

# Nishida Kitaro and Japan's interwar foreign policy: war involvement and culturalist political discourse

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Received 11 May 2010; Accepted 14 October 2010

## Abstract

Takashi Inoguchi once stated that Japan's international relations theory is characterized by its exclusive disciplinary orientation toward constructivism. Nishida Kitaro is widely recognized as one of such constructivists. In this article, I argue that Nishida's theory of world history was based on the perception of subjectivity of contradiction, and was thus exclusively culture-oriented. By emphasizing cultural aspects, he tried to disturb the coherence and consistency of the colonialist discourse on which the dominant regime of Japan of the time was entirely reliant. However, because Nishida's theory of world history completely lacked the recognition of the material relations of the colonizer and the colonized, as a direct consequence of his understanding of the term 'culture', his attempts were unrealized.