and 8.
38. Braibanti, 'Neighborhood Associations in Japan and Their Democratic Potentialities', 140.
39. For pre-war histories of neighbourhood associations see Takayose, *Komyuniti to Jyumin Soshiki (Community and Residents Organizations)*, 52–76; Kurusawa and Akimoto, *Chounaikai to Chiiki Shuudan (Neighborhood Associations and Local*

- Groups), chapter 2; and Hastings, *Neighborhood and Nation in Tokyo, 1905-1937*, chapter 3.
40. Braibanti, 'Neighborhood Associations in Japan and Their Democratic Potentialities'.
 41. Masland, 'Neighborhood Associations in Japan', 357.
 42. Braibanti, 'Neighborhood Associations in Japan and Their Democratic Potentialities', 156.
 43. Interviews 2006; for accounts of neighbourhood associations in the immediate post-war context, see Bestor, *Neighborhood Tokyo*, 75–80; Dore, *City Life in Japan: A Study of a Tokyo Ward*, chapter 17; Nakagawa, *Chounaikai: Nihonjin No Jichi Kankaku (Neighborhood Associations: Japanese Sense of Self Government)*; and Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life*.
 44. See Haddad, 'From Undemocratic to Democratic Civil Society', for a detailed account of these demographic and social pressures on traditional groups.
 45. http://www5.cao.go.jp/seikatsu/whitepaper/h16/01_zu/zu301070.html (accessed 26 March 2007) (Japanese) National Lifestyle Whitepages 2004 chart 3-1-7.
 46. For more on specific ways that a sense of community responsibility is fostered and passed on, see Haddad, 'Community Determinants of Volunteer Participation and the Promotion of Civic Health'; Haddad, *Politics and Volunteering in Japan*.
 47. Interview with block-level chief in a medium-sized city, 2002.
 48. Interview with block-level chief in large city, 2006.
 49. Masland, 'Neighbourhood Associations in Japan', 357.
 50. Interview with city-level neighbourhood association chief from a medium-sized city, 2006.
 51. This general trend was verified by a number of other interviews from both the government and civil society side (interviews 78, 84, 89, 104, 106, 111, 114, 134 in 2002 and 154, 157, 158, 160, 161, 166, 167, 170, 177, 178, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 188, and 195 in 2006).
 52. Full text available online: http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/toc_idx.html (accessed 15 January 2008). See ch. 12 on Political Associations.
 53. See Ikeda and Richey, 'Japanese Network Capital', for a more extensive discussion of the role of social networks and civic organizations in promoting political participation.
 54. See Haddad, 'From Undemocratic to Democratic Civil Society', for more about characteristics and reasons for this transformation, see Haddad, 'Transformation of Japan's Civil Society Landscape', for how this transformation compares to changes in the United States.
 55. See Haddad, *Politics and Volunteering in Japan*, for a more detailed study of the differences between traditional and new-style volunteer organizations.
 56. This is the distinction that Dr Hinohara as well as all the New Elder Citizen members that I spoke with articulated. However, this difference between the two groups was not intended to denigrate the activities of the 'traditional' seniors' clubs. Most of the NEC members that I spoke with were also members of their local traditional seniors club.
 57. Self-cultivation is a core Confucian value that emphasizes learning and moral improvement. See Mencius, *The Works of Mencius*; Angle, *Sagehood*; Tu, *Humanity and Self-Cultivation*.

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