

JAPAN AND THE EUROPEAN SOUTHEAST

Over a hundred years of political, economic,
cultural and academic interactions

Edited by

EVGENIY KANDILAROV  MARTIN DIMITROV

朕ノ良兄

ブルガリア國皇帝陛下ニ白ス

朕ノ親愛スル皇后昨年十二月二十三日東京
宮城ニ於テ安ウカニ皇男子ヲ擧ケ同月二十九日
明仁ト命名シタルコトヲ茲ニ陛下ニ報道スルハ
朕ノ寔ニ欣快トスル所ニシテ陛下カ此ノ慶事ニ
對シ朕及朕ノ皇室ト歡喜ヲ共ニセラルヘキハ
陛下ノ常ニ朕ニ示サレタル友誼ニ徴シ朕ノ深ク
確信スル所ナリ

JAPAN AND THE EUROPEAN SOUTHEAST

OVER A HUNDRED YEARS OF POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC
INTERACTIONS



JAPAN AND THE EUROPEAN SOUTHEAST

OVER A HUNDRED YEARS OF POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC
INTERACTIONS

Papers from the international conference,
organized by the Japanese Studies Department of
Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”,
21–23 November 2019

Sofia • 2021
St. Kliment Ohridski University Press

The collection is published with the support of the Japan Foundation and the Research Fund of Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

The volume is dedicated to The Triple Anniversary Bulgaria and Japan marked in 2019 and to the 30th Anniversary of the Japanese Studies program in the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” marked in 2020.



SOFIA UNIVERSITY
ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI



Peer-review:

Professor Ivan ILCHEV, PhD, DSc.

Professor Gergana PETKOVA, PhD

© 2021 Evgeniy Kandilarov, Martin Dimitrov, editors

© 2021 Antonina Georgieva, cover design

© 2021 Martin Dimitrov, technical processing

© 2021 St. Kliment Ohridski University Press

ISBN 978-954-07-5232-7

Contents

Foreword | 7

Through the Eyes of the Other | 11

Evgeniy Kandilarov “Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans”: Bulgarians Through the Lens of Japanese in Three Different Historical Epochs | 13

Tetsuya Sahara How Has Bulgaria Been Represented in Japan? A Case of the First Japanese Bulgarian Guidebook | 22

Alexandra Marina Gheorghe Hints and Echoes of Japan in the Romanian World Before and After 1989 | 44

Aleka Strezova Japan through the eyes of the diplomat: Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov | 59

Nikolay Padarev Formation of the Perception for Eastern Europe in Japan | 66

Historical Perspectives | 79

Nobuhiro Shiba A New-Formed State, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Japan in the Early Interwar Period: Focusing on the Question of the Recognition of the New State | 81

Martin M. Dimitrov Bulgarian Periodicals’ Coverage of the Russo-Japanese War – a Brief Overview | 93

Social Aspects | 107

Maya Keliyan Local Culture Survival in Depopulated Rural Areas in Japan: Lessons for Bulgaria | 109

Yana Yovcheva Japanese lifestyle migration in Austria and Bulgaria: structural determinants and their impact on choices | 121

Economic Cooperation | 137

Nako Stefanov Japanese Management in Bulgaria – Attempts for Implementation | **139**

Boryana Miteva Japan's Official Development Assistance to Central and East European countries in their transition toward democracy and free market economy | **152**

Nikolay Padarev The perspectives of the Japanese Bulgarian economic relations, in the context of Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt brand success story | **164**

Ebata Yasuyuki To the Strategic Partnership and beyond | **178**

Cultural and Spiritual Intersections | 183

Andronika Martonova The elusive scholar: Watanabe Mamoru, the Japanese cinema and Bulgaria (late 30's and early 40's of the XX century) | **185**

Monk Kliment of Zograph Japan and the Bulgarian Orthodox Monastery of Zograph on the Holy Mount Athos – Spiritual and Cultural Interactions | **198**

Communication Through Education and Academia | 219

Junko Sugahara Academic exchange between Japan and Bulgaria. From during the World War 2 until the 1980's | **221**

Yumi Ninomiya The cultural bridge between Bulgaria and Japan. One example from Sofia University and Soka University | **229**

Kenta Sugai Comparative Analysis of the Grammatical Terminology Used in Learning Materials for the Bulgarian Language for Japanese Native Speakers | **233**

Stella Zhivkova Tradition and Innovation: the Selection of Materials for Teaching Japanese Language at Various Levels at the Department of Japanese Studies of Sofia University | **247**

Foreword

In 2019 Japan and Bulgaria marked three important anniversaries: 110 years since the beginning of contacts between the two countries (1909); 80 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations (1939); 60 years since the resumption of diplomatic relations (1959), after their breaking at the end of WWII. On this occasion Japanese Studies Department at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” with the kind support of the Japan Foundation organized an international conference entitled: ***“Japan And The European Southeast – Over A Hundred Years Of Political, Economic, Cultural And Academic Interactions”***. The conference was held between 21st and 23rd November 2019, at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. Apart from panel sessions and paper presentations, the event hosted workshops and round tables on multilateral aspects of the relations between Japan and the countries of the Southeast Europe with a special focus on Bulgaria.

The conference was open to the general public. Since the event was also part of the program of the 30th Anniversary Days of the Japanese Culture in Bulgaria, traditionally organized by Japanese Embassy in Sofia, the interest to the Conference and especially to the participating prominent keynote speakers as well as the other distinguished scholars from Japan was extremely strong.

Such an academic event as an interdisciplinary international conference dedicated to the study of the relations between Japan and the region of Southeast Europe, with the participation of so many prominent Japanese scholars in different fields such as history and political science, language, literature and culture studies as well as diplomacy, focused especially in Bulgaria and Balkan region is something that happens in Bulgaria for the first time. Back in 1981 similar conference known as the First International Symposium on Cultural Relations between Japan and the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe has been organized in Tokyo by the Association for the Study of Relations between Japan and the Countries of Eastern Europe. That time the symposium was attended by scholars from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Austria. In 1982, a collection of articles from the symposium entitled *“Fundamental Studies of Cultural Relations between Japan and the Countries of Eastern*

and Central Europe” was published. Among the publications in it special attention deserve the works of prominent Japanese scholars specialists in Bulgaria and the region of the Balkans such as Kenji Terajima, Rokuya Matsunaga, Junko Imai, Bunji Obunai, Shingo Minamizuka and Shigeru Kido. In the same collection are published the papers of the Bulgarian Japanologists who took part in the symposium – Silvia Mileva and Tsvetana Krasteva.¹

Today, almost forty years later a collection of selected and revised papers, presented at the conference held in Sofia in November 2019 is already published. Four decades later, the next generation of Japanese researchers focused on Eastern Europe and Eastern European japanologists took part in this publication. From the Japanese side the key note speakers honored the conference in Sofia were officially four – namely Prof. Yasuo Kimbara (Tokai University), Prof. Tetsuya Sahara (Meiji University), Prof. Yumi Ninomiya (Soka University) and Assoc. Prof. Kenta Sugai (Hokkaido University). Together with them the audience had the chance to hear and discuss with other special guests at the conference, a prominent Japanese scholars into Bulgarian and Balkan studies such as: Prof. Junko Sugahara (Nishogakusha University), Prof. Nobuhiro Shiba (Josai International University), Prof. Makoto Kimura (Japan Women’s University) and Assoc. Prof. Moyuru Matsumae (Waseda University). The conference has been attended also by prominent Bulgarian, Russian and Rumanian scholars, specialist on the topic of the Conference. That gave a great chance for an extremely fruitful and stimulating academic discussion that could be read in this volume.

Part of the papers of the conference were focused on examining the relations between Japan and the Southeast Europe pointing out the place of Bulgaria within the Japanese political, economic, cultural and academic approach toward the region. The conference also traced all the phases of the development of the Japanese studies in Bulgaria and the prospects for future development of academic research on Japan. We are sure that only a cross-perspective can provide valuable answers to various questions concerning a number of issues about the multilateral relations between Japan and the European Southeast.

¹Proceedings of the International Symposium “Fundamental Studies of Cultural exchanges between Japan and the countries of Eastern Europe”, September 1981, Tokyo. Issued by the Association for the Study of Relations between Japan and the Eastern Europe, 1982. 「日本と東欧諸国の文化交流に関する基礎的研究」、日本東欧関係研究会、1982年

In terms of the academic and intellectual outcome there is no doubt that the conference and the present volume of papers is already a success. The impact of the multifaceted discussions of the participants consisted in deepened intercultural understanding of and further development of Japanese studies as well as the relations between Japan and the Balkan region. The implementation of the results and conclusions in practice will surely reverberate into the theoretical output of a great number of scholars who work in various fields. The new facts established and the conclusions reached contributed to a better and up-to-date view on social political and cultural mainstreams in Japanese and Balkan societies. By comparing different points of view a relevance of ideas, theories and concepts has been examined.

Finally, we would like to note that this collection of papers is dedicated to the 30th anniversary, which celebrates Japanese studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” in the year of 2020. We do believe that the volume *“Japan And The European Southeast – Over A Hundred Years Of Political, Economic, Cultural And Academic Interaction”* is a step further in the goal the Japanese Studies Department at Sofia University has been carrying on for many years now, namely - examining the relations between Japan and the South East Europe pointing out the place of Bulgaria within the Japanese political, economic, cultural and academic approach toward the region. At the same time through systematic and critical comparative analyzes the collection is shedding light on the processes of the development of these relations on a state, governmental, business and grass roots levels. Through an interdisciplinary, multilevel, profound and critical comprehensive analyses of the past and the present trends of development of the relations between Japan and Bulgaria as well as the development of the Japanese Studies in Bulgaria in the broadest sense of the term and on the background of the political, economic and cultural relations between Japan and Southeast European region the outcome of the conference as well as this volume creates a clear vision for the future growth and better development of the academic knowledge related to Japan in the European East and Southeast. This objective could be achieved the best way only through a comparative perspective within the trends of the development of the Japanese studies in the region and its relations with Japan.

Last but not least we would like to express our most sincere gratitude to all the authors that honoured us with their participation and later on dedicated time and energy to prepare their papers for publication.

We do believe that the papers published in this volume will be beneficial for many people, such as students majoring in Japanese studies, as well as those studying international relations, regional studies, political science, international economic relations and others. Diplomats, politicians and journalists also can use it as a useful and valuable reading.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Evgeniy Kandilarov and Assit. Prof. Dr. Martin Dimitrov
Sofia, December 2020

Through the Eyes of the Other

“Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans”: Bulgarians Through the Lens of Japanese in Three Different Historical Epochs

Evgeniy KANDILAROV*

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

Abstract: *The article traces the origin and meaning of the expression “Bulgarians are the Japanese in the Balkans”, which is periodically used in various historical epochs through which the relations between Bulgaria and Japan pass. Documents from different epochs clearly show that this is a definition of the Bulgarians, which is well known in Japan and largely shapes the Japanese image about the Bulgarian people in the period until the end of World War II. At the same time, historical sources show that the meaning of the expression changes in different periods. If in the beginning this comparison is made mainly due to the rapid pace of socio-economic development, which Bulgaria demonstrates in the early twentieth century, then in the next period the meaning of the expression is rather associated with the similarity between the two peoples in terms of high morale. Bulgarian army manifested in a series of military campaigns in the first half of the twentieth century. In the Cold War era, the expression was also used in connection with the comparison between Bulgaria and Japan in terms of the development of the electronics industry, to which both countries gave priority in the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century.*

Keywords: Bulgaria-Japan Relations, Japan-Balkan relations, Bulgaria and Japan during XXth century

*Dr. Evgeniy Kandilarov is Associate Professor at the Japanese Studies Department, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and at the Institute for Historical Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. He works in the field of the International relations in the region of East Asia and especially focusing on the relations between Japan and Bulgaria, as well as modern and contemporary history of Japan and Bulgaria in XXth and XXI century.

“Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans”. Have you ever heard this expression? What stays behind it? Who used it and in what kind of historical context it appeared? Nowadays its sounds like a joke. Even worse, It sounds like a self-determination which is more like a wish than something based on some kind of relative base giving a reason to make such conclusion. From contemporary point of view it sounds almost ridiculous even to try comparing such a distant and completely different countries part of completely different cultural and political tradition.

It might sound ridiculous now but in the long more than a hundred years relations between Bulgaria and Japan such an expression exists and the most interesting is that it is not a matter of self-determination but the way that Bulgaria emerges as an image in the Japanese social and political space during different epochs and in different contexts from the beginning of the XXth century until the end of the 80s of the same century.

Within this time framework both countries went through different epochs each of them bringing a difficult situations and extreme challenges for the bilateral relations – World Wars, Cold War, being allies and being enemies, with lack of diplomatic relations through establishment of diplomatic relations and reestablishment of such.

The archival documents from all these different epochs clearly show that despite all the turbulence, difficulties, historical storms and challenges, the relations between Bulgaria and Japan remain good. They have continued learning and exploring each other, showing mutual moral and spiritual support and an even greater desire for cultural acquaintance. This resulted in slowly but gradually building trust, which is the key to healthy, sincere and stable relations between countries and people.

In this sense one of the most important issues related to the point of building stable and sustainable mutual perception is the one of the image of the other. Trying to find some mutual similarities and common features usually shows the will of finding a greater closeness in order to be able to scale yourself to the other by emphasizing what brings you together.

Here comes the story of this expression “Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans” which is actually a story of one expression with different meanings in different epochs which is related as well to the way that both countries perceive each other.

The first epoch is the period until the beginning of the Balkan wars in 1912. Actually in the context of the triple anniversary that both country celebrate in 2019, the first one is related to the establishment of the first

official contacts between Bulgaria and Japan which was marked by the visit to Bulgaria of Kuninomiya Kuniyoshi 久邇宮邦彦王 in 1909¹ and the subsequent official Japanese governmental recognition of Bulgarian independence which happens through an exchange of letters between the Japanese ambassador in Vienna Uchida Kōsai (内田 康哉) to Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Religious Affairs Stefan Paprikov.²

During that time in 1908 – in the “Outlook” magazine the American President Theodore Roosevelt used for the first time the expression that Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans comparing the economic progress of the little-known Bulgaria with that of already famous Japan.³ This parallel was one of the most significant compliments made to Bulgarians by a foreigner and it was due to the high economic growth that Bulgaria marks during that time.⁴

Two years later in one of the earliest Bulgarian written sources from the beginning of the twentieth century dedicated to Japan – the paper of the Bulgarian scientist and administrator Dr. Ivan Zlatarov entitled “*Economic Japan*” again we can follow that point of comparison provoking with the parallel that the author makes with the development of Bulgaria during the same period. Actually the main point of the Author regarding the expression “*Bulgarians, the Japanese on Balkans*” in terms of their economic development is the raise of the question of the example of the Japanese nation from which we Bulgarians should take a lesson so that the

¹ Central State Archive of the Republic of Bulgaria (CSARB), Fund 176K, Inventory 2, archival unit 543; a.u.543, p.2; a.u.543a; F.3K, In. 8, a.u.1462, p.1, 3, 3-0, 4, 4-0; a.u.1463, p.3, 3-0, 4, 4-0; F.3K, In.11, a.u.292, p.4, 4-0, 6, 7; a.u.392, p.1-2; F.304K, In.1, a.u.928; F304K, In.1, a.u.928, p.10;

² Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (アジア歴史資料センター), REEL No 1-0417 /0006 – 0022/

³ Ikeda, D., Dzhurova, A. The Spirit of the Lion. Ed. Princeps, Sofia 2000 (I edition) University Publishing House “St. Kl. Ohridski”, Sofia, 2016 (II edition) p. 12. (Икеда, Д., Джурова, А. Духът на лъва. Изд. Princeps, София 2000 г. (I издание) Университетско издателство „Св.Кл.Охридски“, София, 2016 г. (II издание) с. 12.)

⁴ Detailed study of the relations between Bulgaria and Japan during the XXth and XXI century has been made by Evgeniy Kandilarov and Vera Stefanova in their recently published book: *Stefanova, V. Kandilarov, E. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, People and Events*. “East-West” Publishing House. Sofia, 2019. (Стефанова, В., Кандиларов, Е. България и Япония. Политика, дипломация, личности и събития. Изд. „Изток-Запад“. С., 2019.)

comparison of “Japanese on the Balkans” will not sound irrelevant and out of substance or as an ironical compliment.⁵

In the same direction sound the words of the first Dutch professor in Slavic languages Nicholas van Wijk, who undertakes a trip to Eastern Europe, after which, in 1914, wrote an article about Bulgaria, in which he says that he have heard this expression “*Japanese in Europe*” for the Bulgarians from Galicians, Romanians and Croats and it was mainly based on the economic achievements and rapid progress of this young country.⁶

Unfortunately the sense of the so called Economic miracle that Bulgaria marks at the beginning of the XX th century implemented in the expression “Japanese on the Balkans” disappears with the beginning of the Balkan wars which changes everything.

This marks the beginning of **the second epoch** of the Bulgarian-Japanese relations where the expression “*The Japanese on the Balkans*” appears but already in a different sense and meaning which is already related to the spirit of the war and the military development and tradition in both countries.

I will give three very clear examples. An interesting fact, documented in the Bulgarian archives and the press, is the visit to Bulgaria on the eve of the Balkan War, in the summer of 1911, of one of the most emblematic figures in the Meiji-era, General Nogi Maresuke (乃木 希典). In Sofia, general Nogi visited the Military School, Artillery and Infantry Regiments, where Bulgarian soldiers made special demonstrations of artillery firing, shooting and various tactics of gun fighting. In the Bulgarian press the adjutant of general Nogi, Lieutenant Toshika, said that before his visit to Bulgaria he read in a Japanese newspaper „*that Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans*“, which he believes means „*to prepare all your life to fight gloriously for your country*“, something the Bulgarian army did during the Balkan Wars as well as during the First World War.⁷

Another example of this kind of perception of Bulgaria and Bulgarians in Japan is related to the visit of Prince Nobuhito Takamatsu (高松宮宣仁親王) and his wife Princess Kikuko (宣仁親王妃喜久子), which stands out as an important event in official relations between the two countries,

⁵ Zlatarov, I. Economic Japan. Sofia, 1910, 44-45. (Златаров, И. Икономическа Япония. С., 1910, 44-45.)

⁶ Raymond Detrez. Bulgarians are not just all talk. The Dutch slavist Nicolas Van Wijk's impressions about Bulgaria. // Istoricheski pregled 68, Nr. 3-4, p. 231-257. (Детрез, Реймонд. „Българите изобщо не са хора само на приказки.“ Впечатления за България от холандския славист Николас ван Вейк – Исторически преглед, 2012, №3-4, 231-257.)

⁷ в. „Воля“, 1911, бр. 105, с. 8.

testifying for the established proximity between the Bulgarian royal and the Japanese imperial courts.⁸ In his statement on behalf of Prince Takamatsu and with his permission, the head of the protocol of the imperial court, colonel Takeo Yamagata, noted: „*Their Imperial Highness, and I, are fascinated by the reception in Sofia. What we know about the Bulgarians, that they are democratic, sober and calm, we have found in much larger dimensions than we have imagined. Even in early childhood at school I was taught that Bulgarians are also a heroic people ... There is no doubt that the current visit of their Imperial Highnesses to Sofia, to the country of the „Japanese on the Balkans,“ will once again reinforce these good relations, between the two countries.*”⁹

The third example of this sense of the meaning Japanese on the Balkans is related to the time of the second anniversary that Bulgaria-Japan relations mark in the 2019 namely the establishment of a diplomatic relations between the two countries which took place exactly after the beginning of the WWII in 1939. The Japanese government has decided to send Hachiya Teruo(蜂谷 輝雄), as its first diplomatic representative in Bulgaria and the holder of the newly established legation in Sofia. He arrived in Sofia on 4 December 1939 and handed his credentials to Tsar Boris III on December 28, 1939.¹⁰

So during the War and especially in the context of the fact that both countries became allies within the Tripartite Pact part of the state propaganda in Japan as well as in Bulgaria was the suggestion of the existence of special spiritual closeness between Bulgarians and Japanese, which gives grounds to the perception of the Bulgarians as the „*Japanese on the Balkans*“, mainly because of the high fighting spirit of the Bulgarian army and because of the demonstrated military victories by Bulgarian army during the wars that Bulgaria fought in the first half of the XX century. A good example is the following episode. On August 19, 1942 the first Bulgarian Plenipotentiary Minister in Japan Janko Peev was accepted by the Japanese Foreign of Minister Shigenori Togo (東郷 茂徳). In his report to the Bulgarian Government Peev announces his welcome reception by

⁸ CSARB, F.176K, In.13, a.u.326, pp.1-24; F.176K, In.13, a.u.315, pp.39-81; F.321K, In.3, a.u.331, pp.4-22.

⁹ В. „Утро“, бр.6422/ 17.01.1931 г.; бр.6427/ 22.01.1931 г.; бр.6427/23.01.1931 г.; В. „Зора“, бр.3463/22.01.1931 г.; бр.3464/23.01.1931 г.; бр.3465/24.01.1931 г.м в. „Вестник на вестниците“, януари 1931 г.

¹⁰ CSARB, F.176K, In.14, a.u.1253, p.11; p.8-9; p.14.

the Japanese foreign minister who has noted the closeness between the two peoples, citing the fact that Bulgarians are proud to call them „*the Japanese on the Balkans*.”¹¹

As you may suppose the military sense behind the expression Japanese on the Balkans disappeared with the end of the war.

The third epoch when this expression appears is already related to the third anniversary in Bulgarian-Japanese relations celebrated in 2019.

In 1959 Bulgaria and Japan restored diplomatic relations as part of the process of normalizing of Japan's relations with the Soviet Union and the communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

During the next 3 decades from 1959 to 1989, which coincided with the Cold war period, Bulgaria and Japan laid the foundations of their contemporary relations. This period in the history of the bilateral relations shows how mutual interest and willingness of the people for knowing each other better, coupled with pragmatic and far-sighted approach by the governments, created conditions for development of their relations irrespective of the two countries belonging to opposing socio-political systems and different ideologies. Here we should particularly mention the open and pragmatic approach of the Bulgarian governing elite towards learning from Japan's economic and technological experience and implementing Japan's economic model in Bulgaria.¹²

A detailed study of the relations between Bulgaria and Japan, after their resumption in 1959 until 1989, clearly proves that for the most part the initiative was mainly Bulgarian, as well as, the keen interest and benefits, which accounted for the political activity on the Bulgarian part. The main reason was the commercial and economic interest and the necessity for scientific and technological cooperation. One of the major prerequisites for the close relations was the lack of ideological burden between Bulgaria and Japan. Moreover, Japan turned both a good model and a suitable partner for Bulgaria. Japan, for its part, saw in Bulgaria and the rest of the socialist countries an opportunity to expand its export markets, as well as, to import cheaper food commodities and raw materials.

¹¹ CSARB, F.176K, In.1ш, а.у.407, pp.1-21; In.13, а.у.1048, p.57; In.1ш, а.у.467, pp. 2-55; In.8, а.у.855, pp.57-58; In.2ш, а.у.11, p.154; а.у.10, p.52; In. 16, а.у.1144, p.48.

¹² The most detailed study of the full scale of political, economic and cultural relations between Bulgaria and Japan during the Cold war period is done by Evgeniy Kandilarov in his book: *Kandilarov. E. Bulgaria and Japan. From The Cold War To the XXI Century*. Sofia, 2009 “Дамьян Яков” Publishing House. (Кандиларов, Е. България и Япония. От Студената война към XXI век. Изд. „Дамьян Яков“. С., 2009.)

At that time Japan definitely attracted the Bulgarians with its unique coexistence of amazing economic and technological progress and traditional culture that led to the phenomena worldwide known as the “*Japanese miracle*”. During this period, one of the priority areas of cooperation between the two countries was the field of electronic industry. As a result of the Bulgarian government’s efforts to obtain a license agreement with the Japanese company Fujitsu in 1965, the first electronic computers that Bulgaria produces and sells in the COMECON markets are under a Japanese license.¹³ Thanks to its cooperation with Japan in the field of electronic industry, Bulgaria has succeeded in gaining a specialization within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in the field exactly of electronic computers and subsequently the country became one of the largest manufacturers in this area of production, which again revives the country definition as “*The Japanese on the Balkans*”, but this time in completely different context.

This active cooperation between Bulgaria and Japan led to a paradox situation when, in the late 1980s, the Bulgarian state leader Todor Zhivkov was directly accused by the Soviet leadership of trying to create so called “*mini Japan*” on the Balkans, which in turn led to strong cooling of relations between Bulgaria and the USSR at the end of this period.¹⁴

In conclusion undoubtedly, the appearance of the expression “*Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans*” in the different historical epochs of Bulgarian-Japanese relations shows the aspiration of the two countries to build stable and close relations despite the geographical distance and the different cultural traditions. This was the case even in the years of the Cold War when the two countries successfully overcame the ideological and political opposition among the Powers in whose spheres of interest are Bulgaria and Japan. At the same time, this definition reflects a desire to find

¹³ Kandilarov, E. Bulgaria and Japan. From The Cold War To the XXI Century. Sofia, 2009 “Damyan Yakov” Publishing House. pp.85-87. (Кандиларов, Е. България и Япония. От Студената война към XXI век. Изд. „Дамян Яков“. С., 2009, 85-87.)

¹⁴ Kandilarov, E. Bulgarian Transition to Democracy, Japan and the Crisis in Bulgarian-Soviet Relations in the Second Half of 1980s – In: Vocation and Dedication. In Honour of the 70th Birthday and the 40th Anniversary of the Research Work of Prof.Dr.Sc. Vitka Toshkova. Professor Marin Drinov Academic Publishing House. Sofia, 2011.(Кандиларов, Е. Българското преустройство, Япония и кризата в българо-съветските отношения през втората половина на 80-те години – В: *Призвание и всеотдайност*. В чест на 70-годишния юбилей и 40-годишната научна дейност на проф. дин Витка Тошкова. Академично Издателство „проф. Марин Дринов“ С., 2010, 402-417.)

common features and characteristics that create a special sense of closeness. The last can be achieved only by the mutual recognition, a process in which the most special role plays culture, science and education, part of which is the present conference as well.¹⁵

I wish the expression that Bulgarians are the Japanese on the Balkans possibly appear again in the new era of our bilateral relations and if possible the meaning of it to be mainly in sense of social and economic progress and high technological development, which express also my most sincere wish for both countries in the current and future state of development of their relations.

Bibliography:

Archival Sources

Central State Archive of the Republic of Bulgaria (CSARB), Fund 176K, Inventory 2, archival unit 543; a.u.543a; F.3K, In. 8, a.u.1462; a.u.1463; F.3K, In.11, a.u.292; a.u.392; In.1, a.u.928; F304K, In.1, a.u.928; F.176K, In.13, a.u.326; F.176K, In.13, a.u.315; F.321K, In.3, a.u.331; F.176K, In.14, a.u.1253; F.176K, In.1III, a.u.407; In.13, a.u.1048; In.1III, a.u.467; In.8, a.u.855; In.2III, a.u.11; a.u.10; In. 16, a.u.1144.

Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (アジア歴史資料センター), REEL No 1-0417 /0006 – 0022/

Periodicals

Утро (Utro) бр.6422/ 17.01.1931 г.; бр.6427/ 22.01.1931 г.; бр.6427/23.01.1931 г.;

Зора (Zora) бр.3463/22.01.1931 г.; бр.3464/23.01.1931 г.; бр.3465/24.01.1931 г.;

¹⁵ International conference “*Japan And The European Southeast – Over A Hundred Years Of Political, Economic, Cultural And Academic Interactions*”, 21-23 November 2019, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

Publications

Raymond Detrez. Bulgarians are not just all talk. The Dutch slavist Nicolas Van Wijk's impressions about Bulgaria. // *Istoričeski pregled* 68, Nr. 3-4 (*Детрез, Реймонд*. “Българите изобщо не са хора само на приказки“ Впечатления за България от холандския славист Николас ван Вейк – Исторически преглед, 2012, №3);

Ikeda, D., Dzhurova, A. The Spirit of the Lion. Ed. Princeps, Sofia 2000 (I edition) University Publishing House „St. Kl. Ohridski“, Sofia, 2016 (II edition) (*Икеда, Д., Джурова, А.* Духът на лъва. Изд. Princeps, София 2000 г. (I издание) Университетско издателство „Св.Кл.Охридски“, София, 2016 г. (II издание);

Kandilarov, E. Bulgaria and Japan. From The Cold War To the XXI Century. Sofia, 2009 “Damyan Yakov” Publishing House. (*Кандиларов, Е.* България и Япония. От Студената война към XXI век. Изд. „Дамян Яков“. С., 2009);

Stefanova, V. Kandilarov, E. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, People and Events. “East-West” Publishing House. Sofia, 2019. (*Стефанова, В., Кандиларов, Е.* България и Япония. Политика, дипломация, личности и събития. Изд. „Изток-Запад“. С., 2019);

Zlatarov, I. Economic Japan. Sofia, 1910. (*Златаров, И.* Икономическа Япония. С., 1910).

How Has Bulgaria Been Represented in Japan? A Case of the First Japanese Bulgarian Guidebook

Tetsuya SAHARA*

Meiji University

Abstract: *The study takes up Juichiro Imaoka's 1962 book about Bulgaria as a case of early representation of Bulgarian history, culture and contemporary development to Japanese readers. The author offers a criticism of Imaoka's ideas about the origin of the Bulgarian nation, and seeks to explain the latter's work through Imaoka's involvement in the Turanic movement, which emphasized the Turkic origin of Bulgarians.*

Keywords: Bulgaria, representation, Juichiro Imaoka, Turanism,

The first official contact between Japan and Bulgaria can be traced back to the 1940s, and more than 70 years later, the two countries still maintain relations. Despite a long history of contact, it is still difficult to say that the two countries have a close and stable relationship based on mutual understanding. According to CiNii, the most comprehensive academic database in Japan, there are no more than 248 books about Bulgaria written in Japanese. Considering that neighboring countries Turkey and Greece have 1147 and 2773 books, respectively, written about them in Japanese, this number is comparatively low.

Until recently, ordinary Japanese people knew little about Bulgaria other than their “yogurt.” The country’s image in Japan has greatly improved thanks to the success of Sumo wrestler Kotooshu, yet the majority of Japanese people are still largely unaware of the life, culture, and history of the Bulgarian people. Japanese people’s ignorance concerning Bulgaria is due to the low level of economic and political cooperation between the two countries. With little prospect for business opportunities, Japanese people seldom take interest in learning about Bulgaria. Unsurprisingly, Japanese

* Dr. Tetsuya Sahara is Professor at the School of Political Science and Economics, Meiji University.

people know little about Bulgaria's national identity, language, literature, history, or religion.

First Guide Book on Bulgaria

There are exceptions to every rule. A small number of Japanese people have become attracted to this country and taken up the study of its culture. What were their motivations? Why were they fascinated by this country? The answers to these questions are complicated. In an attempt to begin finding an answer, I will examine and discuss the first Bulgarian guidebook published in Japan.¹

The guidebook was written by Juichiro Imaoka and published in Tokyo in 1962 and is 482 pages, with an additional eight pages of photographs. The book is luxuriously bound, and was considered rare at the time. Moreover, the book contained a wealth of information and was one of the most detailed country guides of an East European country that had ever appeared in Japan.

The book has 27 chapters grouped into five larger sections which cover the topics of geography, history, ethnicity, culture, and economy. The first section on geography is composed of six chapters covering climate, mountains and plains, valleys and river systems, underground resources, population, and political system, and administrative divisions. The second section on history is composed of three chapters and three annexes dedicated to ancient and medieval history, the national renaissance, contemporary Bulgarian international relations, and the names and activities of the kings of Bulgars. Section three is about the country's racial demographics and discusses early immigrations, Bulgarian ethnicity, its national questions, and the temperament of the Bulgarian people. Section four is about culture and contains chapters on religion and culture, Bulgarian literature, folklore, folk songs, and proverbs. This section also deals with the education system and contemporary Bulgarian art. Section five deals with various aspects of the economy, such as agricultural history, socialist industrialization, modern agriculture, foreign trade, and economic cooperation.

This exhaustive table of content attests to the author's ambition to explain all aspects of modern Bulgaria in detail. However, on closer inspection of the book's content, the total disorder and chaos of the narrative be-

¹ *Imaoka, Juichiro*. Bulgaria. Tokyo 1962, Japanese title 今岡十一郎、『ブルガリア』、新紀元社、1962.

comes apparent. His descriptions are inaccurate and contradictory and are injected with his own biased views. As a whole, the book leaves the reader feeling confused and disoriented. Large portions of the text are repetitive or exact duplications. The author deals with the same topic in multiple places, repeating some content three or four times. The author also contradicts himself often, providing contrasting assessments of the same topic. The structure of the text is also illogical and poorly organized. In short, the book is a catastrophe.

The book's state of disorder can be partially ascribed to its process of preparation. According to the author, he was first inspired to write a book on Bulgaria in February 1943, following the establishment of a cultural cooperation agreement between the two countries. At the time, no book about Bulgaria existed in Japan. Sometime later, he drafted a brochure entitled "General Picture of Bulgaria," but the manuscript was destroyed by a fire during the U.S. bombardment of Tokyo in 1945. Following World War II, the two countries restored diplomatic ties in 1959. At this time, there was no book on Bulgaria available in Japanese. Therefore, he took up the work again, making use of his old notes and incorporating additional materials provided by the cultural attaché of the Bulgarian diplomatic mission.² The repetition and logical inconsistencies seem to have been caused by this dual process of preparation. The author likely inserted new sentences into the old manuscript without considering their appropriateness. However, even if this is the case, the noted contradictions contained within several core discussions of the text critically undermine the authenticity of the work and give the book an air of amateurism.

According to Imaoka, Japan and Bulgaria have had little contact in the past due to the vast distance separating them. Official diplomatic relations between the two countries began in 1942 when they became allies during World War II. The next year, Japan and Bulgaria entered into a cultural treaty and the Bulgaria Japan Association was founded. Subsequently, the friendship between the two nations started to grow. However, friendly relations lasted less than two years. After World War II, Bulgaria became a country of the socialist camp and relations between the two countries came to an end. Although official diplomatic ties were restored in 1959, cultural and economic cooperation between the two countries remained quite negligible. As a result, there were very few Bulgarian books which the author could consult. Among the 50 materials referenced by the author,

²Ibid., p. 117.

only three were written in Bulgarian. These are: Boncho Ungaroff's *Tova e Balgaria*, V. Velev's *Balgarski Tsare* (Sofia, 1942), and *Godini narodna vlast i nasheto selsko stopanstvo* (Sofia, 1959). The text also references 34 English-language books, six Japanese books, three Hungarian books, two German books, and two French books.³ Most of the English-language works are propagandistic material created by the socialist regime. It is certain that the author's knowledge of Bulgarian language was rudimentary. The author did not have many quality, unbiased resources at his disposal. It is likely that the author's personal experience played an important role in shaping his view of Bulgaria, as the author states that he had the opportunity to learn about Bulgarian culture during a trip to the Balkans in 1924.⁴

Peasant Nature of Bulgarians

Due to these circumstances, the author's view on Bulgarians is very unique. According to him, Bulgarians are a "highly praiseworthy people." He gives the reason for this as follows:

*They neither eat delicious foods nor spend money on play, luxury clothes, or cars. Even the property of rich people is inconspicuous. People wear the same clothes every season and eat modestly. They don't indulge in nightlife regardless of age or gender. They appreciate a modest lifestyle and never waste money.*⁵

As his assessment suggests, in the author's view, their frugality and plain lifestyle is indicative of the essence of Bulgarian people. He also emphasizes their robust work ethic. Indeed, he writes:

*Bulgarians are diligent and patient, and their work ethic is well-known in Europe. Bulgarians are excellent gardeners elsewhere in Europe. Many European nations admire their diligence, and often use the phrase "to work like a Bulgarian."*⁶

According to the author, these virtues originated from their peasant nature and formed throughout their long history of hardship and poverty. For the author, this explains why Bulgarians are so persistent in their efforts to own and keep land. He writes, "Bulgarians are stubbornly obsessed with

³ Ibid., p. 482.

⁴ Ibid., p. 255.

⁵ Ibid., p. 255-6.

⁶ Ibid., p. 256.

land. For Bulgarians, losing farmland is much worse than losing a family member.”⁷

According to Imaoka, Bulgarian men are not only hardworking peasants, but they are also excellent soldiers and fearless fighters during the war. The author writes that “their braveness and prowess on the battlefield [...] are well-known.” He adds that: “They are often called ‘the Japanese of Europe,’ or ‘the Prussians on the Balkans.’”⁸ As for Bulgarian women, Imaoka asserts: “Bulgarian women are beautiful when they are young, but they become obese as they grow older. They generally have a stable family life and are very chaste; remarried widows are extremely rare.”⁹

In this way, the author’s image of Bulgarian people is somewhat unbalanced, and exaggerates their agrarian nature and naivety. Indeed, the author’s description stereotypes Bulgarians as ascetic workaholics overly prepared to protect their nation from an imaginary enemy. They also lack any cosmopolitan sophistication. Such an image seems to derive from the author’s personal experience. In his book, he discloses that in the 1920s he met a young Bulgarian man on a train in Southern Germany. The man was poorly dressed yet eloquently criticized Western decadence. He accused the materialism of Western civilization of degrading the human mind and spoiling the human body. In contrast, he greatly admired the simple life of Bulgarians. The author was so impressed by this conversation that he wanted to understand Bulgaria’s culture and how it had produced such an “ascetic and solid” young man.¹⁰

To sum up, the author viewed Bulgarians as people who possess superior spirituality regardless of the material poverty of their lives. For him, Bulgarians have a character that stresses mental superiority, quite different from of the materialism of Western European civilization. Therefore, in his book, he tried to define the fundamental elements which inform their unique national culture, and focused his discussion on their history. Indeed, according to him, “the basic knowledge on the genesis and historical development of the Bulgarian people is indispensable for understanding their contemporary national character.”¹¹

⁷ Ibid., p. 257.

⁸ Ibid., p. 263.

⁹ Ibid., p. 226.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 255.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 2.

The Genesis of the Bulgarian Nation

The author puts forward a very strange theory to explain the genesis of the Bulgarian nation. He asserts: "Though the Bulgarians now speak a Slavic language, their ancestors were Turks,¹² who spoke Turkish and lived a nomadic life. Their ethnic nomenclature 'Bolgar' or 'Bulgar' are pure Turkish."¹³ He added, "The primordial homeland of the Bulgarians is Mongolia."¹⁴ He claimed that their ancestors were nomads who originated from Xiongnu and had long been living according to a tribal structure. They once formed a tribe under the Great Hun Empire of Attila and were proud to be a Kuturgur-Bolgar tribe of the Hun descendants. When the Hun Empire erupted, the Bolgars came to live in the North Caucasus for some time, and moved to the southwest under the command of Khan Asparuh. They defeated the Byzantine army in 680 and settled in what is now the Dobrodea Plain. They began to rule over the Slavic tribes of Northern Bulgaria, and Asparuh founded the Bulgarian state in 681.¹⁵ The Bolgars were a warrior nation and fearless adventurers who loved power and wealth. As Asians, they were originally "roly-poly Mongolian-type warriors," but grew to become a talented nomadic tribe proficient at farming, trade, and handicrafts.¹⁶ Indeed, Imaoka asserts that they were well-trained soldiers led by the Khans and his aristocrats, and easily subdued the indigenous Slavic farmers who were living in small village communities.¹⁷

Imaoka asserts that at the time of conquest, the Slavs were poorly organized politically and without a strongly unified society. Therefore, it was only after the conquest of the Turkish Bolgars that the Slavic Bulgarian state began to take shape. As he put it:

The Bolgar tribal society, which was dominated by the Khans, lasted nearly 200 years. During that time, the mechanism of political rule of the Bolgars was well established. The new state consisted of two basic classes: free farmers and landowning aristocrats. Their ruler, whose appellation was "Khan," handled state affairs with the help of a na-

¹² Though the author seemed to know the difference between Anatolian Turks and other Turkic peoples, he didn't use the adjective "Turkic" in his writing.

¹³ Imaoka. Bulgaria, p. 193.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 185.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 260.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 118.

*tional council composed of Bolgar and Slavic nobles. The Bolgar aristocrats constituted a dominant political class. Beginning with the first ruler, Kubrat, all subsequent Bulgarian rulers—such as Asparuh, Tervel, Kardam, Krum, and Omurtag—had Turkish names. Just like other ancient Turkish peoples, the rulers took the title of Khan, not king.*¹⁸

According to Imaoka, the present-day Bulgarian nation is a mixture of three ethnic groups: then Turkish Bulgars, indigenous Roman people, and the South Slavs who had immigrated in the 6th century. He thought the Slavs and the Bulgars were different in their ethnic origins, with different languages and beliefs. However, as the Bulgars lived among indigenous Slavic people who constituted an overwhelming majority, the Slavic elements overwhelmed the minority Turkish-Bolgar elements. He argued that the Bulgars gradually lost their nomadic habits, and began to assimilate into the dominant culture. Over time, their populations mixed, and their language, culture, and customs merged into one. Imaoka believed that in this way, the prototype of contemporary Bulgarians had emerged.

Imaoka's theory of ethnic mixing as the genesis of the Bulgarian nation is not very different from standard explanations of Bulgarian historiography. However, the author adds the following remarks:

*Although this is was the birth of the foundation of today's Slavic Bulgarian people, their solid system of virtuous tribalism and their prowess as equestrian people survived for a long time.*¹⁹

The author strongly believed in the Turkish origins of Bulgarian ancestry, and that traces of the Turkish spirit remained long after they assimilated into Slavic society. In his view, it was this Turkish-nomadic spirit that enabled the highly sophisticated Bulgarian civilization to flourish in the 9th century. Imaoka writes, "In this era, architecture prospered and the ruling class built their great homes and castles in a vast and solid manner. Architects inherited these styles from their past ethnic traditions."²⁰ As evidence for his claims, he asserts: "The most impressive monument of this time is the famous Madara Rider that depicts the nomadic soldier in Hun Bolgar style."²¹

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 58, 118, 193.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 197.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

²¹ Ibid., p. 52.

In this way, the Imaoka's views on the genesis of the Bulgarian nation are very unique and differs widely from the standard narrative of Bulgarian historians that assigns a minimal role to *Prabulgars*.

The Role of Christianity

Despite Imaoka's strong insistence on their Turkish origin, he acknowledges the decisive roles that Christianity played in shaping Bulgarian nationhood, which replaced their nomadic religion. As he put it: "Christianity played a decisive role in Bolgars losing their original ethnic heritage. Greek Orthodox Christianity connected Bulgaria with the Eastern Byzantine world. Also, the first cultural era of Slav Bulgaria began, destroying Asian-Turkish nomadic culture."²² Imaoka seems to have difficulty in explaining this culturally suicidal act of the Bolgar rulers, and attempts to locate an answer in realpolitik. "Boris Khan," as he asserts, "had to adopt Christianity as the national religion due to various factors. Religion lent a sacred mandate to the king's secular rule and secured the unconditional submission of the people to the rulers. It was the best ideology for strengthening the feudal order."²³ For him, the acceptance of Christianity was solely a political act. Therefore, he asserts that elements of Turkish ethnic culture remained long after the conversion to Christianity:

*Although Bulgarian people drifted away from their native Turkish culture and merged with European and Christian culture, their ancient Turkish heritage survived in their state organizations, customs, and ethnic composition.*²⁴

Imaoka's assessment of the Cyrillic alphabet is also unique. He highly applauded the invention of the Slavic alphabet by the "Slavic Bulgarian" Cyril and Methodius in 855 as a "highly humanitarian, democratic, progressive, and revolutionary incident."²⁵ He believed it enabled the people to create a "Bulgarian culture," and was a powerful blow to the cultural hegemony of the three languages of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. It also opened the way for the cultural independence of the Bulgarians. Imaoka, however, did not neglect to add the following sentences:

²² Ibid., p. 55.

²³ Ibid., p. 52.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 193.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 56.

In the past, the Bolgars used the beautiful Turanic language, but having lived together with the Slavic people for a long time, they have been influenced by the Slavic culture. Ultimately, they have lost the language unique to the Turanic Bolgars. Now they speak the Slavic language and believe in Greek Orthodox Christianity. This process is analogous to the case of the Tungusic Manchus who had forgotten their own language and came to speak Chinese and accept the customs of the Han people. However, because the blood of their Turanic ancestors flows deeply in the bodies of Bulgarians, their souls are eternally connected with their Turanic brethren, like Turks and Hungarians, and always feel sympathy with them.”²⁶

The Other Turkish Tribes

The above remarks attest to the fact that Imaoka’s unusual views of the Turkish heritage of Bulgarian people were at odds with the Slav-Bulgarian theories. Was he a supporter of Pan-Turkism? Interestingly enough, he held very negative views of the roles of other Turkish tribes in Bulgarian history. Despite supporting the self-claimed thesis that the current Bulgarian nation is a result of different ethnic groups mixing together, he excluded such groups as the Pechenegs, Oghuzs, and Kumans. He admits that the Byzantine Empire resettled various ethnic groups of the Oghuz Turks—such as the Pechenegs, Polowets, and Uze—in Macedonia and Thrace to prevent Slavic immigration. However, he insists that all of them left no trace on the contemporary Bulgarian nation. According to Imaoka, they were all invaders and destroyers to the Bulgarian nation, and although Bulgarians suffered several set-backs, they successfully preserved their original nationhood.

“The Pecheneg Turks,” as he put it, “invaded Thrace in 934 and brought about the terrible destruction of Bulgarian land in 944.”²⁷ He continues, stating: “Much worse was the Tatar invasion. The Bulgarian people were either severely oppressed or looted by them.”²⁸ These invaders, however, ended up all being expelled by the Bulgarians, leaving no significant traces. Therefore, according to Imaoka, the migrations of Turkish tribes after Bolgars were merely short-lived episodes. The only exception is the case

²⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁷ Ibid., 213.

²⁸ Ibid., 75.

of the Gagauz people. He claims that they are the descendants of the Kuman Turks who emigrated in Bulgaria in the middle of the 13th century. In his view, however, they are not Bulgarians, but a separate nation of Turkish-speaking Greek Orthodox people.²⁹

He also has a unique view on the Pomaks. He asserts that Rhodope, where Pomaks live, is one of the pure Bulgarian regions in the territories of contemporary Bulgaria. He asserts: "Rural Pomaks speak Bulgarian and are faithful to Bulgarian customs. Since the independence of Bulgaria, many of them have wanted to be largely unrelated to the Turks and tended to move away from Turkey."³⁰

Imaoka's remarks reveal how he conceives of nationalism. According to Imaoka, the essence that has determined the national character of the Bulgarian people derives from the Bolgars. They founded not only the Bulgarian state, but also the Bulgarian nation. The nation preserved not only the names of their ancestors, but also very the essence of their Asian Turkish Nomadic heritage and culture. The essence of their heritage remained intact despite the onslaught of multiple linguistic, religious, and physical transformations. This essence was not affected by contact with other Asian Turkish groups, because those Turkish groups were different nations with their own national character. For Imaoka, national character is primordial and not amendable to merging with other groups or nations. Therefore, Orthodox Gagauz is a different nation from its unique Kuman origin. On the other hand, Muslim Pomaks are pure Bulgarians, because they are descendants of Bolgars.

This begs the question: Who was the main bearer of this national essence? In the course of history, the original Bolgar ruling class was destroyed and the Bulgarian church was Hellenized. Therefore, in theory, only peasants remained to inherit the pure, original spirit of their Bolgar ancestors. This view compliments Imaoka's admiration for and exaggeration of the peasant virtues of contemporary Bulgarians.

The Ottoman Yoke

His assessment of the role of the Ottoman Turks in Bulgarian history is decidedly negative; he describes it as follows. Imaoka explains that by the 14th century, fratricidal feudal struggles, intrigues in the dynasties,

²⁹ Ibid., 217.

³⁰ Ibid., 222.

and invasions of foreign countries had exhausted the resources and power of the Balkan regions. The Balkans was divided into many small feudal estates and dukedoms, and were subsequently too vulnerable to repel the invasion of powerful Ottoman forces. The Turkish army's attacks were so violent that Bulgaria was completely ruined. Indeed, according to Imaoka, Ottoman rule was nothing but destruction and invasion.

Imaoka judged the Ottoman feudal system as extremely backward compared to the Bulgarian traditional feudal system. Therefore, it prevented the natural development of the Bulgarian economy. The Ottomans replaced Bulgarian feudalism with a system that was accompanied by extreme violence and predatory exploitation. He asserts: "The Ottoman Turkish feudal system is a combination of forceful subordination and conquest, heavy taxes and grievances, and ethnic and religious discrimination. As a result, it halted the development of the Bulgarian economy and culture for centuries, and brought about a fatal delay in their European development."³¹

Imaoka insists that the Ottoman Turks were a formidable equestrian nomadic people from Central Asia. They were uninterested in productive activities such as agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing. They despised such occupations and left them in the hands of conquered peoples.

According to Imaoka, the Ottomans were merciless and whimsical tyrants, and thus their rule was cruel and oppressive. Imaoka wrote, "All the Turks were called 'Beys' elsewhere. The Bulgarians, who were devoted Christians, were nothing but targets for taxation. They were the same as the bulls and horses that brought their masters wealth and power."³² As a result, Bulgarian farmers were forced to live in extreme poverty and were burdened with hard work under the Turk's rule. Although Bulgarians rose up in massive revolts in 1595 and 1688, the Turkish Empire held a tight grip over their territories as it served as the largest bastion for their European invasions. Imaoka wrote, "Bulgarians were forced to suffer from the longest and most oppressive regime among the Balkan nations. Most fatal for the Bulgarians, however, was that the Turk's iron-fisted rule isolated Bulgaria from the European world, closing its path to communication and progress and making it into an extremely backward Asian feudal system."³³

As reflected in Imaoka's remarks, he was strongly convinced that the Ottoman Turks were a conquering race and acted as such when on Bul-

³¹ Ibid., p. 394.

³² Ibid., p. 261.

³³ Ibid., p. 394.

garian soil. Imaoka writes, “They were culturally and socially alien to the indigenous population. Thus, they could not be integrated into the national character of Bulgaria.”³⁴

According to the author, another aspect of Ottoman rule was repression by the Greeks. The Phanariots’ misrule of Bulgarian society by far surpassed the cruelty of the Turks, and deeply traumatized the Bulgarian people. Those injuries were difficult to heal quickly, and as a result, they caused the backwardness ubiquitous in modern Bulgarian history. Indeed, Imaoka states, “Unlike the lazy and stupid Turks, the lustful Greeks were truly ruthless and cruel to the Bulgarian farmers, sometimes even more terrifying than the cruel Turks, because they would do anything to extract grain and taxes from the Bulgarians. They mocked Bulgarian peasants and sheep traders as idiots, and despised their peasant customs and Slavic language.”³⁵ Imaoka argued that for several centuries, the Greeks completely controlled Bulgarian culture and religion, and tried to assimilate the Bulgarians into Hellenic culture. They tried to destroy Bulgarian tradition through all possible means. Indeed, Imaoka said that some Bulgarians who were Greek-educated displayed a humiliating obedience to their Greek masters, and sold their souls in order to become Greek. As a result, only those who remained as farmers were able to preserve their ancestral identities, that is, Bulgarian nationhood. This finalized the peasant nature of the nation in Imaoka’s eyes.

National Revival and Independence

According to Imaoka, Bulgarian peasant character was the driving force behind their national liberation. He claims: “Although the Turkish Greek yoke suppressed Bulgarians’ desire for knowledge, it was unable to destroy the Bulgarian cultural tradition. The monastery and its attached schools became centers for education and literary life. The monks continued their literary work, inspiring the spirit of the people during the Dark Ages. Folklore has developed remarkably. Architecture, wood carvings, and sewing continued to develop. These cultural traditions created new spiritual values and maintained the national identity of Bulgarians. The slavery policies of conquerors that attempted to assimilate them by depriving them of national character ended up in total failure every time.”³⁶

³⁴ Ibid., p. 260.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 262.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 84.

Describing the history of Bulgarian independence, Imaoka states that from the end of the 18th century until 1878, major social and economic changes took place in the country. Capitalist enterprises and large manufacturing factories appeared, greatly undermining Turkish feudalism. A new landowner class appeared in the region that began mass production of agricultural products for the market. In this way, the agricultural, commercial, and industrial bourgeois classes emerged. They led the national struggle of Bulgarians. Indeed, Imaoka argued that national independence emerged from these indigenous endeavors and developments of the Bulgarian people.

Juichiro Imaoka: A Turanist

Imaoka's view on Bulgarian history can be summed up as follows. According to him, Bulgarian statehood and ethnicity were created by the Turkish Bolgars. They continued to live and develop without losing their original spirit while undergoing linguistic changes and Christianization. The immigrations of other Turkish tribes, including the Ottomans, didn't influence the Bolgar spirit of the Bulgarian nation. Imaoka writes that their national spirit was well preserved among the peasant class who experienced incessant oppression and misrule by foreign powers. The national virtue of hard work among the peasant class was fortified through hardship and independence was finally achieved as a result of their own striving for economic and cultural development.

Imaoka's thesis somewhat resembles the standard discourse of Bulgarian historiography. However, whereas Bulgarian historians put emphasis on the Slavic heritage and Christianity of the Bulgarian nation, Imaoka stubbornly insists on the eternity of the Turkish-Bolgar primordial character of contemporary Bulgarians. His interpretation of history is undeniably unique. In fact, one could even say that he expresses a kind of paranoia. Why does Imaoka represent such a peculiar image of Bulgarians? What inspired him? What kind of ideology was he motivated by? The answers to these questions can be found in his career.

Juichiro Imaoka was born on April 21, 1888, in the small provincial town of Matsue, Shimane. He lived in poverty during his childhood and graduated from a local high school with difficulty. In 1910, he enrolled at Tokyo Institute of Foreign Languages (now Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) and majored in the German Studies. After graduation, Imaoka came to

know a Hungarian traveler, Benedek Baráthosi Balogh.³⁷ Balogh introduced himself as an ethnographer, but he was actually a devoted follower and evangelist for Hungarian Turanism. He visited Japan to search for traces of the Turanic race in contemporary Japan. The motive was purely political. Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War made Hungarians overjoyed, as they had harbored long-standing discontent for the Russophile Slavic peoples.³⁸ As a result, Japan had become a beacon for Turanic peoples who had been oppressed or threatened by Russians, including Hungary.

Balogh ostensibly came to Japan to study the Ainu people living in Hokkaido and Sakhalin, and Imaoka accompanied him as an interpreter. The two embarked on a six-month research trip to Northern Japan, during which they consolidated their friendship. Imaoka was fascinated by Hungarian Turanist ideas that stressed the common origin of the two nations. Imaoka sympathized with Balogh's cause, as Balogh insisted that Hungarians and Japanese were racial brothers.³⁹

In 1921, Balogh visited Japan again. According to Imaoka, this time he planned to launch a Turanist movement in Japan and asked Imaoka for his help. Imaoka excitedly accepted the offer immediately. At that time, there was strong conviction among Hungarian Turanists that the Turanic race existed in only five independent countries—Japan, Turkey, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Finland—and that all other racial brethren were dominated by the Slavic oppressors, the Russians. They thought that Japan was the only nation among these five that could compete with the Russians. Communist Russia, they believed, would certainly collapse if Japan took the lead in the struggle for the emancipation of the Turanic nations in Siberia and Central Asia. In a lecture held in Kanda, Tokyo, Balogh asserted: “In order to prevent the aggression of the inherently oppressive and warmongering Arian

³⁷ Umemura, Yuko. Japan-Hungarian Diplomatic Relations through the activities of Juichiro Imaoka, – In: *Journal of International Relations*. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2/2, 2013, Japanese title: 梅村裕子「今岡十一郎の活動を通して観る日本・ハンガリー外交関係の変遷」『国際関係論叢(東京外国語大学国際関係研究所)』 2(2), 2013.

³⁸ Kondo, Masanori. A Japanese textbook published in Hungary early 20th century and its historical background. – In: *Japanese Language Education in the World*, 15, 2005, p. 188, Japanese title: 近藤正憲「20世紀初頭ハンガリーで出版された日本語教科書とその時代背景」『世界の日本語教育』15, 2005.

³⁹ Levent, Sinan. Juichiro Imaoka, an Activist of Turanism. – In: *Annual of Institute for Asian Studies*, 49, 2014, Japanese title: レヴェント・シナン「トゥーラン主義運動家としての今岡十一郎」『アジア文化研究所研究年報』49, 2014.

race, and to protect Turanic brethren in Asia, it is necessary to organize the Turanic National Alliance.”⁴⁰

Shortly before the arrival of Balogh, an anti-Soviet activist of Bashkir origin, Alimcan Tagan, had sought asylum in Japan. As they shared the same resentment for the Soviet Union, Tagan became a comrade of Imaoka and Balogh. The three started lobbying to secure support from the Japanese military and political establishment. First, they made contact with the Asian Association, a political organization of Japanese Asianists. With the help of the association, Imaoka's group was able to found a small society named the Turanist National Alliance. However, Japanese Asianists valued Touranism only for its anti-Soviet and anti-European elements, and they felt no sympathy for the Siberian and Central Asian Turkic peoples. As a result, their cooperation remained superficial.⁴¹

Subsequently, Imaoka and his comrades approached Japanese fascists, including Shumei Okawa and Ikki Kita. These fascists were much more sympathetic to Imaoka's cause, but they couldn't provide what Japanese Turanists needed. Japanese fascists, at that time, were still a nascent group, and they didn't have any practical influence over military or political circles. The cooperation was short-lived. As a result, Imaoka's society could not exert any significant practical influence over Japanese politics.

At this point, Imaoka's ambitious plan came to a standstill. They abandoned their original plan and decided to instead go to Central Asia. There, an anti-Soviet popular movement, known as the Basmachi movement, had broken out. Rather than persuade conservative Japanese nationalists, Imaoka and his comrades judged it more pragmatic to imbue their Central Asian brethren with Turanist ideology. Thus, they headed to “Turkistan” to join the movement.

Imaoka's Sojourn in Hungary

Imaoka later wrote in one of his books that he went to Europe in the spring of 1922 to study with the help of Balogh;⁴² however, his real objective was to go to Central Asia to spread Turanism among the Turkic peoples. For this purpose, it was necessary to take a route through Europe,

⁴⁰ Osaka Mainichi Newspaper, 11 September 1921.

⁴¹ *Levent*. Juichiro Imaoka...

⁴² *Imaoka, Juichiro*. *Turan Racial Sphere*. Tokyo 1942, Ryuginsha, Japanese title: 今岡十郎、『ツラン民族圏』、龍吟社、1942.

as both the trans-Siberian and Shinjiang routes were closed. They first took a boat to Germany in order to reach Hungary. They stayed in Hungary for a while before setting out for Turkey in November of 1922. However, the Greek-Turkish war was running rampant at the time, and Soviet troops had moved southward into the Caucasus. It was impossible to go through Anatolia to reach Central Asia. The three stayed in Turkey for a while but ended up returning to Hungary.⁴³

This abortive political endeavor forced Imaoka to stay in Hungary for a long time. He spent more than nine years there. According to his biographer, Imaoka learned the Hungarian language and studied their history and culture at the University of Budapest.⁴⁴ His stay in Hungary, however, was not solely for academic purposes. He took part in the activities of the Hungarian Turanist Society and made contact with Hungarian political and business elites. During this long stay, he was strongly indoctrinated into the Hungarian version of Turanism and became a devoted supporter of their theories.⁴⁵

He also hoped to take advantage of an opportunity to revitalize the Turanist movement in Japan. At that time, there was no Japanese diplomatic representative in Hungary, so Imaoka was commissioned by the Japanese embassy in Vienna to publicize the affairs of Japan and host Japanese guests. He organized events and lectures on behalf of Japanese-Hungarian friendship. As a result, his house became a kind of unofficial Japanese embassy in Budapest. By way of these activities, he made friends with several diplomats and officers. Some of them were later to become pillars of Japanese militarism.⁴⁶

Imaoka's Political Activities during Japanese Fascism

When the Mukden Incident broke out in September of 1931, Japan's policy orientation shifted toward the invasion of China and Mongolia. Imaoka saw this as a chance to propagate Turanism, and hastily returned to Japan in December of 1931. He first took part in the organizing of the Turanist Society that was established in March of the following year. The orga-

⁴³ Levent, *Sinan*. Turanism in Japan from Perspective of the Pan-Asiatic Journal, Dai Ajia Shugi (1933-1942). – In: *Journal of the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies*, 20, 2011, p. 313.

⁴⁴ Umehara. *Japan-Hungary...*

⁴⁵ Levent, Juichiro Imaoka...

⁴⁶ Ibid.

nization aimed to provide theoretical justification for the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Soon afterwards, Imaoka himself founded another political body, known as the Japan Turanist Association, in June of 1932.⁴⁷ This group played a much more active role in promoting Japanese imperialist policy on the Eurasian continent, attracting policymakers and officers who were interested in ethnic questions in Central Asia. Imaoka also became a member of the Asia-Pacific Society in 1933. This organization was a notorious tool used by Japanese fascists to promote their Asianists ideologies.

Meanwhile, Imaoka found a job at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he often gave public lectures and wrote articles. He published a total of 12 monographs and translations between 1931 and 1944, and authored more than 100 essays and short articles.⁴⁸ His Turanist theories are most succinctly summarized in his book *Turan Racial Sphere*. It is a collection of more than 30 articles which had appeared in *Asianism*, a major organ of the Japanese Fascist movement. In the preamble, Imaoka wrote the following:

The history of humankind is not only the history of national struggles for survival, but also the history of progress toward inter-ethnic solidarity and surmounting antagonisms. Today, the world is a theater of conflict between globalism as the ultimate form of European nationalism, and the coordinated liberation movements of Asian nations that have been oppressed by European colonialism. The latter has developed into the East Asian Co-Prosperity Zone, namely the construction of a new order in East Asia. These two things have fundamentally different roots. The latter has a common destiny that will soon set them free from European capitalist oppression. Thus, there are historical grounds on which the integration and cooperation of Asian nations will be realized. Based on this belief, I can say for certain that it is possible to establish a joint defense front against the aggressive Western nations, the common enemies of East Asian peoples. Japan, as the leader of the East Asia Co-Prosperity Zone, has to keep in mind its mission to culturally illuminate the East Asian nations with its neo-Japanese principles that combine the advantages of Western civilization with the quintessence of Asia that is embodied in Japan as the fusion of Eastern and Western cultures. We must not forget to carry out cultural assimilation among the East Asian nations. The current Japanese national policy of anti-communism and

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Umehara. Japan-Hungary...

international new order is aiming at the establishment of a common prosperity zone for the peoples of East Asia based on family values...⁴⁹

Therefore, the creation of a Turanic cultural zone by promoting ties among Turanic racial brethren is essential to the sacred national goal of Pan-Asian Japanese hegemony... I declare that Japan is the real and spiritual leader of Turanic Asia.⁵⁰

Imaoka's Turanist View on Bulgaria

Imaoka was a racist to the core, and was a devotee of Japanese fascist who were infused with a Hungarian version of Pan-Turkism. It is these political beliefs that led him to express such a unique conception of Bulgaria. During his stay in Hungary, Imaoka read the first volume of the Turanic collections of the Hungarian Turanic Society dedicated to Bulgaria. This actually motivated him to write about Bulgaria despite his poor knowledge of the country and its people.

According to Imaoka, the Turanic ethnic group is equivalent for those who belong to the Ural-Altaic linguistic family. They are an ethnic group sharing a common culture that originated in the Turanic plain, and thus they can be considered Northern Asian people. Imaoka asserted that they share a number of common features, such as physical attributes, place of residence, language, and cultural system. Therefore, they constitute a racial unit. Specifically, he saw the Turanic peoples as sharing the same unique form of language and distinctive physical characteristics. Their native religion is a type of Shamanism with a unique dualistic worldview. All of them preserved the nomadic essence of their social structure. Imaoka believed that these features were still commonly shared by all major Turanic nations to some extent.

Owing to his conviction, Imaoka started to look for traces of Turanic heritage in Bulgarian culture and history. The search for traces of Turanic heritage is the fundamental motive behind his book on Bulgaria. He believed that Bulgarians must have retained their Turanic racial essence, despite having lost its linguistic and physical characteristics. Without such a discovery, his racist conviction would be discredited. This irrational conviction led him to construct his unusual description of the Bulgarian nation.

⁴⁹ Imaoka. *Turanic Racial Sphere*, p. 5-6.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 12.

This explains why we often come across serious distortions of facts, strange interpretations of events, and pseudoscientific theories in his work.

Apart from the unique interpretations we have seen above, his view on the Bogomils merits attention. According to Imaoka, Bulgaria's adoption of Christianity was the decisive historical act that strengthened the feudal system and made it possible for Bulgarian national character to take shape. At the same time, it strengthened Byzantine influences and paved the way for the Byzantines to permeate into Bulgaria. The invention of Cyrillic letters, however, made it possible for them to express critical views on the social and political wickedness of Greek clerics, enabling them to rebel against the oppressive class and national oppressors.

According to Imaoka, the first example of such a movement was Bogomilism. For him, it was simply a social and political reform movement. The movement unabashedly addressed political oppression, social injustice, and religious hypocrisy. For Imaoka, the Bogomil movement had a democratic, progressive, and revolutionary character and its critical doctrine destabilized the feudal order. Imaoka asserts:

Bogomilism urged people to take part in the liberation movement from Constantinople, emphasizing that true salvation should be sought in the truth of the Gospel and human perfection. Its revolutionary protest against Byzantine tyranny became a shining beacon for the people and quickly won a large number of enthusiastic followers. Prior to the introduction of Christianity, Bulgarians had a dualistic view of God that was common among the Turanic tribes. In this same vein, Bogomilism had a dualistic view. It was nothing but the national religion of Bulgarians, combining traditional popular beliefs with the doctrine of Christianity. It was not a mere religious movement, but a true Bulgarian national movement. It developed into a spiritual movement that sought to protect the uniqueness of Bulgarian national culture.⁵¹

In this way, Imaoka claims Bogomilism was a revival of the ancient Turanistic religion of Bolgars because it had a dualistic world view. However, one can easily dispute this claim, as a dualistic worldview was not something inherent to "Turanic peoples." Are Zoroastrians, Druids, and Voodoos Turanic because they had dualistic world views? Imaoka's narratives are all dominated with self-centered, twisted distortions that are not based on tangible evidence or solid reasoning.

⁵¹ Imaoka. Bulgaria, p. 154.

Imaoka's Turanist bias is clearly expressed in claims such as that "Bulgarians instinctively feel sympathy for Hungarians, as they share a common origin." He asserts that both Hungarians and Bulgarians had rulers of Asian descent, conquered the indigenous Slavs to build their present-day nation, and accepted Christianity. "When we look back in history," as he put it, "we find the strong ties between Bulgarians and Hungarians that cannot be cut off." Imaoka writes:

*Hungarian ancestry was closely associated with Bulgarian ancestry in the North Caucasus for a very long time and both were influenced by Turkish culture. Contemporary Hungarian language has many foreign words of Turkish origin, indicating that their ancestors were influenced by Bolgar culture. Likewise, Bulgarian people originally came from the blood of Turanic Asia.*⁵²

Based on this conviction, Imaoka claims that Pan-Slavic sentiment among Bulgarians is artificial. He claims it was a product of a Russian expansionist policy that had aimed to annex the Ottoman territories. Their southward advance was favorable for the Bulgarian anti-Ottoman movement. Thus, the Bulgarian national liberation movement was linked to pan-Slavism. After World War I, however, Pan-Slavic and Pan-Germanic movements ceased to exist in Hungary and Turkey, and in their place, the Turanist movement gained momentum as a new pan-nationalist movement. Imaoka saw in this the chance to propagate Turanism in Bulgaria. According to him, there were encouraging signs in the country:

The first scholar who proved the Turanic origin of Bulgarians was Bulgarian historian Ivan Michev. He published a text of 6th-century Bolgar monuments in 1861, and linguistically and historically demonstrated that the ancestors of Bulgarians were Turanic people. At the end of the 19th century, two students of Sophia University, Sakazov and Bobchev, went to Constantinople to study the Ural-Altai people. Strashinov published the Ural-Altai Ethnic Studies in 1904. In 1909, the linguist Milchev wrote a book on Ural-Altai linguistics, and established the Turanic origin of Bulgarians. In this book, Milchev attested to the fact that most of the Turkish vocabulary previously considered to be loan words from the Ottomans actually belong to the Bulgarian national language of the Asparuh era, and that the ancestors of Bulgarians had

⁵² Ibid., p. 203-4.

*Ural-Altaic roots and belonged to the same ethnic group as Turks. This fact establishes that the foundation of the Turanist movement began in Bulgaria.*⁵³

However, Turanist ideas didn't spread beyond a restricted circle of pro-Turkish activists in Bulgaria. Imaoka partly attributes this failure to the Turks. He asserts that, "As the Turks applied political pressure, these ideas were met with strong resistance. Bulgarian national sentiment had not forgotten the tyranny of five hundred years of Turkish rule."⁵⁴

Imaoka sought to define the weak presence of Hungarian Turanists in this country as another reason for the failure of Turanism in Bulgaria. With the alliance of Turkey, Hungary, and Bulgaria during the World War I, however, the situation changed. It enabled Hungarian activists to propagate their cause in Bulgaria, and as a result, the Turanist movement spread to some extent. After the war, there appeared to be an even greater chance for Turanists to propagate Bulgaria. "The Bulgarian Turanist movement," as he put it, "emerged as a kind of social power. It took advantage of the feeling of having been betrayed by Germany and Russia, who had used the small kingdoms as tools to realize their own ambitions. Disillusioned with the Pan-Slavic and Pan-Germanic movements, Bulgarians realized that the weak countries had to unite to better protect their mutual interests."⁵⁵ As a result, Imaoka explains that the Bulgarian delegation participated in the Turanist National Congress. When World War II broke out, Bulgaria, along with Hungary, sided with the Axis powers. The Turanist movement flourished under these conditions and political and cultural cooperation between Hungary and Bulgaria became more substantive. But this development suddenly came to a halt with the defeat of the fascist camp.

Imaoka never gave up his hope of propagating Turanism in Bulgaria, even after WWII. The very act of writing a book on Bulgaria was part of his political mission as a Turanist.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 242-3.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 242.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 243.

Conclusion

Initial interest about Bulgaria in Japan originated from an unusual, paranoid obsession with the Turkish origin of the Bulgarian nation. This view not only ignored reality, but also distorted Bulgarian culture and tradition. Indeed, the first encounter between Japan with Bulgaria started with a very unfortunate misunderstanding and constructed extremely misleading theories purporting to explain the nature and origins of Bulgaria. As Japanese researchers of Bulgaria, we have to make efforts to overcome this prejudice, and try to foster a more balanced and unbiased picture of Bulgaria.

Bibliography:

- Imaoka, Juichiro*. Bulgaria. Tokyo, 1962;
Imaoka, Juichiro. Turan Racial Sphere. Tokyo, 1942;
Kondo, Masanori. A Japanese textbook published in Hungary early 20th century and its historical background. – In: *Japanese Language Education in the World*, 15, 2005, p. 188;
Levent, Sinan. Juichiro Imaoka, an Activist of Turanism. – In: *Annual of Institute for Asian Studies*, 49, 2014;
Levent, Sinan. Turanism in Japan from Perspective of the Pan-Asiatic Journal, Dai Ajia Shugi (1933-1942). – In: *Journal of the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies*, 20, 2011, p. 313.
Osaka Mainichi Newspaper, 11 September 1921;
Umemura, Yuko. Japan-Hungarian Diplomatic Relations through the activities of Juichiro Imaoka, – In: *Journal of International Relations*. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2/2, 2013.

Hints and Echoes of Japan in the Romanian World Before and After 1989

*Alexandra Marina GHEORGHE**

University of Bucharest

Abstract: *Japan and Romania have developed strong connections during their age of modernization, sharing many common concerns regarding their eventual fit into a Western state pattern built on traditions of a completely different nature – whether they were of an Anglo-Saxon, French, Dutch, Italian or Germanic origins. The events in Romania from December 1989 brought about a change of dynamics and mutual perspective as far as the two countries were concerned. Freed from Communism, Romanians started travelling abroad and they also reached Japan. Some of these experiences turned into successful best-sellers and also launched the literary tradition of the confessions from a different culture. It is the aim of this paper to outline the way that the Japanese Other's image is built as a consequence of the authors' contact with the Japanese civilization before and after 1989 within the historical context of mutual relations that these images fit in.*

Keywords: Japan, Romania, Revolution, cultural relations

The year 1989 brought significant changes in the democratic dynamics of many countries in the Eastern part of Europe. When nobody was hoping for a change, very close to the end of the year, in Romania, a massive revolt swept the cities from Timișoara to Bucharest, bringing the change of political regime and the fall of the Communism.

In a Note sent by the Romanian Embassy from Tokyo to the Japanese government on the 23rd of December 1989, the Diplomats were actually admitting that they had switched sides from being the official representatives of a Communist regime into the supporters of a newly established revolu-

* Dr. Alexandra Marina Gheorghe is Associate Professor at the Japanese Section of the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Bucharest.

tionary civil formation which was called “The Front for National Rescue” of Romania (Rom. *Frontul Salvării Naționale* – translated in the official message as the “Front for National Salvation”):

“The Embassy of Romania in Tokyo and its entire staff, starting from December 22nd, 1989, the historic day when Romanian people overthrew the Ceaușescu’s hated dictatorship, fully made¹ common cause with the Council of the Front for National Salvation of Romania and supports firmly its program.

This is a Declaration of conscience² and a strong political commitment to act for implementation of the program of the Front of National Salvation of Romania.”³

The profound changes which brought back the dignity, freedom, as well as all the democratic rights of the individual in Romania were welcome by the Japanese. Due to Ryō Matsumaru’s book called *Rūmania kakumei: Bukaresuto chūzai nihonjin no kiroku* (“The Romanian Revolution in the Records of the Japanese Officials from Bucharest”), published in 1990 we find out that the Japanese who witnessed the events had actually not been aware of the terrifying realities of Romanians’ lives, including hunger, fear and the existence of the appalling secret police. The reader can find many similarities between the Romanian Revolt from December 21st 1989 and the Chinese Rebellion from June 4th 1989 in Tiananmen Square; in both cases the violence and hardships met by the people who had been oppressed by their national authorities made them resort to extreme measures which led them to massive revolts that found their end out in the streets of the cities.

There, in December 1989, the armed forces who represented the Communist regime shot at the people who marched in demonstrations where they expressed in the open their anti-Communist creed. The sudden victory was followed by confusion and by a certain uneasiness as far as democracy was concerned within the newly formed political institutions. The book casts many perspectives upon the Romanian Revolution from 1989, as well as on the Orwellian atmosphere in Romania, which actually prompted the bloody events, trying to explain in a brief history of Romania, the causes which actually led to that state of mind.

¹ “maked” in the original text

² “conscience” in the original text

³ Note No. 653 – the Romanian Embassy from Tokyo sends the note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Tokyo on the 23rd of December; it is also quoted in a study concerning the Diplomatic relations between Japan and Romania of a Romanian Diplomat, Ion Scumpieru, at page 587.

For one who aims at getting a better understanding of the way the image of Japan was shaped in the Romanian mind *before* and *after* 1989, several ways to reconsider it can be taken into consideration. As the chronological perspective which outlines the main stages of development of the relations between the two countries which start with the XVIIth century and ends close to our present times⁴ has already been undertaken, and the study of the main themes⁵ of interest which captured the remarks on Japan of the Romanian cultural observers has also been done, we chose a process of selection of the most important personalities and phenomena which marked the way that the Romanians perceived Japan and the Japanese from the beginnings of their mutual encounters until 1989, as well as the changes which occurred in the way the Romanians perceived Japan and the Japanese after the events from December 1989 until the recent times.

Romania and Japan – the Beginnings

In 2013 a former Diplomat from the Romanian Embassy in Tokyo, Ion Scumpieru (1941 -), published a complex study regarding the outline of the relations between Japan and Romania. There he underlined a very interesting discovery he had made when he was working in Japan – he claimed that the Japanese had been aware of the existence of our country from 1671 when a craftsman called Hayashi Jizaemon published the *Map from Kyoto* where its name was actually written with the characters which correspond to the syllables “Ro-ma-ni-a”⁶. This discovery makes “The Description of

⁴I developed this approach in a study published in 2017 where I divided the history of Japanese – Romanian relations in five stages: the first stage developed around the middle of the XVIIth century; the second one consisted of the multiple processes which took place during the establishment of the modern state, starting with the seventies in the XIXth century and ending in 1917; the third stage started from the establishment of the first Romanian Consulate from Tokyo in 1917, and lasted until the 31st of October 1944, when the sudden decision of the Romanian authorities from August 1944 changed Romania from a partner into an enemy of the Powers of the Axe (of which Japan was a member); the fourth stage of Japanese – Romanian relations develops along the Communist regime and the fifth one – after the Anti-Communist Revolution from 1989 (Gheorghe, A. M., Japan in the Romanian Imaginary: Major Trends and Their Dynamics. – In: *A Festschrift for Florentina Vișan*. București, 2017, 347 – 365).

⁵Gheorghe, A. M. Romanian Views on Japan. Major Topics in Less Known Discourses between 1894 and 1939. – In: *Chūō shokoku no Nipponjin to Nihongo. Japanese People & Language in Poland, Romania, Czech and Estonia*. Ōsaka, 2008, 77 – 95.

⁶Scumpieru, I. 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 537 – 538.

China”, the records regarding the Japanese *island* of a Romanian aristocrat called Nicolae Milescu Spătarul (1636 – 1708) – dated in 1677⁷ according to Constantin Bărbulescu, the editor of Milescu’s text in Romanian in 1958, come on a second place from a chronological point of view as far as the bilateral relations are considered. He might have reviewed it several times afterwards⁸. His last two chapters – Chapters 57 and 58 – are dedicated to Korea and Japan. In the fifty eighth chapter entitled “The Description of the Famous and Big Island of the Japanese and What Lies On It” he describes the inhabitants of the archipelago as he probably derived the information from other sources⁹ which must have been available to him while he was in Pekin or afterwards. Milescu had no direct contact with the Japanese neither had he set foot on their land. He obviously knew nothing about *sakoku*¹⁰ policy which the Tokugawa Shogunate had already adopted before he reached China, yet he made no secret from the fact that he had read Marco Polo’s texts. He mentioned his writings by calling him “the Venetian”¹¹.

As Mihai Epure (1948 -), another Romanian Diplomat, was pointing out in one of his studies dedicated to the relations between Japan and Romania, the Far Eastern country was known to the Romanian scholars as a land of mountains due to by Amfilohie Hotiniul’s translation of a volume of Geography written by Camille Buffier in 1785 and published in Iași at the beginning of the XIXth century¹².

The two emerging modern states, Japan and Romania, started developing strong political and diplomatic connections during the second half of the XIXth century. They met not only the requirements of political modernity – a Constitutional monarch, a civil administration, a Parliament, elections, internationally oriented market economy, a national army or national

⁷ *Milescu Spătarul, N. Descrierea Chinei*. București, 1958, vii, xviii.

⁸ *Ibid.*, xix.

⁹ According to John Frederick Baddeley’s book “Russia, Mongolia, China” published in London in 1919, Milescu actually translated Martino Martini’s (1614 – 1666) “Atlas Sinensis” (1655, Amsterdam) in order to fulfill his task of informing his Russian employers of as many Chinese details as possible (J. F. Baddeley. “Russia, Mongolia, China”. London, 1919, vol 2, 205 – 214).

¹⁰ “National isolation” – a political strategy which prevented the Japanese from coming into contact with any foreigner or foreign elements; the law was adopted during the military administration of the Tokugawa rulers in the first half of the seventeenth century; those who would break the law were to be executed in public.

¹¹ *Milescu Spătarul, N. Op.cit.*, 229.

¹² *Epure, M. Din Carpați până la Fuji*. București, 2000, 70.

efficient educational and health systems, but also the social norms which became very important when two heads of states were engaging into official correspondence. Due to the many letters exchanged between Emperor Meiji and His followers with King Carol the First and His descendants, from the 22nd of May 1880 until the 31st of October 1944¹³, we conclude that the relationship between the two heads of state was a close one.

Japanese Echoes in Romania before the Second World War

One can notice the considerable geographical distance between Japan and Romania, yet for most of their known History, they shared a common neighboring political power: Russia. Former subjects to political and cultural influences coming from the Ottomans and Russians, the Romanians searched different cultural patterns in Paris, Wien, Berlin and Rome during the same time. In this way the paths of some Japanese aristocratic, scholarly figures intersected the Romanians' ones.

The first major international event which brought Japan on the international stage was the war with China from 1894 – 1895. It also raised the Romanians' public attention. Gheorghe Mihăilescu¹⁴ delivered his speech in Galați¹⁵ and Constantin Georgescu¹⁶ – in Buzău, in 1894. One of them praises the Japanese for their art and poetry¹⁷, while the other for their rapid pace of modernization and their high level of civilization according to Western standards¹⁸.

¹³ *Scumpieru, I.* 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 36.

¹⁴ *Mihăilescu, Gh.* Din Țara Soarelui în țara dolarului ("From the Sun-Country to the Dollar-Country"). – In: Chūō shokoku no Nipponjin to Nihongo. Japanese People & Language in Poland, Romania, Czech and Estonia. Ōsaka, 2008, 78.

¹⁵ An important harbor on the Danube River. The Japanese wanted to open a Consulate there, due to its very favorable trade-oriented position (according to *Epure, M.* Din Carpați până la Fuji. 2000, 279).

¹⁶ *Georgescu, C.* Priviri generale asupra României și Japoniei. Conferință publică ținută la Atheneul din Buzău în ziua de 11 Martie 1894 ("A General View on Romania and Japan. Public Conference delivered at the Athenaeum of Buzau on the 11th of March, 1894") – In: Chūō shokoku no Nipponjin to Nihongo. Japanese People & Language in Poland, Romania, Czech and Estonia. Ōsaka, 2008, 84.

¹⁷ *Mihăilescu, Gh.* Din Țara Soarelui în Țara Dolarului. Conferință ținută la Ateneul din Galați în ziua de 6 februarie 1894". Galați, 1894, 24.

¹⁸ *Georgescu, C.* Priviri generale asupra României și Japoniei. Conferință publică ținută la Atheneul din Buzău în ziua de 11 Martie 1894 ("A General View on Romania and Japan. A Public Conference delivered at the Athenaeum of Buzau on the 11th of March, 1894") Buzeu, 1894, 3.

In 1899 the Romanian engineer called Basil Assan (1860 – 1918) was coming home from a voyage that had included Japan as well. He talked about the small, yet frail and beautiful things in Japan, as well as about the impressive sumo wrestlers¹⁹. In 1900 Corneliu Diaconovich (1859 – 1923), a Secretary of the Transylvanian Association for The Romanian People's Culture and Literature (ASTRA) and a journalist, included information regarding Japan²⁰ in one of the three volumes of the first Romanian Encyclopedia in the modern age. The female journalist Otilia Cosmuță spent almost one year in Japan between 1901 and 1902²¹. In the same year when she returned home, the first performances of a Japanese theatre company with *Sada Yoko* as the leading artist took place in Bucharest, Iași and other towns in Romania²².

The War between Russia and Japan from 1904 – 1905 ended with the victory of the East Asian state²³. One of the Romanian leading experts in Universal History between the two World Wars, Nicolae Iorga (1871 – 1940), felt it necessary to introduce to his fellow countrymen the context of the war in the Far East²⁴ by underlining the qualities of the Japanese: “Apart from their love of nature, the craft of the lovely arts, the passion for cleaning and accessorizing (things) – the strength, the bravery of the people from the mountains and of the fishermen who fight the waves and the dangers of the high places, despite the deaths of the Vulcan's sons”²⁵, they had the will to fight.

¹⁹ Assan, B. Călătorie împrejurul Pământului. București, 1899, 47.

²⁰ Gheorghe, A. M.. Japan in the Romanian Imaginary: Major Trends and Their Dynamics. – In: *A Festschrift for Florentina Vișan*. București, 2017, 350.

²¹ Scumpieru, I. 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 540.

²² The artist's name was changed from Sada Yoko into 'Sada Iacco' (*Scumpieru, I. 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia*. București, 2013, 540.)

²³ Gheorghe, A. M.. Japonia și lumea occidentală – imaginea „celuilalt” între 1853 și 1912. Bacău, 1915, 400 – 401.

²⁴ More about Iorga's opinions regarding the Japanese can be found in *Gheorghe, A. M. Intellectuali români și imaginea Japoniei în prima jumătate a secolului al douăzecilea* [‘The Romanian Intellectuals and the Image of Japan in the First Half of the Twentieth Century’]. – In *Studii și cercetări științifice. Seria Filologie. Plurilingvism și interculturalitate. Imaginar și interculturalitate*, Bacău, 2015, 9 – 22.

²⁵ Iorga, N. Războiul din Extremul Orient. China, Japonia, Rusia Asiatică. Schițe. București, 1904, 65.

The echoes in Romania were all in favor of the Japanese²⁶, their patriotic feelings²⁷ and other values. The tradition of writing about Japan – whether the Romanian authors did have the chance to reach the East Asian land or not – kept on thriving and many papers of interest, with a varied content, appeared in the years which followed²⁸. The Japanese victory against the Russians marked both the Romanian Literature²⁹, as well as the military reports³⁰. The fact that Romania was legally represented by an Embassy in Tokyo from 1917 until 1944³¹, marked a different dynamics of the relations between the two states.

In 1936 *Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai* (“The Society for International Cultural Relations”) asked the Romanian Embassy for some representative papers on Japan which had been published in Romania until that moment³². Therefore, they came up with two books³³ by Ioan Timuș (1890 – 1969), the Romanian lawyer who had spent five years in Japan from 1917 until 1921³⁴, as well as with the Japanese travelogue written by General Constantin Găvănescul (1871 – 1942) during Prince Carol’s voyage³⁵ in the twenties³⁶, followed by the booklet introducing Japan and its people published in the thirties by one of the Presidents of the Romanian Academy, Ion Simionescu (1873 – 1944)³⁷. Radu Flondor’s first Romanian – Japanese Dictionary which was ready in 1939 and shipped to Romania in 1940 was also a huge achievement in the field of bilateral relations.

²⁶ *Negreanu, M.E.* Câte-va cuvinte asupra poporului japonez. Conferință ținută la 2 martie 1905 la Ateneul din Călărași. Călărași, 1907.

²⁷ *Gașpar, Mihail.* Japonia. Lugoj: Tipografia Carol Traunfellner, 1905.

²⁸ *Gheorghe, A.M.* Intelectualii români și imaginea Japoniei în prima jumătate a secolului al douăzecilea. – In: *Studii și cercetări științifice. Seria Filologie. Plurilingvism și interculturalitate. Imaginar și interculturalitate*. Bacău, 2015, 9 – 22.

²⁹ *Nădejde, S.* Irimel, întâmplările unui tânăr român în Moldova, Rusia și Japonia (Poveștiri). Iași, 1927.

³⁰ *Manolescu, I.* Războiul ruso-japonez. București, 1921.

³¹ *Scumpieru, I.* 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 32.

³² *Epure, M.* Din Carpați până la Fuji. București, 2000, 224.

³³ *Timuș, I.* Japonia. Viața și obiceiurile. București, 1924 and Japonia. Arta, femeia, viața socială. București, 1925.

³⁴ *Scumpieru, I.* 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 544.

³⁵ More about the royal voyage in *Gheorghe, A. M.* Constantin Găvănescul and Kunitake Kume: In Search of Self and Other in a Foreign Land – A Comparison between Their Travel Diaries. – In: *Interstudia*. Bacău, 2010, 135 – 141.

³⁶ *Găvănescul, C.* Ocolul pământului în șapte luni și o zi. Călătorie făcută cu Principele Carol, fostul moștenitor al Tronului. Volumul V. Japonia. București, 1923.

³⁷ *Simionescu, I.* Japonia, țara minunilor. Cunoștințe folositoare. Seria C. Din lumea largă. București, 1934.

General Gheorghe Băgulescu (1886 – 1963), appointed to Tokyo as a military Attaché between 1935 and 1939³⁸ and as an Ambassador from 1941 to 1943³⁹, to Tokyo wrote a novel inspired by the tragedy of the forty seven *rōnin* in the XVIIth century Japan, which he entitled – *Yamato damashii*⁴⁰ (“Japanese Soul”); it was published in Romanian, English and French right before the Second World War.

Whether we talk about travelogues published by the Romanian travelers – like Basil Assan, Ioan Timuș, Voicu Nițescu, Gheorghe Flaișlen, Elie Bufnea or General Constantin Găvănescul – or wonder about the many non-governmental institutions which were formed during this period of time – like the *Romanian House*⁴¹ or the *Japan – Romania Society* founded in 1929⁴² by the Romanian Ambassador Ion Aurel Vasiliu in Tōkyō, we come to a conclusion: whether we talk about translations from the Japanese literature⁴³, about diplomatic documents, official and unofficial correspondence, the overall relations between Japan and Romania exceeded the mere economic interest which the Asian country might have had for the oil reserves of the European country⁴⁴.

Unfortunately, The Second World War which brought Japan and Romania together initially, also separated them for a long period of time. After Romania’s changing sides in August 1944, the political and diplomatic relations with Japan came to an end in October of the same year and they started again almost fifteen years later, when Romania was a Communist Republic. The official ties were reconnected on the 1st of September 1959⁴⁵

³⁸ Epure, M. *Din Carpați până la Fuji*. București, 2000, 292.

³⁹ Scumpieru, I. 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 229, 234.

⁴⁰ Băgulescu, G. *Yamato damashii*. Suflet japonez. București, 1939.

⁴¹ Two different opinions belonging to two Romanian diplomats can be found in their studies: Scumpieru claims that the project of the House was finalised and that it was built in Nikko (Scumpieru, 2013: 547) and Epure claims that the project has not been materialised due to the funding issues which came along (Epure, 2000: 137, 220).

⁴² Epure, M. *Din Carpați până la Fuji*. București, 2000, 136.

⁴³ Alexandru Teodor Stamatiad (1885 – 1956) translated from French Japanese poetry; Traian Chelariu (1906 - 1966) translated Japanese poetry from German; they also wrote poetry in the Japanese manner.

⁴⁴ As can be found in Scumpieru, I. 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București, 2013, 33.

⁴⁵ Epure, M. *Din Carpați până la Fuji*. București, 2000, 152.

and the reopening of the Romanian Embassy from Tokyo took place on the 1st of June, 1964⁴⁶.

Japan and the Romanian Censorship before 1989

After the end of the Second World War the positive tone which was adopted by the Japanese authorities toward Romania intensified after the latter's decision not to participate in the invasion of Czechoslovakia with the other countries of the Warsaw Pact, during the *Prague Spring* movement in 1968. After the official visits of the Romanian President to Japan in 1975 and of future Emperor Akihito and his spouse to Bucharest in 1979 no other institutional thresholds seemed to be crossed – except for the massive politics of censorship during the whole Communist period. Romanian intellectuals tried to exchange freedom for beauty and almost all of the special number of a famous literary magazine – *Secolul 20* ('The Twentieth Century') dedicated to Japan in 1972, was filled with excerpts from the Japanese literature with a strong esthetic content.

Many Romanian intellectuals of the new generation, whose work and biographies had been attentively screened by the secret police – had the opportunity to go to Japan and write about it, yet the spontaneity given by the free spirit of the pre-war writings gives them a certain uniformity and a propaganda-like aspect. Even the literature written by Eugen Jebeleanu (1911 – 1991) – his poetry (*Surîsul Hiroshimei* – “The Smile of Hiroshima”) dedicated to the tragedies from Hiroshima by the end of Second World War – apart from the sensitivity of the verse, seems to answer the political agenda of his times.

Florin Vasiliu (1999 – 2001), Ioan Grigorescu (1930 – 2011), Aureli-an Ionaşcu (1903 – 1990), George Gheţău (1940 -), Aurel Rău (1930 -), Neagu Udriou (1944 -), Costin Murgescu (1919 – 1989) and Florea Ţuiu are some of the authors who were allowed to publish books on Japan that would answer the political agenda of the Communist regime and the extremely positive impressions we find there can also be interpreted as the result of a certain induced optimism which would answer the Romanian authorities' policy of building strong ties with the Japanese from a number of reasons – mainly pertaining to the extremely well developed technology of the East Asian partner.

⁴⁶ *Scumpieru, I.* 133 de ani de relaţii România – Japonia. Bucureşti, 2013, 37.

The Romanian Female Discourse on Japan Before and After 1989

The female writers' discourse on Japan stretches before and after 1989 as well. Although some of the female writers who wrote about Japan have not studied the Japanese language and culture in a systematic way – like Claudia Golea⁴⁷ (1968 –) or Ioana Nitobe Garrison Lee⁴⁸ (1973 –), – they wrote on Japanese themes and managed to attract the public attention upon their writings in this way. There are at least five categories they can fit in: the first one is the *prose* – which is represented by Sofia Nădejde (1856 – 1946) and her male character, Irimel⁴⁹, a fictional participant in the Russo – Japanese war from 1904 – 1905 in the period before World War Two, by Claudia Golea's Naturalistic perspectives upon the night life in Tokyo in her post -1989 novels⁵⁰, or by Ioana Nitobe Garrison Lee's literary confessions inspired by her life in Tōkyō, as the wife of a Japanese member of the aristocracy⁵¹. There can also be added the *scientific* approach – which includes Anna Budura (1931 –)⁵², a Historian from the Post-War period who wrote about the Japanese modernization process during the Meiji epoch – and Nina Stănculescu (1928 – 2016), a specialist in *ukiyo-e* and its development. The third category is given by the non-specialist interested in the Japanese arts: the artistic approach could include Laura Petrina Sigarteu (1940 -) and her view upon the Japanese traditional arts like Ikebana, the

⁴⁷ Claudia Golea has graduated from the Section of Japanese Language and Literature of the University of Bucharest in the nineties. More about her literature can be found in *Gheorghe, A. M. Amélie Nothomb and Claudia Golea: European Women Writers and the Japanese Challenge by the End of the Twentieth Century*. – In *Gender Studies. Woman Inside and Outside the Box*. București, 2013, 71 – 85.

⁴⁸ Ioana Nitobe Garrison Lee has graduated from the Section of Japanese Language and Literature of Spiru Haret University from Bucharest in the nineties as well. More about her literary confessions can be found in *Gheorghe, A. M. Ume Tsuda and Ioana Nitobe Garrison – Identity Recovered in the Land of the Other*. – In *Gender Studies in the Age of Globalization*. New York, 2013, 109 – 128.

⁴⁹ Nădejde, S. Irimel, întâmplările unui tânăr român în Moldova, Rusia și Japonia (Poveștire). Iași, 1927.

⁵⁰ Golea, C.. Planeta Tokyo. București, 1998 and Tokyo by Night. București, 2000.

⁵¹ Nitobe Garrison, I. Ai suru – a iubi. București, 2010.

⁵² Budura, A. Structuri tradiționale și procese de modernizare în Japonia secolului al XIX-lea ['Traditional Structures and Modernizing Processes in XIXth century Japan']. – In *Revista de istorie* ["The History Magazine, volume 34"], Vol. 34, no. 9, Bucharest, 1981, 1687 – 1704.

art of garden arrangements, *bonsai*, *bonkei*, *origami* and *chanoyū*⁵³ from the seventies in the twentieth century. A special category is represented by the *literary propaganda* during the Second World War from the short time before 1944, which was very well represented by a female writer whose pen-name was Ana Stănică⁵⁴. In the end we also have to mention the *haiku* poet from the post-war period, Manuela Miga (1947 -) and her anthologies of Japanese poetry⁵⁵. Andrada Coos and Florina Ilis, as representatives of the Cluj School of literature, added their way to embody Japan and its sensitivity within their life experience and literary achievements through their literary diaries and stories, which include them in the first category.

Conclusions

The Romanian cultural observers of the Japanese culture would actually fit into a larger pattern, along with other well known Western⁵⁶ Nippologists. After 1989 the literary works based on Japan and the Japanese experience thrived and volumes like George Moise's thirteen letters addressed to his mother from Japan and entitled "Forgive Me for Not Being a Japanese" (2011) became best-sellers that captured the hearts and minds of the Romanian readers who started including Japan in their travel plans, as well as in their instruction⁵⁷.

The way that the Romanian mind came to shape Japan and the Japanese is of an extremely positive nature. Although from a chronological perspective – the mutual impressions can be considered to cover a five century span, the most lively time interval as far as the relationships between the two states remains – in my opinion – the modern age spanning over the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Both Romania and Japan played a significant role in the international events preceding and following the Second World War, yet as far as enthu-

⁵³ Sigarteu Petrina, L. Arte tradiționale japoneze. București, 1977.

⁵⁴ Stănică, A. E lung pământul, ba e lat... București, year unknown.

⁵⁵ Miga, M. 99 Haiku Exercises. Bucharest, 1994.

⁵⁶ Gheorghe, A. M. The Idea of Japan Reflected by Some Westerners' Travelogues and Notes from the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century. – In: *Traditions in Dialogue / Tradiții în dialog. Yearly publication of the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Bucharest*. Volume 3. Bucharest, 2011, 185.

⁵⁷ More about this subject can be found out in Gheorghe, A. M. Japanese Studies in Romania: a New Perspective. – In: *Tōō no Nihongo kyōiku, Nihon kenkyū (Studies of Japanese Language and Culture in Eastern Europe). Japanese Language Education and Japanese Studies in Hungary, Poland, Romania and Estonia*. Tōkyō, 2003, 79 – 88.

siasm and mutual respect are concerned the intense cultural, economic and diplomatic correspondence between the Romanian kingdom and the Japanese empire seemed to remain unparalleled by any of the common projects which developed between the two countries after the end of the war or in the aftermath of the Romanian events from 1989.

Although Japan and Romania have kept communicating with each other and developing new projects during the recent years, the nature of equality which the old partnership enjoyed before 1944 has remained unparalleled yet. Nevertheless, we have to admit that in the recent history of the two countries, an important boost in the bilateral relations was given by the Japanese Prime-Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzō Abe, who visited Bucharest in January 2018. The official visit can be considered a proof of the Japanese intend to continue to deepening their commercial and cultural relations with Romania, as well as launching projects which will always materialize the best response to the mutual expectations of the two states.

Bibliography:

Assan, Basil. Călătorie împrejurul Pământului. București: Editura Socecu, 1899.

Băgulescu, Gheorghe. Yamato damashii. Suflet japonez. București: Editura ziarului „Universul”, 1939.

Budura, Ana. Structuri tradiționale și procese de modernizare în Japonia secolului al XIX-lea [‘Traditional Structures and Modernizing Processes in XIXth century Japan’]. – In: *Revista de istorie* [‘The History Magazine’], Vol. 34, no. 9, 1981, 1687 – 1704.

Chelariu, Traian. Suflet Nipon. Cernăuți, 1937.

Cooș, Andrada. Frumusețea lucrurilor trecătoare. Iași: Editura Adenium, 2017.

Epure, Mihai. Din Carpați până la Fuji. București: Editura Cartega, 2000.

Flaișlen, Gheorghe. De peste nouă țări și nouă mări... Note dintr-o călătorie împrejurul pământului. București: Editura ziarului „Universul”, 1931.

Flondor, Radu, Kenzo, Nezu. Dicționar român-japonez (Ra-Nichi jiten). Tōkyō, 1940.

- Gaşpar, Mihail*. Japonia. Lugoj: Tipografia Carol Traunfellner, 1905.
- Găvănescul, General Constantin*. Ocolul pământului în şapte luni şi o zi. Călătorie făcută cu Principele Carol, fostul Moştenitor al Tronului. Volumul V. Japonia. Turnu-Severin: Institutul de Arte grafice „Ramuri”, 1923.
- Georgescu, Constantin*. Priviri generale asupra României şi Japoniei. Conferinţă publică ținută la Atheneul din Buzău în ziua de 11 Martie 1894. Tipografia Al. Georgescu: Buzeu, 1894.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Amélie Nothomb and Claudia Golea: European Women Writers and the Japanese Challenge by the End of the Twentieth Century. – In: *Gender Studies. Woman Inside and Outside the Box*. Bucureşti: Printech, 2013, 71 – 85.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Constantin Găvănescul and Kunitake Kume: In Search of Self and Other in a Foreign Land – A Comparison between Their Travel Diaries. – In: *Interstudia. Cultural spaces and identities in (inter)action. Review of Interstud Interdisciplinary Centre for Studies of Contemporary Discursive Forms*. Bacău: Alma Mater, 2010, 135 – 141.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Japan in the Romanian Imaginary: Major Trends and Their Dynamics. – In: *A Festschrift for Florentina Vişan*. Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2017, 347 – 365.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Japanese Studies in Romania: a New Perspective. – In: *Tōō no Nihongo kyōiku, Nihon kenkyū (Studies of Japanese Language and Culture in Eastern Europe). Japanese Language Education and Japanese Studies in Hungary, Poland, Romania and Estonia*. Tōkyō, 2003, 71 – 89.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Oriental Experiences in the Romanian Female Literary World at the Turn of the Twenty First Century. – In: *Comparativism, Identity, Communication*. Craiova: Universitaria, 2013, 79 – 88.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Romanian Views on Japan. Major Topics in Less Known Discourses between 1894 and 1939. – In: *Chūō shokoku no Nipponjin to Nihongo. Japanese People & Language in Poland, Romania, Czech and Estonia*. Ōsaka International University Press, 2008, 77 – 95.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* The Idea of Japan Reflected by Some Westerners' Travelogues and Notes from the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century. – In: *Traditions in Dialogue / Tradiţii în dialog. Yearly publication of the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Bucharest*. Volume 3 / 2011. Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2011, 185 – 192.
- Gheorghe, Alexandra M.* Ume Tsuda and Ioana Nitobe Garrison – Identity Recovered in the Land of the Other. – In: *Gender Studies in the Age of Globalization*. New York: Addleton Academic Publishers, 2013, 109 – 128.

Gheorghe, Alexandra M. Intelectualii români și imaginea Japoniei în prima jumătate a secolului al douăzecilea. – În: *Studii și cercetări științifice. Seria Filologie. Plurilingvism și interculturalitate. Imaginar și interculturalitate*. Bacău: Editura Alma Mater, 2015.

Gheorghe, Alexandra Marina. Japonia și lumea occidentală – imaginea „celuilalt” între 1853 și 1912. Bacău: Editura Alma Mater, 1915.

Ghețău, George. Secvențe japoneze. București: Editura Sport – Turism, 1975.

Golea, Claudia. Planeta Tokyo. București: Editura Nemira, 1998.

Golea, Claudia. Tokyo by Night. București: Editura Nemira, 2000.

Grigorescu, Ioan. Fenix inflamabil. București: Editura Eminescu, 1970.

Ilis, Florina. Cinci nori colorați pe cerul de la răsărit. București: Editura Cartea Românească, 2006.

Ionașcu, Aurelian. O călătorie în Japonia. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1983.

Iorga, Nicolae. Războiul din Extremul Orient. China, Japonia, Rusia Asiatică. Schițe. București: Editura Socec, 1904.

Jebeleanu, Eugen. Surîsul Hiroshimei. București: Editura Minerva, 1958.

Manolescu, Colonel I. Războiul ruso-japonez. București: tipografia „Răsăritul”, Institut de arte grafice Sfinții Apostoli, 1921.

Matsumaru, Ryō. Rūmania kakumei: Bukaresuto chūzai Nihonjin no kiroku. Tōkyō: Tōkyō Keizai Shinpōsha, 1990.

Miga, Manuela. 99 Haiku Exercises. Bucharest: Editura „Sakura”, 1994.

Mihăilescu, Gheorghe. Din Țara Sorelui în Țara Dolarului. Conferință ținută la Ateneul din Galați în ziua de 6 februarie 1894. Galați: Tipografia Ion G. Nebuneli, 1894.

Milescu Spătarul, Nicolae. Descrierea Chinei. București: Editura de stat pentru literatură și artă, 1958.

Mitrașcă, Marcel. Japan in Romanian Books before World War Two. Research Note. – În: *Acta Slavica Iaponica*. Tomus 23. Bucharest. 241 – 247.

Moise, George. Iertați-mă că nu sunt japonez. București: Editura Curtea Veche, 2011.

Murgescu, Costin. Japonia în economia mondială. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1985.

Nădejde, Sofia. Irimel, întâmplările unui tânăr român în Moldova, Rusia și Japonia (Povestire). Iași: Viața Românească, 1927.

Negreanu, Mihail E. Câte-va cuvinte asupra poporului japonez. Con-

ferință ținută la 2 martie 1905 la Ateneul din Călărași. Călărași: Tipografia Constantin I. Șeicărescu, 1907.

Nitobe Garrison, Ioana. Ai suru – a iubi. București: Editura Hamangiu, 2010.

Philippide, Al. et al. Secolul 20. Revistă de literatură universală. Vol. 137 – 138. No. 6 -7. București: Uniunea Scriitorilor din România, 1972.

Rău, Aurel. În inima lui Yamato. 9 priviri lirice asupra Japoniei. București: Editura Albatros, 1973.

Scumpieru, Ion. 133 de ani de relații România – Japonia. București: Fundația Europeană Titulescu, 2013.

Sigarteu Petrina, Laura. Arte tradiționale japoneze. București: Editura Albatros, 1977.

Simionescu, I. Japonia, țara minunilor. Cunoștințe folositoare. Seria C. Din lumea largă. București: Editura „Cartea românească”, 1934.

Sorescu, Constantin, coordinator. Japonia, o continuă revelație. Reprezentări românești. București: Editura Fiat Lux, 1997.

Stamatiad, Al. T. Din cânticele curtezanelor japoneze. București: Vreamea, 1942.

Stamatiad, Al. T. Eșarfe de mătase. Antologie japoneză. București: Editura Contemporană, 1943.

Stănculescu, Nina. Stampa japoneză în secolul al XVIII-lea. București: Editura Meridiane, 1986.

Stănică, Ana. E lung pământul, ba e lat... București: Tipografia „Dâmbovița”, year unknown.

Timuș, Ioan. Japonia. Arta, femeia, viața socială. București: Editura Casa Școalelor, 1925.

Timuș, Ioan. Japonia. Viața și obiceiurile (cu o prefață de N. Iorga). București: Editura Casa Școalelor, 1924.

Timuș, Ioan. Ogio-san. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dacia, 1984.

Țuiu, Florea. Japonia, un miracol? București: Editura Politică, 1975.

Udroiu, Neagu. Măine, în secolul următor. București: Editura Albatros, 1985.

Vasilii, Florin. Pe Meridianul Yamato. București: Editura Sport – Turism, 1982.

Japan through the eyes of the diplomat: Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov

Aleka STREZOVA*

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Abstract: *The text gives Stoyan Petrov – Chomakov’s perception of Japan through three different perspectives: his recollections of a diplomat in Tokyo in the end of World War II, his skillful writer’s pen in his writings and his genuine and sensitive artist’s brush. His memoirs, his deep historical narrative about Japan and his beautiful drawings contribute to the better understanding of the Japanese life and culture and help people to get acquainted with a country barely known before World War II. The different talents of Stoyan Petrov – Chomakov depict a human Japan, with its strengths and weaknesses and encourage the dialogue between different nations.*

The history of the beginnings of Bulgarian-Japanese diplomatic relations has been studied recently by some researchers¹. The chronology of the opening of a Bulgarian legation in Tokyo has been observed in detail as also the bilateral contacts in the eve and during the World War II. The first Bulgarian diplomats have also been mentioned in these texts. However, much more attention could be payed to the personalities of the mentioned representatives who worked diligently for the good collaboration between the two countries and contributed to the better understanding between the

*Dr. Aleka Strezova is Chief Assistant at the Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

¹ *Stefanova, Vera-Vutova, Kandilarov, Evgeniy*. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, Personalities and Events. Sofia 2019, “East-West” Publishing House”, 101-200. (*Вутова-Стефанова, Вера, Кандиларов, Евгений*. България и Япония. Политика, дипломация, личности и събития. София, 2019, ИК „Изток-Запад“, 101-200); *Strezova, A.* The Establishment of Bulgarian-Japanese Diplomatic Relations and First Bulgarian Diplomatic Representatives in Tokyo (1942-1945). – In: *World War II Re-explored. Some New Millenium Studies in the History of the Global Conflict*. Eds. J. Suchoples, St. James, B. Törnquist-Plewa. Berlin, 2019, Peter Lang, 319-336.

Japanese and Bulgarian peoples. This text aims to present Japan, its people and nature through the eyes of Stoyan Petrov – Chomakov, a distinguished Bulgarian, involved in diplomacy for some decades of his life.

There are not many Bulgarian diplomats who had written memoirs about their missions abroad. Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov is one of these fortunate exceptions since he had left evidence about his stay in Japan as a minister plenipotentiary in Tokyo (1944-1945).

When he arrived in Japan, Bulgaria didn't realize that in his personality it has not only a clever and capable diplomat but also a penetrating psychologist, a gifted writer and a sensitive artist and aesthete. Besides the political dispatches to his government, Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov told about the contact with the Far East in two of his memoir books: "The Spirit of Diplomacy" and "Japan. Diplomat's Notes"². His impressions were vast, rich and intelligent, shared with a bright sense of humor and writing skill. His artist's talent added to the vibrant picture and through his drawings this exotic world received a new significance and meaning.

The Diplomat's Sight

Beginning of 1944, when Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov was appointed as the new Bulgarian minister plenipotentiary and envoy extraordinary in Japan, he was already an experienced diplomat with several diplomatic missions abroad. Born in Plovdiv in 1888, he finished his law education in Paris and soon afterwards he entered the diplomatic service (1910). He was a chargé d'affaires in Budapest (1928-1932), head of legation in Washington (1933-1935), Stockholm (1938-1940) and Bucharest (1940-1944). In the early 20's he was a Bulgarian agent at the Anglo-Bulgarian mixed arbitral tribunal where he earned "a reputation for straightforwardness and reliability".³ His professional career counted also the post of chief of protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Denominations, chief secretary ad interim and director of the Political department of the ministry in Sofia (1936-1938). In 1940 he was heading the negotiations with the Romanian

² *Petrov-Chomakov, Stoyan. The Spirit of Diplomacy. Sofia, 2002, "Lik" Publishing House (Петров-Чомаков, Ст. Духът на дипломацията. София, 2002, ИК „Лик“); Petrov-Chomakov, Stoyan. Japan. Diplomat's Notes. Sofia, 2002, "East-West" Publishing House. (Петров-Чомаков, Ст. Япония. Записки на дипломата. София, 2002, ИК „Изток-Запад“).*

³ Central State's Archives (CSA), fund 176K, inv. 18, a.u. 673, p. 122 (Централен държавен архив (ЦДА), ф. 176К, оп. 18, а.е. 673, л. 122).

government for the returning of South Dobroudja which ended successfully for Bulgaria with the signing of Craiova treaty. In late spring of 1941 he was nominated for the first time as minister plenipotentiary in Tokyo⁴. But the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviets in the summer of 1941 as also the Japan's December attack on Pearl Harbour made Chomakov's trip to Japan impossible.

Still, in late May 1944 he arrived in Tokyo and took charge of the legation. Despite he doubted the success of his mission, he was more fascinated about the idea of being in the Far East getting to know such a different culture and people. His first contact with this new world was so stunning that it left an important impression upon him for the rest of his life.

When Chomakov arrived in the capital, he had soon his audience before the emperor. He was driven from his home by a small chamberlain in a violet car. On the road to the palace, he noticed that the people around him were making low bows when the car drove past them. He had the impression that they bowed to him, but later understood that they were paying respect to the emperor's vehicle.

The Emperor Hirohito seemed to Chomakov to be 'a dignified and kind person'. The diplomat gave his speech in French, the Emperor answered in Japanese and the audience was mediated by a humble and quietly speaking interpreter. The ceremony lasted only few minutes not differing much from the Western model⁵. Quite different was the custom of welcoming the foreign diplomats. At a reception in the imperial palace, Chomakov admitted to be quite astonished when a polite chamberlain approached the diplomatic corps insisting that they are not supposed to eat in the Highly presence of the Emperor but suggested that they should be grateful only to be in his divine company. As a reward, after the end of the reception, the diplomats were given the packages with the dishes they were deprived of, carefully wrapped⁶.

Curious seemed the reality in the ministries too. Chomakov recalled when visiting the institutions in summer that he met civil and military servants wearing straw sandals, hanging shoulder-straps and trousers, threatening to unveil their owner at any moment. But he confessed that

⁴As his daughter recalls, in 1944 he was transferred to Japan as he was no longer considered to be in line with Bogdan Filov and his pro-German policy. She was most probably speaking for 1941 because three years later the situation was different.

⁵*Petrov-Chomakov, The Spirit*, 150-151 (*Петров-Чомаков, Духът*, 150-151).

⁶*Petrov-Chomakov, Japan*, p. 16 (*Петров-Чомаков, Япония*, с. 16).

these negligently looking people won the sympathies of the foreigner with their politeness and friendly smile⁷.

When Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov arrived in Tokyo, he inherited the public position of his predecessor to be the honorary President of the Japanese-Bulgarian Association⁸. At its first meeting Chomakov, after accepting the honour to preside, revealed his respect towards the Japanese and his care for the good feelings between the two people pronouncing a cordial speech. He was sincere and touching, gaining the respect of the audience. As he stated:

“In this moment, I experience the feelings of a traveler who after a long and stormy voyage finally enters calm waters of a harbor, there to be greeted by his friends.”

After testifying his good will to work hardily for the prosperity of the bilateral relations, he charmingly added:

“The Bulgarian-Japanese friendship may be compared to a still tender plant, which is in need of much care and much solicitude in order to gain a firm grip of life. But I feel confident, that entrusted to such world-reputed gardeners as are the Japanese, this precious plant will grow steadily and bear wonderful fruits.”⁹

It was not the diplomatic courtesy putting its words into Chomakov's mouth, it was a speech that came from his heart, full of respect and esteem to the Japanese. And his attitude was shortly after appreciated by his colleagues who didn't hesitate to give him support for his diplomatic mission.

Despite Chomakov was advised by the regents not to write reports, he did send some information to his government. In two months (June and July), Chomakov sent six profound dispatches to Sofia which gave a rich and penetrating view of the military actions led by the Japanese in the Pacific¹⁰. According to him notwithstanding Japan was admitting the American supremacy, it will face the enemy in a crucial battle which will be fought at sea. But for the moment Tokyo was avoiding the decisive clash because this loss will lead to its defeat.

Soon after the start of his mission, Chomakov became aware that he

⁷ Ibid., 20-21.

⁸ Beginning of 1943 a Japanese-Bulgarian Association was established in the aim of strengthening the bilateral relations and the former Bulgarian minister plenipotentiary Yanko Peev was its honorary president: see more *Strezova*, The Establishment, 326-327.

⁹ The whole speech can be seen in CSA, f. 2146K, inv. 1, a.u.37a, p. 168-171 (ЦДА, ф. 2146K, оп. 1, а.е. 37а, л. 168-171).

¹⁰ CSA, f. 176K, inv. 2ш, a.u. 10, p. 60-67 (ЦДА, ф. 176K, оп. 2ш, а.е. 10, л. 60-67). See also *Strezova*, The Establishment, 332-333.

was regularly spied by the Japanese police officers. The diplomat knew that every evening his driver, the gardener and the servant-maid all had to visit a small police booth at the corner of the street and to report his movements during the day. Ironically, he wrote in his memoirs that his small diary became one of the police officers' favorite readings. Despite his diplomatic immunity (or rather because of it) Chomakov became under suspicion and the frequent check of his personal belongings by the authorities didn't motivate him to follow his duties. In the first decade of August, being aware that his activities were restricted and that he couldn't do any useful work he asked for resignation. He was refused and stayed at his post for a few months after the political changes in Bulgaria which brought the communists to power in September 1944. The new Bulgarian government dismissed him. On his way back he came to the painful realization that his country had lost its independence and decided not to involve himself with the new authorities in Sofia. In May 1945 he set out for Switzerland and joined his family there. Then began his life in exile – first in Argentina, then in Brussels where he passed away in 1966.

The Pen of the Writer

Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov stayed in Japan for less than 8 months. A short time for a diplomatic mandate but a long period to leave its impact upon him for good. Only two years later, in 1947, he wrote a keen narrative about Japan published in the Belgian review “*Revue Générale Belge*” where he shared his impressions about the Japanese, their character, culture and way of life. The initial title of his text was “*La tragédie du Japon*” (“The Tragedy of Japan”) which was in 2002 translated into Bulgarian under the name “Japan. Diplomat's Notes”. In these 100 pages we see a gifted and talented writer who has gained an excellent insight into the Japanese national character, a sharp analyst of the causes of the political defeat of Tokyo and a good connoisseur of the Japanese spirituality. The lines he wrote witness for his intelligence and broad knowledge but are also a sign for his respect and affection for the Japanese people.

Chomakov's book began with a concise history of the country, depicted the era of the shogunate, the first relations with the Europeans, the divinity of the Emperor: this was the traditional Japan, proud and bold, self-sufficient and presumptuous in a way. Chomakov admitted the Japanese love to nature, their admiration for the mount Fuji, the Japanese sacred mountain,

their affection for the flourishing plants, flowers and especially the Japanese cherry blossom (sakura) which inspired so many generations in Japan. He showed a high esteem for the Japanese working diligence and patience. Curious were his observations for the European political impact upon Tokyo. As he stated: "They [the Japanese – A. S.] imitate most thoroughly and are inspired by the Western experience in state government and art of war because throughout their history they have always manifested remarkable political and military gifts [in these areas]."¹¹

Chomakov's narrative gave a deep insight into the Japanese past and present. Even today the book is convincing and genuine, tempting for readers and bears evidence for the literary talent of its writer.

The Artist's Brush

As Chomakov stated „The Japanese art is deeply marked by Chinese influence but it differs in its grace and idea simplicity, in its perfect implementation and mostly because it is inspired directly by nature.”¹²

At the time of his mission in Japan he started drawing nature and some of his sketches are kept in his personal fund at the Central State's Archives in Sofia. Twenty years after his stay in Japan, being in exile, he organized an original and fetching exhibition, presented in Gallery Rubens in Brussels in 1964. His performance was excellently received by the critics who wrote favourable words about his talent as an artist.

As the newspapers stated: "Stoyan Petroff-Tchomakoff, ... former Bulgarian Minister in Tokyo, held an exhibition of his paintings on gold at the Rubens Gallery, Brussels, in May this year. Its success was such that almost all the paintings were sold."¹³ The art critique was favourable to the painter especially focusing on the artist's skill to depict birds in simple compositions with greenery and few flowers in an oriental manner. A prominent member of the Belgian Royal Academy, after giving a high evaluation of the exhibition, stated about the painter: "The secret of this master birdman is that he loves his models."¹⁴

¹¹ *Petrov-Chomakov*, Japan, p. 49 (Петров-Чомаков, Япония, с. 49).

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹³ CSA, f. 2146K, inv. 1, a.u.37a, p. 189 (ЦДА, ф. 2146К, оп. 1, а.е. 37а, л. 189).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

In the person of Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov Japan gained one of its most keen observers. The sharp mind of the diplomat combined with the writer's gift and the eye of the artist, all this revealed an entirely rich image of a country still poorly known in the middle of the 20th century. Moreover, through his diverse activities, Chomakov contributed to the approaching of the East and the West and to the better knowing of the yesterday's opponents. He gave appearance of a human Japan, with its strengths and weaknesses and brought it closer to the Western notion. A mediator between two worlds, endowed with delicacy and culture, Chomakov became a universal ambassador for peace and understanding, while his attachment to Japan accompanied him till the end of his days.

Bibliography:

Petrov-Chomakov, Stoyan. The Spirit of Diplomacy. Sofia, 2002, "Lik" Publishing House (*Петров-Чомаков, Стоян.* Духът на дипломатията. София, 2002, ИК „Лик“)

Petrov-Chomakov, Stoyan. Japan. Diplomat's Notes. Sofia, 2002, "East-West" Publishing House. (*Петров-Чомаков, Стоян.* Япония. Записки на дипломата. София, 2002, ИК „Изток-Запад“).

Stefanova, Vera-Vutova, Kandilarov, Evgeniy. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, Personalities and Events. Sofia 2019, "East-West" Publishing House". (*Вутова-Стефанова, Вера, Кандиларов, Евгений.* България и Япония. Политика, дипломатия, личности и събития. София, 2019, ИК „Изток-Запад“).

Strezova, Aleka. The Establishment of Bulgarian-Japanese Diplomatic Relations and First Bulgarian Diplomatic Representatives in Tokyo (1942-1945). – In: World War II Re-explored. Some New Millenium Studies in the History of the Global Conflict. Eds. J. Suchoples, St. James, B. Törnquist-Plewa. Berlin, 2019, Peter Lang, 319-336.

CSA, fund 176K, inv. 18, a.u. 673, p. 122 (ЦДА, ф. 176K, оп. 18, а.е. 673, л. 122).

CSA, f. 176K, inv. 2ш, a.u. 10, p. 60-67 (ЦДА, Ф. 176K, оп. 2ш, а.е. 10, л. 60-67).

CSA, f. 2146K, inv. 1, a.u.37a, p. 168-171 (ЦДА, ф. 2146K, оп. 1, а.е. 37, л. 168-171).

Formation of the Perception for Eastern Europe in Japan

Nikolay PADAREV*

Abstract: *In this paper I will try to trace how the perception of Eastern Europe has been developed in Japan, presenting a summary of my master degree thesis which was written in Japanese in Shizuoka University in 2003. The title of the thesis in Japanese is “日本における東欧認識の形成・「信夫淳平の東欧の夢」を中心に”, and in it I analyzed how the idea and perception of Eastern Europe has been introduced in the academic and political discourse of Japanese society, focusing on the book “The Dream of Eastern Europe” written by Mr. Junpei Shinobu, who was one of the first among the prominent scholars and diplomats in Japan to introduce Eastern Europe’s complex history, international and political agenda to the Japanese public.*

In this paper my ambition is not only to summarize the activity of Junpei Shinobu and the influence of his work to the Japanese interpretation of Eastern Europe, but also to touch and describe some of the most typical characteristics that are usually figured to typify Eastern Europe, its identity as compared and opposed to the concept of Western Europe. For common Japanese people, the slight differences between Western and Eastern Europe society and civilizations are very vague, difficult to be understood, and unfortunately the approach from Japan to Eastern Europe – let it be academic, political or economic – is usually subjugated to the core relations between Japan and Western Europe.

In the beginning, let me first introduce who is Junpei Shinobu, what has he done for Japan and his credit to the formation of the perception of Eastern Europe in Japan.

*Nikolay Padarev is Assistant Manager at the International Business Division of Meiji Co., Ltd.



Junpei Shinobu (1871 – 1962)

Biography

1871, September 1 – Born in Shimane Prefecture as the firstborn son of Joken Shinobu, a scholar in Chinese language and culture

1890 – Completes the English class at Tokyo High School

1894 – Graduates specialized trade school in Tokyo

1896 – Lecturer at the Kurume School of Commerce, Fukuoka Prefecture

1897 – Admitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan after passing a diplomatic examination; initially working at the consulate in Seoul

1901-04 – Third Secretary at the Embassy of Mexico

1904 – Dispatched to the Army Corps located in Liaodong Peninsula (Port Arthur)

1906 -10 – Works at the Inspectorate in Incheon, Korea

1910-12 – First Secretary to the Embassy in Vienna, Austria

1912-14 – First Secretary to the Embassy in the Netherlands

1916 – Consul General in Calcutta

1917 – Leaves the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

During his career as a diplomat, he has received numerous medals for diplomatic and military merit.

1921-56 – Teaches International Law, International Relations and History of Diplomacy at Waseda University in Tokyo

1921-25 – Advisor to the Government of China

1927 – Becomes the Chief Editor of Yorozechoho Magazine (万潮報)

1962, November 1 – passed away, 91 years old

Junpei Shinobu is a non-standard personality, a colorful cosmopolitan, and a prominent leader of the liberal line in Japanese historiography and diplomacy, the father of academic and applied international law in Japan, who dedicated his life to teaching and introducing his ideals and postulates in Japan. After his withdrawal from the front stage of Japanese diplomacy, he committed himself to the academic creativity as a lecturer in the discipline of International law and politics at the prestigious Waseda University from 1922 to 1956. His fate and intellectual heritage do not fit into any profane cliché, they do not fit into the shagreen skin of any narrow-minded view point – his legacy and contribution to the diplomacy and the scientific world of Japan cannot be described simply as serving the imperial ideal of Greater Japan and justifying, giving path to its colonial-expansionist policies.

In Japan, after the Meiji Restoration, which coincides historically precisely with Bulgaria's liberation and the struggle for its national unification and independence, the same processes are inherent that can be found in every young nation-state which is rushing to emerge from the framework of feudal collectivism, where the future is simply a repetition in the best possible forms of the past. Japan, between 1868 during the Taisho period until the end of World War II, was tempted by Cleo to create, make history, establish her voice as any young nation fighting for prosperity, international recognition, and protection of its national interests, which often intersected in explosive and murderous disputes with neighboring countries and peoples, adding her intrinsic chords to the quartet of great powers.

This is one side of Junpei Shinobu's work – to be an apologist for young Japan, experiencing the waves of industrialization, increasing population, universal education, modernization of the army, economic boom, and exploding development of commerce and production of mass consumer goods after the Meiji restoration.

Shinobu's other equally interesting personality is his transformation from an active diplomat serving primarily to the state interests of Japan, to a zealous defender and disseminator of the ideas and principles of the International Law and Liberalism in Japan. Without exaggeration, we can say that he rewrites and translates them, incorporates them into Japanese statehood, administrative practice, and scientific discourse.

Somewhere in between his two major life roles, pre-destined for Junpei Shinobu, is situated his third life achievement – along with other pioneering scientists and researchers in Japan at the time like Hokichi Nagase (who

looks at the historical development of the Balkans region in his writings “The Balkans Today” 1916, “The Balkan Peninsula” 1916 and “The Future of the Balkans” 1920), he is one of the first discoverers of this neuralgic and watershed region from Eastern Europe, one of the first scientists in Japan to articulate the discourse for the role of the Balkans on the international stage, paying sharp attention to the intricacy of the national dramas and conflicts there. Through the creative work of Junpei Shinobu, Japan was given the opportunity to look at the Eastern part of the same ubiquitous Europe, which, with dazzling economic power, military superiority and diplomacy, was drawing at that time the international borders at its discretion and imposed the legal norms of international relations, becoming a major magnet, model to imitate and compete in the eyes of Japanese from Meiji and Taisho periods.

The main subject of my diploma thesis written at Shizuoka University in 1999-2002, is to reveal how Japan discovers this often condescendingly neglected part of the European civilization, how Japanese politicians, diplomats, artisans and intellectuals view and interpret the East European problems, dreams, ideals and illusions. On the core of my analysis is presentation of one of the fundamental works in this field – “The Dream of Eastern Europe” published by Junpei Shinobu in 1919y, while attempting to depict its place in the whole theoretical disputes regarding Eastern Europe .

As a preface, I would just like to mention that, despite the uniqueness of individuals such as Junpei Shinobu and his endeavor to educate the Japanese about the history and role of Eastern Europe on the world stage, which has found followers in the face of other scientists and researchers since World War II, unfortunately, stereotypes continue to persist among most Japanese people that the Balkans are Europe’s gunpowder trouble box. Thus, this region, which is the center of Bulgaria’s development and our self-consciousness as Bulgarians, continues to be perceived and outlined in Japanese journalism, real politics and the mass consciousness as marginal in international relations, on the one hand a satellite of Western Europe, an economic appendage of the European Union and, on the other hand, an arena of geo-political confrontation (or cooperation) between the new global and regional “great powers” and players – the EU, Russia, the United States of America, Turkey and recently China. Unfortunately, Eastern Europe and the Balkans in particular would never reach the same importance for Japan in diplomacy and economical exchange, as has the adjacent region of Southeast Asia and ASEAN.

1. The main ideas and discourses on Eastern Europe from the Renaissance to the present

Before we look at how Japan perceives Eastern Europe, we need to make a retrospective that does not claim to be exhaustive, how in the history Eastern Europe was recognized as a separate region, to some extent the antithesis, alter-ego of Western Europe.

This question – about the identity, the view from outside and the self-perception of Eastern Europe as a distinct region, politically, culturally and economically – is even more relevant today, 12 years after Bulgaria's accession to the European Union. Today we face such problems that seemed unthinkable only 25 years earlier when Francis Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history, and such challenges as the refugee crisis, the rebellion against elites exalted in the pathetic of xenophobic and nationalist formations, and parties, that are ready to sacrifice all the benefits of a united Europe in the name of ethnic groups ego and narrow national interests.

If we have to schematically identify what are the characteristic features of Eastern Europe that shape it as the region we know today, we can highlight 2 basic features, which in their totality constitute the profile of Eastern Europe are namely:

1) The shared past and traumatic experience to be ruled under the authority of other nations

All countries in Eastern Europe have experienced the rule of other peoples at some time in their history. Usually, these periods of foreign rule, the loss of political independence, and the invasion by the often religiously different ethnicity of the Other, are understood in the victims' collective memory as a disruption of natural development and historical continuity. Thus, the idea of God-elect, the feeling of being a victim of historical circumstances and injustice, inherent in many Eastern European countries, is a natural reaction against the invasion of alien conquest, against the outward dominance of a tradition and social life different from their original nature. This manifests itself in a variety of forms and social phenomena that can be summarized under the term **“traumatized national consciousness”**, traceable to one degree or another in the modern history of every Eastern European country.

Extremely, this develops into a morbid state of search for error and the causes of underlying social disabilities increasingly in the divinity of the behavior brought about by the “foreign” model. This trauma from contact

with the Other, the unpleasant memory of the loss of control over one's own historical destiny, can be characterized and sometimes experienced as a typical provincial inferiority complex, a syndrome to blame for the malfunctions of the local political organism and social failures the culprits outside – let it be the tentacles of international conspiracy, the ubiquitous Freemasonry, the cold bureaucratic soullessness of Brussel, the calculating greed of international organizations and the giant multinational corporations.

2) The problem of backwardness in comparison with the countries of Western Europe and the USA

This is probably the most discussed feature of Eastern Europe when arguing and defining its distinctiveness from Western Europe. In the case of Eastern Europe, the various interpretations and explanations that emphasize its “uniqueness” in the reasons for lagging behind in Western Europe after the Enlightenment and the first Industrial Revolution, can be traced to this very time frame. After the Enlightenment, Eastern Europe was largely passed away from the first waves of the Industrial Revolution, and until today is cursed with the dilemma how to catch up with the West, reaching it on such indicators as economic prosperity, productivity, innovation and quality of administration.

Backwardness is, of course, a diagnosis that is very relative and based on the value system of the benchmark model – in this case the parliamentary democracy we know today, with all the attributes and achievements gained after a long process of evolution whose roots can be traced back to the Magna Charter in medieval England and to the Greek cities of antiquity. The epicenter of the revolutions that shook the Eurasian continent began in Cromwell's England, echoed in France of Robespierre and Napoleon, passed through the European Spring of 1848, the Decembrist uprisings and the Russian Revolution to catalyze such movements as the Restoration Meiji in Japan and creation of communist republic in China, which today emulates the most pragmatic features of European civilization – a free market economy and private initiative, without forgetting state support to boost growth in strategic sectors of economy until they become sufficiently strong and competitive.

Looking to Eastern Europe, I would like to reiterate the pivotal reasons for its economic backwardness in Western Europe, which even today cannot be fully captured by such indicators of economic wealth as GDP per capita and average purchasing power.

A common view in contemporary historiography is that the reasons for the economic backwardness of Eastern Europe and its slower emancipation along the path of democratic development lie in the different trajectory that the region passes after the era of the Great Geographic Discoveries, the echo of which reaches Eastern Europe later. First of all, the peasantry, which after 16-17 centuries in Western Europe was gradually getting rid of heavy levies and duties and became much more mobile with more means of production and choice for work, in Eastern Europe and especially in Poland and Russia was subjected to a new serfdom and attachment to the land, which for the most part was possession of the descendant aristocracy.

This peculiarity of Eastern Europe is reflected in the work of social science teacher at New York State University Aleksander Gella – “Development of Class Structure in Eastern Europe: Poland and Her Southern Neighbors (1989)”. According to him, one of the reasons for the gradual backwardness of Eastern Europe is that the aristocracy in the region continued until the end of the late Middle Ages and the revolutions of the 19th century to exercise a monopoly on political power, displaying in principle arrogant contempt to trade and production, which were neglected and maintained mainly within the framework of conservative collective law and property, or under the tutelage of the State, encouraging industries that have a direct connection to security and combat capabilities such as the art brilliance and production of military weapons and ammunition. The result is a more anemic and scarce class of citizens and merchants in Eastern Europe, which is fundamentally dependent on the well-being of centralized imperial power.

The legacy of the multi-ethnic empires that dominated Eastern Europe in the 17th-19th centuries – the Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian – boasted a large internal market that dulls the need for new vassal territories, colonies, and commodity markets, in which have been predominantly engaged Western European powers since the age of Great Geographical Discoveries. Moreover, in Eastern Europe the peasants continued to depend mainly on land for subsistence, while the imperial courts continued to guarantee the privileges of the aristocracy. In short, neither the aristocracy nor the peasants in Eastern Europe had the incentives to develop an economy different from that of feudalism in the late Middle Ages in Eastern Europe (for more details refer to Daniel Chirot Edition, “The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe”, 1989).

In such circumstances, the impetus for social reform and progressive ideas in Eastern Europe was dispersed by the representatives of the intelligentsia (a term created by the Polish ethnologist Karol Libelt in 1844), a diverse class that unites awake and progressive personalities among aristocracy and wealthy peasants, merchants and city dwellers.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, from one point or another, the theme of the religious, ethnic and political-economic difference of Eastern Europe from the western world, which is too often intertwined with inversions about the barbaric roots or the backwardness of the population here, is a reminiscence in general from the topic of Orientalism, which provoked the thoughts of many travelers, diplomats and writers of Western European countries who visited the region after the 16th century and was expressed in their travelogues, stories and novels (for further details refer to Maria Todorova "Imagining the Balkans", Oxford University Press, 1997).

2. Formation of the perception for Eastern Europe in Japan

Japan's first direct contact with the region of Eastern Europe dates back to the Meiji period, and here we will briefly trace how this process progressed to the defeat of Japan in World War II.

Quite schematically, Japan's interest and perceptions of Eastern Europe can be divided into two categories: 1) the political and diplomatic approach imposed from above, dictated by state institutions, under the pressure of changes in international relations and the role that Japan plays in them; 2) a bottom-up approach, formed as part of the legacy and activity of writers, civilians and intellectuals in Japan, which coincides with the interest how the ideas of liberalism and the Enlightenment are applied in Eastern Europe and how these ideas can be transferred to Japan. This second approach goes as part of the fermentation of various, let's call them, progressive social movements in Japan – most notably the introduction of the idea for universal suffrage for all adult citizens, who must be empowered with the necessary political rights and self-organization of the labor movement.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Japan was engaged in vital topics and existential issues such as concluding equal treaties with the Western powers and Russia, and how to maintain its political independence. So it is natural that Japan in Meiji period was under the urgent pressure how to create a strong modern army to guarantee its independence as well as the achievement of its political ideals and diplomatic goals. From the perspec-

tive of all these political issues, the Eastern Question about the legacy of the Ottoman Empire and the events on the Balkans and Eastern Europe, their experience in modernization and westernization were of particular interest for the study and reference to Japanese leaders. In addition, the competition and rivalry between Japan and Russia over who controls the Far East politically and derives economic benefits from the use of its natural resources, inevitably pressed Japan to better understand Russia and in order to anticipate Russians aspirations, Japan closely watched and systematically gather information about the influence and intervention of Russia in Eastern Europe.

Historically, the signing of the unequal Japan-Austria Hungary Friendship and Trade Agreement on 18 October 1869 is a precondition for the first direct contacts between Japan and Eastern Europe, with the Japanese Legation in Vienna coordinating the collection of information about the region through the prism of the narrow state interests dominated by the top-down view of Eastern Europe. Japan's participation in the World Exhibition organized in 1873 in Vienna, the visit of a Japanese state delegation exploring the Austro-Hungarian experience in the field of economic development ("Observations of Austro-Hungary by the participants in The World Exhibition in Vienna" was published in Japan in 1877), as well as the visit of a diplomatic mission led by Iwakura Tomomi during the same period, aiming to compare the most advanced European constitutions and state models with a view to their transplantation in Japan (the mission proposed as the most appropriate the Prussian model of a monarchical government) – these are all results of the first direct visits to Eastern Europe of representatives of the Japanese state, aristocratic and business elites.

After the dramatic unleashing of the Balkan wars and the First World War, many nation states and unions emerged from the ruins of Austria-Hungarian Empire, as well as the final independence of Bulgaria and the emancipation of Romania and Greece from the influence of Turkey were accomplished. In this new situation after the First World War, Japan's preoccupation and interest towards Eastern Europe was targeting the new nation states, their diplomacy and foreign economic policy, within the context of Japanese strategy how to find a skillful balance of interests between the major players on the international stage. For example, in 1908, Japan recognized the independence of Bulgaria and, in 1919, the independence of Poland and Czechoslovakia, as part of the country's overall strategy to balance with Western European forces in maintaining the post-war order imposed by the

Paris Peace Treaty. Japan, of course, was seeking for the cooperation and support of young Eastern European countries, establishing its own diplomatic missions.

From the era of Taisho democracy, can be traced in Japan a kind of romantic exaltation and representation of Eastern Europe. Japan was impressed and sympathetic to the efforts of Eastern European people to build their independent nation-states, as well as interested in their peculiar cultural heritage. Particular attention is paid to the activities and merits of Thomas Masaryk (1850-1937), a Czechoslovak philosopher and politician who became the first president of the newly formed Czechoslovak Republic. His achievements in outlining the democratic development of Czechoslovakia, as well as his advocacy for solidarity and interaction between Central European countries, are presented in bravura paintings by Japanese journalists and researchers during the Taisho period, who praised him as a politician that embodied in his actions and the principles of Western democracy, as a successful leader of a small but courageous country that continues its rapid development and economic growth, despite the unfavorable environment of end of World War II.

However, as the aftermath of the Global Depression and the gradual confrontation between emerging new blocs and spheres of influence between the great powers, influenced a negative effect on Japan, the fragile democracy of the Taisho period gradually gave way to the dominance of politics and economy by the army. Along with the gradual militarization of Japan, when the chauvinistic notes take precedence over the intelligence and pluralism of society, these unpleasant trends imprinted their mark on the way Japanese viewed and perceived Eastern Europe. The Manchurian incident in 1931 can be seen as a turning point, when Japan's sinking in the civil war and the occupation of China became increasingly irreversible and led to insurmountable contradictions between Japan and the Western countries, especially the United States and England.

After Manchurian incident in 1931 and Japanese accession to the tri-literal pact with Italy and Germany, pluralism, romanticism and the glorification of the achievements of young Eastern European countries gave way to blatant anti-communism (namely anti-Sovietism) and neglect of democracy as a guarantee of prosperity for all and foremost in relations with Eastern Europe. Ideas such as 1) the idea of a Turanian community of peoples, which should unite all Asian peoples – starting from the Magyars, through the Bulgarians lost in the Slavic sea and reaching the Japanese; 2)

the deification of the Fuhrer of Germany, Adolf Hitler, and of Nazism as the most progressive social doctrine then, designed to liberate Eastern Europe from its backwardness and to integrate it into the bright avant-garde of the brotherly German people.

3. Eastern Europe depicted by Junpei Shinobu

In his work of about 500 pages, Shinobu does not strictly distinguish between the geographical and historical boundaries between Central Europe and the Balkans as an integral part of Eastern Europe, and on the other hand, probably because of the nature of his official residence, he did not have opportunity to visit Poland and Ukraine, so they are hardly included in the book's general presentation. In other words, the narrative in *Eastern Europe's Dream* focuses mainly on the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Turkey, as well as the countries that gained their independence by separating from them. Particular attention is paid to the economic assets, natural and geographical features of individual regions and countries, how it models their trade, economic development, defense and military capabilities. For example, pages 98 and 99 of the book emphasize the great importance of the Danube River for trade, movement of people and goods, as well as the importance of fertile soils of the Danube plains for the development of agriculture in the country.

According to Shinobu, the economy of the Eastern European countries is based on agriculture, which is conditioned by the geography and natural resources of each country, and it is no accident that the author describes with awe the natural beauties of the Balkan mountains and forrests, among which are the picturesque valleys and bays; for example in the paragraph dedicated to Montenegro (161 pages), whose "lands are as fertile as those of southern Italy."

However, from Junpei Shinobu's point of view, who crossed Eastern Europe and the Balkans as a diplomat of Japan, which was ethnically cohesive and in its main territory unencumbered by disputes with ethnic and religious minorities, it is precisely the ethnic diversity, cultural and religious pluralism here that are typical for Eastern Europe. According to the author in *Eastern Europe* 3 of the world's religions – Christianity, Islam and Judaism influenced each other, and the diversity is one of the central topics in the discourse for Eastern Europe. Depending on the approach and attitude, the diversity can lead to both antagonism, fighting, conflict and war, or can be a stimulus for resolving complex political issues, for peaceful coexis-

tence, cooperation and prosperity in mutual recognition and respect for the differences, peculiarities of each one community.

Significant is the fact that, from a distance of time, Shinobu almost prophetically cites as a model for the development of the ethnically and religiously diverse region of Eastern Europe and the Balkans – Switzerland, with its advanced parliamentary system, the federal community plus referendum-guaranteed self-sufficiency, universal suffrage and all others the attributes of a successful democracy, bringing under the banner of the national nature and statehood of Switzerland the representatives of 3 different peoples – Austrians, French and Italians. On page 88 of the *Dream of Eastern Europe*, the author notes that “the Swiss political system is generally the most successful functioning democracy in the world” and on page 89 emphasizes that “along with the admired natural beauties, politically, Switzerland also it is a paradise on earth where wealth is distributed equally and in proportion and ignorance, poverty and crime are unknown.”

The reality of the Balkans on the eve of the Balkan wars is different and in his book Shinobu draws attention to the growing controversy in the region after the Berlin Congress, and especially to the ethnic opposition in Macedonia, which remained under Turkish rule and where each of the main communities – Bulgarians, Greeks and Albanians, formed its paramilitary defense groups, and the influence and authority of the Turks government declined despite numerous attempts for reform (305-319 pages of the book). Shinobu also explains in details the IMRO debate over what is the most appropriate tactic – whether the organization is fighting for accession to Bulgaria or for the self-government and independence of Macedonia itself, with an almost documented description of the Ilinden-Transfiguration Uprising that broke out on June 2, 1903, its torturous suppression and the escape of refugees in free Bulgaria (318-319 pages).

In the process of creating the first monumental work in Japan, exploring Eastern Europe, as Shingo Minamidzuka points out, Junpei Shinobu is also the first scientist in Japan to formulate the definition of nation. On page 101 of *Eastern Europe's Dream*, Shinobu gives the following definition of a people – “there are a variety of theories and views in politics and history about what a people is, but we are unlikely to make much mistake if we give the following definition of a people - a group of people representing a community bound together by common language, ideas, ideals, history and culture. A nation is not just a community of people of the same origin and blood kinship - such a definition of a nation is too narrow and one-sided in meaning, “Shinobu notes.

Describing the oppositions and struggles for peoples independence in the age of growing nationalism, Shinobu essentially denies extreme nationalism, criticizes the assimilation and suppression of minority rights, and not coincidentally, as I already mentioned, pointed out Switzerland with its well-established parliamentary democracy, federalism and regional self-government as a model for state development in Eastern Europe.

Historical Perspectives

A New-Formed State, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Japan in the Early Interwar Period: Focusing on the Question of the Recognition of the New State

Nobuhiro SHIBA*

Josai International University

Abstract: 2019 marked the 100th anniversary of the international recognition of a new formed state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (changing of name to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929). The formation process of the New state was very complicate and in comparison with Poland and Czechoslovakia, it took some time to recognize the New state at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. This paper deals with Japanese stance to the question of the recognition of the New state and the diplomatic relations between Japan and the New state in the early interwar period by making use of the digital archive of Japan Center for Asia Historical Records (JACAR), National Archives Japan. This paper might make clear Japan's attitude to the Balkan countries at the time.

Keywords: Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Japan, recognition question, Paris Peace Conference, honorary consul

Introduction

After the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-95, the Russia became a very important neighboring country and an enemy country to Japan. In connection with the Russia, Japan seemed to have developed an interest in the Balkan countries around her. So, Japan sent various military missions to the Balkan countries to get the military information about the Russia from them. Japan won the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-5, embarking on the road to the Big Power. And Japan was considered one of the 'Big Five' countries after World War I.

*Dr. Nobuhiro Shiba is Professor at Josai International University and is the Director of Josai Institute for Central European Studies.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the attitude of Japan as one of Big Powers to the Southeast Europe, especially the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in the early interwar period. As the formation process of the New state was extremely complicate, the recognition of the New state at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 was not easy to be given. This paper deals with the question how Japan recognized the New state in the South-east Europe, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and then mainly treats with the diplomatic relations focused on setting each honorary consulate in the early interwar period by making use of the digital archive of Japan Center for Asia Historical Records (JACAR、アジア歴史資料センター), National Archives Japan.

It might be able to become clear by this paper how the diplomatic relations between Japan and the New state were established, on which we have not researched enough in Japan, and to show how Japan understood the new Balkan countries just after World War I.

International recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes

Unlike new-formed Poland and Czechoslovakia after World War I, the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes at the Paris Peace Conference was a little behind due to the unstable situation of the new-formed state¹, especially the question of Montenegro and the Adriatic

¹Regarding the formation process of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, see the following literature: *Shiba, Nobuhiro*. A Contemporary History of Yugoslavia. Tokyo 1996, Iwanami Shoten, (the 20th ed., 2019) [柴宜弘『ユーゴスラヴィア現代史』岩波書店、1996年]. Recent studies in English: *Djokić, Dejan*. Nikola Pašić and Ante Trumbić: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. London 2010, House Histories; *Elusive Compromise: A History of Interwar Yugoslavia*. Hurst & Company, London. Older but basic and useful studies in English: *Djordjevic, Dimitrije, ed.*, The Creation of Yugoslavia 1914-1918. Santa Barbara and Oxford 1980; *Lederer, Ivo J.* Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study in Frontiermaking. Yale U. P.; *Banac, Ivo*. The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origin, History, Politics. Cornell U.P. 1984, 1963. Basic and important work in Serbian: *Мутровић, Андреј*. Југославија на конференцији мира 1919-1920. Београд 1969, Завод за издавање уџбеника. Recent Collection of papers in Serbian: *Ђурић, Ђорђе*, ред. Први светски рат и уједињење: зборник радова. Нови Сад 2018, Матица Српска. Recent papers in English: *Bakić, Dragan*. ‘Apis’ Men: the Black Hand Conspirators after the Great War’ – In: *Balkanica*, XLVI, 2015, pp.219-239; *Bakić, Dragan*. Nikola Pašić and the Foreign Policy of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes 1919-1926 – In: *Balkanica*, XLVII, 2016, pp. 285-316; *Bakić, Dragan*. Regent Alexander Karadjordjević in the First World War – In: *Balkanica*, XLVIII, 2017, pp. 191-215; *Bakić,*

question with Italy. Before the declaration of the New state by the Prince Regent of Serbia, Aleksandar Karadjordjević on December 1 in Belgrade, the Montenegrin Parliament in Podgorica had declared the unification with Serbia and the overthrowing of the Petrović dynasty on November 26. But the King Nikola and Montenegrin government in exile in France supported by Italy refused to recognize these decisions, asking the Peace Conference to allow Montenegro to attend.

The delegation's supreme body, the political section at the Paris Peace Conference consisted of 7 members: 4 plenipotentiaries, Nikola Pašić (head, Serbian politician, the former Prime Minister like Japanese head of the plenipotentiary, Kinmochi Saionji 西園寺公望), Ante Trumbić (deputy, Croatian politician and Foreign Minister), Ivan Žolger (politician and university professor in Slovenia) and Milenko Vesnić (Serbian diplomat and university professor), and 3 government representatives, Josip Smolaka (Croatian politician), Mateja Bošković, (Serbian Diplomat in London) and Otkar Ribarž (Slovenian politician)². They had different opinions on the government system of the New state and the sensitive question of Montenegro, but they stood together and gave priority to the international recognition.

Their greatest concern was when the international recognition of the New state would be given and how the border problems with Italy, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Albania without Greece could be settled. The Paris Peace Conference started on 18 January, 1919 under the circumstance of the vague stance on the New state by 'Big Four' countries resulting from the Italy's attitude to the New state based on the London Treaty in 1915. The Paris Peace Conference tolerated the delegation of the New state in fact, but officially it was regarded as the delegation of the Kingdom of Serbia. The United States supported the New state from viewpoint of denying the secret London Treaty, but Great Britain and France took the standpoint

Dragan. The Great War and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia: The Legacy of an Enduring Conflicts – In: *Balkanica*, VLIX, 2018, pp.157-169. Historiography on World War I in Serbia: *Dimić, Ljubodrag*. Serbian Historiography on the Great War – In: *Živojinović, Dragoljub R., ed.* The Serbs and the First World War 1914-1918. Belgrade 2015, The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, pp.383-408.

² *Lederer*, op.cit., pp.84-91. We can find the name list of the New state's 110 delegates at the Paris Peace Conference in the supplement of this book (pp.313-316); *Mumposuh, Андопеј*, н.д., 467-469. One of the plenipotentiaries, Žolger served as a minister of the last Austrian government, so Italy strongly criticized him at the Conference. But the delegation of the New state didn't yield to the criticism. See: *Djokić*. Elusive..., p.42, note 7.

that they made sure of the unstable conditions of the New state a little longer in consideration of Italy³.

The Conference no sooner began than Greece understood that the delegation of the New state reflected the opinions of the New state, giving first the recognition to it on 26 January and after that, Norway on 29 January, Switzerland on 26 February. Among 'Big Five' countries, the United States recognized the New state on 7 February. At the Conference it was necessary for the Allies to get united to conclude the Peace Treaty with Germany and they finally received the delegation under the name of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, not the Kingdom of Serbia on 26 April, deciding to recognize the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on 29 April⁴. We can find the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as one of the signing countries of the final draft of the Treaty of Versailles on 7 May. Trumbić seemed to understand that the international recognition of the New state was given on this day⁵. Great Britain recognized the New state on 2 June and France on 5 June.

Thus, the process of international recognition of the New state got complicated. The next section discusses how Japan among 'Big Five' countries understood the New-formed state and gave the official recognition to her.

2. The recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes by Japan

The overheated economy by World War I in Japan brought on a sudden inflation from 1917 to 1918. The rice price sharply rose and the rice riots spread all over Japan, giving a blow to the Masatake Terauchi cabinet(寺内正毅内閣). The cabinet suppressed them by rushing not only police forces but also military forces. After coming to an end of the riots, the Terauchi cabinet resigned in a body and the Takashi Hara cabinet(原敬内閣) that was the first party cabinet in Japan. The delegation of Japan at the Paris Peace Conference was assigned under the Hara cabinet. Prime minister, Hara actively coped with the diplomatic problems after World War I although he faced a lot of domestic problems. He made use of his experience

³ Mitrović, *Andrej*. The Yugoslav Question, the first World War and the peace conference – In: *Djokić, Dejan, ed.* Yugoslavism: Histories of a failed Idea 1918-1992. London 2003, Hurst & Company, p.54.

⁴ Ibid., p.55.

⁵ *Djokić*. Nikola Pašić..., p.130.

as a diplomat and push forward the diplomatic policy by his own initiative⁶.

The preparations for participating in the Conference were made by the preparatory committee organized by an Administrative Vice Foreign Minister, Kijuro Shidehara (幣原喜重郎). The committee formed the matters for demand, appointing Sutemi Chinda (珍田捨巳), the Ambassador in London and Keishiro Matsui (松井慶四郎), the Ambassador in Paris as the plenipotentiaries of Japan and then Kinmochi Saionji as head of plenipotentiaries and Nobuaki Makino (牧野伸顕) as deputy were named. As Saionji firmly refused the position for reasons of his health, the Japanese delegation at the Conference whose temporary head was Makino left Yokohama on 10 December. They arrived at Paris on 12 January, 1919 by way of the United States. Saionji finally decided to take his position after getting information on the President of United States, Woodrow Wilson's attending the Conference and left Japan in mid-January. So, his arrival date in Paris was on 2 March⁷.

The government of Japan gave an official instruction to the delegation (about 60 delegates) that they should take care not to make the matter worse and try to act in concert with the leaders of European countries, following Great Britain if Japan confronted with any problem⁸. We will see such an attitude of Japan about the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. There is a document named 'On the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes'. This consists of the decision by the Hara cabinet on 20 May, 1919.

According to the Cabinet decision, the Japanese government received a telegram from Trumbić which informed them to assume the first Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on January 18, 1919. The outline of the decision is as follows:

The Japanese Government carefully watched the attitude of the Allies towards the New state. The United States and France had supported the New State from the beginning of World War I and the United States agreed to change the Serbian Legation in Washington into the Legation of the New state in early February, 1919. But only Italy refused to recognize the New state because of the Adriatic Question. So, the recog-

⁶ Nish, Ian. *Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period*. London 2002, Praeger (関静雄訳『戦間期の日本外交——パリ講和会議から大東亜会議まで』ミネルヴァ書房、京都、2004年), p. 23

⁷ Ibid., p. 26.

⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

nition of the New state is continuing to be unclear. But the ambassador Matsui in Paris sent the Ministry a telegram on May 15, saying the Allies (except Italy) agreed that the delegation of the New state would sign the Peace Treaties with the name of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. It is not clear yet whether the New state's recognition could be completed by the signing or the Allies should give the New state the official recognition separately. The Japanese government considers it will be timely to work closely together with the Allies toward this issue and the Government decides to reply so to the ambassador Matsui⁹.

We can indicate the following two points from this cabinet decision. Firstly, the Hara cabinet seemed to quite accurately understand the complicated process of the formation of the New state and the Adriatic Question with Italy through the information given by the ambassador Matsui, although it was not easy for Japan to have a true appreciation of European issues. Secondly, Japan dealt with the issue of the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes by working in concert with the Allies. It seems that Japan gave recognition to the New state in June, 1919 after Great Britain and France.

3. Setting each diplomatic establishment

Japan has relatively longer relations with Romania than any other Balkan countries. Because Japan had a great interest in Romania as an oil-producing country from economical viewpoint more than military one and Envoys of the two countries at Vienna had held an informal consultation for establishing diplomatic relations since 1902. Romania sent Envoy to Japan and set its legation in Tokyo in 1917, while Japan established its legation in Bucharest in 1922 for the first time among the Balkan countries. This legation covered the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The honorary consulate of Romania was set in Osaka in 1923 and the Commercial treaty between two countries was concluded in 1924.

The relations between Japan and the New State developed with the King Aleksandar's marriage with Maria, a daughter of the King Ferdinand of Romania as a turning point¹⁰. Because a Special Envoy of the Emperor

⁹JACAR Ref. B03041296200 *On the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1919*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

¹⁰Shiba, Nobuhiro, *superv.* Serbia and Japan: A Short History of Relations between Two

of Japan attended the marriage ceremony in Belgrade in 1922, And the two countries concluded the Treaty of commerce and navigation in November, 1923 in Vienna¹¹. After that, their relations became active not only at economic field, but at the other field. But both of them hadn't diplomatic establishments in each country at the time¹² and the need for each diplomatic establishment was argued. According to a Japanese document, the Europe and American Affairs Bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed to set the legation in Belgrade, but the majority support about such proposal could not be got in the Ministry and the establishing the Honorary consulate instead of the legation was decided in August 1927¹³.

Just after this decision, the legation of Japan in Bucharest started to choose an honorary consul. According to the notice of the Envoy of Japan in Bucharest, Kintomo Mushakoji (武者小路公共) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Giichi Tanaka (田中義一), Mushakoji received a letter with his curriculum vitae and documents from a Croat (Dr. Ljubomir St. Kosier) living then in Berlin who wanted to serve as an honorary consul in Zagreb. Mushakoji responded to him that Japan would at first set the honorary consulate in the capital, Belgrade¹⁴. He asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the New State to select a suitable person as the honorary consul. They recommended Milutin Stanojević (1865-1954), vice president of the Chamber of commerce in Belgrade as the honorary consul. Mushakoji informed the

Countries. The Embassy of Serbia in Tokyo, 2011 (柴宜弘監修『セルビアと日本——両国関係史概観』セルビア共和国大使館、2011年), p.33.

¹¹ JACAR Ref. A03034117800 *On the Treaty of commerce and navigation between Japan and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1923*, National Archives Japan.

¹² The embassy of France in Tokyo gave protection to the people coming to Japan from the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes on behalf of their government at that time. JACAR Ref. B16080005900 *On the protection of people of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes by the French consul in Yokohama, 1926*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan. It is difficult for us to find the people coming to Japan from the New state in 1920's. Among them, Dušan Todorović (1875-1963), a professor of Russian language at Tokyo School of Foreign Languages was only one long-term sojourner in Japan. He stayed in Japan from 1909 to 1940. See: Shiba, Nobuhiro. National Identity of a 'Borderland Man': the case of Dušan Todorović, Russian Language Professor in Tokyo – from early days until end of World War I – In: *Electronic Journal of Central European Studies in Japan*, No.4, December 2018.

¹³ JACAR M-0106, 0331-0333 *On establishing our honorary consulate in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1927*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

¹⁴ JACAR M-0106, 0345 *On establishing our honorary consulate in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1928*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tanaka that Stanojević was suitable for the honorary consul considering his age of 63 years old, his personal history, social position and prestige, enough assets¹⁵. A draft memorial to the Emperor on the honorary consulate was written by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tanaka on 27 August and the establishment of the honorary consulate in Belgrade was finally decided on 2 November, 1928¹⁶.

On the contrary, the acting Envoy in Bucharest, Toshiharu Harima (張間利春) informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tanaka in April, 1929 that the Chamber of commerce at Dubrovnik proposed Eiichiro Ueyama¹⁷ (上山英一郎, 1862-1943), a president of a company for mosquito repellent (Golden Cockキンチョー, 大日本除虫菊) doing business with companies at Dalmatia as the honorary consul in Japan to be set in Osaka¹⁸. Harima had sent documents about Ueyama to the New state, but their response was very slow. Maybe they could not answer Japan soon due to a political disorder after the King Aleksandar's declaration of dictatorship in January, 1929 (from this time, the name of the New state changed into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia). Receiving an inquiry about the delay of the answer from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kijuro Shidehara (幣原喜重郎), Harima informed him on 27 September that "I have not yet gotten any response from Yugoslavia"¹⁹. Then in October, Japanese Ambassador in the United States, Masaru Debuchi (出淵勝) sent The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shidehara a message that he received a letter of credence of Ueyama to be the honorary consul in Osaka signed in 10 September, 1929 by the King Aleksandar of Yugoslavia through the Envoy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Washington. And thus, the exequatur of the honorary consul in Osaka

¹⁵ JACAR M-0106, 0347-0349 *On establishing our honorary consulate in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes*, 1928, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

¹⁶ JACAR M-0106, 0352-0357 *On the draft memorial to the Emperor of establishing the honorary consulate*, 1928, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

¹⁷ On Eiichiro Ueyama, see: *Ueyama, Naohide*. A Serbian flower, Bela rada: unexpected relations between the mosquito coil in Japan and Serbia – In: *Shiba, Nobuhiro, Yamazaki Shinichi, eds.*, 65 Chapters to understand Serbia. Tokyo 2015, Akashi Shoten. (上山直英「第59章 セルビアの花ベララーダ——蚊取り線香との意外な関係」柴宜弘・山崎信一『セルビアを知るための60章』明石書店、2015年), p. 343–347.

¹⁸ JACAR Ref. B14090608400 *On the establishment of the honorary consulate of Yugoslavia in Osaka*, 1929, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

¹⁹ Ibid.

was officially given to Ueyama on 5 December²⁰. Ueyama's son, Kantaro Ueyama (上山勘太郎) was designated to the vice-honorary consul on 21 November, 1930²¹. These arrangements of the appointment were made between the Envoy of Yugoslavia in Washington and the Ambassador in Washington, Debuchi. It is not clear why the Legation of Japan in Bucharest didn't take part in these processes.

Thereafter, Shidehara received a message from the Japanese Ambassador in France, Kenkichi Yoshizawa (芳澤謙吉). Yoshizawa was directly informed in February, 1931 that the government of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had already decided to set the legation in Tokyo²². But the Kingdom of Yugoslavia didn't bring the decision into practice during whole interwar period.

Conclusion

Summarizing briefly the question how Japan recognized the New state in the Southeast Europe, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Japan dealt with matters at the Paris Peace Conference in an international harmonious manner. The basic stance of Japan as one of 'Big Five' countries was to act in concert with the other four countries and to follow Great Britain without taking a decision by herself if Japan confronted with any problem. We can confirm such an attitude of Japan about the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. And we are able to point out that Japan got the accurate information from her own ambassadors in Paris, London and Rome, trying to understand the complicate formation process of the New state.

Needless to say, issues on border demarcation were difficult to solve. However, the following case may be very interesting for us. When a Japanese military attaché at the League of Nations was designated as the Japanese Commissioner in the Hungarian-Yugoslav Boundary Commission in 1921, he seemed to work on the sensitive border problem appropriately and fairly as a Commissioner. This case should be studied in more detail²³.

²⁰ JACAR Ref. B1510374600 *On the appointment to the honorary consul of Yugoslavia in Osaka, 1929*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

²¹ JACAR Ref. B1510374600 *On Kantaro Ueyama's appointment to the vice-honorary consul of Yugoslavia in Osaka, 1930*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

²² JACAR Ref. B14090608500 *On establishing the legation of Yugoslavia in Tokyo, 1931*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

²³ See: Bertalaníč, Boštjan. B. Lt. Col. Yanagawa Heisuke and the Demarcation of Prek-

Finally, we are able to get a glimpse how the national interest of Japan toward the Balkan countries was by researching the development of the process of relations between Japan and the New state. Japan had a great concern to the Balkan countries before World War I to get military information about the situation of the Russian Empire. With the reorganization of the Balkan countries after World War I, Japan seemed to show interest in the Balkan region, not each country from economical point of view in the 1920s. Romania producing oil was an object of concern. Japan and Romania set each legation just after World War I. On the contrary, the Treaty of commerce and navigation was concluded between Japan and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1923, but each legation was not set in Tokyo and Belgrade in the interwar period.

After the withdrawal from the League of Nation in 1933, Japan aimed to bring a closer relationship with Germany, concluding the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany in 1936 (Italy participated in 1937). Japan turned concern to Hungary and Bulgaria which was dissatisfied at things as they were at the time. The alliance was formed between Japan and Hungary by concluding a bilateral cultural treaty in 1938 and each legation was established. Manchukuo and Hungary took part in the Anti-Comintern Pact in February, 1939. Japan and Bulgaria set each legation in 1939, but the diplomatic relations between Japan and Yugoslavia did not develop in 1930s.

Bibliography:

Primary sources:

JACAR Ref. A03034117800 *On the Treaty of commerce and navigation between Japan and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1923*, National Archives Japan;

JACAR Ref. B03041296200 *On the recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1919*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

murje: A Japanese Account of the Yugoslav-Hungarian Border Commission's Activities in 1921-1922 – In: Lazarevic, Zarko, Shiba, Nobuhiro, Suzuki, Kenta, eds. *The 20th Century through Historiographies and Textbooks: Chapters from Japan, East Asia, Slovenia and Southeast Europe*. Ljubljana 2018, pp.191-202.

JACAR Ref. B16080005900 *On the protection of people of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes by the French consul in Yokohama, 1926*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR M-0106, 0331-0333 *On establishing our honorary consulate in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1927*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR M-0106, 0345 *On establishing our honorary consulate in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1928*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR M-0106, 0347-0349 *On establishing our honorary consulate in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 1928*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR M-0106, 0352-0357 *On the draft memorial to the Emperor of establishing the honorary consulate, 1928*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR Ref. B14090608400 *On the establishment of the honorary consulate of Yugoslavia in Osaka, 1929*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR Ref. B1510374600 *On the appointment to the honorary consul of Yugoslavia in Osaka, 1929*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR Ref. B1510374600 *On Kantaro Ueyama's appointment to the vice-honorary consul of Yugoslavia in Osaka, 1930*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan;

JACAR Ref. B14090608500 *On establishing the legation of Yugoslavia in Tokyo, 1931*, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Japan.

References:

Banac, Ivo. *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origin, History, Politics*. Cornell U.P., 1984;

Bertalanič, Boštjan. B. Lt. Col. Yanagawa Heisuke and the Demarcation of Prekmurje: A Japanese Account of the Yugoslav-Hungarian Border Commission's Activities in 1921-1922 – In: *Lazarevic, Zarko, Shiba, Nobuhiro, Suzuki, Kenta*, eds. *The 20th Century through Historiographies and Textbooks: Chapters from Japan, East Asia, Slovenia and Southeast Europe*. Ljubljana 2018, pp.191-202;

Dimić, Ljubodrag. *Serbian Historiography on the Great War* – In: *Živojinović, Dragoljub R.*, ed. *The Serbs and the First World War 1914-1918*.

- Belgrade 2015, The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, pp.383-408;
Djokić, Dejan. Nikola Pašić and Ante Trumbić: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. London 2010, House Histories;
--Elusive Compromise: A History of Interwar Yugoslavia. Hurst & Company, London;
Djordjevic, Dimitrije, ed., The Creation of Yugoslavia 1914-1918. Santa Barbara and Oxford 1980;
Ђурић, Ђорђе, ред. Први светски рат и уједињење: зборник радова. Нови Сад 2018, Матица Српска;
Lederer, Ivo J. Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study in Frontiermaking. Yale U. P., 1963;
Митровић, Андреј. Југославија на конференцији мира 1919-1920. Београд 1969, Завод за издавање уџбеника;
Mitrović, Andrej. The Yugoslav Question, the first World War and the peace conference – In: Djokić, Dejan, ed. *Yugoslavism: Histories of a failed Idea 1918-1992*, Hurst & Company, London, 2003, p.54;
Nish, Ian. Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period. London 2002, Praeger (関静雄訳『戦間期の日本外交——パリ講和会議から大東亜会議まで』ミネルヴァ書房、京都、2004年), p. 23;
Shiba, Nobuhiro. A Contemporary History of Yugoslavia. Tokyo 1996, Iwanami Shoten, (the 20th ed., 2019) (柴宜弘『ユーゴスラヴィア現代史』岩波書店、1996年);
-- Serbia and Japan: A Short History of Relations between Two Countries. The Embassy of Serbia in Tokyo, 2011 (柴宜弘監修『セルビアと日本——両国関係史概観』セルビア共和国大使館、2011年), p.33;
Ueyama, Naohide. A Serbian flower, Bela rada: unexpected relations between the mosquito coil in Japan and Serbia – In: *Shiba, Nobuhiro, Yamazaki Shinichi, eds.*, 65 Chapters to understand Serbia. Tokyo 2015, Akashi Shoten. (上山直英「第59章 セルビアの花ベララーダ——蚊取り線香との意外な関係」柴宜弘・山崎信一『セルビアを知るための60章』明石書店、2015年).

Bulgarian Periodicals' Coverage of the Russo-Japanese War – a Brief Overview

Martin M. DIMITROV*

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

Abstract: *The report attempts a brief overview of the Bulgarian press during the Russo-Japanese War, showing how the conflict in East Asia was presented before the Bulgarian public, thus highlighting important interconnections between domestic politics and global geopolitical events. The materials examined also shed light on the process of early cultural perception of Japan in Bulgaria.*

Keywords: Russia, Japan, Bulgaria, Russo-Japanese War, press, newspaper.

The Russo-Japanese War was one of the most significant events of the early 20th century. Apart from witnessing the confrontation of two completely different adversaries, thus bringing up notions of a rift between civilizations and even races, the conflict tested the robustness of the entangled alliance structure in Europe, saw the introduction of military technology, later to be used in the Great War, and further brought Japan into the spotlight of Western public opinion.

Bulgaria, although a country separated from the war theatre by more than seven thousand kilometres, was deeply affected by the abovementioned factors. By 1904-1905, the state was yet to declare its independence from the Ottoman crown, thus securing its place among sovereign nations. Therefore, at the time Bulgaria was fully subject to the attitudes of the decision-makers of the Congress of Berlin from 1878, and even more important to Bulgarian politicians and public alike was the state that the majority considered to be the country's liberator – the Russian empire.

Thus, it was inevitable that the Russo-Japanese war was felt in Bulgaria

* Dr. Martin M. Dimitrov is Assistant Professor at the Department of Japanese Studies of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

as though the conflict had been close to its borders. News from Manchuria captured the public imagination, affected politicians' foreign policy agendas, once again highlighted the rift between the so-called Russophiles and Russophobes in Bulgarian society, and, ironically, immensely enlarged the exposure of Japan and its culture to the Bulgarian public.

Far from attempting a comprehensive review of all contemporary periodic publications, I made a brief overview of the Bulgarian press of the time as a useful way to gauge the abovementioned trends.

The government's party newspaper – the voice of those in charge

By 1904 Bulgaria had a very developed press as the country boasted a wide array of regional and national newspapers and magazines. However, one of the most widely circulated periodicals were those of the political parties. They are an excellent starting point of our analysis as they provide not only the facts, but convey certain attitudes toward the war.

At the time of the Russo-Japanese war, Bulgaria was ruled by the People's Liberal Party, the so-called "Second Stambolovite regime" after the name of the party's late leader – Stefan Stambolov, who had headed a government between 1887 and 1894. Stambolov oversaw a period of substantial economic modernization, but his fierce anti-Russophile policies and autocratic tendencies had made him an odious figure to a lot of quarters, which led to his assassination shortly after falling from power.

By 1903 his ideological successors regained power by once again winning the benevolence of the prince – Ferdinand Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, as historians generally agree that in this period the latter's attitudes were far more important than electoral politics.¹

Thus, the People's Liberal Party newspaper *Nov Vek* (New Century), offers a glimpse not only into the way the Russo-Japanese war was conveyed to the public, but also its relation to the pressing political issues of the day – such as Bulgaria's international standing and the inter-party struggle in Bulgarian domestic politics.

The People's Liberals retained the Russophobe heritage of their previous regime. That is why it is not surprising that New Century's editorial

¹ *Lalkov, Milcho*. Bulgaria after the Liberation (1878-1912). A Lecture Course. Sofia 2001, „Polis“ (Лалков, М. България след Освобождението (1878-1912). Лекционен курс. София 2001, „Полис“.), p. 153-156.

treatment of the events tilts toward a neutral analysis, rather than a whole-hearted support for Russia, as the one we shall find in the Russophile press.

In the head column of the paper's January 28 issue, shortly after the commencement of hostilities in the Far East, the conflict is dubbed "a war between two giants, between two races".² The author clearly has the point of view of Japan in mind when he writes that "*If you look at the map and see the Russians' position in Port Arthur and their intention to settle themselves not only in Manchuria, but also in Korea – the front door of Japan, you will realize that she [Japan] cannot allow this without at least a single defeat on the field of battle. Everyone in her place, who has their own best interests at heart and the duty to defend them with all available means, would hardly conduct themselves differently*".³ As we shall see, even the notion that Japan had a justifiable casus belli was anathema to the Russophiles and this particular publication came under fire from their newspapers.

However, contrary to popular belief, the Stambolovites appear not to have been radically and militantly anti-Russian. Their newspaper's editorials are very careful not to go into extremes. Russia is referred to as "our Liberator" throughout.⁴ Partly because of the apparent backlash that the initial "cold-headed" publication incurred, and partly to accommodate Ferdinand's own attitude, who was careful not to antagonize Russia, the issue from January 30 is quick to pledge support for the Russian cause. We read the following:

*"It is with great satisfaction that we note that our whole press, without exception, has expressed the most sincere sympathies for the Russian cause. It is doubtful that anything like what happened here has occurred in any other country – everywhere religious services were conducted and prayers were offered for the Lord to grant victory to our liberators. The service in the capital was joined by His Majesty the Prince and his ministers. It cannot have been otherwise. Bulgaria owes its current standing to the victory of that same Russian force and we expect from it further achievements toward the realization of our National ideal [...] The Bulgarian people will never forget the sacrifices, which Russia has laid on the altar of our liberation."*⁵

The editorial then goes on the defensive about the previous stance of the newspaper, stating that the January 28 editorial was not meant to be "un-

² Nov Vek (HOB BEK), 28 January 1904.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 4 February 1904.

friendly towards Russia”, nor to “betray the cause of Slavdom and our national ideal”. It had merely, according to the author, provided a cold-headed analysis of the situation and had urged keeping a national perspective on the issue.⁶

Indeed, a call for a cold-headed neutrality while paying lip service to the Russian cause, and not an open pro-Japan sentiment, guided *Nov Vek*’s editorial policy. This is exemplified by a paragraph that predicts that if Russia wins, this will lead to further conflict as her control of warm ports will destabilize the international system. We read further:

*“And precisely because Bulgaria is not outside of the [European Powers’] spheres of influence, we think that the current war should make us more careful and we should follow its developments with no small amount of self-possession, so that we give no reason for the world to think of us as a tool of one side or the other. Momentous events are unfolding, with the outbreak of war, even for our Fatherland and its interests, which should be kept at heart by every Bulgarian patriot.”*⁷ A special article on “neutrality”, from the point of view of international law and practice, was published in *Nov Vek* on February 9 to further drive home the abovementioned point.⁸

Here we see a trend, that is present in all of the reviewed publications. Bulgarian journalists’ commentary on the Russo-Japanese War was inevitably linked to the problems of Bulgaria’s foreign policy, its vectors at the time being – the fate of the Christian population in Macedonia and Thrace (which was left within the boundaries of the Ottoman empire by the Congress of Berlin, but which the majority of Bulgarians considered to be part of the Bulgarian nation), the reforms the Sultan was halfheartedly carrying out in those regions under European pressure, and the question of rearmament and even the prospect of a future conflict against Bulgaria’s suzerain – the Ottoman Empire.⁹

The “Macedonian question” loomed large above both government and opposition alike, so it is not surprising to see the events of the Russo-Japanese War be interpreted through its lens. *Nov Vek*, in an apparent effort to justify the Stambolovite government’s efforts at rearmament, consistently notes that Russia’s misfortunes in the war were due to lack of preparation¹⁰.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 28 January 1904.

⁸ Ibid., 9 February 1904.

⁹ Lalkov, M. Op. cit., p. 137-138.

¹⁰ Nov Vek, 5 May 1904.

Its editorials stress that Japan “spared no sacrifices” to obtain military superiority, and that likewise Bulgaria is obliged to rearm lest she be “caught unprepared” like “our Russian brothers”.¹¹ An article in the spirit of the maxim “If you want peace, prepare for war” further emphasizes this point.¹²

Besides the frequent presence of the war in the paper’s editorial column, *Nov Vek*, like the other publications reviewed, devoted a significant part of its pages for news from the front brought by the world’s leading information agencies, providing even minute details of the fighting.¹³ From February 23, 1904, onwards *Nov Vek* devotes a separate column for the events unfolding in Manchuria,¹⁴ which would run throughout the war. This testifies to the intense interest the reading Bulgarian public held for the far-away conflict. From October 1904 onward, *Nov Vek* even offers its readers an illustrated attached magazine, called the “The Russo-Japanese war”, which purports to show “all episodes of the Great War” in “words and pictures”.¹⁵

As stated earlier, the conflict not only stirred public opinion in one or other direction, but immensely contributed to the popularity of Japan in Bulgaria. Although not without some interaction in previous decades¹⁶, for many Bulgarians the island nation was an obscure and far-away entity before crossing sabers with Russia – Bulgaria’s well-known Slavic counterpart. Japanese victories on the field of battle prompted editors to publish more and more information about the country, exemplified by the *Nov Vek*’s publication of statistical data about Japan in its June 23 issue of 1904.¹⁷ Naturally, however, Bulgarian journalists had to rely on secondary sources most of which were Russian. An example of this is when *Nov Vek* published a column describing Russian explorer Vasily Golovnin’s captivity in Japan in the 1820s – an episode, which later became famous through Golovnin’s writings.¹⁸

In conclusion, it should be once again noted that *Nov Vek*, while a newspaper linked with the Russophobe circles in Bulgarian society, did not

¹¹ Ibid., 14 June 1904.

¹² Ibid., 18 June 1904.

¹³ For example: Ibid., 30 January 1904.

¹⁴ Ibid., 23 February 1904.

¹⁵ Ibid., 4 October 1904.

¹⁶ *Stefanova, Vera-Vutova, Kandilarov, Evgeniy*. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, Personalities and Events. Sofia 2019, “East-West” Publishing House (Стефанова, В., Кандиларов, Е. България и Япония. Политика, дипломация, личности и събития. С. 2019, Изд. „Изток-Запад“.), p. 11-35.

¹⁷ *Nov Vek*, 23 June 1904.

¹⁸ Ibid., 30 July 1904.

adopt openly pro-Japan views. It presented the news of the fall of Port Arthur in the closing days of 1904 as “a piece of news, which will surely bring grief to everyone, who sympathizes with the Russian people”.¹⁹ The Battle of Tsushima, it’s editors later on claim, “brings deep grief to the hearts of Russia’s friends, who had followed the news of this terrible war”.²⁰ Its editorials also imply that Bulgaria will always sympathize with its Slavic liberator no matter the circumstances “as [the qualities of] great peoples are recognized when in distress”.²¹

The opposition’s view

Next, we should turn to one of the most active among the opposition’s parties – the Democratic Party, which eventually succeeded the Stambolovites’ government in 1907. The democrat’s newspaper *Pryaporets* (Banner) was similar in its attempt to give almost daily coverage of the war and also immensely contributed to the Bulgarian public’s knowledge of Japan. However, it stood on rigid Russophile positions.

As soon as news of the breakout of war comes out, *Pryaporets* is quick to lend its wholehearted support for the Russian cause and lambast the Western powers, which supported Japan, in the most emotional of manners. It criticizes the Western press for falsely presenting the conflict as one between a “civilized Japan” and a “despotic Russia” (a widely held notion in the West). *Pryaporets* editors maintain that it was precisely Russia, who had had a civilizing mission in the Asian steppes, that had protected the old continent from the East and had thus provided a safe space for European civilization to develop. The same editorial concludes with the rhetorical question “What has ‘civilized’ Japan given to the world?”²² Of course, no opportunity is missed to also criticize the “Stambolovite clique” for their lack of support for Russia, exemplified in the democrats’ minds by the initial “cold-headed” editorial of *Nov Vek*.²³

The pro-Russian tone is kept throughout the war, as each Russian setback is treated by the editorials with a mixture of sorrow and a sense of reassurance, that the Eurasian giant is far from being knocked out.²⁴ Upon

¹⁹ Ibid., 22 December 1904.

²⁰ Ibid., 25 May 1905.

²¹ Ibid., 1 June 1905.

²² *Pryaporets* (Пряпорец), 1 February 1904.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ For example: Ibid., 7 April 1904, 21 May 1905.

the signing of the Portsmouth treaty, the editors are forced to accept that the ceding of Southern Sakhalin “has sealed the defeat”, but nonetheless that that was a “pill that has to be swollen”.²⁵ As a revolutionary situation unfolded in Russia with the turn of the new year, the newspaper, owing to the Democratic party’s liberal tradition, starts to shift the blame for Russia’s defeats on its own diplomacy and its “bureaucratic regime”, while at the same time praising its constitutional movement. Gradually, the authors come to grudgingly admit the Japanese army’s high qualities – an army “which is far from our liking in every other respect”.²⁶

It is important to note that, like all other political newspapers, *Pryaporets* also keeps the Bulgarian national perspective when covering the events. The war, it warns, will occupy Russia’s attention in the Far East, which would in turn reduce the pressure on the Ottoman crown to further the reforms in its territories, inhabited by Christian Slavic population.²⁷

Pryaporets too provides an almost daily coverage of the events in the Far East by running a separate column on its pages. They are concise and professional, most of the time being signed by an anonymous “retired officer”. These columns are either neutral in tone or betray only a tinge of pro-Russian sentiment, as opposed to the editorials.²⁸ The Japanese are occasionally praised.²⁹

In *Pryaporets* we also see a familiar trend – the steady publication of articles about Japan itself, which was undoubtedly prompted by the sudden interest in the island country among the Bulgarian reading public. On August 27, 1905, the newspaper reprinted an article from the Italian magazine “Nuova Antologia” – a brief historical overview of Japanese literature.³⁰ In May 1904, *Pryaporets*’s readers are treated to a whole section devoted to Japan’s political structure.³¹

Although this certainly contributed to the exposure of Japan to the Bulgarian people, and although the paper’s civilized tone stops short of slandering the Japanese explicitly, *Pryaporets*’s pro-Russian stance inevitably led it to fueling the “Yellow peril” narrative, which was predominant at the time not only in Bulgaria, but throughout the whole Western world. This is

²⁵ Ibid., 18 August 1905.

²⁶ Ibid., 13 January 1905; 1 March 1905.

²⁷ Ibid., 3 March 1904.

²⁸ For example: Ibid., 4 May 1904, 8 May 1904, 13 May 1904, etc.

²⁹ Ibid., 3 June 1904.

³⁰ Ibid., 27 August 1905.

³¹ Ibid., 27 May 1904.

exemplified by the reprinting of an article by a Norwegian journalist, who describes the Japanese as “indifferent toward Europe, which they use only as a technical university and an arsenal”. “Why are we supporting these foreign people in their fight against our own white race and civilization?”, asks further the Norwegian author, concluding that “[Japan] looks to our civilization solely from its barbaric point of view, coveting only material gains”.³²

Critiques of the Japanese from other perspectives can also be found on *Pryaporets*’s pages. An article named “The Political Development of Japan” by a Frenchman – Andre Sigfried, points to the deficiencies of the Japanese political system, such as the virtually unchecked powers of the monarch as opposed to a toothless parliament, as well as the narrow electoral base. It concludes: “Japan has a constitution, but [the manner of] its enforcement is akin to the Middle Ages and the era of feudalism.”³³

Pryaporets’s own editorials sometimes fuel the “Yellow peril” narrative by claiming that London, Berlin and New York [sic], where the Japanese victories had been applauded at first, “are now frightened by [Russia’s] setbacks as they now realize that the war in the Far East is not a war between two peoples, but is the first act of an inescapable global tragedy between two great races – the white one and the yellow one”.³⁴

The other opposition

The newspaper of the People’s Party³⁵ *Mir* (“Peace” or alternatively “World”) conforms to the tendencies outlined above but goes further in its Russophile tone. At the outbreak of the war its editorial states: “*It will be hard to find a Slavic heart, which has not been moved by indignation at the fact that a nation, which is engaged in idolatry and has adopted the European civilization only superficially, and which doesn’t have any grand military victories on the pages of its history, except for the annihilation of the undisciplined and wretched Chinese legions, is now intent on opposing the peaceful expansion of mighty Russia[...]* It is not the first time Russia

³² Ibid., 15 July 1905.

³³ Ibid., 6 November 1904.

³⁴ 13 January 1905.

³⁵ A political organization made up by former Conservative Party members, former “Unionists” from Eastern Rumelia and others, which was in power in the last decade of the 19th century. One of the most famous Bulgarian authors – Ivan Vazov, was a member and a minister of education from the party.

stands up to protect Europe from the tide of the Asiatic tribes and from their destructive and barbaric force."³⁶ *Mir*'s editors' support for Russia is unequivocal: "*We here on the small Balkan peninsula may quarrel with each other, envy each other, seek ethnographic and linguistic differences, but there, before the wide ocean, we are all Slavs, we are all brothers.*"³⁷

Later, in September, *Mir* would publish an editorial, which condemned those journalists, who had criticized Bulgarians for paying too much attention to the war and not to their domestic situation. The newspaper's editors don't see a problem in this and state empathically: "[for the Bulgarians] *Port Arthur is as close as Shipka, Liaoyang is like Pleven. Those who twenty-eight years ago commanded platoons and battalions in Bulgaria, are now commanding corps and divisions in Manchuria*".³⁸ Although an emotional and somewhat far-fetched statement, it was certainly true that memories of the country's liberation by Russian armies were still fresh in Bulgarian people's minds at the time, and thus the overall pro-Russian bias of the press certainly spoke to a majority among the public.

It goes without saying that the Western powers, with their support for Japan, also incurred *Mir*'s wrath. A front-page editorial claims that "Great Britain and the US have allied themselves with the pagan Japanese for commercial purposes, and maybe they also pray in their churches for the victory of the pagan forces".³⁹

Being firmly pro-Russian, *Mir* also went further than other newspapers in its anti-Japan rhetoric. The country is slammed as a "treacherous attacker, who displayed his remoteness from the moral standards of true culture, even in the first minutes of warfare."⁴⁰ Elsewhere, the Japanese are dubbed "protéges of the English"⁴¹, who are "bloodthirsty and are only after the West's military technologies"⁴². Notably, *Mir* not only thus contributed to the "Yellow peril" narrative but even used the exact same phrase.⁴³

Mir did not stay behind in conveying almost daily news from the front and it also had its own separate column dedicated to the war. And like its counterparts, the newspaper, despite a strong anti-Japan bias, did not fail

³⁶ *Mir* (Мир), 27 January 1904.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 30 September 1904.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 29 January 1905.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 16 March 1904.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 10 July 1904; 28 February 1904.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 3 May 1905.

to provide its readers with educational articles and columns devoted to the far-away island country itself. In them, one can see how the politically charged commentary on the war fades and gives way to admiration for Japan's achievements. In an article about the Japanese education system, it is admitted that the Japanese "showed great courage and devotion to their own interests." The reason, the writer thinks is "that the Japanese [education] systems gives birth to patriots, and not to cosmopolitans".⁴⁴

It goes to the credit of *Mir*'s editors, that by the end of the war, they almost completely abandon their anti-Japan tone. An editorial following the Portsmouth treaty goes: "*One of the most important results of the war is the awakening of a giant in the Far East – one of whose existence nobody thought of 18 months ago [...] Japan has won its place among the Great Powers*"⁴⁵ As for Russia, the editors voice their hopes, that the country will be "stabilized internally and externally" and that it would continue "to be a graceful influence" on Balkan affairs "especially on the issue of our fellow countrymen [in Macedonia and Thrace]".⁴⁶

Other publications

Svobodno Slovo (Free speech), the newspaper of the newly formed Young Liberal Party presents an interesting case. Although explicitly pro-Russian in tone when commenting on the news from the front⁴⁷ or when lamenting Russia's defeats⁴⁸, it is far from *Mir*'s all-out support for Russia.

Probably more than any other of the newspapers reviewed, given its humbler presence, *Svobodno Slovo* committed the most efforts in educating the reading Bulgarian public about Japan. It published articles about Japanese religion⁴⁹; a travelogue, spanning several issues, which broached such subjects as Japan's history, natural wonders, political structure, social norms, etc.; and an inquiry into the country's origins, to name a few.⁵⁰

The war's presence, however, was not felt only through the pages of the political press. A look at certain newspapers, whose chief aim was not to follow political everts, or at least not in the conventional way, is useful for

⁴⁴ Ibid., 20 May 1905.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 21 August 1905.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 19 July 1905.

⁴⁷ For example: *Svobodno Slovo* (Свободно слово), 1 May 1904.

⁴⁸ For example: Ibid., issue 66, 67, 1904. (Special Christmas Issues)

⁴⁹ Ibid., 18 December 1904.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 18 September 1904; 2 October 1904.

establishing how the conflict was reflected through the prism of domestic social issues or cultural attitudes.

As an example of such publication, one might look at *Zhenski Glas* (Female voice) – an issue of the Bulgarian Female Union – a non-government organization. As a newspaper almost entirely devoted to issues of women's rights in Bulgaria and abroad, it didn't publish general news. However, it too was touched by the conflict.

An editorial from January 20, 1904, gives a curious glimpse into the feminist movement's stance toward the conflict. Commenting on an initiative of the Prince, who entrusted certain ladies from the Bulgarian political high life to organize a charity for wounded Russian soldiers, the editors' reaction is lukewarm. Betraying a certain degree of contempt for high class dames, they warn the union's member societies against being caught in others' political gambits. The following lines testify to a developed and principled pacifist stance: "[it is clear that] *the issue is not about the fighting men and the Russian forces, who are bound to win anyway, but about the wretched ones, who are by now out of the fight. But such poor souls can be found in the opposite side also. Should we be sympathetic to the poor Russian without considering the others? We don't care how certain Mrs. and Ms. are looking at the question but we know how an organization that has pledged its support to the idea of world peace, has to look at it.*"⁵¹ In the next issue it is further stated that "[we are devoted] *not only to the betterment of women's mental and moral position [in society], through eliminating the inequality in our laws and in people's minds, but also to world peace and fraternity among all peoples*"⁵² It is noteworthy that the feminist movement's staunch pacifism stands in stark contrast to the "one way or the other" attitudes of the press at large.

Female voice also managed to publish a couple of articles about women's standing in Japanese society, apparently also in response to the heightened interest of the Bulgarian public toward the island country.⁵³

Humoristic newspapers also tapped into the frenzy for news concerning the Russo-Japanese war, as the caricature and humoristic poetry-laden newspaper *Bulgaran* (Българан) can demonstrate us. (Fig.1)

⁵¹ *Zhenski Glas* (Женски глас), 20 January 1904.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1 March 1904.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1 September 1904; 1 August 1905.



Fig. 1 A caricature on the front page of *Bulgaran*, issue 5, 1905.

The marvelous artistic magazine of the era *Ilustratsia Svetlina* (Илюстрация светлина) did not stay behind. Portraits of Japan's imperial couple made their way to the pages of the magazine, undoubtedly in response to readers' attitudes. (Fig. 2)



Японската Императрица.



Японския Императоръ (Микадо).

Fig. 2 Portraits of Emperor Meiji and his wife – Empress Shōken in Illustratsia Svetlina, March 1904, p. 13.

Conclusion

In conclusion, from the newspapers reviewed we can see that the Russo-Japanese War indeed captured the imagination of the Bulgarian public and had an immense presence in the press, considering its lack of direct consequences for the Balkan country. In part this was due to the overall pro-Russian sentiments of the Bulgarian people and the significance of Russia as a factor in the Macedonian question. However, it is undeniable that as a result of the events Bulgarians learned more and more about Japan, at the same time becoming more and more curious about the far-away island nation, which has undoubtedly contributed to the amicable relations which our countries have enjoyed over the years and which we are celebrating today.

Bibliography:

Newspapers:

Bulgaran (Българан): 5, 1905;

Ilustratsia Svetlina (Илюстрация Светлина): March 1904;

Mir (Мир): 27 January 1904; 29 January 1905; 28 February 1904; 16 March 1904; 10 July 1904; 30 September 1904; 3 May 1905; 20 May 1905; 19 July 1905; 21 August 1905;

Nov Vek (Нов век): 28 January 1904; 30 January 1904; 4 February 1904; 9 February 1904; 23 February 1904; 5 May 1904; 14 June 1904; 18 June 1904; 23 June 1904; 30 July 1904; 4 October 1904; 22 December 1904; 1 June 1905; 25 May 1905;

Pryaporets (Пряпорец): 1 February 1904; 1 March 1905 3 March 1904; 7 April 1904; 4 May 1904, 8 May 1904, 13 May 1904; 27 May 1904; 3 June 1904; 6 November 1904; 13 January 1905; 21 May 1905; 15 July 1905; 18 August 1905; 27 August 1905;

Svobodno Slovo (Свободно слово): 1 May 1904; 2 October 1904; 18 December 1904; Issue 66, 67, 1904 (Special Christmas Issues);

Zhenski Glas (Женски глас): 20 January 1904; 1 March 1904; 1 September 1904; 1 August 1905.

Other publications:

Lalkov, Milcho. Bulgaria after the Liberation (1878-1912). A Lecture Course. Sofia 2001, „Polis“. (*Лалков, М. България след Освобождението (1878-1912). Лекционен курс. София 2001, „Полис“.*);

Stefanova, Vera-Vutova, Kandilarov, Evgeniy. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, Personalities and Events. Sofia 2019, “East-West” Publishing House”. (*Стефанова, В., Кандиларов, Е. България и Япония. Политика, дипломация, личности и събития. С. 2019, Изд. „Изток-Запад“.*)

Social Aspects

Local Culture Survival in Depopulated Rural Areas in Japan: Lessons for Bulgaria

*Maya KELIYAN**

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Abstract: *Ageing population is one of the biggest problems of contemporary Japan and Bulgaria. Japan ranks first in the world in terms of population ageing, and Bulgaria ranks fourth in the same indicator. Many rural areas of both countries are depopulated and mainly retirees live in the villages. In this critical situation Japanese people are trying to find spiritual comfort in their traditions and feeling of security and stability in local communities' festivals (matsuri); they are looking for moral support in traditional value systems and culture. The paper presents results from a survey of local communities festivals (matsuri) in depopulated region of Japan where the population rapidly ages. Research is conducted in 2018/2019 in two villages – Hobo cho and Maruyama mura which are part of Kumano city, Mie prefecture. The first village is located on the shore of the ocean and the second one is mountainous. Studying local community festivals in depopulating and ageing rural areas is important for understanding changes in their lifestyle and the ways local people are trying to preserve their traditions and culture. Both cases are indicative of the activity of local people, of their persistent efforts and collaboration between municipal authorities, local activists and outside volunteers. Collective action is an important factor in preserving the local culture and traditions in Japan. Can such structures and subjects be created and operated effectively in Bulgaria? Conclusions from Japanese experience could be very useful lessons in solving the same problems in Bulgaria.*

Keywords: local community, local festivals, cultural identity, depopulation, population ageing.

* Dr. Maya Keliyan is Professor at the “Communities and Identities” Department of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Introduction

In this article I am studying ways by which traditions have been continued and changed through the years in depopulated and rapidly ageing rural areas in Japan. My research focuses on local people activities and efforts to respond to contemporary society problems and challenges, how their lives are affected by social and economic transformations?

The article studies local communities' religious festivals as basis of local and national culture and as important means to keep them alive in difficult conditions. Festivals are significant part of local culture, they are very indicative for the processes taking place in community, for local people identity and solidarity. My goal is to identify social actors playing leading roles in preservation, organization, and performance of festivals, to characterize their activities, to recognize which religious practices and rituals have been changed, and to find reasons for these changes.

Japan and Bulgaria seen through their local community religious festivals

The leading tendency in lifestyle of Japanese and Bulgarian local communities in the second decade of 21st century is their growing privatization, individualization and secularization. Japan has a developed postmodern society, and the country is world leader in postmodern global urban culture. But despite of growing globalization and internationalization of both societies, many seemingly traditional elements have still continuing to play an important role as basis of local communities, culture, identity and solidarity. Religious festivals, as part of the cultural heritage of local communities, are among significant traditional elements of local and national culture. It is important to note that in the article, religious festivals are being studied not as much as an expression of the religious beliefs and feelings of local communities conducting them but rather as an important element of local and national culture and tradition.

Japanese religious festivals are closely connected to *ie* system and its basic principles.¹ In Japanese religious-cultural atmosphere harmoniously co-exist traditional Shintō, Buddhism, Confucius and Neo-Confucius beliefs. Main religious denominations in Bulgaria – Orthodox Christians and

¹ *Kelivan, Maya*. Local Community Lifestyle: Contemporary Japan. Varna 2010, "Alex Print" (Келиян, М. Стил на живот на локалната общност: Съвременна Япония. В. 2010, Изд. „Алекс принт“).

Muslims are represented by different ethnic communities; the majority of Bulgarians are Orthodox Christians; about 10% of the population, most of them belonging to Turkish ethnic minority and some of Roma people are Muslims. In Bulgaria during the socialist regime (1944-1989) the religion was perceived as incompatible with the dominant ideology and participation in religious festivals was monitored and controlled by the authorities. After the collapse of the socialist regime, people could perform religious rituals freely and local religious festivals are re-created in every town and village. In local communities with mixed ethnic population it could be both observed religious festivals connected with Christian and with Muslim religious traditions. These rituals represent not only their religious, but also ethnic belonging and cultural identity.

The choice of comparison between Japanese and Bulgarian local communities religious practices, rituals, and festivals is not coincidental; despite the obvious differences of civilization, culture, economy and geography between the two societies, there are also more than a few important common points between them. For example, in Japan and Bulgaria there have been processes of modernization similar in nature, orientation, and objectives and they occurred simultaneously in the two countries in the third quarter of the 19th century and again after The World War Two. In their development one observes certain features common to late modernizations; similar are the trends in social stratification and the development of the middle class; identical processes have gone on in agriculture and similar moral values and norms have been shared by the rural communities and farmers in these two societies. In both Japan and Bulgaria egalitarian values and attitudes are important and strongly influential. In separate periods of their development, the two societies have followed the leading Western models and they have understood their respective modernizations as Westernization. Both Japanese and Bulgarian people are not considered to be among highly religious nations, but religious values and beliefs are establishing the foundation of their respective cultures and traditions.

What is the value of such a comparative approach? On the one hand, I am following a belief that when Japanese studies are conducted using a comparative method, fresh insights into Japan can be uncovered, and new discoveries revealed. On the other hand, this research is important for better understanding the cultures with which Japan is compared, as well as for fuller comprehension of contemporary culture in general.

Local community structures and festivals

Japanese society has a developed community culture, which has been preserved over the centuries and continues to perform an important role and function even now, in postmodern society. In Japan there are certainly strong social bonds between individuals within the framework of the group to which they belong, between the communities and society at large. Japan is a communitarian society², in which social responsibility and duty towards the group and the community are of paramount importance, despite the intense current of individualism that comes through Western influence. In fact, this trend is not only a result of foreign influence but also of the impact upon society and its structures of modernization, industrialization, urbanization, mass culture, post-modernization, and the social transformations all of these provoke.

Apart from the formal, institutionalized, and legally established structure, the Japanese local community also creates a functioning network of informal structures, which build up, maintain, and develop certain types of relationships between members. The informal structures express the ‘moral rules’ of the community, which the members are required to observe. These rules are an informal ‘institutionalization’ of its principles, its tradition, which, due to the symbiosis of the value aspect and the ‘semi-institutional’ aspect, are passed on through the centuries and, today, acquire a modern meaning.³ The informal structure of the local community, established in Japanese tradition and functioning today, is called *chōnaikai* (町内会) which literally means ‘neighborhood association’. In some regions it is known as *jichikai* (自治会), a designation that emphasizes autonomy, unlike the official administrative institutions established through law. In villages these structures are known as *shizenson* (自然村), i.e. a spontaneous/voluntarily hamlet’s community. In 2013 there are about 300 000 such neighborhood associations in Japan.⁴

Such informal structures have been formed in settlements of all sizes, ranging from villages to megapolises⁵; they are led by an informal council,

² Etzioni, Amitai. The Essential Communitarian Reader. Roman and Littlefield, 1998.

³ Keliyan, Maya. Op. cit., p. 60.

⁴ Pekkanen, Robert J. et al. Neighborhood Associations and Local Governance in Japan. Routledge, 2014, p. 1.

⁵ The difference between these structures as they exist in small settlements and in megapolises lies in the ways of participation in their activities and in their functions for the life of the settlement.

headed by *kuchō san* (区長さん), or “community leader”. The latter, as well as the other members of the informal council, work on a volunteer basis, without pay, and are elected by the local households for a mandate of 4 years. The informal structures, councils, leaders, and their activity have for many centuries served as a resource for mobilizing not only the local communities, but Japanese society in general; parallels may be drawn between their “spirit of enterprise” and the Protestant ethic.

The members of the local community are engaged in the numerous activities managed by the informal council of the *chōnaikai*, activities for which the *kuchō san* is generally responsible. One of their most important activity is organization and performance of local festivals – *matsuri* (祭り).

Religious festivals solidify relationships between individuals and their community, making spirit of belonging stronger; they intensify solidarity of the participants and shape their collective identity. Festivals are constructing and strengthening the social bonds between community members, making obvious that living in a neighborhood is not simply a residence, but a question of belonging to some very special social group, with which people identify themselves. Religious practices, rituals, and festivals are building the foundation of social networks in local community. In post-modern environment they become important part of locality versus global forces, showing not only the continuity and connection with past, but also the local culture creativity and potential for transformation. Religious traditions embedded in respective practices, rituals and festivals, consist both of elements deeply incorporated with the past as well as they include also new elements, invented from local community during its own socio-cultural changes.

According to Emile Durkheim⁶ the power of a group is expressed in ritual; symbols and rituals are important for maintaining and reinforcing the sense of belonging. In his theory on forms of religious life he demonstrated the close relationship between ritual processes and the formation of social solidarity. In Jeffrey Alexander⁷ view the important point in Durkheim’s sociology of religion is the notion of rituals as institutionalized ways of achieving social solidarity by putting individuals in touch with the sacred, the non routine. Local community *matsuri* are playing this important role

⁶ Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Translated by Carol Cosman and ed. by Mark S. Cladis. Oxford University press, 1912/2001.

⁷ Alexander, Jeffrey. (ed.) *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies*. Cambridge University Press, 1988.

in Japanese society. As significant cultural resource they are “more than a set of artifacts, codes or signs”⁸ to be observed and studied.

Matsuri as “a cultural marker of community and region’s identity” has “the potential ... to unite communities”⁹. Local festivals are regarded by general public less as religious observances than as community-enhancing events with considerable entertainment value.¹⁰

Kumano city, Mie prefecture as research object

I discuss results from field research conducted in Kumano city, Mie prefecture during 2018-2019. What are the reasons for my choice to survey this area?

Mie prefecture is part of *Kumano kodō* pilgrimage routes registered as UNESCO World heritage in 2004 as part of the “Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range” property. Field research in Kumano is very helpful for studying transformations of local festivals, local culture and traditions which is one of my goals. Some of local festivals’ changes are caused by demographic changes in the area. Ageing population is one of the biggest problems of contemporary Japan and Bulgaria. Japan ranks first in the world in terms of population aging, and Bulgaria ranks fourth in the same indicator. Many rural areas of both countries are depopulated and mainly retirees live in the villages. Kumano city population is ageing and the area is depopulating which is affecting local community activities. The population of Kumano is 16 459 inhabitants in 2018 ¹¹; around 42% of them are over 65 years old. For a period of 23 years, between 1995 and 2018, the city’s population decreased by one-third, for the whole Mie prefecture (1 790 376 in 2018) this reduction for the same period is only 3% ¹². The population over 65 years old in the prefecture in 2018 is 28%, the relative share is the same as for Japan as a whole ¹³. Kumano city

⁸ Hall, John R., Neitz, Mary Jo. Culture: Sociological Perspectives. Pearson College div., 1993, p. 3.

⁹ Nelson, John K. Enduring Identities: The Guise of Shinto in Contemporary Japan. University of Hawai’i Press, 2000, p. 174.

¹⁰ Ibid.; Bestor, Theodor C. Neighborhood Tokyo. Stanford University Press, 1989; Ashkenazi, Michael. Matsuri: Festivals of a Japanese Town. University of Hawaii Press, 1993.

¹¹ <http://www.city.kumano.mie.jp/sisei/toukeidata/01toukeisyo.pdf>

¹² <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/japan-admin.php?admlid=24>

¹³ <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/pdf/2019all.pdf>

municipality office expectations are that in the year 2060 its population will shrink to 7148 people¹⁴.

Ageing population is one of the biggest problems of contemporary Japan and studying local community festivals in rapidly depopulating and ageing rural area is very indicative for understanding changes in traditional culture and the ways local people are trying to preserve them. For comparison, the population of Bulgaria over the age of 65 in 2017 was 21%¹⁵.

The case of Hobo *chō*

During field work in Kumano city on December 1 and 2, 2018, I visited Hobo *chō* and I made observation and interview with *kuchō san* – local community informal leader. Local community has elected only *kuchō san*, who is organizing all local community activities. This community, because of declining population, does not elect *chōnaikai* structures, organizations, and other *chōnaikai* leaders like *fukuchō san*, for example as is customary in all local communities in Japan. Only 100 people are living there in 60 households – *ie*. Most of them are pensioners and others are working outside their village. This is originally fishermen's village, but now fishing in the area is in decline which is affecting their local community lifestyle. They don't collect neighborhood association informal tax – *chōnaikaihi* and all their festivals are funded by donations to the local temples and shrines.

What kind of festivals are organized and performed during the year in this small local community?

Their main festival is *fureai matsuri*, organized in November. Originally it was Thanksgiving festival dedicated to Sea Gods for good fish catch during the year and for asking protection from Gods in stormy sea waters. Before they gave *sashimi* to participants, but now they change their offerings and give them *mochi*. Before they put small boats to swim in the sea, but now they abandoned this ritual and only go to prey in local *jinja* – *Mur-okojinja* and *Akoshijinja*.

On January 7th is organized the festival of *Niwajinja* with performing a ritual called *oyutachi*. Bamboo shoots with leaves are immersed in a large container of hot water and sprayed with the guests for good health. *Kuchō san* prepares these twigs in advance by cutting them out of the trees in the

¹⁴ <http://www.city.kumano.mie.jp/sisei/sityoukousitu/tihousousei/kumanosijinkouvision27.pdf>

¹⁵ https://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/Population2017_R5PBSJP.pdf

forest, their number should be 120. Every inhabitant of the village takes a branch to the house to bless the house and his family. They perform also the ritual *momimaku o suru* – throwing *mochi* in the air and everyone is trying to collect as much sweets as possible and to bring them in his house for family blessing. Arrows have fired to specially made targets. This ritual disappeared because the archers were necessarily junior high school students but now there are not such young people in the village. They shoot 3 times with every arrow and also schoolchildren used to hit the *taiko* drums.

On January 18th is held the festival of *Myoken jinja*, called *yakubarai no kokito* for purification and blessing of villagers.

On January 20th and on October 20th is performed the festival of Ebisu who is believe to protect businesses and fishermen. These festivals are called *goji san o yonde*. At 5 pm, the participants gather for a cup of sake around a fire. About an hour or so they talk about fishing, which is their main business. They call on Ebisu to bring them rich catches; before they hit *taiko* drums, usually pupils did that, but now there is no one to beat them. *Kuchō san* together with 5 other people called *yakuin* are performing the ritual.

On June 1, there is the festival of *Sungei jinja* – *Takeoho*, where bamboo is cut. 60 bamboo trunks are cut; the festival begins at 4 pm. Last year's bamboos are removed and new ones are put in place. Around the bamboo stem, the small leaves are kept, and on top is placed a folded ornament made of *washi*, which is cut out in a special way. *Kuchō san* has made a drawing of the way he has to cut the paper, how he should fix it, how the bamboo stem should look, because he was not so skilful in the beginning.

The festival that requires the longest preparation and takes place for the longest time is *Obon* – the festival of the dead. His preparatory part runs from 7th to 11th of August. Then the graves of the dead are cleaned and the gifts for them are prepared. They are dancing *Bon Odori* on August 14 and 15. At 11 pm on the evening of August 15, there are fireworks, and shortly before 12 am at midnight on August 16, a special small ship loaded with gifts for the dead, is put to the sea, sailing to the Heaven.

On the night of December 31st is held the ritual of *Joya no kane* – bell ringing ceremony on New Years' Eve. Immediately after the New Year's Eve, people are visiting all 5 local Shintō shrines for *hatsumode* – first Shintō shrine visit of the year. Until they return home, they do not talk to anyone; the ritual is performed in silence to have health, prosperity, and to get New Year purification.

Will these festivals survive in the future?

In *Hobo chō* I met young woman with 10 months old baby girl, married to a local man. She graduated from Kyoto University and during her study she participated in research team doing field work in Kumano city. She liked the area so much that after graduation she moved to Kumano, married, have a child and settled there. She told me she has happy life in *Hobo chō*. Local people are glad that there are currently 7 children, of whom her baby girl is the youngest one, and everyone enjoys her.

This story, *kuchō san* activity, and preserved local festivals continuously performed around the year give me some reason for optimism about the future there. Many local people, like *kuchō san*, after retiring turn back to their native place, they are following U-turn type of activity. They are still active and motivated to keep *Hobo chō* alive and performing their local festivals is one of the ways to do that.

The case of *Mushiokuri* event in *Senmaida*, *Maruyama mura*, *Kumano city*

Maruyama Senmaida is recorded as having 2,240 terraced paddy rice fields during Edo period, but their number decreased to about 530 terraced paddy rice fields in 1993. Local residents united and began their restoration in 1993 and by 1996 1,340 paddy rice fields were restored.

Mushiokuri ritual is connected with extermination of insects in rice cultivation, and it is an event that was actually held in the *Maruyama* area until 1953. In the old days, there were no pesticides, and there was no way to fight insects, so children in the area after blessing at the local *Shintō* shrine, walked through the *Senmaida* with torches, drums, bells, etc. In commemoration that *Kumano kodō* was registered as a World Heritage Site in 2004, *Mushiokuri* ritual was revived. At that time there were about 50 torches, their number grew to 1,340 in 2010, the same as the number of rice fields, and insect chasing-off event began to be held in a fantastic scene¹⁶. Since 2012, lantern lighting and candle procession is performed by volunteers. Participation in the event costs 1000 yen, as is the price of lanterns made from *washi* with the *Maruyama Senmaida no Mushi Okuri* inscription, as well as food prepared by local people. A shuttle bus from the parking lot to the terraced paddy fields is also provided, because during the holiday for

¹⁶ <http://www.city.kumano.mie.jp/profile/profile00.html>

safety reasons, road traffic stops. Kumano city municipality has an active role in organization of event, together with the initiative local people. The interest in the ritual is also related to the interest in the region itself, as it is part of the cultural and historical heritage. Partnership with municipal authorities is an important condition for the success of local initiatives. Through this ritual, guests get to know not only local culture but also they learn more about Japanese village and farming traditions in general.

Conclusions

What are main conclusions from my research findings?

Collective action is an important factor in preserving the local culture and traditions in Japan. Local community is not a fixed social reality, it is changing; this is also true for its structures, identity and even for its traditions. Though its history it is continuously re-shaped, re-structured, and re-interpreted.

In mountainous rural areas of Kumano city even in small, ageing and depopulating communities local traditions are preserved and even restored after decades of abandonment. In the case of Hobo *chō* it happens because of strong dedication and efforts of *kuchō san* and other active local people. In Maruyama *mura*, *Senmaida* the organizational and managerial help and support of Kumano city municipality is crucially important for restoration and performance of *Mushiokuri* event. Outside volunteers are active participants in the ritual and without their involvement it could not be realized and continued. Some festival rituals are changed or even abandoned, because of changes in local economy and population structures, but Hobo *cho* still preserves its local culture and traditions. On the one side, local people are organizing their festivals and they are changing some of rituals to adapt tradition to new reality. But, on the other side, these festivals, as important part of local culture are keeping people together, making their identity and solidarity stronger. Local communities, with its own structures, leaders, active peoples, together with local institutions like municipality, etc. are building and maintaining the foundation of *matsuri* as a keystone of local identity, solidarity and culture. Without proper and working institutions and collaboration with them local community could not preserve its *matsuri*. Peoples' motivation to participate in *matsuri* could not be understood without explaining the role of local community's structures that are supporting and organizing their activities. Local community is the social

structure which is the basis necessary for realization of their activities. According to the results of the research, the spirit of enterprise of various social actors, such as the informal local councils and their leaders, the civic associations, the representatives of the municipal administration, the enterprising local peoples, is an essential aspect of lifestyle of the Japanese local communities.

The local community, thanks to its informal structures and active personalities, appears as a collective enterprising actor in contemporary Japanese society. The community relies on traditionally inherited organizational forms and structures, but these operate in today's postmodern environment. With its environmental initiatives, educational programs and activities typical for civil society, the community has asserted itself as an important locus, resource and center of a postmodern lifestyle. Through this function and role it plays, it determines to a great degree the face of postmodern Japanese society. Today Japan is certainly a leader of postmodern lifestyle: an important, distinctive trait of contemporary Japanese society is the enterprising lifestyle of its local communities, with their enterprising actors who use the resources of tradition for achieving socially significant postmodern goals.

This study is not a purely academic effort: the Japanese experience is examined with a view to the applicability of rational practices that have been proven effective in Bulgarian conditions. What inferences may be drawn from the Japanese experience for applying it to Bulgarian conditions; this is the practical result of the researches. Three main directions emerge in which provenly effective Japanese experience can be used in Bulgarian conditions:

1. Co-operation between institutions and local people;
2. Building informal organizations in local communities and assisting their work;
3. Stimulating volunteer initiatives.

These would be an important step towards creating and strengthening the structures of civil society and bolstering the faith and conviction of local people that their civic activeness and conduct can be a foundation for democracy in Bulgaria, that we can choose our lifestyle by ourselves, and that the quality of this lifestyle depends on each of us and on our joint efforts.

Bibliography:

- Alexander, Jeffrey.* (ed.) *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies.* Cambridge University Press, 1988;
- Ashkenazi, Michael.* *Matsuri: Festivals of a Japanese Town.* University of Hawaii Press, 1993;
- Bestor, Theodor C.* *Neighborhood Tokyo.* Stanford University Press, 1989;
- Durkheim, Emile.* *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life.* Translated by Carol Cosman and ed. by Mark S. Cladis. Oxford University press, 1912/2001;
- Etzioni, Amitai.* *The Essential Communitarian Reader.* Roman and Littlefield, 1998;
- Hall, John R., Neitz, Mary Jo.* *Culture: Sociological Perspectives.* Pearson College div., 1993.
- Keliyan, Maya.* *Local Community Lifestyle: Contemporary Japan.* Varna 2010, “Alex Print” (Келиян, М. Стил на живот на локалната общност: Съвременна Япония. В. 2010, Изд. „Алекс принт”);
- Nelson, John K.* *Enduring Identities: The Guise of Shinto in Contemporary Japan.* University of Hawai’i Press, 2000;
- Pekkanen, Robert J.* et al. *Neighborhood Associations and Local Governance in Japan.* Routledge, 2014.
- Mie prefecture statistics: <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/japan-admin.php?admlid=24>, 15 January 2020;
- Kumano city municipality office webpage: <http://www.city.kumano.mie.jp/profile/profile00.html>, 15 January 2020;
- Kumano city statistics: <http://www.city.kumano.mie.jp/sisei/toukei-data/01toukeisyo.pdf>, 15 January 2020;
- Kumano city population development vision: <http://www.city.kumano.mie.jp/sisei/sityoukousitu/tihousousei/kumanosijinkouvision27.pdf>, 15 January 2020;
- National Statistical Institute of Republic of Bulgaria: https://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/Population2017_R5PBSJP.pdf, 15 January 2020.;
- Statistical Handbook of Japan 2019: <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/pdf/2019all.pdf>, 15 January 2020.

Japanese lifestyle migration in Austria and Bulgaria: structural determinants and their impact on choices

Yana YOVCHEVA*

Abstract: *Lifestyle migration has become increasingly popular among Japanese of all ages and backgrounds. Based on in-depth qualitative interviews with respondents in Austria and Bulgaria, this paper explores the variety of lifestyle migration practices Japanese migrants engage in, and seeks to understand the structural determinants behind their migration choices. While the Western typology of lifestyle migration can certainly be applied to Japanese lifestyle migrants, the latter can also be found practicing migrations not typical for their Western counterparts. This can be explained with factors both in the host countries and in the sending country. It can be concluded that – as much as Japan shares characteristics with other developed societies – its unique social structure and norms create conditions for unique types of lifestyle migration.*

Introduction

Lifestyle migration is a type of migration practiced by relatively affluent individuals, typically coming from developed, post-modern societies. They move “either part-time or full-time to places that, for various reasons, signify for [them] a better quality of life.” Their stories are often underpinned by a narrative of escape from life in their countries of origin (‘getting out of the trap’, ‘making a fresh start’ etc.), in which moving abroad is seen as a way to renegotiate work/life balance, improve quality of life, and achieve freedom from prior constraints. Lifestyle migration is therefore a life project rather than a single act, and it encompasses diverse destinations, desires, and dreams.¹

As the phenomenon emerged in the 1980s-1990s, so did research exam-

* Dr. Yana Yovcheva received her PhD from the University of Graz.

¹ Benson, M. and K. O'Reilly. Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration. – *The sociological review*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2009, pp. 608-625.

ining it. Lifestyle migrants from English-speaking countries have been the most studied, but other Westerners (notably from North/West Europe) have also received attention. The most popular destinations appear to be the respective geographical ‘neighborhoods’ – the South of Europe / the Mediterranean for North/West Europeans and Latin America for North Americans.

Within South Europe, North/West Europeans seem to prefer coastal Spain, rural France, Portugal, Malta, and Turkey. Outside the region, appealing European destinations include German spa towns and rural Sweden. North Americans, for their part, generally seem to prefer Latin America – Mexico as the nearest neighbor, but also Panama, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Chilean Andes and the Argentinian northwest farther south. Outside of their respective ‘neighborhoods’, studies have found US citizens in South Europe, North Europeans in the USA, and Westerners from Egypt, through India, Thailand, to East Asia and New Zealand.²

While lifestyle migrants are typically not seen as motivated by economic factors, economic motives have been shown to partially explain moving to cheaper destinations for both West Europeans³ and Americans⁴. Similarly to Western lifestyle migrants, many of their Japanese counterparts also favor their cheap and warm ‘neighborhood’ – Southeast Asia. The region is known in Japan as a nearby (*kin*), warm (*dan*), and safe (*an*) destination, but, above all, as a place where Japanese incomes can be stretched quite a bit⁵.

Western researchers have theorized that – according to what migrants are looking for – lifestyle migration falls into one of three categories: residential tourism, the rural idyll, or bourgeois bohemian. The first one involves a coastal/island destination where warm weather, cuisine, wine, a slow pace of life, and outdoor living contribute to an experience full of

² See the Bibliography.

³ Ormond, M. and M. Toyota. Confronting economic precariousness through international retirement migration: Japan’s old-age ‘economic refugees’ and Germany’s ‘exported grannies’. – In: J.M. Rickley-Boyd, K. Hannam and M. Mostafanezhad (eds.) *Tourism and Leisure Mobilities: Politics, Work and Play*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016, pp. 134-146.

⁴ Hayes, M. Moving South: The Economic Motives and Structural Context of North America’s Emigrants in Cuenca, Ecuador. – *Mobilities*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2015, pp. 267-284.

⁵ Ono, M. Japanese Lifestyle Migration/Tourism in Southeast Asia. – *Japanese Review of Cultural Anthropology, Special Issue: “New Trends of Tourism/Migration in Japan and Beyond”*, vol. 10, 2009.

Ormond, M. and M. Toyota. Confronting economic precariousness through international retirement migration: Japan’s old-age ‘economic refugees’ and Germany’s ‘exported grannies’. – In: J.M. Rickley-Boyd, K. Hannam and M. Mostafanezhad (eds.) *Tourism and Leisure Mobilities: Politics, Work and Play*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016, pp. 134-146.

relaxation and tranquility. The rural idyll offers an escape from the stresses of postmodern urban life by reconnecting migrants with the land, giving them a sense of the simple or good life, as well as of community spirit – as if they have stepped back in time. In contrast, the bourgeois bohemian experience is a cultural one, which means modernity and civilization are welcome rather than avoided.⁶

While Japanese can be found practicing all three of the above, they have also been observed engaging in lifestyle migrations not typical of their Western counterparts. Unlike Southeast Asia, Western destinations (notably Australia and the USA) have been shown to appeal to younger Japanese whose goal is not necessarily to save money in a warm climate, but to experience Western societies and all that the latter have to offer⁷. This can include better (i.e., Western) education⁸, renegotiated gender relations⁹, or simply an escape from Japanese social norms.

This research examines the lifestyle migrations of Japanese people in two European countries, whose Japanese populations have not been studied before, and sheds light on the connection between structural determinants in host and sending country, on the one hand, and the choice of destination and type of lifestyle migration, on the other.

⁶Benson, M. and K. O'Reilly. Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration. – *The sociological review*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2009, pp. 608-625.

⁷Fujita, Y. Cultural migrants from Japan: Youth, media, and migration in New York and London. Lexington Books, 2009.

Satō, M. Farewell to Nippon: Japanese lifestyle migrants in Australia. Trans Pacific Press, 2001.

Hamano, T. Searching Better Lifestyle in Migration: The Case of Contemporary Japanese Migrants in Australia. Saarbrücken, Germany: LAP Lambert, 2010.

Nagatomo, J. From tourist to migrant: the interaction between work-oriented lifestyle, tourism experience, and migration decision among Japanese lifestyle migrants to Australia. – *Proceedings of the 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia*. 2008.

⁸Igarashi, H. Privileged Japanese Transnational Families in Hawaii as Lifestyle Migrants. – *Global Networks*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2015, pp. 99-117.

⁹Kawashima, K. Becoming Asian in Australia: Migration and a shift in gender relations among young Japanese. – *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, issue 31, 2012.

Kelsky, K. Women on the verge: Japanese women, Western dreams. Duke University Press, 2001.

Methodology

Research for this paper involved in-depth qualitative interviews with Japanese residents in Austria and Bulgaria, semi-structured interviews with Japan experts in the two host countries, email interviews with former JICA volunteers in Bulgaria, and an extensive review of primary and secondary literature. As the data for this paper is taken from the data collected for a bigger study (a doctoral dissertation), the total number of interviews conducted was much larger than the number of interviews with people who eventually qualified as lifestyle migrants (19 in Austria and 16 in Bulgaria). In Austria, interviews took place from October 2014 to February 2016, and in Bulgaria – from November 2012 to February 2017. Interviews were conducted in Japanese, recorded and then transcribed and translated into English. Full anonymity was observed.

To meet potential respondents, I initially reached out to Japanese people in public positions in the two host countries – professors at universities, owners of Japanese restaurants and shops, calligraphy teachers, tea-ceremony masters, martial-arts instructors etc. – anyone whose contact details were available online. Once these first contacts were established, respondents put me in touch with their friends within the Japanese community, and these friends – with theirs. This snowball sampling ensured a relatively smooth fieldwork, as the people approached rarely refused to meet. However, in cases where further information was requested post-interview via email, many of the respondents declined to reply.

As someone who speaks Japanese and has experienced Japanese society and culture, I found that respondents generally felt at ease to speak to me – as to someone who can understand their (Japanese) perspective. Still, it was obvious that I was not seen as a Japanese. That, in fact, proved useful, as many of them confided that they felt more comfortable talking to a non-Japanese stranger, as “there are no rules” for conversation (unlike with a Japanese stranger). In this sense, my position of both an insider and an outsider was very helpful. However, my nationality proved to be an obstacle at times. As a Bulgarian citizen, I found it more difficult to get honest answers to my questions in Bulgaria than it was in Austria – quite possibly because respondents in Bulgaria censored themselves on topics that they thought might be sensitive in the presence of a local.

Structural determinants

As a developed, postmodern society, Japan shares many characteristics with the West, including with regard to migration and mobility. Affluence has afforded Japanese people to travel around the world as tourists and experience places, which sometimes sparks their imaginations with ideas of what life could be in those places. There are those who choose to settle in a tourist destination in order to have that holiday feel, away from the routine and structure at home. Others – in order to ‘gaze’ on the exotic, in pursuit of authentic experience. In any case, lifestyle migration is often informed by tourism.¹⁰

Counter-urbanization is another trend that Japan shares with the West. Stressful city life – overcrowding, expensive housing, taxes, congestion, pollution, alienation, high crime rates (though not in Japan) – is perceived as something to be avoided. This has triggered a movement to the countryside, which is constructed as a stress-free environment where prices are low, the air is clean, and people live in a close-knit community and have more time for each other.¹¹ For Japanese who do not believe they could find this ideal place within Japan, moving abroad often seems like the best option.

While working late hours is certainly not unheard of in some businesses in other developed countries, in Japan it is somewhat of a national sport. Unlike most European economies where a 35-to-40-hour work week is observed, overwork has been a major issue in Japan for decades – to the point that there is even a word for ‘death from overwork’: *karoshi*. Regardless of recent changes to the structure of the Japanese workforce, loyalty to the company continues to be expected from employees on permanent contracts – and that means staying late on the job, at the expense of time for family, friends, romance, social life in general, and ultimately, health. For those wishing to have more of a ‘normal’ life, leaving Japan may be the only solution.

Another thing that distinguishes the country from the rest of the Developed World (with the exception of South Korea, perhaps) is the place of women in society. Women have traditionally been relegated to the role of wives and mothers and have not been welcome in the workforce. Even

¹⁰ Benson, M. and K. O'Reilly. Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration. – *The sociological review*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2009, pp. 608-625.

¹¹ Ibid.

under the current government and its Womenomics doctrine, there is still much room for improvement.¹²

Alongside gender relations, Japan is also unique when it comes to the rules for social interaction. The extreme contextuality of communication, the hierarchy, the highly codified etiquette – those are things that are apparently experienced as stressful and push people away from their home country.

Of course, neither women's place in society nor the very peculiar rules for social interaction would have been a problem – or a reason to leave – if there were no other countries to compare to. But, ever since Japan opened to the world in the late 19th century, Japanese people have been learning about and comparing their society to the West. Western social norms have been looked up to and have inspired numerous pursuits of 'a better life' outside Japan.

Other than social norms, the West (and West Europe in particular) is also admired in Japan for its cultural achievements: art, music, architecture, literature, philosophy etc. To be able to savor this culture on a long-term basis (longer than the typical holiday) has been the dream of many Japanese. As for choosing a host country, this is where the destination narrative prevalent within the sending country comes into play – the way a host country is imagined and constructed decides its appeal.

However, regardless of what is imagined about a destination, practical questions often determine the final decision. Immigration policies are the first hurdle. For people of working age, the possibility to earn a decent salary is central, while for retirees, prices are more important. Last but not least, things like the housing market, social welfare, and healthcare also play a role. Regardless of whether the move is motivated by lifestyle preferences or is more economic in nature, migrants are limited by structural determinants in the host country.

On the other hand, certain developments in the host country such as the internationalization of the higher education system tend to facilitate the contact of foreigners with the local culture and society, and thus increase the opportunities for them not only to decide if they want to live there, but also to find ways to actually stay.

¹² *Osaki, T.* From bad to worse: Japan slides 11 places to 121st in global gender equality ranking. *The Japan Times* [online], Dec 17, 2019. Available at: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/12/17/national/social-issues/japan-121st-global-gender-equality-ranking> [Accessed Jan 23, 2020]

Japanese lifestyle migrants and the two host countries

Austria

The Japanese population in Austria is currently around 3,000 people – almost twice the numbers in 1990¹³. Prior to 1990, Austria was three things to the Japanese: 1) a convenient hub to do business with Central and Eastern Europe (still behind the Iron Curtain at the time, hence inaccessible); 2) one of the UN seats (in Vienna); and 3) the capital of classical music. As a result, the Japanese community in Austria before 1990 consisted mostly of employees of Japanese companies (sent with their Japanese families, typically on two- to three-year mandates), UN officials (also on mandates), and students of music (most of whom would eventually go back to Japan) – that is, mostly temporary residents.

Today, the demographic is rather different. The Japanese business community has dwindled as Japanese companies have either pulled out of Austria altogether (now that Central and Eastern European markets are open for business) or downsized and/or switched to local personnel. The number of Japanese students at Austrian universities has skyrocketed, at several hundred per year – and not just at universities of music. And the number of Japanese women now in their 30s, 40s, and 50s, who are neither students nor employed at Japanese companies or the UN, are married to Austrian men, and are permanent residents surpasses the number of all other categories put together.¹⁴

One thing that has not changed is that, in the Japanese mind, Austria continues to be the capital of classical music and generally a place rich in history and culture. Alongside the troves of Japanese students applying to Austrian universities, there are Japanese families and individuals who have moved to Austria (Vienna in particular) in order to have access to the rich cultural calendar of opera houses, philharmonic orchestras, museums, galleries – or to visit palaces, churches, vineyards, and generally experience Austrian culture. The cultural appeal of the country has also kept a number of former Japanese company employees (originally sent on supposedly temporary work assignments) in the country well beyond their retirement.

Other than culture, Austria also appeals to Japanese people with freedoms not available in Japan. For those who find Japan's social climate 'too

¹³ See: <http://mofa.go.jp>

¹⁴ Ibid.

heavy’¹⁵ and feel restricted by rules there, Austria seems to offer a breath of fresh air. From the Japanese perspective, communication with Austrians is direct and effortless, there are no significant social limitations, work-life balance is much easier to achieve than in Japan, and gender relations are much closer to what Japanese women look for¹⁶. In the words of a Japanese couple in their 50s who live in Vienna, “Austrian [and West European] society has the maturity that Japanese society still lacks.”

Bulgaria

Within the former Soviet bloc, Bulgaria used to hold a special place in Japanese hearts. During the Cold War, Corporate Japan, supported by the Japanese State, did serious business with the then-communist country, while the Bulgarian brand was popularized within Japanese society. The country was presented as a peaceful, rural place, where simple people live healthy, slow lives surrounded by beautiful nature. This image was sold to the Japanese in the 1970s-1980s when the Baby Boomer generation (who are now recently retired or about to retire) were in their 20s or 30s. Some of these tropes were revisited in the 2000s on Japanese TV – in a series of short films and variety shows which triggered a renewed interest in the country.

Following the fall of the communist regime, Bulgaria became a recipient of Japanese ODA, and with it, a (temporary) destination for hundreds of Japanese experts and volunteers working on projects that the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and other Japanese organizations and companies oversaw. While many of the experts (typically older, married men) dreaded the backwardness of the country and could not wait to get back to Japan¹⁷, many of the volunteers (typically younger and single, many of them women) cherished their Bulgarian experience and expressed their regret that there was no possibility to return and stay¹⁸.

Indeed, possibilities for Japanese people to settle in Bulgaria have been limited – and not only because of restrictive immigration policies regarding third-country nationals. As Japanese employers paying Japanese sala-

¹⁵ A quote from an interview with a Japanese resident of Graz, Austria, conducted in Apr 2015.

¹⁶ Cited by respondents in this study as the major reasons to want to stay in Austria.

¹⁷ From an interview with a Japan expert in Bulgaria, May 2016.

¹⁸ From email interviews conducted with former JICA volunteers in Bulgaria, March – June 2014.

ries have pulled out of the country, the near impossibility to earn a decent income (even if given unlimited access to the labor market) is cited by respondents of working age as one of the major reasons to abandon the idea of settling in Bulgaria. Those who have managed to find their niche and earn a living – usually as self-employed – are the exception rather than the rule. The good thing is that, apparently, they have achieved a work-life balance much better than that in Japan.

In contrast to people of working age, retirees have no problem with low wages. Rather, they are lured by the low prices – in combination with the image of Bulgaria promoted on Japanese TV. There are those who (think they) have found the peace and simplicity of a bygone Japan in contemporary Bulgaria. Others, who were eager to escape the social limitations of Japanese society (especially with regard to communication), have found freedom there. Yet others, who would ideally like to live in a Western country like Austria but cannot afford it financially, are happy to have found an affordable place to live within easy reach of where they want to be.

Discussion: Austria vs. Bulgaria

Looking at the types of lifestyle migration practiced by Japanese in the two host countries, it is obvious that different people look for different things and find them in different places. The variances in who looks for what and where can be explained with structural factors both in the country of origin and in the host country.

Austria, as a West European country, clearly appeals to Japanese admirers of Western culture and seekers of Western social norms (with regard to gender relations, work-life balance, and other freedoms). It has been a popular tourist destination in Japan since the 1980s and is thus the subject of a certain narrative that has since then captured the imagination of Japanese people of different generations. The internationalization of Austrian higher education since the 1990s has also contributed to enlarging the scope of possibilities for (young) Japanese to savor Austrian culture and society. Austria is also a highly developed economy with plenty of opportunities for earning a decent income – provided the immigrant manages to secure access to the labor market. On the other hand, it is a rather expensive country, so a decent income is a must (whether the person is working or not). It is also a country that has always had strict immigration laws, both before and after its EU accession in 1995.

As a result, the Japanese who have not only decided that they would like to live in Austria, but have actually managed to find a way to stay, are a very specific mix. Few of the tourists since the 1980s have been affluent enough to be able to secure visas without working. However, quite a few of the corporate soldiers (plus their wives) who were stationed in Austria in the 1970s-1990s for longer mandates have integrated well enough into Austrian society to be in a position to retire in Austria rather than in Japan. The boom of international students at Austrian universities since the 1990s has meant that thousands of young Japanese have studied in the country. Out of these thousands, several hundred women – now in their 30s, 40s, and 50s – have found a path to stay (either by securing a job right after graduation or by marrying an Austrian).

Bulgaria, on the other hand, appeals to Japanese in search of a ‘different’ experience – decidedly not Western, but not Asian either. The narrative about the country that was popularized within Japanese society in the 1970s-1980s has been revisited in more recent times and has thus captured the imagination of new audiences. The underdevelopment of the country is clearly attractive to rural idyll seekers. It also means lower prices (attractive to retirees on limited budgets) and a relative lack of opportunities to earn a decent income (unattractive to younger people). It was also the reason for a steady Japanese presence in the country from 1990 until 2009. The country’s geographic proximity to West Europe makes it possible for even not-so-affluent admirers of Western culture to visit their favorite places without having to endure high living costs.

As a result, Bulgaria is now home to Japanese lifestyle migrants who are more on the elderly side – some of them rural idyll seekers, others ‘bourgeois bohemians from a distance’, but all of them happy with the “low prices, good food, nice climate, and kind people”¹⁹. While the majority of those are couples, there are also the occasional single women. As for younger people, there are a few who came as volunteers before 2009, decided that this is where they want to live, and found a way to stay, despite the difficult access to the labor market and the relative lack of possibilities to earn well.

Conclusion

This paper has shown that Japanese people do engage in lifestyle migrations typical of their Western counterparts, but also in migrations that

¹⁹ From an interview with two Japanese respondents in Bulgaria, Sept 2015.

are unique to them. Just like North/West Europeans and North Americans, the majority of Japanese lifestyle migrants prefer the warm climate, coastal comforts, and low prices of their geographical ‘neighborhood’, Southeast Asia, where they engage in residential tourism. Just like Westerners, some Japanese subscribe to the creed of counter-urbanization and seek the rural idyll. Just like Westerners, some Japanese are interested in having a life full of cultural experiences, so they seek destinations where they can be ‘bourgeois bohemians’. Somewhat unlike Westerners, Japanese migrants are interested in experiencing other (developed) societies not for the amenities or tourist attractions, but for the social norms and freedoms they do not have at home – from gender relations, through rules for communication, to work-life balance. And unlike Westerners, they are willing to settle in a country they can afford financially in order to be close to the places they want to enjoy.

The paper has also shown that the choice of destination and type of lifestyle migration to be practiced is a function of structural determinants both in the country of origin and in the host country. Contemporary Japanese society shares a number of features with other developed societies, so some types of lifestyle migrations Japanese people are interested in are the same as those practiced by Westerners. Japanese society, however, has its unique features as well, and those determine the other types of lifestyle migration that Japanese people look for. As for the choice of destination, factors in the country of origin combine with factors in the host country to determine the final decision.

Bibliography:

Ahmed, A. Retiring to Spain: British Women’s Narratives of Nostalgia, Belonging and community. Bristol: Policy Press, 2015.

Åkerlund, U. The Best of Both Worlds: Aspirations, Drivers and Practices of Swedish Lifestyle Movers in Malta. PhD Thesis, Umeå University, 2013.

Balkır, C., I. Südaş. Guests and Hosts: European Retirees in Coastal Turkey. – *Insight Turkey*, vol. 14, no. 6, 2014, pp. 123-143.

Bantman-Masum, E. ‘You Need to Come Here... to See What Living is Really About’. Staging North American Expatriation in Merida (Mexico). *Miranda n°5 – South and race / Sud et race* (Ed. Anne Stefani) – *Staging Mobility in the United States / Mise en scène et mobilité aux Etats-Unis* (Ed. Emeline Jouve). 2011.

Benson, M. Deconstructing Belonging in Lifestyle Migration: Tracking the Emotional Negotiations of the British in Rural France. – *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 19, no. 5, 2016, pp. 481-494 [Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1367549416631554>]

Benson, M. Living the ‘Real’ Dream in la France profonde? Lifestyle migration, Social Distinction, and the Authenticities of Everyday Life. – *Anthropological Quarterly*, vol. 86, no. 2, 2013a, pp. 501-526.

Benson, M. Postcoloniality and privilege in new lifestyle flows: the case of North Americans in Panama. – *Mobilities*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2013b, pp. 313-330. [Available at <http://bit.ly/193rvzS>]

Benson, M. Landscape, Imagination and Experience: Processes of Emplacement among the British in Rural France. – In: Benson, M. and R. Munro, (eds.) *Sociological Roots and Political Routes (The Sociological Review Monograph)*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2011.

Benson, M. The context and trajectory of lifestyle migration: the case of the British residents of southwest France. – *European Societies*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2010, pp. 45-64.

Benson, M. and K. O’Reilly. Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration. – *The sociological review*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2009, pp. 608-625.

Betty, C., and Hall, K. The Myth of No Return? Why retired British Migrants in Spain Return to the UK. – In: Torkington, K., I. David, J. Sardinha (eds.) *Practising the Good Life: Lifestyle Migration in Practices*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015, pp. 123-137.

Botterill, K. Discordant lifestyle mobilities in East Asia: Privilege and precarity of British retirement in Thailand. – *Population, Space and Place*, vol. 23, no. 5, 2017, e2011.

Buller, H., K. Hoggart. Selling France: Advertising French Houses to Attract British Purchasers. King’s College London Department of Geography Occasional Paper, 1992.

Carson, D.A., Carson, D.B. & Eimermann, M. International winter tourism entrepreneurs in northern Sweden: understanding migration, lifestyle, and business motivations – *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2017, pp. 183-192.

Casado-Díaz, M.A. Retiring to Spain: An Analysis of Difference among North European Nationals. – *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 32, no. 8, 2006, pp. 1321-1339.

Casado-Díaz, M.A., C. Kaiser, A. M. Warnes. Northern European retired residents in nine southern European areas: characteristics, motivations and adjustment. – *Ageing and Society*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2004, pp. 353-381.

Croucher, S. Rooted in Relative Privilege: US Expats in Granada, Nicaragua. – *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*. 2016. Available online at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2016.1260022>

Croucher, S. Migrants of Privilege: The Political Transnationalism of Americans in Mexico. – *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, vol.16, no. 4, 2009, pp. 463-491.

Drake, H., S. Collard. A Case Study of Intra-EU Migration. 20 years of the ‘Brits’ in the Pays d’Auge, Normandy, France. – *French Politics*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2008, pp. 214-233.

Eimermann, M. Flying Dutchmen? Return reasoning among Dutch Lifestyle Migrants in Rural Sweden. – *Mobilities*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2017, pp. 116-135.

Ertuğrul, G. British Migrants in the Turkish Countryside: Lifestyle Migration, Loss of Social Status and Finding ‘True Life’ in Difference. – *METU Studies in Development*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2016, pp. 475-496.

Etrillard, A. ‘This Book will Trigger Dreams’: The Memoirs of Lifestyle Migrants in Rural France – Recounting, Entertaining, Promoting. – *Dos Algarves: A Multidisciplinary e-Journal*, vol. 24, 2014, pp. 64-82.

Ferbrache, F. and Yarwood, R. Britons Abroad or European Citizens? The Negotiation of (Trans)national Space and Citizenship by British Migrants in France. – *Geoforum*, Vol. 62, 2015, pp. 73-83

Fujita, Y. Cultural migrants from Japan: Youth, media, and migration in New York and London. Lexington Books, 2009.

Gustafson, P. Transnationalism in retirement migration: The case of North European retirees in Spain. – *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 31, no. 3, 2008, pp. 451-475.

Hamano, T. Searching Better Lifestyle in Migration: The Case of Contemporary Japanese Migrants in Australia. Saarbrücken, Germany: LAP Lambert, 2010.

Hayes, M and J. Carlson. Integration Discourse and Practice as a Meaning Making Process: A Cultural Sociology of North American Migration to Cuenca, Ecuador. – *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2018, pp. 189-211.

Hayes, M. Moving South: The Economic Motives and Structural Context of North America’s Emigrants in Cuenca, Ecuador. – *Mobilities*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2015, pp. 267-284.

Higgins, K., W. Lifestyle migration and settler colonialism: the imaginative geographies of British migrants to Aotearoa New Zealand. – *Population, Space and Place*, 2017, pp. 1-25.

Huber, A. and K. O'Reilly. The construction of Heimat under conditions of individualised modernity: Swiss and British elderly migrants in Spain. – *Ageing and Society*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2004, pp. 327-352.

Igarashi, H. Privileged Japanese Transnational Families in Hawaii as Lifestyle Migrants. – *Global Networks*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2015, pp. 99-117.

Karkabi, N. Couple in the Global Margins: Sexuality and Marriage between Egyptian Men and Western Women in South Sinai. – *Anthropology of the Middle East*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2011, pp. 79-97.

Kawashima, K. Japanese Working Holiday Makers and their Return to the Japanese Labour Market: Before and After. – *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2010, pp. 267-286.

Kawashima, K. Becoming Asian in Australia: Migration and a shift in gender relations among young Japanese. – *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, issue 31, 2012.

Kelsky, K. Women on the verge: Japanese women, Western dreams. Duke University Press, 2001.

Kordel, S. and P. Pohle. International lifestyle migration in the Andes of Ecuador: how migrants from the USA perform privilege, import rurality and evaluate their impact on local community. – *Sociologia Ruralis*, published online 6 Jul 2016, 2016.

Korpela, M. 'India has got it!' 'Western' Lifestyle Migrants in India, Neither Tourists nor Residents. – In: Zeiler X. (ed.) Research on India in Finland. Embassy of India, 2017, pp. 66-73.

Lardiés Bosque, R. Geographical mobility among retired US migrants living in the Northwestern region of Mexico bordering California, US. – *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-Economic Series*, vol. 32, 2016, pp. 105-116.

Lawson, M. Narrative positioning and 'integration' in lifestyle migration: British migrants in Ariège, France. – *Language and Intercultural Communication*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2016, pp. 58 – 75.

Lundström, C. Creating 'international communities' in southern Spain: self-segregation and 'institutional whiteness' in Swedish lifestyle migration. – *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2018, 1367549418761793.

Lundström, C. Women with Class. Swedish migrant women's class positions in the USA. – *Journal of Intercultural Studies, Special Issue: Women, Intersectionality and Diaspora*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2010, pp. 49-63.

Matarrita-Cascante, D., Zunino, H. and J. Sagner-Tapia. Amenity/Lifestyle Migration in the Chilean Andes: Understanding the Views of “The Other” and its Effects on Integrated Community Development. – *Sustainability*, vol. 9, no. 9, 2017, pp. 1619.

Nagatomo, J. From tourist to migrant: the interaction between work-oriented lifestyle, tourism experience, and migration decision among Japanese lifestyle migrants to Australia. – *Proceedings of the 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia*. 2008.

Nudrali, O. Sun Seeking Britons In Coastal Turkey: A Case of Study of Lifestyle Migration on the Verge of the EU. DM Verlag Dr. Muller Aktiengesellschaft & Co. KG, 2009.

Ono, M. Japanese Lifestyle Migration/Tourism in Southeast Asia. – *Japanese Review of Cultural Anthropology, Special Issue: “New Trends of Tourism/Migration in Japan and Beyond”*, vol. 10, 2009.

O'Reilly, K. The British on the Costa Del Sol Twenty Years On: A story of liquids and sediments. – *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2017, pp. 139–147. <http://doi.org/10.1515/njmr-2017-0017>

O'Reilly, K., Stones, R. and K. Botterill. Lifestyle migration in East Asia: Integrating ethnographic methodology and practice theory. Sage Research Methods Cases, Sage Publications Ltd., 2014.

Ormond, M. and M. Toyota. Confronting economic precariousness through international retirement migration: Japan's old-age ‘economic refugees’ and Germany's ‘exported grannies’. – In: J.M. Rickley-Boyd, K. Hannam and M. Mostafanezhad (eds.) *Tourism and Leisure Mobilities: Politics, Work and Play*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016, pp. 134–146.

Osaki, T. From bad to worse: Japan slides 11 places to 121st in global gender equality ranking. *The Japan Times* [online], Dec 17, 2019. Available at: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/12/17/national/social-issues/japan-121st-global-gender-equality-ranking> [Accessed Jan 23, 2020]

Rainer, G. Constructing globalized spaces of tourism and leisure: Political ecologies of the Salta Wine Route (NW-Argentina). – *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 43, 2016, pp. 104–117.

Sardinha, J. Settlement and Socialisation Strategies of Lifestyle Migrants in Central Portugal. – In: Janoschka, M., H. Haas (eds.), *Contested Spatialities of Lifestyle Migration*. London: Routledge, 2013, pp. 174–189.

Satō, M. Farewell to Nippon: Japanese lifestyle migrants in Australia. Trans Pacific Press, 2001.

Spalding, A. K. Lifestyle Migration to Bocas del Toro, Panama:

Exploring migration strategies and introducing local implications of the search for paradise. – *International Review of Social Research*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2013, pp. 65-84.

Südaş, İ. Comparing British and Other European Immigrants Living on the Aegean Coast of Turkey. World Universities Congress Proceedings I, Çanakkale, 2010, pp. 723-738.

Trundle, C. Americans in Tuscany: Charity, compassion and belonging. New York: Berghahn, 2014.

Van Noorloos, F. Residential tourism and multiple mobilities: local citizenship and community fragmentation in Costa Rica. – *Sustainability*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2013, pp. 570-589.

Verlot, M. and C. Oliver. 'European Consciousness' and Social Commitment amongst Expatriates in Belgium and Spain. – In: Wildemeersch, D., V. Stroobants, M. Bron Jr (eds.) *Active Citizenship and Multiple Identities in Europe*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag, 2005.

Wallin, A. The transnational lives of Finnish retirees in Torrevieja. – *Matkailututkimus*, vol. 13, no. 1-2, 2017, pp. 6-20.

World Economic Forum. Mind the 100 Year Gap. WEF Report [online]. 2020. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/gender-gap-2020-report-100-years-pay-equality> [Accessed Jan 23, 2020]

Weidinger, T. and S. Kordel. German spa towns as retirement destinations: How (pre)retirees negotiate relocation and locals assess in-migration. – *Dve Domovini/Two Homelands*, vol. 42, 2015, pp. 37-53.

Weidinger, T. and S. Kordel. Intra-European lifestyle migration of German (pre)retirees to rural Spain: a contribution to rural development in times of the financial and real estate crisis? The migrants' point of view. – In: Grabski-Kieron, U. et al. (eds.) *European rural peripheries revalued: Governance, actors, impacts*. Münster: LIT, 2016, pp. 248-271.

Wohlfahrt, I. Intergenerational Consequences of Lifestyle Migration. German-speaking immigrants in New Zealand. Singapore: Springer, 2017.

Woube, A. Living with Change among a Transient Population – Narratives of collective belonging among Swedish Migrants on the Costa del Sol in Spain. – *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2017, pp. 148-155.

Economic Cooperation

Japanese Management in Bulgaria – Attempts for Implementation

*Nako STEFANOV**

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

Abstract: *The goal of the report is to study and to present the attempts made in Bulgaria to implement different approaches, worked out in the frame of the so-called model of Japanese Management. This model proved during the period from the 60-s till the 80-s of the XX century to be extremely successful mode of managing the Industrial organisations in many areas – quality, productivity, cost, safety, etc.*

For the implementation of the approaches of the Japanese Management in Bulgaria was created a special organizational structure – Bulgarian Quality and Productivity Centre (BQPC), later the name of the Centre was changed to Bulgarian Quality, Productivity and Management Centre (BQPMC). By BQPC/BQPMC were used different methods of consulting Bulgarian business organizations as to introduce certain elements of the Japanese Management. In the material are given concrete examples of such implementations in leading Bulgarian business organizations.

Keywords: Model of Japanese Management, Bulgarian Quality, Productivity and Management Centre (BQPMC), Implementation of Japanese management in Bulgaria

Introduction

The problem of transfer of know-how in many areas of human activities have played, are playing and certainly will play very important role in Human civilization. The history of all human civilizations in many cases is a story of borrowing the experience of one civilization from another, where this experience is further developed, enriched and perfected.

* Dr. Nako Stefanov is Professor Emeritus from the Department of Japanese Studies, Department of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

Management technologies are not some extraordinary matter that is not subject to this, we would call it “universal law of borrowing”. Since the beginning of Industrial Revolution in England from the late XVIII century started so called “Great Divergence”¹. From that time the West became the biggest source of artefacts and know-how in many areas. What is concerning the management know-how the borrowing when in US Frederic Winslow Taylor with his aids and followers created new practical model of big industrial organizations management from the early XX century American management ideas and practice started to be used in many West European countries. During the US occupation of Japan after WWII the abovementioned ideas were welcomed in the Country of Rising Sun too.

But from the late 50-s and especially from the early 60-s of XX century in Japan was created on the base of American management original model of management. This model was called Japanese Style of Management or simply Japanese management. The Japanese management created a real revolution in the management of the economic entities in many areas – quality, productivity, cost, safety, etc.

The achievements in these areas attracting the attention of the whole world. Already in the early 70-s of XX century started the first attempts of transfer of the positive approaches, born in the frames of Japanese management into others countries. The first wave of this transfer were countries like US, South Korea, Singapour, Taiwan, Hongkong. The second wave, which happened already in the 80-s of XX century, included China and some West European countries. In the 90-s began the third wave, which covered India, some countries in South-East Asia and even in Latin America.

It must be pointed out that the systematic attempts for transfer of Japanese management on Bulgarian soil started in the middle of the 80-s of XX century. The goal of the suggested material is to reveal how did start, develop and what has achieved the transfer of the Japanese management in Bulgaria. The goal is achieved through the following tasks, structured in the main sections of the work, namely:

¹ The Great Divergence is a term made popular by Kenneth Pomeranz’s 2000 book by that title, (also known as the European miracle, a term coined by Eric Jones in 1981) referring to the process by which the Western world (i.e. Western Europe and the parts of the New World where its people became the dominant populations) overcame pre-modern growth constraints and emerged during the 19th century as the most powerful and wealthy world civilization, eclipsing Mughal India, Qing China, the Islamic World, Joseon Korea, and Tokugawa Japan.

- The Japanese Model of Management – Short Overview;
- The systematic efforts in Bulgaria for implementing Japanese management.

The basic thesis is that inspite of the different socio-economic and socio-cultural environment many approaches born in the frames of Japanese management have universal characteristics. Thank to this universalism is possible to be succedssfully used in Bulgaian business organizations.

Key methodological approaches used in this work are:

- The systematic approach according to which the object under study is regarded as a system, i.e. an aggregate (complex) composed of interconnected components acting as a whole. All of these components form the internal environment of the system, and everything outside this internal environment is the external to the system environment;
- Analytical-structural approach – it “breaks” the studied phenomenon into the most important components, as well as classifies the latter on the basis of a certain logic, which enables us to gain knowledge about the functioning of the phenomenon;
- Comparative approach – based on a comparison of a given phenomenon with other similar phenomena. By this comparison a new knowledge is generated for the studied phenomenon.
- Logical approach – i.e. this approach that reveals logic, that is, the meaning, the grounded scheme of interactions and relationships of the phenomenon under study

Chapter 1. The Japanese Model of Management – Short Overview²

At the beginning of the 60's of the 20-st century the key role in practical development of quality methods and systems, as well as the development of Firm Management as a whole step by step has moved from USA to Japan.

It should be accentuated that Japan started from very low level of management of organizational interactions. As a result, almost until the late 50's the Japanese themselves call their products “安かろう悪かろう” (Yasukarō warukarō) which means “Cheap, but poor”/poor in quality-my note, NS/. However, at different levels – state, professional organizations like the Japan Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) and Japan Productivity Centre (JPC), companies, universities and institutions, started efforts Japan to improve its management systems, quality of products and productivity.

In 1962 a Japanese state owned enterprise NTT (Nippon Telephone and Telegraph) Co. launched for the first time in Japan problem solving groups. Initially this system includes the operators at manufacturing line (the so called “Blue collars”), organized in small mono-functionality groups, aimed to improve quality.

At the very beginning the system was called 全社員参加品質管理制度 (Zen-shain sankā hinshitsu kanri seido) This is translated as “Quality control system with the participation of all employees”. But in reality only the operators in the manufacturing units were involved through the problem solving groups. The later started to be called in Japanese – 小集団活動 – /Shōshūdankatsudō/. In English this group were translated as Quality Control Circles/QCC/ or Small Group Activities/SGA/.

² This material in this chapter is based on the following sources in Bulgarian language: *Stefanov, N.* The Japanese Approach to Production Management – A Comparative Analysis. Sofia 1996, BQPMC (Стефанов Н. Японски подход за управление на производството – сравнителен анализ. София 1996, Изд. ЦКПМ); *Stefanov, N.* Cost Management. Bulgarian Center for Quality, Productivity and Management. Sofia 1999, Bulgarian Center for Quality, Productivity and Management (Стефанов, Н. Управление на себестойността. София 1999, Изд. Център за качество, производителност и мениджмънт); *Stefanov, N.* A Guide to Total Quality Management. Sofia 1999, Club 9000 (Стефанов, Н. Ръководство по управление на тоталното качество. София 1999, Изд. Клуб 9000); *Stefanov, N., Yokoyama, Y.* Japanese corporate governance model. Sofia 2001, Prism 66 Ltd (Стефанов, Н., Йокояма, Й. Японският модел за фирмено управление. София 2001, Изд. „Призма 66“ ООД); *Stefanov N. E. Kandilarov.* Japan – Economy, Technologies, Innovation and Management. Sofia 2012, East-West Publishing (Стефанов, Н., Кандиларов, Е. Япония – икономика, технология, иновации и управление. С. 2012, Изд. “Изток-Запад”).

The Small Group Activities/SGA/ has to be called the core of the Japanese management – the problem solving process and improvement process done by using the creativeness of the ordinary employees. At that time was born the term “kaizen”. The most suitable translation of the term “kaizen” is “continuous, (permanent and by small step by step) incremental improvement” created by the employees.



Fig. 1. These hieroglyphics “Kaizen” means “continuous, (permanent and by small step by step) incremental improvements” created by the employees on the base of SGA

Later this successful scheme – solving of problems and improvement process done by small group activity started to be used not only in the area of quality – the so called Total Quality Management/総合品質経営 – Sōgō hinshitsu keiei/.



Kaoru Ishikawa (石川 馨) – the Man, who initiated TQM

It also was implemented as basic platform used in the areas of:

1. Maintenance of the equipment – Total Productive Maintenance/総合設備管理 - Sōgō setsubi kanri/;



Seiichi Nakajima (中島清一) – pioneering founder of the Total Productive Maintenance System

2. Productivity – the Lean management – in Japan this management approach started under the name Toyota Production System – トヨタ生産方式/Toyota seisan hōshiki/;



Taiichi Ohno (大野 耐一) – the Father of Toyota Production System

3. Cost optimization – Total Cost down/総合原価管理 – Sōgō genka kanri/.

They are also numbers of others useful approaches and techniques, created in the frame of Japanese Management, as the following:

- “5-S” movement – This movement refers to the five dimensions of of workplace optimization: Seiri /整理/ – Sort, Seiton/整頓/ – Set in order, Seisō/清掃/ – Shine, clean up), Seiketsu/清潔/ – Standardize, and Shitsuke/躰/ – Sustain. Like many other concepts of Japanese management, the “5-S” can be interpreted narrowly or broadly, depending on circumstances of their use;
- SMED (Single-Minute Exchange of Dies) – this is a system for dramatically reducing the time it takes to complete equipment changeovers. The essence of the SMED system is to convert as many changeover steps as possible to “external” (performed while the equipment is running), and to simplify and streamline the remaining steps. The name Single-Minute Exchange of Dies comes from the goal of reducing changeover times to the “single” digits (i.e. less than 10 minutes);
- Poka-Yoke – Mistake proofing is the use of any automatic device or method that either makes it impossible for an error to occur or makes the error immediately obvious once it has occurred. It is a common process analysis tool.



Shigeo Shingo (新郷 重夫) – the Inventor of SMED, Poka-Yoke, as well as Practical Industrial Engineering/Practical IE/

Japanese management is guided by the following key principles:

(1) Totality and integration, which means:

- * Inclusion of every stage and process of creation of the product in the system for improvement of the activity;

- * Involve the efforts of all employees in the process of improvement of the activity;

- * Formation of mechanisms for integrating the interests of the employees and the goals of the organization in short and long term perspectives.

(2) Creative participation – involves the “empowerment” of regular employees in relation to solving production problems so that they feel responsible for their work and for the organization. Means the creation of conditions for the generation of ideas by the employees, as well as for active participation in the decisions making concerning the issues of formation and improvement of the processes;

(3) Continuous improvement – this principle can be called key to the thinking and philosophy of Japanese corporate governance. It focuses on the need to continually improve the parameters of products, processes, people and organization. Accordingly, this requires the so-called active type of managerial thinking. The latter means never to reconcile with the things as they are, to seek their constant refinement in an advance plan, i.e. not to respond to changes that have already occurred in the environment, but to anticipate changes through continuous improvements.

Chapter 2. The systematic efforts in Bulgaria for implementing Japanese management

In Bulgaria, this interest toward the Japanese management became the driving force for the establishment of the BULGARIAN QUALITY, PRODUCTIVITY AND MANAGEMENT CENTER(BQPMC), which was founded in 1985 by the initiative of the father of electronics in Bulgaria prof. Ivan Popov. BQPMC was founded as public organization based on the shares of three other public organizations – Bulgarian Federation of the scientific and engineering unions/BFSEU/, Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry/BCCI/ and Bulgarian Industrial Association – Union of the Bulgarian Business/BIA-UBB/.

In the period of so-called centralized economy thanks the activity of BQPMC from 1986 till 1989 were created in more than 40 big industrial

organizations 800 Creativity-Initiative Groups. In fact, this was the name of the SGA in Bulgaria at that time.

But in 1989 in Bulgaria began the so-called “Transition period”, which in economy meant transition from centralized economy to market economy. In this changed situation BQPMC started to work as business entity. Its main product were business consultations for implementation of one or another approaches of the Japanese management. At that time BQPMC signed contract with the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship.³ The support provided by this organization played tremendous role for the success of the business consultations. BQPMC has established also good cooperative relationships with other Japanese organizations like the Japan Center for Productivity and Socio-Economic Development (JCP-SED), Japan Institute of Plant Maintenance and even with such important state agency as Japan International Cooperation Agency/JICA/.

There were two main types of business consultations carried out either with the help or directly of the BQPMC, namely:

(1) Supporting the management consultancy of Bulgarian companies and enterprises by Japanese missions sent through AOTS– the so called “Short missions”;

(2) Consulting activity of the BQPMC itself, which was done by so called “long missions”.

In this sense, there are two models of implementation and perception of the “Japanese management” in Bulgaria, each of which has its merits, but also disadvantages.

The first model is that of the short-term missions sent through AOTS. The practice of this type of consulting activity dates back to 1991. According

³ The Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS; Japanese: 海外技術者研修協会) was established in 1959 with the support of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (now the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, METI) as the first technical cooperation organization on a private basis in Japan. Its main purpose is to promote international economic cooperation and enhance mutual economic development and friendly relations between those countries and Japan. The main activities of AOTS are as follows:
Training of engineers and managers from developing countries in Japan
Training of engineers and managers in overseas countries
Management of Kenshu Centers

AOTS has been merged with Japan Overseas Development Corporation (JODC) and is now the Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Association (HIDA). The merger was done on March 30, 2012. The Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Association (HIDA) was incorporated on 1 April 2013/see in <http://www.hidajapan.or.jp> / Last retrieved February 22, 2020/.

to this model first has to be selected the organizations that would be subject to management consulting. In the period March-June of a calendar year, a group of specialists comes to Bulgaria. Within two or three days the group visits two or three Bulgarian companies. These companies, on the basis of forms provided earlier to them, prepare certain documentation characterizing their functioning in different fields of activity – production, finance, sales, personnel, etc. On this basis, sifting and selection are carried out, after which the companies (maximum two) to be consulted are identified. A few months later, a team of highly-skilled Japanese specialists in various areas of management practice and consulting usually make a one-week visit to the selected company or companies. They execute the following:

- (1) document review;
- (2) interviews with company employees and managers;
- (3) overview of workflows and processes.

On this basis the internal and external environment of the company is analyzed. This analysis is used to prepare set of short- and long-term measures that should be implemented to improve management and organizational interactions. This type of counseling is done once a year, but there are cases of visits of two counseling missions in year. More than 10 Bulgarian companies have become the object of this consulting model in the period from 1991 till 1997.

The second model is that of the long-term consultation carried out by the BQPMC consulting team. This model, as a rule, started with a preliminary inspection and introduction to the company on the spot, as well as holding preliminary conversations. Based on these discussions, a management consulting offer is being prepared. It contains a proposal for implementation on the following major issues, like as:

- (1) Company policy and organization of management activity;
- (2) Formation of structures, mechanisms and approaches for analysis of nonconformance, detection of causes and improvement of quality;
- (3) Management of the performance of the employees on the basis of MBO/Management by Objective/ approach, implementation of analytical type of formal performance evaluation, as well as the mechanisms related to the CDP/Carrier Development Program/ for the promotion of the employees;
- (4) The “5-S” movement;
- (5) Implementation of SGA /Small Group Activities/;
- (6) Improvements on the base of the Practical IE techniques, developed

by Shigeo Shingo, such as “Plant Layout”, “Line Balancing”, “Materials Handling”, “Crew work analysis”, “Process Analysis”, “Motion and Time Study”, etc.

(7) Implementation of such systems as TPM/Total Productive Maintenance/, TCD /Total Cost Down/, SMED/Single Minute Exchange of Die/ etc.

Following the conclusion of the contract between BQPMC and the respective company, the concrete implementation begins. The implementation itself is an activity that includes the following modules:

- Analytical and research module – analysis of the current situation on the basis of process research on the spot, activity monitoring, document review, interview with managers and employees;
- Training and implementation module – a package of services in the form of training of the relevant managers and specialists in order to skillfully and seamlessly implement and operate the system. The main way of conducting the training is by seminars in the company. In addition, it includes the development and implementation of a specific new organization of activities, as well as documentation aimed at making changes and improvements. A key approach in the implementation of this module is to discuss the various aspects of building the system, as well as to formulate documentation, rules and activities within the joint teams;
- Monitoring module – long-term monitoring of the implemented system and taking corrective actions if necessary.

In fact, a complete service is offered, representing a trademarked product under the name “BQPCM” and a corresponding numeric and alphabetic code including information expressing the nature of the upcoming management consulting and others. The overall introduction of the product guarantees the formation of an organizational system with a high level of motivation, activity and initiative of the managers and employees towards the achievement of the organizational goals and the formation of a modern type of organizational culture.

On the base of this model during a period of more than five years were visited and consulted more than 20 companies in various sectors of Bulgarian economy – machine-building, chemical and pharmaceutical, textile, fine optics, electronics, metallurgy, etc. Below is a part of a list with some firms and sectors, where certain systems were implemented, as well as the type of systems, which were implemented;

- “Biovet”- Pestera. It must be pointed that this company became model organization for implementing different approaches born by the “Japanese management” like TPM, “5-S”, Formal performance evaluation, Cost management. R&D management, Marketing approaches, etc. In the case of “Biovet”- Pestera the CEO/Chief Executive Officer/ of the company was sent for three weeks to Japan, where he has completed Business Management course organized by JICA/Japan International Cooperation Agency/. This course also included visits of various Japanese companies as to directly observe how the Japanese management is functioning;
- “Belasitsa” – Petrich – quality management, productivity improvement, cost management, ”5-S”, etc.
- “Yana” – Panagyuriste – textile – ”5-S”, quality management, cost management;
- “Jiti” – Russe – ”5-S”, TQM, marketing approaches, etc.;
- “Montupe” – Russe – SMED – Single Minute Exchange of Dies;
- “Electronics” – Gotse Delchev – TQM, – ”5-S”;
- “Elcabel” – Bourgas – TQM, ”5-S”, TPM;
- “Neftochim-Lucoil” – Bourgas – TQM, ”5-S”, TPM;
- „Elnik Machine-building” JSK;
- Others.

Instead of Conclusion

Instead of Conclusion we have to say that the implementation of Japanese Management Approaches in Bulgarian Firms and Enterprises proved to be successful in spite of the differences in social, economic, cultural, technical and technological conditions.

From one side it means that Japanese Management, in spite the fact that was grown on Japanese “soil”, has universal features, which make it not only Japanese but also global achievement and treasure.

From other side it means that Bulgaria had and I hope has till now the potential to perceive all positive and progressive approaches in spite from where do they come.

Bibliography:

Stefanov, N. The Japanese Approach to Production Management – A Comparative Analysis. Sofia 1996, BQPMC (*Стефанов Н.* Японски подход за управление на производството – сравнителен анализ. София 1996, Изд. ЦКПМ);

Stefanov, N. Cost Management. Bulgarian Center for Quality, Productivity and Management. Sofia 1999, Bulgarian Center for Quality, Productivity and Management (*Стефанов, Н.* Управление на себестойността. София 1999, Изд. Център за качество, производителност и мениджмънт);

Stefanov, N. A Guide to Total Quality Management. Sofia 1999, Club 9000 (*Стефанов, Н.* Ръководство по управление на тоталното качество. София 1999, Изд. Клуб 9000);

Stefanov, N., Yokoyama, Y. Japanese corporate governance model. Sofia 2001, Prism 66 Ltd (*Стефанов, Н., Йокояма, Й.* Японският модел за фирмено управление. София 2001, Изд. „Призма 66“ ООД);

Stefanov N. E. Kandilarov. Japan – Economy, Technologies, Innovation and Management. Sofia 2012, East-West Publishing (*Стефанов, Н., Кандиларов, Е.* Япония – икономика, технология, иновации и управление. С. 2012, Изд. “Изток-Запад”);

<http://www.hidajapan.or.jp>.

Japan's Official Development Assistance to Central and East European countries in their transition toward democracy and free market economy

*Boryana MITEVA**

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Abstract: *Since the end of the Cold war Central and East European countries drew more attention from Japan. Japan expressed its intention to support the efforts towards market economy in the region and gradually expanded its aid to cover a broad range of political and socio-economic sectors like transition towards market economy, reconstruction of the economic infrastructure, environmental conservation, as well as humanitarian assistance and Basic Human Needs for countries that are in the reconstruction phase after military and ethnic conflicts. Current research will attempt to summarize some main aspects of Japan's aid policy and involvement in Central and East Europe since the end of the Cold war.*

Keywords: Japan's ODA, Japan's policy toward Central and East Europe, Central and East Europe's transition toward democracy and free market economy

Early this month Bulgaria marked 30 years since the beginning of its transition to democracy. Discussions dedicated on the issue shows that there are still various and even opposite evaluations of the transition period. However, current paper does not consider the positive or negative aspects of the last three decades, but focuses on Japan's specific role in the so-called transition to democracy and market economy, not only in Bulgaria but in Central and Eastern Europe as a whole. Japanese role has been exercised mainly through the Official Development Assistance. It was not large in size and extent, but in my opinion it was of great importance for

* Dr. Boryana Miteva is Assistant Professor at the Department of Modern and Contemporary History of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

laying the foundations and maintaining of good relations between Japan and the changing region.

Japan's Official Development Assistance itself has already long history. ODA transformed several times and reformed to meet the needs of its recipients. Until nowadays Japan provided bilaterally or multilaterally in coordination with international organizations hundreds of countries in different regions with loans, grants and technical assistance¹. Since Asian countries have always been a priority for Japan, Europe altogether comprised only a very small part of the Japanese ODA. In the context of the Cold war Japanese aid to Central and East European countries practically did not exist, but Japan had economic involvement in the region through granting credits, intergovernment industrial or technical agreements, commercial dealings, joint ventures etc.².

Central and East European countries drew more attention from Japan after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold war. Since 1989 these countries started their transition toward democracy and introduced free market economic system. Some of them progressed faster in their economic recovery, but some of them suffered due to the rapid changes in the economic system. In the former Yugoslavian countries, the conflicts resulting from intensifying ethnic tensions, coupled with subsequent NATO air strikes and economic sanctions, resulted in devastating blow to their economies. These countries faced a broad range of challenges in

¹ *Official Development Assistance. History of Official Development Assistance.* – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/summary/1994/1.html>; *Japan's ODA and an Overview of JICA Programs.* JICA, 2003 – <https://www.jica.go.jp/english/publications/reports/annual/2003/pdf/200303.pdf> 29.12.2019; *Potter, David.* Japan's Official Development Assistance. – In: 国際教育センター紀要 第12号, 7-17, 22-23; *Huda, Mohd.* Evolution of Japanese ODA, 1945-2015: An Analysis. – In: *International Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016, 14-17, 22-23; *Japanese ODA at 50s: An Assessment.* – In: *Asia Program Special Report*, No 128, February 2005, 2-28; *Hook, Steven., Guang Zhang.* Japan's Aid Policy since the Cold War: Rhetoric and Reality. – In: *Asian Survey*, Vol. 38, No. 11 (Nov., 1998), 1051-1066. Hiroshi Kato describes ODA by decades. – *Japan's Development Assistance. Foreign Aid and the Post-2015 Agenda.* Ed. By Hiroshi Kato, John Page, Yasutami, Shimomura. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016, 1-5.

² *Hutchings, Raymond.* Japan's Economic Involvement in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. London and New York, 1999, 142-153; *Terada, Yataro.* The system of trade between Japan and East European countries, including the Soviet Union. – In: *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol. 37, No. 3, East-West Trade: Part 1 (Summer, 1972), 429-447; *Asomura, Kuniaki.* Japan and East/Central Europe (with some references to Russia). – In: *Perspectives*, No. 2 (winter 93/94), 13-19.

many sectors, including refugee assistance, buildup of socio-economic infrastructure for rehabilitation and reconstruction, and Basic Human Needs.

As early as 1989, Japan expressed its intention to support the efforts toward market economy in the region and gradually expanded its aid to cover a total of 18 countries, including the former Yugoslavian countries. The region was opening up new opportunities for Japanese diplomacy. Japan's ODA was an appropriate mean of establishing friendly relations and positive dialogue with these countries. As leading economic power and country already faced political and socio-economic transition after WWII, Japan felt a duty to share its experience and to contribute to democratization and peacemaking in Central and Eastern Europe.

Moreover, the great transformation of Central and Eastern Europe coincided with new era in the Japanese ODA since the Japanese government announced in 1991 ODA guidelines and two years later adopted ODA Charter. Within the new requirements for ODA recipients were limitation of military expenditures, respect of basic human rights and freedoms and efforts for promoting democratization and introduction of market-oriented economy³.

Japan saw geopolitical and economic opportunities in the region. As a global economic power and as a partner of the US and the EU Japan could increase its prestige in the international community. Coordinated policy with the US and the EU in the region eventually would result in improving Japan-EU dialogue and gaining more European support in Asian security and economic issues or even for getting a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. In the economic field Japanese interests are questioned as these countries are geographically far, had neglective share in Japanese trade and had low purchasing capacity. Nevertheless, the region could transform into attractive market after democratization. Central and East European countries were believed to have well educated, hardworking and adaptive population. So, Japanese aid would provide friendly relations with the Central and East European countries and future opportunities for Japanese investments, export and import, joint ventures, etc.⁴.

³ *Official Development Assistance. History of Official Development Assistance.* – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/summary/1994/1.html>, 29.12.2019.

⁴ *Hristov, D. A study on the Factors Explaining the Japanese Aid towards Eastern Europe: The Significance of the National Interest Debate.* Osaka University Knowledge Archive.

Japanese aid was supposed to be limited in time and extent. It should span a period from transition to democracy and market economy to the membership in the EU, when countries would achieve stable political and economic systems. As international community was hardly involved in democratization in the region, Japanese aid should avoid double part of EU funds and should be aimed at solving specific problems and cover concrete regions (for example, post-war or ethnic conflict regions or countries facing difficulties in building market economy). Furthermore, the reduction of ODA budget in 90s necessitated better coordination between grants, yen loans and technical cooperation, as well as between Japanese and international institutions for more effective use of the aid. Thus, Japanese ODA was focused mainly on sectors as humanitarian aid to refugees, healthcare, human development, infrastructure and transport, energysaving and environment conservation, agriculture, exchange of technical information, specialists and equipment, peacekeeping and reconstruction, basic human needs, support for the implementation of elections in the former-Yugoslav region.

Based on the increasing regional differences, Japanese experts distinguished three main groups within Central and East European countries in regard with their political stability and socio-economic advance. The so called advanced countries were Central European countries (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Croatia). The middle group included less advanced countries like Bulgaria and Romania. Countries affected or reconstructed from war and ethnic conflicts were in the last group (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia (now North Macedonia), Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo).

According to the Japanese experts the advanced countries accomplished fastest and most successful transition to democracy and market economy. They first met the Copenhagen criteria – stable institutions, granting democracy, rule of law, human and minority rights, functioning market economy, ability to fulfil their obligations in the EU. They became EU members in 2004.

Technical cooperation was given to development of the Hungarian productivity, for construction of Japanese-Polish Institute for computer technologies. Central European countries did not receive grants, but loans⁵. The

2006-2009, 365-372.

⁵ Municipal project for development of Varpalota in Hungary, loan for trade in Poland, construction of highway in Slovakia. *Regional Study for Japan's Official Development Assis-*

exception was Croatia, which received grants for projects in the field of culture and human resources development.⁶ In cooperation with the World Bank Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary received direct loans for structural adaptation, promotion of local industry, promotion of small and medium size enterprises, telecommunication development and environment improvement.

Since 2004, Central European countries have officially acquired the status of free and effectively functioning market economies with positive economic and social indicators and significant economic growth. Thus, Japan put an end to Transition Support Program and focused on such programs/projects as those designed to support the establishment of transferred technologies in these countries and those designed to help these recipient countries develop into donor countries. It is a priority for Japan to consolidate the achievements so far in democratization and economic growth. Japan encourages Central European countries to use the technology and technical assistance provided by Japan to assist neighboring countries and in particular the Balkan countries⁷.

The less advanced countries had more slow progress in their reforms. Rapid reforms resulted in decreasing standard of living and increasing inflation and unemployment. Corruption discredited trust in democratic process and political institutions. These countries achieved stability and met later Copenhagen criteria. They became members of the EU in 2007.

After their accession to the EU it was considered that two countries had generally achieved macroeconomic stability and maintained a positive economic growth. Thus, Japan limited its assistance and focused its efforts on achieving specific targets for a specific period of time like human source development, deepening technical skills and practices, training of small and medium size enterprise's management experts, attracting foreign investment and export promotion, promoting local industry, environmental assistance, and agricultural development⁸.

tance to Central and Easter Europe. Japan International Cooperation Agency. 2003, 35-44.

⁶*Japan's ODA to Croatia*. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html, 30.12.2019.

⁷*Regional Study for Japan's Official Development Assistance to Central and Easter Europe*. Japan International Cooperation Agency. 2003, 35-44.

⁸For example, loans were given for the construction of new terminals of Varna and Burgas ports, measures against industrial pollution in Eliseina and Plovdiv, extension of subway net in Sofia, reconstruction of the international Bukuresht airport; grants for projects for improvement of musical instruments of symphonic orchestra of Bulgarian National

Transition to democracy in ex-Yugoslavian countries faced serious difficulties not only due to the disintegration of the political and economic systems, but also because of the ethnic conflicts led to international isolation, political, economic and social chaos, NATO intervention in 1999 in Serbia, aggravated refugee crisis. Despite of the international support these countries experience essential impediments in establishment of peace, stability and economic growth in Western Balkans, which still prevent them from the EU membership.

Need of essential support to reach the level of “the advanced” stimulated Japan to redirect a significant share of its assistance to those in the last group. Japan provided technical assistance in institutions’ construction and human resource and socio-economic infrastructure development, as well as promoted reconciliation between different ethnic groups. Priority sectors for Japanese aid to Western Balkans are development of social infrastructure (medical and educational equipment), repatriation of refugees, reconciliation between different ethnic groups, solving environmental problems, stabilizing the market economy, admission to the EU, job creation by promoting local industry, technical assistance⁹.

Japan’s efforts in the Western Balkans could be classified into two main periods – initial emergency assistance before 2004 and development assistance after 2004. The initial emergency phase included humanitarian and reconstruction assistance like mine cleaning, basic human needs, social and economic infrastructure, human security assistance (education 38%,

Broadcast, building a museum, dedicated to Thracian art in Eastern Rodopi region, modernization of equipment for reconstruction of national cultural and cinematography art of Romania, rehabilitation of railway Bukuresht-Konstanza; technical cooperation for development for Kazanluk region, construction of Center for skills improvement in the field of business management and small and medium enterprises, construction of Center for effective use of energy. risk reduction in a case of seismic activity, farm management’s improvement via agricultural cooperatives, modernization of National laboratory for air quality. – *Japan’s ODA to Bulgaria*. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html; *Japan’s ODA to Romania*. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html; *Regional Study for Japan’s Official Development Assistance to Central and Easter Europe*. Japan International Cooperation Agency. 2003, 3-11, 27-28; *Country Assistance Evaluation of Romania and Bulgaria*. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html, 05.01.2020.

⁹ *Regional Study for Japan’s Official Development Assistance to Central and Easter Europe*. Japan International Cooperation Agency. 2003, 3-11, 27-28.

healthcare and medical 25%, social sector 15%, others 14%, agriculture 6%, transportation and communication 2%), election assistance¹⁰.

Once the initial emergency stage was completed, JICA (the main distributor of ODA) gradually shifted its support towards projects, focused on development of the region. In 2004 Japan launched a special Initiative in the Western Balkans aiming at promotion of Western Balkans development and announced three main pillars of assistance for the region: economic development, peace consolidation and regional cooperation¹¹. In 2018 Japan's involvement in Western Balkans continued with the "Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative". The Ambassador in Charge of the Western Balkans at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was appointed and JICA survey team was dispatched to uncover new cooperation projects and holding seminars in order to promote regional cooperation¹². In addition the MIRAI Program was dedicated to young leaders coming from the region. "Western Balkans meet Japan: A Bridge into the Future" claimed to be a exchange program, aiming to explain Japan's policy and to build a basis for future friendship and cooperation between Japan and Western Balkans¹³. Recent trends in

¹⁰ For example, Bosnia and Hertzegovina "Sarajevo City Public Transportation Reconstruction Project", Kosovo "Small arms recovery plan", Serbia and Montenegro "Ribnica Village Sveti Sava Elementary School" Reconstruction Project. Japan also sent monitors to the OSCE mission for the verification of the elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia. In addition, Japan implemented an emergency aid of 1.041 million US dollar to OSCE for the Kosovo municipal election in 2002. – *Japan's Actions towards Reconstruction of Peace in the Western Balkans, 2004*. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/balkan/action.pdf>, 06.01.2020.

¹¹ *Japan's Initiative in the Western Balkans. Three Pillars of Assistance, 2004*. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/balkan/initiative.pdf>; *Western Balkans*, JICA Brochure Balkan Office, JICA. – https://www.jica.go.jp/balkan/english/office/others/c8h0vm0000bfpach-att/introduction_english.pdf; Gledic, Jelena. Japan's Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative: A Wise Way to Wage "War". – In: *Japan Today*, 2 February 2018. – <https://japantoday.com/category/features/opinions/japan%E2%80%99s-western-balkans-cooperation-initiative-a-wise-way-to-wage-war>, 07.01.2020.

¹² *Prime-Minister Shinzo Abe visits Europe (January 12-17 2018)*, Japan-Serbia Summit Meeting, 15 January 2018 – Countries and Regions, Europe, Serbia, Japan-Serbia Relations (Archives). – https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_sec/serbia/page1e_000197.html, 07.01.2020.

¹³ "Western Balkans meet Japan: A Bridge into the Future", MIRAI Program 2018: Western Balkans Youth Exchange (Mutual understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative)- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.rycowb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Western-Balkans-meet-Japan-A-Bridge-into-the-Future.pdf>, 08.01.2020.

Japanese assistance policy toward Western Balkans are concentrated in rolling plan for each country in the region¹⁴.

Concluding Remarks

Except for being welcomed, Japan's Official Development Assistance has been often criticized. Critics are related to its limits in time and extent, its priorities and geographical distribution, etc. Nevertheless, Japanese ODA for Central and East European countries came exactly on time, when they needed support. Its concentration in specific period and sectors made it actually effective. Since the EU gave support in the field of political, administrative and institutional adaption, Japanese aid focused mainly in social, economic and humanitarian sectors. Effectiveness of Japanese ODA came also from the clear and correct classification of the countries in the region according to their political stability, economic development and progress in the reforms. Therefore, Japanese efforts were concentrated on specific needs of each country. Since the so called advanced and less advanced countries are now full members of the EU, Japanese ODA focused on the Western Balkans. Japan now stimulates ex-recipient of ODA in Central and East Europe to use technical assistance from Japan to support Western Balkans countries in their efforts to achieve economic growth and EU membership.

Some experts believe Initiative for cooperation in Western Balkans is a Japanese response to the Chinese activities on Balkans through 16+1 cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. However, this explanation seems too simple. Obviously, Japanese aid to the region has already long history since the beginning of 90s and did not start as a competition for influence, but as coordinated efforts of the global community to support Central and East European countries. Even if there is some competition between Japanese and Chinese initiatives, it would probably have positive effect on the region and should not discredit Japanese efforts to support countries in the

¹⁴ *Rolling plan for the Republic of Albania; Country Development Cooperation Policy for Bosnia and Herzegovina; Rolling Plan for the Republic of Kosovo; Rolling Plan for the Republic of Macedonia.* ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html, *Japan's ODA to Serbia; Japan's ODA to Macedonia; Japan's ODA to Bosnia and Herzegovina; Japan's ODA to Montenegro; Japan's ODA to Kosovo; Japan's ODA to Albania,* ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html, 10.01.2020.

Western Balkans. Japan has its own special place in international support for transition to democracy and market economy in the region.

Japanese experience, economic and technical aid was important for the democratization of Central and Eastern Europe and moreover, had crucial role in establishing friendly relations and deepening the dialogue between Japan and these countries. Ensuring peace, stable democratic systems and developed economies is essential not only for Central and East Europe, but it would be beneficial for Japan as well, as long as creates opportunities for expansion of Japanese influence, intensification of Japan-EU relations as a whole, promotion of Japanese business investments and technical cooperation.

Bibliography:

Documents:

Official Development Assistance. History of Official Development Assistance. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/summary/1994/1.html>

Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter, 2003. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/reform/revision0308.pdf>

New Aid Charter Assistance Policy, 2015. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000139.html

ODA Reform. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/reform/index.html>

ODA White Paper, 2001. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2001/contents.pdf>

White Paper on Development Cooperation, 2017. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000406627.pdf>

Regional Study for Japan's Official Development Assistance to Central and Easter Europe. Japan International Cooperation Agency. 2003.

Japan's ODA and an Overview of JICA Programs. JICA, 2003. – <https://www.jica.go.jp/english/publications/reports/annual/2003/pdf/200303.pdf>

Japan's ODA to Croatia. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Bulgaria. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Romania. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Country Assistance Evaluation of Romania and Bulgaria. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Rolling plan for the Republic of Albania. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Country Development Cooperation Policy for Bosnia and Herzegovina. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Rolling Plan for the Republic of Kosovo. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Rolling Plan for the Republic of Macedonia. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Serbia. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Macedonia. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Bosnia and Herzegovina. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Montenegro. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Kosovo. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's ODA to Albania. ODA by Region. Europe. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000015.html

Japan's Actions towards Reconstruction of Peace in the Western Balkans, 2004. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/balkan/action.pdf>

Western Balkans – JICA Brochure Balkan Office, JICA. – <https://>

www.jica.go.jp/balkan/english/office/others/c8h0vm0000bfpaeh-att/introduction_english.pdf

Japan's Initiative in the Western Balkans. Three Pillars of Assistance, 2004. – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/balkan/initiative.pdf>

Prime-Minister Shindzo Abe visits Europe (January 12-17 2018), Japan-Serbia Summit Meeting, 15 January 2018 – Countries and Regions, Europe, Serbia, Japan-Serbia Relations (Archives). https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_see/serbia/page1e_000197.html

“Western Balkans meet Japan: A Bridge into the Future”, MIRAI Program 2018: Western Balkans Youth Exchange (Mutual understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative)- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. – <https://www.rycowb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Western-Balkans-meet-Japan-A-Bridge-into-the-Future.pdf>

Academic Studies:

Asomura, Kuniaki. Japan and East/Central Europe (with some references to Russia). – In: *Perspectives*, No. 2 (winter 93/94), pp. 13-19;

Gledic, Jelena. Japan's Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative: A Wise Way to Wage “War”. – In: *Japan Today*, 2 February 2018. – <https://japantoday.com/category/features/opinions/japan%E2%80%99s-western-balkans-cooperation-initiative-a-wise-way-to-wage-war>

Hristov, D. A study on the Factors Explaining the Japanese Aid towards Eastern Europe: The Significance of the National Interest Debate. Osaka University Knowledge Archive. 2006-2009, pp. 365-372;

Hook, Steven., Guang Zhang. Japan's Aid Policy since the Cold War: Rhetoric and Reality. – In: *Asian Survey*, Vol. 38, No. 11 (Nov., 1998), pp. 1051-1066;

Huda, Mohd. Evolution of Japanese ODA, 1945-2015: An Analysis. – In: *International Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2016, pp. 14-28;

Hutchings, Raymond. Japan's Economic Involvement in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. London and New York, 1999;

Japan's Development Assistance. Foreign Aid and the Post-2015 Agenda. Ed. By Hiroshi Kato, John Page, Yasutami, Shimomura. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016;

Japanese ODA at 50s: An Assessment. – In: Asia Program Special Report, No 128, February 2005, p. 2-28;

Potter, David. Japan's Official Development Assistance. – In: 国際教

育センター紀要 第12号, p. 22-23;

Terada, Yataro. The system of trade between Japan and East European countries, including the Soviet Union. – In: *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol. 37, No. 3, East-West Trade: Part 1 (Summer, 1972), pp. 429-447.

The perspectives of the Japanese Bulgarian economic relations, in the context of Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt brand success story

Nikolay PADAREV*

Abstract: *The report attempts to summarize the potentials and problems of the Bulgarian economy and the overall business climate in Bulgaria, its its SWOT peculiarities within the framework of Japanese Bulgarian relations.*

Introduction

In order to succeed in new endeavor, let it be industrial or political, you must know and in most of the cases experience by yourself, the genesis of the failures – in order not to repeat them, and also the alchemy of the success – how to emulate and take positive examples usually from the past. The problem however is that the world is constantly changing and there is no guarantee that the recipes and formulas for success in the past will be always effective in the future.

And the code for success and failure varies according to the cultural patterns, ways of thinking, what people value and disdain, social paradigm of each country or block/region of countries with similar history.

If you want to succeed in doing business with Bulgaria you need to understand it not only from its statistical data, which are outer dimensions of its spiritual and anthropological identity. Statistics and classifications marketing survey database are only hints, something that gives you a measure to the dynamics and individual behavior on political/cultural and economic international stage of each country or region in concern, where usually the businessman – this contemporary form of chivalry is looking forward to create its heroic feats.

*Nikolay Padarev is Assistant Manager at the International Business Division of Meiji Co., Ltd.

In this report I will try to summarize one vision – for the potentials and problems of Bulgarian economy and doing business here in Bulgaria, its SWOT peculiarities within the framework of Japanese Bulgarian relations.

And I will give you one clue – the success of Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt in Japan, hoping that it will give you some positive reference when navigating the map of Bulgaria in search of how, with whom and about what to do business in Bulgaria.

SWOT Analysis of the potential in Bulgarian-Japanese Economic Relations

1. Strengths

- Steady economic growth of more than 3% each year in the last decades which diminishes the income gap with Western Europe. The tendency is within 2 decades Bulgaria to join the EU average living standards.
- Stable financial framework
 - A) Stable financial fundamentals, low level of state debt, which meets EU criteria In 2019 Bulgarian national state debt is 19.7% to the GDP.
 - B) Positive rating by international financial agencies. For example Standard&Poors and Fitch increased the rating of Bulgaria long term and short term credit rating to ‘BBB-/A-3’ from ‘BB+/B’ due to the prolonged expansion of exports and increased savings.
 - C) Stable perspective to join the Euro monetary mechanism, taking advantage of its credibility as international currency, reducing the cost of capital investments and financing national budget.
- Low rate of 10% flat tax to the individual and corporate income, which stimulates the inflow of foreign investments and the spending of both individuals and companies, stimulating the economic growth and increasing the disposable income.
- Labor factor
 - A) High level of well-educated working force, usually versed in several foreign languages. In case of Japanese at about 200 hundred students able to speak, write and read in Japanese graduate the different educational centers where Japanese language is taught.
 - B) Still the average salary in many sectors is lower than EU level,

which alleviates the burden to the capital investment plans, and in short-midterm perspective will continue to be competitive advantage for Bulgaria in comparison with EU countries with higher labor cost.

□ Improving business environment and infrastructure

Bulgaria experienced tremendous development in the modernization of its services sector – like banking system, modern trade, hotels and tourism industry, as well as its transport and logistic infrastructure which is very important factor not only for organizing of expedient business operations, but also for increasing the living standards and job-employment opportunities.

Many more Bulgarians chose to remain to work and seek for professional realization in Bulgaria, while due to the increase in the demand and economic progress, there is shortage of qualified labor force in such sectors like IT industry, engineers, experienced managers and workers in tourist industry, which is actually an opportunity to recruit workers from the neighbor countries and Bulgarian diaspora of emigrants.

□ Improving of the management culture and working habits

Hundreds and dozen western companies, that made investments in Bulgaria came not only for the market opportunities “squeezing the revenues of Bulgarians” as some as some hard-liners who admire the communist uniformity might criticize it, but also introduced the whole set of new corporate culture, working habits and attitude to the clients/customers, which promote self-discipline, critical thinking, analytical abilities and the talent not only to find problems, but to work in team for their solving in the interest of society.

This is one of the biggest achievements of the transition to market economy, that modifies contemporary Bulgaria, especially its young citizens and shortens the differences, the cultural gap between Japanese companies, that are looking for new opportunities and partners in Bulgaria and the region of Balkans.

□ Increased diversity and pluralism

There is a clear tendency towards increase in the multicultural diversity and pluralism in the society and its culture, despite the antagonism of some ultra-national and xenophobic extremism. Such tendency is mainly expressed into the internationalization of the food and mass culture, in-

crease in the number of foreign residents and cultural events related to other countries.

To say it in another words, Bulgarians are becoming much more open and open to foreign tastes, products and services, keen to the latest world fashion and this tendency increases the chances of foreign companies to market and communicate new products and services into the local market that is becoming more and more sophisticated and high-quality demanding.

2. Opportunities, positive heritage and upstream trends

☐ Good traditions of partnership in the past

Long standing tradition of mutual beneficial economic cooperation between Bulgaria and Japan, most intensified in 1970~80, when Bulgarian and Japanese companies were engaged in cooperation in many sectors – electronics, heavy-machinery building, pharmaceuticals and chemistry, water power energy, ship building.

It is well debated in the specialized literature, that Bulgarian communist state was looking to the Japanese economic miracle as example of industrial policies, and Bulgaria at that period was very persistent into developing of cooperation with leading Japanese companies, that were favored to transfer their technologies, know-how and model of management, model of education and motivation of human resources.

On the other hand, Japan was striving to expand its economical presence and market share in the former socialist states of Eastern Europe, despite of the American restrictions over trade with the communist block and transfer of sensitive strategic technologies, which can be used not only in civilian economy but also in the military industry.

☐ Japanese support to the democratization of Bulgaria

Japan gave the most generous support as a country outside EU in the Bulgaria's process of embracing democratic values, transition to market economy and membership in EU, being one of the main donor states via program JICA during the period of transition to democracy and market economy.

This fact will be never forgotten by Bulgarians and gives a complimentary galvanization to the Bulgarian admiration of Japan and its culture, harmonic human relations of respect to the weak, mutual assistance and corporate management/social well-fair system which incorporates the

best practices of communist-socialist approach in the allocation of resources, role of the government and its institutions in securing of social-safety network, and prioritizing national goals on one side, with all the positive features of capitalist entrepreneurship and free will of self-expression and pursuit of happiness.

□ New examples of partnership in sectors where Bulgaria has relative advantage

The glory of the past is fading, but in the last 10 years there is gradual increase of Japanese companies, starting to operate business in Bulgaria in sectors, where Bulgaria poses some relative and absolute advantages and can be incorporated in the value creating chain of the Japanese companies looking for new opportunities to expand their business in EU and Balkan regions markets or to secure a production-supply base and/or R&D center for their international activities.

Usually, the pattern of the Japanese companies when they enter Bulgaria is either direct investment when they are burdened with the whole risk, or M&A of important in their segment EU companies, that have a subsidiary in Bulgaria.

Such examples are Hitachi – in electric facility production business, Yazaki – in automobile parts industry (there is a cluster of such companies in Bulgaria and Yazaki opened its 3rd factory), Zenno – which build a modern factory for production of frozen sushi which is distributed mainly in Europe, Sumitomo Trade Company – which bought one of the biggest local car distributors – Motophoe and Sega Holdings – which via M&A obtained the Bulgarian game production office of English company.

□ Bulgaria is integral part of EU, in strategical region close to Turkey, Russia, Middle East

Bulgaria is part of EU, one of the biggest common markets, shares the same civilization values of democracy and pluralism as Japan.

The EPA connecting EU and Japan and harmonizing their legislation system as well as gradually diminishing the tariff and non-tariff barriers, which was enforced recently, gives a strong stimulus for spreading the seeds of new projects and propelling the bilateral trade and investments.

3. Weaknesses

- ☐ Small internal market
- ☐ Decrease of the population and working force.
- ☐ The teenager weakness of the young democracies – crony capitalism and corruption steal from the opportunities of more inclusive growth and is a reason for social unrest, protests, political dissatisfaction as well as malfunction in the process of embodying and exercising of basic democratic rights.

3. Threats, restrains

- ☐ Bulgaria is a border country in EU with low economic weight in the union, situated in its periphery. Usually when Japanese companies choose to enter European market, they put their focus on the biggest countries and allocate their investments in the center of EU.
- ☐ It is not taken for granted that Bulgaria can manage to escape the trap of middle developed countries and enter the club of well developed nations via innovation and emerging to a new state of affairs when the low taxes and labor cost will be not any more the decisive factors for attracting foreign investments.
- ☐ Japan is historically well integrated economically with the countries in Asia Pacific – China and ASEAN, while Japan was a rolling model for their policies of stimulating industrial growth, while Japanese companies were one of the major vehicles that propelled the modernization of the Asian countries economies through their investments in the production sphere. Thousands of Japanese companies operate in the region, and Bulgaria will never be able to become as attractive to Japanese investments as Thailand for example.

For more comprehensive data – look at the HP of BIA (Bulgarian Investment Agency – in Bulgarian and English) and JETRO (in Japanese). Of course, from both HP sights you will find only the positive features and a bunch of opportunities, together with regional comparison of Bulgaria with Central and Eastern European countries.

How to control the country and individual risk (for each industry and stemming from the personal character of your partners) when doing business in Bulgaria? It is an open question, whose answer is in your hands.

The symbolic meaning of Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt Brand success

1. Meiji Dairies strategy

- The utmost goal was to become No.1 in Japanese Dairy sector

There are numerous parameters according to which can be assessed the success of a company to sustain its growth and contribute to the solving of social problems, to the onward growth and progress of mankind as a whole. In case of Meiji I can summarize briefly one of the most important prerequisites for Meiji to maintain its status as leading Japanese food company and successful adopter of European products to Japanese soil, including Bulgaria Yogurt Brand:

- A) To be equally empathetic and supportive to all its stakeholders – 1/ local societies whose needs in the sphere of nutrition, health care and happy life are taken into consideration and treated with professionalism and sympathy by Meiji Holdings, 2/ our clients, consumers, different customers and suppliers to whom we owe our chances to remain in the business balancing in the paradigm of achieving mutual interest and trying to achieve such fundamental goals as SDG (sustainable development goals), determined by United Nations, and 3/our stakeholders and employees who are the subjects working day and night Meiji to contemplate its mission, figure out its business plans and realize them.
- B) Be proactive and use the whole scope of human imagination and creativity in order to innovate new products and services with added value that contribute to the healthier and happier life of all our stakeholders.
- C) High level of moral integrity and credibility, compliance with the law and basic ethical principles; spirit of sacrifice, respect to the other people's values and corporate culture that stimulates challenge, well measured risk and stubbornness to increase the welfare and well-being of society where Meiji operates, even sometimes at the price of sacrificing the profit, maintain activities which do not generate autonomous earnings in particularly as in case of producing special kinds of Infant Formula for mother whose organism cannot decompose Lactose.
- D) The quality control check & assurance, dedication to the highest standards and requirements are absolute and attention is paid to prevent accidents with quality

Driven by such ambition and vision Meiji was able to become the leading Japanese company in the food sector, with highest annual turnover after the 3 producers of alcohol beverages Kirin, Asahi and Suntory, which total sales include the liquor tax and are normal to be higher than ours.

□ Long path towards development of international business

Until the beginning of 20 century Meiji Dairies international business has been structured and positioned in such a way as to fulfill 2 important missions: 1/procurement from overseas of such ingredients and raw materials that cannot be secured inside Japan enough in quantity and quality and at suitable price such as Skimmed Milk Powder, complex mixture of dairy ingredients and natural cheese; 2/export of dairy products which have a long shelf life and are competitive outside Japan such as Infant Milk Formula, especially in counties of South and East Asia – Pakistan, Taiwan, Vietnam and others.

Such a business model was possible, because of the specific Japanese administrative regulations and existence at that time (before enforcement of multilateral FTA or FPA agreements) of tariff system and protective measures to develop domestic dairy companies that can accumulate power and wisdom to compete on the international markets.

Nowadays Meiji operates 1 dairy plant in Thailand which is leader in milk products and successfully enlarges the presence of Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt brand and one dairy plant in Suzhou, Shanghai from where we distribute Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt in China.

In dairy business we are exporting also Meiji cheese, ice-cream and Infant Milk Formula to Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand and operate a very vibrant factory for production of ice-cream nearby Guangzhou in South China.

Our ambition is in dairy sector to increase our presence in the promising Pacific Asian market expanding the potential of the existing plants, building new if necessary and taking full advantage of the export opportunities, while working hard to achieve synergy effect with our chocolate and confectionary business (we have 2 factories – in Shanghai and Singapore which cover the region of China and Asian-Pacific countries).

In this important mission to extend further our food business in Pacific Asia, Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt brand is a very valuable asset, which we hope will be enjoyed by many more consumers of this region.

2. The miracle of Bulgaria's participation in EXPO Osaka 1970

The participation of socialist Bulgaria in EXPO Osaka 1970 was conducted in very successful way – Bulgarian pavilion in the shape of 3 pyramids attracted many visitors, His Majesty the Japanese Showa Emperor visited it officially which was published and reported in Japanese media.

But from my point of view, the most important legacy from this participation is that it gave the impetus for starting the project Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt brand in Japan, which is one of few economical partnerships between Japan and Bulgaria that survived the collapse of communist regime in Bulgaria.

3. Economic, cultural and political dimensions of Meiji Bulgaria success story

□ Economical

A) Transfer of know-how and technology – in the beginning from Bulgarian State Monopoly Dairy Industry to Meiji Dairies and then vice versa when the Licensee/Meiji/ exceeded in intensive growth its teacher/Licensor LB Bulgaricum – the successor of Bulgarian State Monopoly Dairy Industry. When the alliance between Meiji Dairies and Bulgarian State Monopoly Dairy Industry was formed in the 1970s, several factors were crucial for its viability (for details see the attached PPP presentation), and since the very beginning the aspiration of the Licensor and Licensee matched together well, tracking the path to the future success:

i. Bulgarian aspirations

Bulgarian side wanted to be sure that Meiji Dairies possesses the potential, skills, industrial scale, technological ability and sales-distribution network to launch this nationally important for Bulgaria product – the Bulgarian Yogurt. That is why the process of finalization of the negotiations Bulgarian state to bestow to Meiji the executive right to produce and sell Bulgaria Yogurt on Japanese territory, took more than 2 years. It was not just bargaining how many percent from the final sales as Royalty Bulgaria will receive in return, but building of trustfulness which is viable for long-term partnership.

ii. Meiji Dairies aspirations

Meiji wanted to receive the permission to sell some new exceptional Product with the full package of industrial imprint (including Brand reputation, outstanding technology and etc) that will give to the com-

pany a leverage to score against the competition, differentiate from its products and create a new category of something that even when imitated by the competition companies cannot be outnumbered by the later imitation products. The company which is able to generate genuinely New product like Meiji and maintain its technological advantages as well as marketing attractiveness and propels eternally its benefits satisfying basic society needs, will be always capable to keep it as leading brand in the consumers perception.

That is why in the beginning Bulgaria was transferring technology (for example know how of the Professor Gerginov's method for industrial production of set-up post-fermentation yogurt and handling of original Bulgarian starter cultures) and tutoring Meiji how to produce Bulgarian Yogurt. Further the partnership between Meiji and SIC "Dairy Industry" transformed in LB Bulgaricum in the beginning of 1990s (LB Bulgaricum succeeded the IP rights, Institute base with its unique collection of Lactic bacteria, test plants and the export positions of SIC "Dairy Industry") transcended in a new stage, when both partners were conducting cooperation in the sphere of Joint R&D activities, focused on increasing the collection of Lactic bacteria and developing of new products.

Actually, in the period 1997-2002, when LB Bulgaricum was experiencing crisis after losing the direct link with at that time privatized some 40 dairy factories of the former SIC "Dairy Industry", Meiji helped its partner with a donation of several millions USD to modernize LB's Institute equipment, creating in this way better conditions for storage of LB lactic bacteria library and maintaining its level of fundamental and applied research.

B) Direct contribution to Bulgarian economy in cash payment of substantial sum of Royalty.

C) New horizons of partnership in 21st century

In 21 century Meiji and LB Bulgaricum are engaged in new endeavor – strengthening their achievements on Japanese market and expanding Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt brand on the promising Asian markets of China, Thailand, Singapore /at present/ and the adjacent ASEAN countries/in the future/, by creating a new category of natural set-up post-fermentation yogurt and contributing to the health and prosperity of local people via stimulating new eating habits to consume this marvelous product which is good for the digestion and harmonic brain functions of the human beings.

In this respect I would like to point out the fact which is well known among the specialist of food-education and balance diet, that if you add in any way vegetable or fruits fabrics in the Natural Yogurt it becomes the perfect food, which explains the fact that Bulgarian Yogurt is usually consumed in Bulgaria with vegetables like cucumber and paprika and different kind of bread and pastries in order to give fuel of carbons to the human body, that are essential together with the proteins of the yogurt to sustain human organism with energy and materials to reinvigorate its cells.

We cannot foresee the future with great accuracy, and within the dynamics of Bulgarian economic growth the situation might change, but at present no other Bulgarian dairy maker is able to achieve such gigantic extension – to make direct investments in Asian dairy markets or to promote Bulgarian yogurt there. The reason for this fact are many – 1/Bulgarian dairy producers are preoccupied with assuring of their position on local, regional and EU market, and having only a humble, marginal export of dairy products (mostly local type of Cheese “kashkaval” and white salt brined cheese “sirene”; 2/ to manage a successful investment on green field in dairy industry on a new country you must be able to manage all risks and have enough human&capital resources, organizational wisdom and expertise, technological know-how and good marketing team to differentiate and sell you products; and very important factor – good knowledge of the local habits, customs, legal framework.

□ Cultural

A) Enormous possibilities to promote and advertise Bulgaria as homeland of yogurt and tourist destinations in the countries where Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt is sold.

Yogurt is product that people eat every day. Each pack of sold and consumed Bulgarian yogurt is sending a small positive message to the local society and creating a positive image of Bulgaria as country with traditions in dairy/food industry, clear nature and high life expectancy, which is sometimes more effective in stimulating initiatives for Asian people to create contacts with Bulgarian individuals and companies, than the well-entrenched in protocol diplomatic agenda, that is usually governed by complex geo-political issues and does not always reaching or respond to the simple everyday needs,

wishes and dreams of the local inhabitants.

Each consumer eating Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt, especially those with curiosity, enough means to travel abroad and open-minded to different cultural influences – will ask her or him a very simple question – where is Bulgaria; what do you know about Bulgaria, its history land and people?

B) Especially in Japan Meiji helps financially in the past and recently also the organization of many different initiatives and events that popularize Bulgaria as cultural and tourist destination – regular concerts of the famous Sofia Opera and Sofia Solisten orchestra; publications of books and articles about Bulgaria, dispatching of media tours in which Japanese journalist and artist can find their part of multicultural experience in Bulgaria and send their message to Japanese audience; inviting to Japan Bulgarian folklore dancers and singers; opening in Tokyo of Bulgarian restaurant “Sofia” renamed later as “Trojan” – a place in Ginza which still attracts Bulgarians living in Japan and Japanese people who are looking for some exotic tour to Bulgarian food and wines; etc.

C) To summarize – such sophisticated approach, when Meiji not simply sells Bulgarian yogurt, improves its technology and develops new starter cultures, while refunds some of the profit to Bulgaria in the dividends of Royalty payments, but also helps Bulgaria to promote its culture and history, contributes to cherishing of Bulgarian national pride and self-esteem, gives Bulgarian the assurance that through diligence and keeping good mutually efficient relation with their strategic partners, they can succeed in promoting their indigenous products and services in remote countries and regions not only in EU and their neighbors.

☐ Political

In political aspect, Meiji Bulgaria partnership, which is one of the few alliances formed in the Communist era between Bulgaria and Japan, that survived the turmoil of Bulgarian transition to market economy after the fall of Berlin wall, enjoys the full institutional support of Bulgarian and Japanese states.

Usually in the program of all Bulgarian high-ranked statesman that are visiting Japan for the first time, meetings with the executives of Meiji are included and this helps both Meiji and LB Bulgaricum to keep the high spirit of their partnership and to accommodate it to the complex situation

of the international markets, where the risks of the protectionism and sectionalism in trade relation and the changes in the legal framework pose new risks and challenges to the partnership between both companies, that must be treated with prudence, flexible tactics and long-term multi-option-al strategy.

As an estimation of respect to the loyalty and persistence of Meiji in its care Bulgaria Yogurt and promulgating Bulgarian culture in Japan, Mr. Hisashi Nakayama in his capacity of Chairman of Meiji Dairies Corporation at that time, was honored to be appointed as the first Bulgarian Honorary Consul in Japan in 2003.

Meiji Dairies met Bulgarian Yogurt



Real yogurt is not sweet!

The Osaka Expo in 1970 led to the development of Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt.

Authentic yogurt will certainly be accepted. Why don't we try?

Keijyo Fujimi, former managing director and later president

Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt Brand identity

Original value conveyed to the consumers



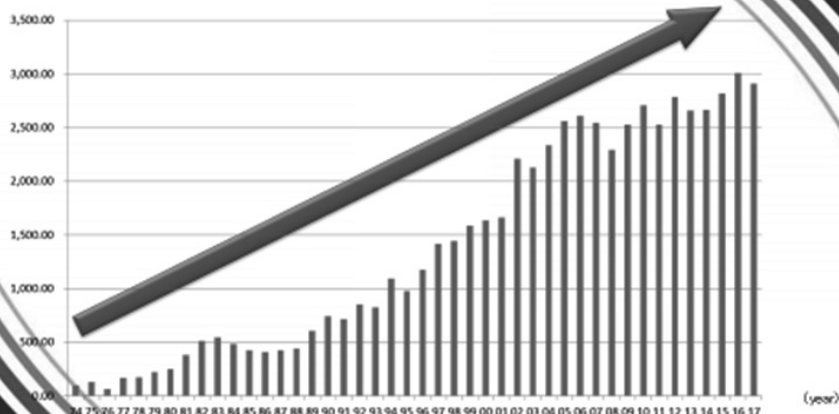
These are the five values we have defined and maintained.

戦後ブルガリアヨーグルト

17

Meiji Bulgaria Yogurt Sales Volume Trend in Japan

■ Changes in the sales volume (assuming sales in the release year 1974 as 100%) 1974 ~ 2017 y



The sales volume has increased up to roughly 30 times since it was launched, reaching at about 80 billions ¥ (20% of the total market) recently.

戦後ブルガリアヨーグルト

5

To the Strategic Partnership and beyond

EBATA Yasuyuki¹

Abstract: *Prime Minister Shinzo Abe came to Bulgaria in January 2018 as the first Prime Minister ever to pay a visit to Bulgaria in the history and thus sent out a signal. There were two strategic agenda and they settled a course to follow. One was Business Forum, and the other one was Western Balkan Initiative. This shows why we should raise our relationship to the strategic partnership and beyond. Implementation of more strategic collaboration projects between Japan and Bulgaria would establish the genuine strategic partnership in the near future.*

Keywords: strategic partnership, diplomatic relationship, Japan, Bulgaria,

Today I will talk about the bilateral diplomatic relationship between Japan and Bulgaria from my own experience and my personal viewpoint. I would like to focus on the Strategic Partnership.

But what is a strategic partnership? Here is an example: we have Woody and Baz Light Year from Toy Story. They give us a clear example of strategic partnership. The territory covered by a cowboy is different from that of a space ranger. There is no common ground and they had a conflict of interest. However, they cooperated with each other for pursuing the common benefit based on their friendship. I think common benefit is a necessary element of a strategic partnership.

Here is another example. Take the *Star Wars* characters C-3PO and R2-D2. These two robots have different personalities and capabilities. But they complement each other. C-3PO does nothing but talk. R2-D2 cannot talk, but he is powerful. The aforementioned complementarity is actually an impermeable reason for strategic partnership.

¹Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Bulgaria (2018-2021). EBATA Yasuyuki served in Samawah liaison office in Iraq, the Embassy of Japan in the United States, Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna and Terrorism Preparedness and Response Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I do not think there are certain criteria that define strategic partnership. There are also several combinations of motives and subject matters to be considered. Japan needs geographical or security complementarity as well as common interest on business and safety. Recently, Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy became one of the most important Japanese foreign policy issues in terms of energy security, ocean resources, territorial conflict, and some other aspects. Therefore, Japan offers a special position to partners for the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy.

In addition, you need a trigger in order to make strategic partnership. One very essential element is VIP visits. It is somewhat similar to the chicken and egg theory, but if summits occur frequently, the bilateral relationship becomes strategically important. Because of the strategic importance, country leaders must meet regularly.

There are several levels of partnership categories for Japan. The strongest partnership is termed Alliance. Japan has only one Alliance, which is with the US. Since the security environment in East Asia is very tough, we cannot survive without the US force. Prime Minister Abe and President Trump are good friends and they have even shared their passion for golf on many occasions. I think it is also important to maintain personal relationship between heads of states.

Actually, there is one more category that fits between the Alliance and Strategic Partnership. Regarding the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, concerned countries have been given a special position. On one hand, our partnership with India is formulated as Special Global Strategic Partnership. On the other hand, Australia is Special Strategic Partner and New Zealand is Strategic Cooperation Partner. As for the UAE, the partnership type is termed Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

In 2019, Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement entered into force. It is a very special case because the partnership is based on a firm legal foundation. We have other strategic partners such as the UK, Poland, Spain, Finland, Denmark, and the Netherlands from EU, as well as ASEAN countries. In addition, Turkey, Chile, and Saudi Arabia are Japan's Strategic Partners, too.

Surprisingly enough, Japan does not have any strategic partnerships with neighbouring countries. We surely recognize China as a country with the potential to forge and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship. Similarly, we think of South Korea as Japan's most important neighbour who shares strategic interests with Japan...

Now, I would like to consider in greater detail the Japan-Bulgaria rela-

tionship. Since the beginning of the 1990's, Japan has implemented many projects for the democratization of Eastern Europe, including countries such as Bulgaria. Japan provided roughly 1 billion USD for the projects in Bulgaria such as the Port of Bourgas Expansion, the Plovdiv Industrial Pollution Improvement Plan, as well as the Sofia Subway Expansion. As early as the 1970's, Japan provided Yen Loan to construct New Otani Hotel, now known as Marinela Hotel.

Since Japan implemented many projects in the 1990's, organizations of importance such as JICA, JOCV, and JETRO had established office in Sofia. It was considered as a big business opportunity for five major Japanese companies (Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Marubeni, Mitsui and Itochu), who did so too. Just to note, the Japan Chamber of Commerce was also established during this time. However, the relationship between our two countries was not equal. At the time, Japan was the second largest economic power and was proud of it. A main task on the Embassy of Japan in Sofia's agenda list was the implementation of big ODA projects – our relationship type was only that of donor and recipient. There was no strategic relation at all. That said, the presence of Japan was considerable.

Unfortunately, after 1996 or 1997, the Japanese companies gradually left the country due to the reasons related to economic and financial corruption. First, JETRO chose to focus on its further partnership activities with Hungary. By 2004, all other major Japanese companies had left Bulgaria except Mitsubishi Corporation. What may be considered the “Bulgaria Boom” came to an end only 15 years after its birth. As a matter of fact, there was one more “boom” around 2007 when Bulgaria was about to join the EU. Many Japanese companies began to regard Bulgaria as a gateway to the EU. They were ready to invest in Bulgaria. Unfortunately, the World Economic Crisis happened due to the Lehman shock and many companies gave up on their upcoming projects in Bulgaria. This economy of deterioration in Japan lasted until 2012.

I came back to Bulgaria in July 2018 for the first time in twenty years and I was quite impressed to see all the changes. I could not have even dreamed of Sofia having such a state-of-art airport, subway, and numerous shopping malls. Bulgaria had really become a state member of the EU. On the other hand, I was very much disappointed by the lack of presence of Japan in Bulgaria. There were only few Japanese businesspersons in Sofia. Japanese ODA projects were nowhere to be seen. However, I found our relationship had also transformed into equal partnership. I thought it is a fair start because

an opportunity to establish the strategic partnership had opened. We have already taken steps towards resuming our relationship and growing it into a warm partnership. It is safe to say that Japan is back in Bulgaria.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe came to Bulgaria in January 2018 as the first Prime Minister ever to pay a visit to Bulgaria in the history and thus sent out a signal. There were two impact points and they set a steady course to follow. One was the Business Forum and the other one was the Western Balkan Initiative. Since our relationship had turned into one of equal partnership, business and political factors became a focal point of the relationship. It can be said that both the Business Forum and the Western Balkan Initiative are strategic agendas.

In February last year, Deputy Prime Minister visited Japan to further strengthen our collaboration. Later on, in June, the Japan Business Forum was established in Sofia. Then, in January 2019, our Embassy organized a networking conference in order to enhance the business relationship among Japanese and Bulgarian companies. In May the same year, we organized the Bulgaria Business Forum in Dusseldorf where more than 620 Japanese companies participated.

Following, in August, Foreign Minister Kono visited Bulgaria for the first time in 12 years. This visit was the highlight of the year. Mr. Kono's first meeting was with Prime Minister Borissov. I asked Tokyo to prepare a football jersey of the Shonan FC, which Mr. Kono used to be a President of. I also requested a No.13 to be put on it because I knew No.13 is Mr. Borissov's number. In politics too, personal touch is of great importance. What followed was the Foreign Minister's meeting with excellent output. The two Foreign Ministers met several times in Toronto, New York, and Tokyo. They certainly had very good chemistry. It may be considered a rarity in politics, but it is why almost every time of their meeting was *tete-a-tete*. Perhaps it is not widely known, but it is rather unusual for a Japanese Foreign Ministry to allow the Minister to meet his counterpart without other officials present. But here is yet another piece of proof that the establishment of a good personal relationship is important for the strategic partnership. One of the things that Mr. Kono became firmly convinced of is that the Japanese government must make better known the enormous potential of Bulgarian IT companies. Japanese companies need excellent IT engineers, but they did not recognize Bulgaria yet. I think Bulgaria can complement Japan in the fields of IT. That is why we suggested the Minister to visit the Bulgarian branch of studio SEGA, which was established in April 2019. We knew that Japanese com-

panies pay attention when the Minister pays a visit somewhere. Especially Foreign Minister Kono is famous for being active on Twitter and having over 800,000 followers. Over 20,000 followers liked this picture of him in the newly established studio in just 30 minutes.

In September, the Embassy of Bulgaria in Tokyo organized an economic seminar. The following month, President Radev visited Japan to participate in the enthronement ceremony of the new Japanese emperor and to meet with Prime Minister Abe as well. As a result, we gained momentum to enhance our relationship even more.

Now Japanese companies are back to Bulgaria. In the recent years, Yazaki and Sumitomo Electric established automobile parts factories in Eastern Bulgaria. Sumitomo Cooperation bought Moto-Pfohe two years ago. JAPE established a frozen Sushi factory in Plovdiv. Pentax Medical established a new service centre. In addition, SEGA games opened its game studio.

Currently, more projects are underway. With the donor-recipient relationship being over, Japan would benefit greatly by deepening its connections with Bulgaria. As I mentioned, complementarity is the key point of this strategic partnership.

In addition, Japan and Bulgaria collaborate widely on the Western Balkan Cooperation. When Prime Minister Abe met with Prime Minister Borissov in January 2018, they agreed on creating the Western Balkan Initiative. Our Embassy organized the Disaster Management Seminar in February 2019. Disasters are a shared problem among the countries in the Western Balkans and they provide them with a good reason to come together and talk. Japan has a lot of experience in disaster management and can share its insight and knowledge. It is essential to give each other opportunities and for the Western Balkans to work together in the name of greater stability and credibility. However, Japan is unable to do it alone and requires Bulgaria's cooperation. As a mediator between countries within long-term conflict, only Bulgaria was in the position to invite both Serbia and Kosovo. Therefore, we relied on the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior to invite disaster experts from all six countries from the Western Balkans. Japan and Bulgaria share the common goal on their diplomatic agenda of ensuring the stability and prosperity of the Western Balkans.

This also shows why we should work on improving our relationship to a strategic partnership and even go beyond. I myself would like to take part in many collaboration projects with Bulgaria and contribute to establishing a true strategic partnership between Japan and Bulgaria in the near future.

Cultural and Spiritual Intersections

The elusive scholar: Watanabe Mamoru, the Japanese cinema and Bulgaria (late 30's and early 40's of the XX century)

Andronika MÀRTONOVA *

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Abstract: *The proposed paper will focus on some unpopular documents and archival sources that illuminate some aspects of the work of Japanese scholar (musicologist, but also with wide competence in general culture, theatre and cinema) – Dr. (PhD) Mamoru Watanabe – in Bulgaria during the World War II. Watanabe's activities are related to the promotion of Japanese culture in our country, but have not yet been sufficiently studied due to the lack of archival materials. The study will put some additional stroke not only to the personality of the Japanese scientist but also to the portrait of the historical period, marked by the active development of Bulgarian-Japanese cultural relations. Particular emphasis will be placed on the film context and the promotion of Japanese cinema in Bulgaria.*

Keywords: *Bulgaria, Japan, cultural diplomacy, cinema, archive*

The notion of Japan and the knowledge of Japanese culture, respectively, had a gradual introduction into Bulgarian public space. The process began as early as the fading moments of the Bulgarian National Revival and the first years of the Liberation from Ottoman rule and reached its peak in the years between the two World Wars, especially the period of World War II. A peak that was also determined by the establishment of diplomatic

* Dr. Andronika Màrtonova is a film critic, researcher and university's educator in Asian cinema. She is Associated Professor, PhD in Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – Institute of Art Studies (www.artstudies.bg), where she works at position Head of Screen Art Department. Màrtonova is author of numerous critical and research publications on the field of Asian and Japanese film cultures. E-mail: andronika.martonova@gmail.com.

relations between the then Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Japanese Empire¹.

Initially, the image and concept of Japan were mediated through various publications in the press relating to its society, modernization, customs, religion, folklore. The first years of the 20th century and the ignition of the Russo-Japanese War sparked a lasting interest for the Land of the Rising Sun. Interest that has had a continuous resonance after the military conflict. Literary works were translated into western languages, albeit not from the original Japanese. Japanese narratives were interpreted for European artistic practices and thus an image of Japan also reached Bulgaria. 1906 was the year in which the first authentic impression of the Empire, by virtue of Anton Bozukov's travelogue "*Journey through Japan*", was published². Much later his observations will be supplemented and developed in 1942 by traveler Lyuba Kutincheva in her book "*Japan. Personal Impressions, Observations and Studies*", her lectures, accompanied by rich illustrative photographic material, and even film screenings³.

In the bosom of the arts, the artistic practices of the Japanese people and of the artists themselves reached Bulgaria sporadically. Namely at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. The performing arts through which Bulgarians got acquainted with them were circus and theatre⁴.

The advent of the new marvel of technology, the cinematograph, visualized all that was written on page. Indeed, photography precedes cinema, but its static nature could not ensure the kind of spectacle that featured real people in an authentic setting fixed in front of the camera lens. Initially, films contained documentary reels of Japan which later transitioned into

¹ See: *Strezova, Aleka*. The Establishment of Bulgarian-Japanese Diplomatic Relations and First Bulgarian Diplomatic Representatives in Tokyo (1942-1945). – In: *World War II Re-explored*. Some New Millennium Studies in the History of the Global Conflict. Berlin, 2019, "Peter Lang" Publishing House, 319-336.

² See: *Vutova-Stefanova, Vera, Kandilarov, Evgeniy*. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, Personalities and Events. Sofia 2019, "East-West" Publishing House.

³ See: *Martonova, Andronika*. The wonderers with movie camera: The Mysterious Lyuba and Nicola Kutinchevs. – *Art Studies Quaterly*, vol.54, no.4 – 2018. Sofia, Institute of Art Studies, BAS, 2019, 43-42. CEEOL, <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=777017> , 30 January 2020.

⁴ See: *Martonova, Andronika*. Hanako: a Kabuki actress across Bulgaria and Transylvania at the beginning of 20 century. – In: *Societas classica: Cultures and Religions in the Balkans, the Mediterranean and the East*, vol.10, no.1. Veliko Tarnovo, "St. Cyril and St. Methodius" University of Veliko Tarnovo – University Press, 2019, 141 – 162. VTU Press, <http://journals.uni-vt.bg/sc/eng/>, 11 March 2020.

brief melodramas, based on quasi Japanese plots⁵.

Between the two world wars film distribution in Bulgaria was dominated by European and American productions. Especially popular among Bulgarian people was Japanese artist Sessue Hayakawa⁶ who was known for his career of considerable success in Hollywood.

In fact, the first time a Japanese title had distribution in our country was in 1929, and it aroused particular interest among Bulgarian modernists and intellectual elites. The film in question was “*Jūjiro*”(十字路, „*Cross-roads*”, 1928) by the avant-garde director *Kinugasa Teinosuke* (衣笠 貞之助)⁷. The picture was purchased by “Bulgaria Film” and was a private commercial initiative.

In the 1930s, until the end of World War II, imports of Japanese films in Bulgaria increased, with much of the film production coming in through Germany. Special screenings of Japanese films were organized at a later stage, thanks to the cultural policy of the Japanese Legation in Sofia (established in 1939). As of this moment, we have confirmed data that the following titles were screened in Bulgaria:

- “*Namiko*” (*Letzte Liebe / Last love / 恋は終りぬ*) – coproduction between Japan/Austria/Germany, 1935, dir. Fritz Schulz, with Tanaka Michiko;
- “*The Daughter of the Samurai*” (*Die Tochter des Samurai / 新しき土*)⁸, coproduction between Japan/Germany, 1937, dir. Arnold Fanck and Itami Mansaku, with Hara Setsuko and Hayakawa Sessue;
- “*Nippon’s Wild Eagles*” (*Nippons wilde Adler / 燃ゆる大空*), Japan, 1940, dir. Abe Yutaka, documentary⁹;
- “*Ine and her Horse*” (a.k.a. *Horse / Ine und ihr Pferd / 馬*), Japan, 1941, dir. Yamamoto Kajiro.

⁵ See: *Martonova, Andronika*. The Hieroglyph of Cinema. Aesthetic and Meaning in East Asian Cinema. Sofia, 2007, “Panorama” Publishing House.

⁶ The Bulgarian portrait of the Japanese-American star is analyzed in: *Martonova, Andronika*. A character depicted on the face. (Sessue Hayakawa – The Japanese who tempted the world). – In: *Bulgaria-Japan-The World*. International Jubilee Conference in Japanese Studies, Sofia: Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2013, 184-190.

⁷ See: *Martonova, Andronika*. Dialogues of modernity – the Japanese avant-garde filmmaker Kinugasa Teinosuke and the Bulgarian cultural space. – *ARTizantin*, no.9. Sofia, Argos Publishing, 2018, 172-181.

⁸ In Bulgaria, the title was promoted as “*The Daughter of the Rising Sun*”.

⁹ In the press media the film was announced as the “*first official screening of the Bulgarian-Japanese Friendship Society*”, founded in Sofia on February 8, 1942. The projection was at the end of February 1942 at the Europa Palace Cinema in the heart of the capital.

The role of the professional cinema expert, working with film archives and restoring original information, was of particular importance when exploring the cultural communication between Bulgaria and Japan from the screen. Often it was common practice in the cultural field in Bulgaria at the time to change the title of a film in order to adjust it to the receptive mechanisms of the audience, and to have suitable advertising.

Bulgarian film studies never lacked in excitement on matters concerning the cultural ties with Japan and could make a significant contribution to expand the historical context of communication. Research on the repertoire policy and screening of foreign films in our country in the period between the two World Wars was based primarily on an interdisciplinary approach: working with the press, with the specialized film press, with the original films, with archival units that are preserved in state archival funds, memoirs, historical documents, and more.

By the end of World War II, the specialized film press also published texts related to the state of the Japanese film industry: types of movie theatres, information on major film studios, biographic articles of and interviews with (mainly existing content that was translated) major stars of Japanese cinema, film reviews. Some of the articles were translated from other film related publications. Others were the work of Bulgarian authors, some of whom belonged to the cultural elite.

It is in this context that we can trace the presence of a Japanese author who published exclusively for the Bulgarian magazine “*Film*” at the end of 1943. His name was **Watanabe Mamoru** (渡辺 護). His text was not a translated correspondence to accidentally find its way on the pages of a film magazine, nor was it the selection of an editor, but an original material written specifically for the magazine. In fact, Watanabe actually resided in Bulgaria at the time. Here’s what we can read inside the Japanese author’s original article:

“Many actors and actresses have emanated from Japanese film, even if they are widely unknown in Europe. There are three major film companies in Japan: Toho, Shochiku and Nikkatsu. Each one has its own group of actors under contract. Interestingly, in Japan, actors who play historical roles and those who play modern roles differ. It is very rare for an actress, or an actor, who is known for historical films, to appear in a modern film. This is due to the archaic clothing and especially the ancient hairstyle’s requirement of a specific type of hair that is in contradiction to modern styles. This is proof that beauty measure has changed over time. These days we

can observe another change in the taste for female beauty. A change that is nowhere to be observed as clearly, as on the screen”¹⁰.

In “*Actors and actresses of Japanese film*” Watanabe Mamoru introduced to the Bulgarian reader the big names from the film industry as: *Takako Irie* (入江 たか子), *Kuwan Michiko* (桑野通子), *Tanaka Kinuyo* (田中 絹代), a true diva in *Hara Setsuko* (原 節子), *Oka Jōji* (岡 譲司), and *Hasegawa Kazuo* (長谷川 一夫). He briefly analyzed the typology of their acting, the characters they portrayed in different genres, and commented on the different techniques for stage acting and film acting. The material was illustrated very well with six black and white portrait shots of the aforementioned actors. The Bulgarian magazine “*Film*”, which was modeled after the German one that belonged to the major film company UFA, was first published in the summer of 1942 and quickly established itself as a significant specialized media focused on propagandizing German film culture. It is not by accident that the text of the Japanese author appeared on its pages. It has to be reminded that as early as the late 1930s a Japan-Germany film agreement was formed, and the period was marked by active cooperation between the film cultures of the two sides. Co-productions between Japan and Germany were released with some of the titles having distribution on screens in Bulgaria as well.

Watanabe’s text was published at the end of 1943, when the Convention on Cultural Cooperation¹¹ between Bulgaria and Japan had already entered into force. The Convention includes a section about the film’s exchange. A year earlier – at the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942 – companies were set up with the intention to form a cooperation between Bulgaria and Japan in different cities around the country: Sofia¹², Dobrich¹³, Yambol¹⁴, etc. A “*Bulgarian-Japanese Academic Club “Holy Trinity”*” (*Alliance des étudiants bulgaro-japonais*)¹⁵ was established in the capital. The companies and the club were culturally and educationally oriented organizations that mediated the process of familiarization between the two nations, and the extension of the already established bond. Lectures were organized,

¹⁰ Watanabe, Mamoru. The Actors and Actresses from the Japanese Motion Picture. – *Film*, vol. 2, no.15, December 16-23, 1943, p.13.

¹¹ CSA, f.177k, i.2, a.u. 2121.

¹² CSA, f.264k, i.7, a.u. 1124.

¹³ CSA, f.264k, i.5, a.u. 996-997.

¹⁴ CSA, f.264k, i.2, a.u. 8250.

¹⁵ CSA, f.264k, i.5, a.u. 999.

some taking place in movie theatres, film screenings, and various events, often under the auspices and with the approval of the Japanese Legation in Sofia. It is interesting to note that some of the meetings were monitored by the staff of State Security¹⁶. It is quite possible that Watanabe Mamoru was also in attendance at these meetings, although currently we do not have any documentation to prove it.

Our knowledge for the Japanese scholar is scarce. Watanabe (October 9, 1915, Tokyo – July 30, 2007) was a musicologist, with broad academic background in the arts, which is evident through the multitude publications (many in German) and translations to his name throughout his career. In 1938 he graduated from the Imperial University of Tokyo, in the Department of Aesthetics. A year later, he specialized in Germany and in 1942 he broadened his knowledge in European musical heritage at the University of Vienna. He was married to a woman from Romania. The last year of WWII he spent in Switzerland, after which he went to the United States. At some point he returned to Japan where he worked as a teacher. He was the director of the Japanese Cultural Institute in Cologne during the 1980s and held a diplomatic post in the Embassy of Japan in West Germany (FRG) before the German Reunification. After completing his term, he briefly taught at Osaka College of Music, and in 1994 he moved to the United Kingdom¹⁷.

In the context of Bulgarian archival heritage, very few documents remain that reveal Watanabe's personality and work. At this point in the study, we can say that he was an elusive scholar who left compelling traces in the discourse of cultural communication between Bulgaria and Japan.

"A young, humble, and bright Japanese man sits opposite me" – this is how prominent Bulgarian journalist Lyuben Bozhinov begins his interview with Watanabe Mamoru¹⁸.

"I am a little late," he excuses.

He smiles again, putting a thin and miniature hand on his mouth

Let's start with some journalism, – I added right at the start. – I suppose you ought to hand me a photograph?

Mamoru Watanabe searches through his papers.

¹⁶For example see the report from operative intelligencer No 2013 from March 2, 1942, which reports on the activities of the club *"The Holy Trinity"*. Ibid, p.4.

¹⁷According Henitiuk, Valerie. *Worlding Sei Shônagon: The Pillow Book in Translation*. Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press, 2012, p.123.

¹⁸Bozhinov, Lyubomir [Lyuben]. *The Japanese cinema and theatre's actors. A sketch from the one conversation with the Japanese scholar PhD Mamoru Watanabe. – Black and White – journal for film art and culture*, vol. 2, no.7, June 16, 1943, p.5.

And now the signature.

How great was my surprise when this young Japanese scholar, whose visit here was probably his first, wrote his name down in nice Bulgarian words.

Yes, I know a little – dr. Mamoru Watanabe said slowly, carefully, but correctly, in response to my astonishment.

/.../ For half a year now [he] has been studying Bulgarian thoroughly.

My primary Bulgarian teacher is professor Rusev, in Vienna...

Dr. Mamoru Watanabe is in Sofia in relation to the lecture he had on Kabuki theatre.”¹⁹

The interview was published in “*White and Black*” on June 16, 1943. The publication claims to be a renowned biweekly magazine about film and culture. It is oriented towards propaganda of Italian film culture, following the model of the legendary Italian magazine, “*Bianco e Nero*”, created in 1937.

What were Watanabe and Bozhinov talking about? What language were they conferring in? Probably in German.

Lyubomir [Lyubo] Bozhinov (1908 – 1967) was a prominent figure in the Bulgarian intellectual elite before and after WWII. He was the son of a distinguished artist, Alexander Bozhinov, referred to as “*the Father of Bulgarian caricature*”. Lyubomir graduated in Beograd with a degree in Serbo-Croatian philology but had extensive interests and understanding of the arts. He was also a very good artist himself. He returned to Bulgaria in 1941, actively working as a journalist for the press and Radio Sofia, a translator of both literature and film. An erudite, fluent in several European languages, including German and French. It should be emphasized that in the late 1930s Japanese culture and film were relatively well-known in the Kingdom of Serbia – evidence of which can be found in the Serbian Film Archive. Bozhinov Jr. was familiar with Japan’s artistic achievements²⁰. Alas, during researches of Lyubomir Bozhinov’s personal archives, the photo given to him by Watanabe was not found, nor was any other trace left – such as notes or any kind of keepsake of his meeting with the Japanese

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ See: *Bozhinov, Lyubomir [Lyuben]*. Viscount Hidemaro Konoye converses. The prominent Japanese Conductor about the film’s music and his own creative work. – *Film*, vol. 1, no.17, 1942, p.10.

Bozhinov, Lyubomir [Lyuben]. The Japanese Film Art. – *Film*, vol. 1, no.7, September 1- 15, 1942, p.7.

CSA, f.1320k, i.2, a.u.49, p.1-3.

scholar. However, a letter of invitation from the Bulgarian-Japanese Society in Sofia, addressed to the journalist, has been preserved. The address on the envelope is typed in French: "*To Mr. Bozhinov Jr., 6 N. Pavlovich str., in the city.*" The invitation inside the envelope is in solid brick-coloured cardboard, in Bulgarian. It reads as follows: "*The Bulgarian-Japanese Society in Sofia is privileged to invite you to honour with your presence the screening of the Japanese film "Ine and her Horse" which will take place on January 9, 1944, at 9:00 in the morning, at "Europa Palace"*"²¹.

What are the topics Bozhinov and Watanabe discussed together? Generally, the conversation was about the juxtaposition between the conventions of European and classical Japanese theatre, the influence Kabuki had on Japanese aesthetic understandings. The achievements of European and Russian dramaturgy, the state of contemporary (of the era) performing arts. As for cinema, Watanabe had extensive background and was well versed in Japanese film repertoire, which was distributed in Europe at the time.

The conversation, which remained on the pages of "*White and black*", ends with Lyuben Bozhinov's statement: "*Japanese. Representative of a hard-working and capable nation*". And with one riddle: "*I have a secret*", says Watanabe cryptically, "*when I return in the fall, I will share it with you!*"

What was Watanabe's secret?

At the same time – summer of 1943 – the Japanese Legation in Sofia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Confessions, the Ministry of Education of Bulgaria and Sofia University kept active correspondence with Watanabe Mamoru. At the suggestion of the Japanese Legation, the scholar was proposed to start ***the first lectureship in Japanese language and culture in Sofia University, in the fall of the academic year 1943/1944***. It was in June that the Academic Council of the university voted in the affirmative of the candidature. Watanabe was paid by the Legation for his lectures. In a letter addressed to the rector of Sofia University, Prof. Dimitar Katsarov, Japan's Minister of Legislature informs that Dr. Watanabe has a degree in philology in Tokyo and is fluent in Bulgarian, and his appointment is in the interest of the cultural ties between Bulgaria and Japan. As well as in harmony with the cultural agreement between the two countries. The documents of this correspondence between the institutions are kept in the Sofia University archive²².

²¹ CSA, f.1320k, i.2, a.u.49, p.1-3.

²² See the documents at Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski' Archive: f.1, i.35, a.u.1: *Mamoru Watanabe's personal record – a PhD, lecturer in Japanese Language at Faculty*

Before the appointment, it should be noted, Watanabe already had both experience and good standing in the academic field in Bulgaria. A year earlier, in mid-1942, he read lectures at the National Academy of Art. The correspondence between him and Prof. Vasil Zahariev, Rector of the Academy of Art, is another valuable archival source for cultural relations between the two countries. The lecture Watanabe read on May 28, 1942, was widely attended not only by students, but also by professional artists and people who had interest in the matter. The topic was about the spirit of Japanese sculpture: “*Expression and style in Japanese plastic*”²³. The exchanged letters between Prof. Zahariev and Watanabe made it clear that a new lectureship was planned for October, 1942, dedicated to contemporary Japanese painting and applied arts. Both the Bulgarian and Japanese sides were fascinated by the meeting and the shared knowledge. Here is a letter from Watanabe to Vasil Zahariev:

“From Dr. Mamoru Watanabe

Vienna IX/66, 7 Berggasse Street

Tel. A/14-4-66

June 8, 1942

To Prof. Zahariev, National Academy of Art, Sofia.

Dear Professor!

I express my heartfelt gratitude to you for your kind letter from May 29.

*It was a great pleasure for me to know that my lecture appealed to both you and the other guests. My only regret is that I could not stay in Sofia longer and did not have the opportunity to speak with you. Of course, I would be very glad if given the opportunity to read another lecture in Sofia. If you inform the Japanese Legation in Sofia of your wish, the opportunity to come to Sofia could be manifested more easily. In order to prepare the manuscript and photographs on time, please inform me on the topic you would prefer.”*²⁴

of History and Philology, academic year 1942/1943 ; and f.1, i.1, a.u.53: Protocol No15 from the meeting of Academic council, June 9, 1943.

²³ SA-Sofia, f.1047k, i.2,a.u.90: *State Academy of Art – Correspondence between Vasil Zahariev and Mamoru Watanabe (on German and Bulgarian languages) concerning lectures on Japanese Art, July 6, 1942.*

²⁴ Ibid., p.2. Special thanks go to the colleagues Zhanina Dragostinova, who translated the archival letter from German language and Boyan Tzenev from Bulgarian Film Archive for English translation.

Mamoru Watanabe's presence certainly is an important moment in the cultural diplomacy studies between Japan and Bulgaria. The present text is a first approach on a topic that can certainly be developed much more sufficiently when studying the archives in Vienna, and also if given access to the personal archive of the scholar. Certainly more data and documents can be found there about his residence and work in Bulgaria, as long as they are preserved. At this point, the man remains an enigmatic figure who has left significant traces in academic institutions and the public space. Film studies provides an additional opportunity for Japanese historical researches by discovering new, unfamiliar to Japanese specialists, funds – such as the specialized film press of the time in which we discovered both the personal interview with Watanabe Mamoru and his original publication. Combining the discursive fields of cinema and the knowledge of Japan gives new perspective on the study of historical processes.

Bibliography:

Henitiuk, Valerie. Worlding Sei Shônagon: The Pillow Book in Translation. Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press, 2012;

Martanova, Andronika. Dialogues of modernity – the Japanese avant-garde filmmaker Kinugasa Teinosuke and the Bulgarian cultural space. – *ARTizanin*, no.9. Sofia, Argos Publishing, 2018 (*Мартонова, А.* Диалози на модерността – японският киноавангардист Кинугаса Тейносуке и българското културно пространство. – *АРТизанин*, бр. 9. София, Изд. Аргос, 2018);

Martanova, Andronika. A character depicted on the face. (Sessue Hayakawa – The Japanese who tempted the world). – In: *Bulgaria-Japan-The World*. International Jubilee Conference in Japanese Studies, Sofia: Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2013. (*Мартонова, А.* Един характер, изобразен върху лицето. (Сешю Хаякава – японецът, който съблазни света). – В: *България-Япония-Светът*. Международен юбилеен симпозиум по Японистика, СУ „Климент Охридски”. София, СУ, 2013);

Martanova, Andronika. Hanako: a Kabuki actress across Bulgaria and Transylvania at the beginning of 20 century. – In: *Societas classica: Cultures and Religions in the Balkans, the Mediterranean and the East*, vol.10, no.1. Veliko Tarnovo, “St. Cyril and St. Methodius” University of Veliko Tarnovo – University Press, 2019. (*Мартонова, А.* Ханако: една Кабуки актриса

из България и Трансилвания в началото на 20 век. – В: *Societas classica: Култури и религии на Балканите, Средиземноморието и Изтока*, год.10, бр.1. Велико Търново, Издателство на Великотърновски университет „Св. св. Кирил и Методий”, 2019) VTU Press, <http://journals.uni-vt.bg/sc/eng/>, 11 March 2020;

Martonova, Andronika. The Hieroglyph of Cinema. Aesthetic and Meaning in East Asian Cinema. Sofia, 2007, “Panorama” Publishing House (*Мартонова, А. Йероглифът на киното. Естетика и смисъл на в киното на Източна Азия.*). София, 2007, Изд. „Панорама“);

Martonova, Andronika. The wonderers with movie camera: The Mysterious Luyba and Nicola Kutinchevs. – *Art Studies Quaterly*, vol.54, no.4-2018. Sofia, Institute of Art Studies, BAS, 2019 (*Мартонова, А. Пътешественици с кинокамера: загадъчните Люба и Никола Кутинчеви. – Проблеми на изкуството*, год.51, бр. 4 - 2018. София, Институт за изследване на изкуствата, БАН, 2019) CEEOL: <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=777017> , 30 January 2020;

Strezova, Aleka. The Establishment of Bulgarian-Japanese Diplomatic Relations and First Bulgarian Diplomatic Representatives in Tokyo (1942-1945). – In: *World War II Re-explored. Some New Millennium Studies in the History of the Global Conflict*. Berlin, 2019, “Peter Lang” Publishing House;

Vutova-Stefanova, Vera, Kandilarov, Evgeniy. Bulgaria and Japan. Politics, Diplomacy, Personalities and Events. Sofia 2019, “East-West” Publishing House (*Вутова-Стефанова, В., Кандиларов, Е. България и Япония. Политика, дипломация, личности и събития. С. 2019, Изд. „Изток-Запад“*);

Watanabe, Mamoru. Why do the Japanese like European music. – *International Journal of Music Education*, Vol.2, no1. November 1, 1983, 3-10. SAGEPub <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/025576148300200101>, 15 October 2019.

Archival sources:

Bozhinov, Lyubomir [Lyuben]. The Japanese cinema and theatre's actors. A sketch from the one conversation with the Japanese scholar PhD Mamoru Watanabe. – *Black and White – journal for film art and culture*, vol. 2, no.7, June 16, 1943, p.5 (*Божинов, Любомир [Любен]. Японските филмови и театрални артисти. Скица от един разговор с японския учен д-р Мамору Ватанабе. – Бяло и черно – списание за киноизкуство и култура*, год.2, бр.7, 16 юни, 1943, с.5);

Bozhinov, Lyubomir [Lyuben]. The Japanese Film Art. – Film, vol. 1, no.7, September 1- 15, 1942, p.7 (Божинов, Любомир [Любен]. Японското филмово изкуство. – Филм, год. 1, бр. 7, 1-15 септември, 1942, с. 7);

Bozhinov, Lyubomir [Lyuben]. Viscount Hidemaro Konoye converses. The prominent Japanese Conductor about the film's music and his own creative work. – Film, vol. 1, no.17, 1942, p.10 (Божинов, Любомир [Любен]. Японското филмово изкуство. – Филм, год. 1, бр. 17, 1942, с.10);

CSA, f.1320k, i.1-2: Personal archival fond of Lyubomir [Lyuben] Bozhinov (ЦДА, ф.1320к, оп. 1-2: Личен фонд на Любомир [Любен] Божинов);

CSA, f.177k, i.2, a.u. 2121: Convention between Bulgaria and Japan concerning the cultural Co-operation, 1943 (ЦДА, ф.177к, оп.2, а.е. 2121: Конвенция между България и Япония за културно сътрудничество, 1943);

CSA, f.264k, i.2, a.u. 8250: Bulgarian-Japanese Association in city of Yambol, 1942 (ЦДА, ф.264к, оп.2, а.е. 8250: Българо-японско дружество в гр. Ямбол, 1942);

CSA, f.264k, i.5, a.u. 996-997: Bulgarian-Japanese Association in city of Dobrich, 1942-1943 (ЦДА, ф.264к, оп.5, а.е. 996-997: Българо-японско дружество в гр. Добрич, 1942-1943);

CSA, f.264k, i.5, a.u. 999: Bulgarian-Japanese Academic Club "Holy Trinity", Sofia, 1942 (ЦДА, ф.264к, оп.5, а.е. 999: Българо-японски академичен клуб „Св. Троица“, София, 1940-1943);

CSA, f.264k, i.7, a.u. 1124: Statute Project of Sofia's Bulgarian-Japanese association, February 13, 1942 (ЦДА, ф.264к, оп.7, а.е.1124: Проектоустав на Българо-японско дружество в София, 13 февруари 1943);

SA-Sofia, f.1047k, i.2, a.u.90: State Academy of Art - Correspondence between Vasil Zahariev and Mamoru Watanabe (on German and Bulgarian languages) concerning lectures on Japanese Art, July 6, 1942 (ДА-София, ф.1047к, оп.2, а.е.90: Държавна художествена академия – Преписка между Васил Захариев и Мамори Watanabe (на немски и български) относно лекции по японско изкуство, 6 юли 1942);

Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski' Archive , f.1, i.1, a.u.53: Protocol No15 from the meeting of Academic council, June 9, 1943 (Архив на СУ „Климент Охридски“, ф.1, оп.1, а.е. 53: Протокол №15 от заседание на Академичния съвет, 9 юни 1943);

Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski' Archive, f.1, i.35, a.u.1: *Mamoru Watanabe's personal record – a PhD, lecturer in Japanese Language at Faculty of History and Philology, academic year 1942/1943* (Архив на СУ „Климент Охридски”, ф.1, оп.35, а.е. 1: Лично дело на д-р *Mamoru Watanabe*– лектор по японски език в Историко-филологически факултет, учебна 1942/1943);

Watanabe, Mamoru. The Actors and Actresses from the Japanese Motion Picture. – *Film*, vol. 2, no.15, December 16-23, 1943, p.13 (Ватанабе, Мамору. Актьорите и актрисите от японския филм. – *Филм*, год. 2, бр. 15, 16-23 декември, 1943, с. 13).

Japan and the Bulgarian Orthodox Monastery of Zograph on the Holy Mount Athos – Spiritual and Cultural Interactions

Monk Kliment of Zograph*

Abstract: *In 1871 the Bulgarian Orthodox Monastery Zograph on Mount Athos gave the blessing to one of its monks, Father Anatoly Tikhai, to depart to Japan for an apostolic ministry. He spent there almost twenty years. In 1884, another monk from Zograph, Father Georgi Chudnovski, followed. When he returned to Mount Athos he brought a valuable collection of Japanese liturgical manuscripts, a dictionary and a calligraphy book which are all currently held at the library of Zograph.*

The current paper presents the life and the ministry of these two missionaries in Japan. It also describes the Japanese archive of Zograph, including letters exchanged between the two missionaries and their monastery. The letters, a valuable discovery, have been found only recently and have not yet been published. The paper demonstrates that spiritual and cultural interaction between Japan and the European south-east has started at a very early stage, i.e. almost a hundred and fifty years ago.

Keywords: Orthodox Christianity in Japan, Zograph Monastery, Holy Mount Athos and Japan

1. Introduction

In 1871 the Bulgarian Orthodox Monastery Zograph on the Holy Mount Athos, nowadays in Greece, gave the blessing to one of its monks, Father Anatoly Tikhai to depart to Japan and to work there as a missionary in spreading the Orthodox Christianity. He spent there almost twenty years. Later, another Zograph monk, Father Georgi Chudnovski joined him and stay in Japan for three years.

The paper contributes to the objectives of the conference demonstrating that spiritual and cultural interactions between Japan and the European

*Father Kliment is a monk in the Bulgarian Orthodox Monastery Zograph on Holy Mount Athos.

southeast have started at a very early stage – almost hundred and fifty years ago, much earlier than initially thought.

The paper continues as follows. The next section briefly presents the Holy Mount Athos and the Bulgarian Orthodox Monastery of Zograph. Section 3 introduces the historical background and the Orthodox Christianity in Japan at the time when Father Anatoly of Zograph arrived there. In section 4 the life and the ministry of both Father Anatoly and Father Georgi have been described, based on new sources. Section 5 describes the Japanes Archive of held at the Monastery of Zograph. The paper concludes with a summary of the results.

2. About the Holy Mount Athos and the Monastery of Zograph

The Holy Mountain Athos is one of the most famous and important monastic centres in the Orthodox world. The first monks appeared there in the 7th and 8th centuries. Nowadays the Holy Mount Athos is an autonomous monastic Republic which since 1926 is an integral part of the Hellenic Republic. Its legal status confirms the existence of 20 autonomous monasteries, the peninsula's entire land being divided among them.

One of these twenty monasteries on the Holy Mount Athos and one of the most ancient ones is the Slavo-Bulgarian Monastery of Zograph. According to the tradition it was built in 919 A.D. i.e. 1100 years ago. The earliest written document mentioning Zograph, preserved until this day, is a sales contract (homologion) from 980 A.D. The Patron saint of the Monastery is the Holy Great Martyr George, called Zograph, the Greek word for an icon-painter, with a reference to an icon painted by Saint George himself at the time of the establishment of the Monastery. This icon is still present in the Monastery's main church.

The question why the Monastery of Zograph sent its monks to an apolstolic ministry faraway in Japan is certainly of interest to the scientific community. The letters of Father Georgi provide an answer to this question. They have been discovered only recently in the Monastery's archives. The Russian Spiritual Mission in Japan, especially in the beginning, was in acute shortage of personnel²⁶. Both the living conditions as well as the

²⁶ See Гавриков, А.А. Дневник русского православного миссионера в Японии о. иеромонаха Анатолия как источник по изучению отношения православных японцев к событиям русско-турецкой войны 1877 - 1878, с. 177; Гавриков А.А. «Московские ведомости» о распространении православия в Японии в период становления Японской Православной Церкви (1860-е – 1880-е гг.).

difficult language were the reasons for short stays in the mission. Many of the arriving priests who had the intention of staying and joining the Orthodox mission in Japan departed shortly after their initial arrival.

Zograph was trying to maintain friendly relations with the Russian Government. This was also confirmed by Father Georgi's letters which he sent from Constantinople and later from Petersburg¹. The Monastery could not but respond positively to a request from the Russian authorities to support the Spiritual mission in Japan. Hence, when Zograph received a request from the Russian Spiritual Mission in Tokyo to send Father Georgi to Japan, the Monastery did not hesitate to agree and gave him the blessing to depart, even though he was an experienced priestmonk that the Monastery certainly needed. The Russian ambassador to Constantinople, Nelidov² expressed later his gratitude to Zograph for its „good participation in the missionary activities, sending its chosen disciples for preaching the Gospel of Christ³.“

3. Historical Background of Christianity in Japan

Christianity was first introduced to Japan around 1560 when Portuguese Jesuit missionaries began arriving in the country. At that time Portugal was one of the largest maritime empires in the world. The Jesuit missionaries converted both feudal lords as well as peasants. By the early 17th century there were up to five hundred thousand people in Japan that identified themselves as Christians, mainly but not only in the port city of Nagasaki⁴.

Japan's authorities, however, perceived the rapid Christianisation as a threat to the central government. In 1614, a strict nationwide ban on Christianity was issued. Christians who refused to renounce their faith were tortured and killed. An estimated two thousand people who refused to renounce Christianity did eventually die as martyrs. Foreign missionaries were quickly expelled from the country and those who refused to leave were also forced to renounce their faith, tortured or killed. Japan as a whole entered a period of isolation, cutting off almost all contact with the rest of the world⁵.

¹ Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letters sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/11 - 32/19/16, dated January and February, 1888.

² Aleksandr Nelidov (1835 - 1910) was a famous Russian diplomat.

³ Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 34/310, dated March 8th, 1884.

⁴ Tan, *Yvette*. The Japanese Christians forced to trample on Christ. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50414472>.

⁵ Ibid.

Only in the mid 19th century several bilateral treaties were negotiated and signed between Japan and European powers (Britain, Holland and Russia) and America. In line with these treaties, Japan allowed foreign interaction and opened four ports for foreign trade and residence: Nagasaki, Hyogo (Kobe), Kanagawa (Yokohama), and Hakodate (on the island of Hokkaido)⁶.

The Beginnings of Orthodox Christianity in Japan

The treaty with Russia allowed it to open a legation - consulate general in the port city of Hakodate, which was only a few days boat trip from Vladivostok. Following the construction of a consular building and living quarters, an Orthodox chapel was consecrated in October 1860. The chief diplomat then in charge of the consulate-general, wrote to the Russian Holy Synod asking for “a young, well-trained priest” as chaplain to Hakodate. The Russian Holy Synod selected the seminarian named Ivan Kasatkin, ordained him priestmonk with the name Nikolai (to become later Saint Nikolai of Japan) and sent him to Hakodate.

At that time, Christianity was still a prohibited religion in Japan and public evangelism and missionary activities were not allowed. During the following years, Father Nikolai familiarised himself with the country, the language, the customs and traditions of the Japanese people. In April 1868 he baptised the first three converts in Japan. The Russian Holy Synod acknowledged the work of Father Nikolai and established an official Orthodox Mission to Japan in 1871. In the same year, Archimandrite Nikolai relocated the missionary centre to Tokyo and the newly arrived priestmonk Anatoly (of Zograph) took over the parish of Hakodate.

In 1873 Japan abolished its anti-Christian laws. As a result, the Orthodox Mission quickly gained ground. Father Nikolai started building a church and a school in Tokyo, followed by a theological school, which in 1878 was transformed into a Theological Seminary. Together with his associates, he oversaw the translation of the New Testament and many liturgical books into the Japanese language and began to recruit native Japanese for the clergy.

Father Nikolai was ordained a bishop in 1880. He supervised the construction of the Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Tokyo, commonly called Nikolai-do, which was consecrated in 1891. Bishop Nikolai stayed in Japan even during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) which was a difficult

⁶ *Van Remortel, M. and Chang, P. Eds. Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan. Point Reyes Station. CA: Divine Ascent Press, 2003, p. 1.*

period for the Orthodox Mission. In 1970 because of his central role in the establishment of the Orthodox Church of Japan, the Russian Church canonised Archbishop Nikolai and declared him a saint.

4. Two Missionaries from the Holy Monastery of Zograph on Ministry in Japan

4.1 Life and Ministry of Father Anatoly Tikhai

Father Anatoly Tikhai (Alexander Dmitrievich Tikhai) was one of the main associates of Saint Nikolai in spreading Orthodox Christianity in Japan. He was born 1838 in Khotyn in Bessarabia⁷. He studied at the Kishinev Theological Seminary, but before finishing he left for the Holy Mount Athos. There, he was accepted as a novice and later was tonsured monk at the Bulgarian Monastery of Zograph. With the blessing of the Monastery elders, after staying for four years at the Monastery, father Anatoly returned to Kishinev and completed his education at the Seminary in 1867. He then enrolled at the Theological Academy of Kiev which he graduated in 1869.

At the same time Saint Nikolai of Japan, then a priestmonk, was looking for missionaries, graduates from the Orthodox Academies of Russia to assist him in his ministry at the newly established Orthodox mission in Japan. He met with Father Anatoly and invited him to Japan in order to participate in the organisation of the activities of the Orthodox mission.

Father Anatoly accepted the offer. He was ordained priestmonk and at the end of 1871 arrived in Hakodate which was one of the four open ports to foreigners and was the seat of the Russian consulate - general in Japan. Father Anatoly took over from Father Nikolai the responsibilities for the Orthodox Church at the Russian consulate as well as the catechists school at the mission. He reinforced and expanded the catechist school and sent trained catechists into the city to preach⁸. Thanks to their activities, the Orthodox community in Hakodate increased to more than one hundred members⁹.

In 1873, Father Anatoly established the Motomachi Orthodox primary school in Hakodate where he taught for the next six-seven years. By 1880,

⁷At that time in the Russian Empire, nowadays in Ukraine.

⁸Оно, иеромонах Николай. *Становление Японской Православной Церкви при архиепископе Николае (Касаткине) в период с 1876 г. по 1891 г.: обзор первоисточников из архивов Японской Православной Церкви. Диссертация...*, с. 62.

⁹Ibid.

the school had an enrolment of 300 children¹⁰. In 1878, he undertook a missionary tour of the various Orthodox Christian communities in Japan. He reached Osaka, where he performed the first baptisms. At that time, Christianity had already been declared a “tolerated religion”. In 1879 Father Anatoly became the rector of the Church at the Russian embassy in Tokyo.

In 1882 Father Anatoly arrived again in Osaka where he built a church, a catechism school and a missionary house. From Osaka Father Anatoly wrote: “*Here [in Osaka], there is less work compared to the main [mission] base in Tokyo. This base was established only last year, primarily for education of catechists. I have 13 students now, all of them from the SW part of Japan. Their number will increase in the coming September. Yet, sometimes I experience boredom, because I am alone. However, for the feasts of Nativity and Resurrection of Christ I have to go to Tokyo, since I am the rector of the Church at the Russian Embassy.*”¹¹

Particularly important is his work in the field of ecclesiastical music. Thanks to his musical “translations” the service of the all-night vigil was fully celebrated in Japanese. Father Anatoly, together with his native brother, Yakov Tikhai, a graduated seminarian and a teacher for ecclesiastical music who had joined him in Japan significantly contributed to establishing Orthodox Church singing in Japan and the transcription of liturgical texts in Japanese¹².

Father Anatoly was also involved in publishing (and journalism). He sent open letters to the *Missioner* magazine, which was published by the Russian Missionary Society. The letters reported on a regular bases his apostolic activities in Japan. In 1878 they were published as a booklet, called *Diary of a Russian Orthodox missionary in Japan*¹³. In the early 1880s Archimandrite Anatoly began publishing in the newspaper *Moskovskie Vedomosti*. This newspaper is the only source of information about some of

¹⁰ On Orthodox schools in Japan see *Savchuk, R.* Orthodoxy in Japan. Missionary work of Russian Orthodox Church in Japan at the turn of XIX - XX centuries. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018, p.24-31.

¹¹ *Tikhai, Father Anatoly.* Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Sig. Zogr. Arch. 42/182-183, dated May, 28th 1883.

¹² On Ecclesiastical Chanting in Japan see *Maria J. Matushima's* article “Saint Nikolai of Japan and the Japanese Church Singing.” Available at: <http://www.orthodox-jp.com/maria/Nikolai-JAPAN.htm>.

¹³ *Tikhai, Father Anatoly.* Дневник русскаго православнаго миссіонера въ Японіи о. іеромонаха Анатолія (*Priestmonk Anatoly's Diary of an Russian Orthodox Missionary in Japan*). Moscow, V. Univ. Type. (M. Katkov), 1878.

his ministry activities for the period¹⁴. He also published a booklet called *Inhabitants of Japan*¹⁵.

Upon Father Anatoly's recommendation a second monk from the brotherhood of Zograph, Father Georgi Chudnovski was invited to Japan to join the Orthodox Mission. Father Anatoly asked the Holy Monastery of Zograph on behalf of the entire Japanese mission, led by Bishop Nikolai, to give its blessing to Father Georgi to serve the Orthodox Church in Japan. He wrote in his letter to the abbot Kliment: "*We need in our Mission a devout and experienced man to carry out the tasks of sacristan and treasurer. Up until now, [Bishop Nikolai] Himself has been fulfilling these tasks, but in the end, this is becoming impossible for Him. His Grace has heard of father Georgi and is offering him, with Your blessing of course, these tasks.*"¹⁶

Father Anatoly remained deeply connected with Zograph. Although he spent only four years in the Monastery, he felt as a *Zographian*, signed his letters as Anatoly of Zograph, kept informing the abbot and the Monastery elders about his missionary activities, and showed great interest in the life and problems of the monks in the Monastery¹⁷. His Bulgarian language skills were very good. In 1890, after serving in Japan for 19 years, Father Anatoly left the Japanese mission because of an incurable disease. Father Georgi wrote in his letter to the Abbot Josif of Zograph¹⁸: "*Father Anatoly is located in a mental hospital in Petersburg, and his health is in a hopeless condition. He does not recognise anyone. He thinks he is surrounded by kings, ministers, etc. He also broke his right leg. God have mercy upon him!*"

Father Anatoly passed away on November 28th, 1893 in St. Petersburg at the age of 55 and was buried at the cemetery of the Lavra of Saint Alexander Nevsky.¹⁹

¹⁴ See Гавриков А.А. «Московские ведомости» о распространении православия в Японии ...

¹⁵ *Tikhai, monk Anatoly*. Обитатели Японии (Inhabitants of Japan). St. Petersburg, 1882.

¹⁶ *Tikhai, Father Anatoly*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 42/180, dated October, 26th 1883.

¹⁷ See. *Tikhai, Father Anatoly*, Ibid.

¹⁸ *Chudnovski, Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/27-28, dated November 24th, 1890.

¹⁹ Open Orthodox Encyclopedia DREVO : <https://drevo-info.ru/articles/14735.html>

4.2 Life and Ministry of Father Georgi Chudnovski

Until recently very little was known about the life and the ministry of Father Georgi Chudnovski. Only a few available historical sources mentioned his apostolic work. However, his correspondence with the Monastery of Zograph, letters which he sent from Japan and from the United States were recently found in the Monastery Archives. These are most interesting as they shed light on the life of this great missionary of the 19th century. These letters are now held at the designated Japanese Archive at Zograph. Some of them are published for first time in this paper.

Father Georgi (whose real name is unknown) was born in the diocese of Chernigov (currently Ukraine) and studied at the Chernigov Theological Seminary, which he successfully graduated.²⁰ In 1866 Father Georgi was admitted as a novice at the Holy Monastery of Zograph and was tonsured as a monk in 1869. He was ordained deacon on October 10, 1874, and then priestmonk in 1875²¹. He stayed for almost 19 years in Zograph. During this time, as he wrote later from Japan, *our Holy Mother – the Monastery, has been protecting me miraculously, honoured me with the high rank of priesthood and sent me with joy to an obedience (ministry) that is holy and equal to that of the Apostles.*

His mission in Japan

In January 1884 Father Georgi received the blessing of the Monastery elders and left the Holy Mount Athos to join the Orthodox Mission in Japan. He travelled through Constantinople, the Chanel of Suez, the Red and Arabian Sea, through the Indian Ocean and arrived in Tokyo in April 1884. A couple of months later he wrote to the abbot Kliment of Zograph: *Glorify be to God! Thanks to the Heavenly Queen and to our common Patron Saint, the Holy Great Martyr George! I deeply realise my unworthiness and my countless voluntary and involuntary trespasses, but because I serve the Holy Monastery with sincerity, honesty and in obedience, the Divine Providence wished to call me to the edge of the universe, to the high honour of the Holy Monastery and for my own benefit, to help those who suffer and have fallen in the eternal pain of infidelity.*

²⁰ *Pravoslavnii Amerikanskii Vestnik* [Orthodox American Messenger]. No. 11, February 1-13, 1897, p. 213-214, Obituary of Hegoumen George Chudnovsky, available at: <https://www.holy-trinity.org/history/1897/02.01.RAPV.Chudnovsky.html>

²¹ Father Georgi's personal notes on the left page of the first sheet of his hand-written Japanese Service book, which is currently held at the Japanese Archive of Zograph. See the Appendix.

At the beginning Father Georgi was a sacristan, librarian, principal manager of the Mission and also taught moral theology at the Tokyo Theological Seminary. He often celebrated the All-night Vigil and the Divine Liturgy in Japanese, most probably using his service book with Cyrillic transliteration, which is currently held at the Japanese archive of Zograph. He studied the Japanese language and was responsible, with the help of a secretary and a translator, for the correspondence with the mission's representatives.

Father Georgi faced some difficulties at the beginning of his stay in Japan, but when he learned some bits of the difficult language, he felt more comfortable. During his first year, he was sent to the countryside, initially with a translator, to preach the Divine Gospel. He wrote:

*"There was joy everywhere because people here are good and quiet, only the local monks and the nuns with the shaved heads looked at me with no good heart, but after some time they also reconciled with me and became my friends, because the teaching of Christ teaches how man can escape the eternal pains and thus inherit the eternal bliss of paradise. All, young and old, listen attentively when I convey the teaching of the true immortal God and of the immortal soul. It is remarkable that old men do not successfully change as easily as the young generation, exactly as it is impossible to straighten an old crooked tree, while it is easy to fix a young one."*²²

Bishop Nikolai, the Superior of the Orthodox Mission in Japan, had a strong desire for a monastic community in Japan²³. Most probably that was the idea behind his decision to send Father Georgi, who was an experienced priestmonk from Mount Athos, to a quiet place in the Mountains. During the second year of his ministry in Japan Father Georgi went in the mountains to Tonosawa²⁴, that, as he wrote in his letters, resembled a lot the scenery around Zograph²⁵. He bought land and forest, planted an orchard and built *"a magnificent palace for the future monastic community"*.²⁶ Together with his mission-fellows he was translating spiritual books into Japanese, maintaining correspondence with

²² Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/3, dated July 20th, 1886.

²³ Накамура, К. Сост. Дневники святого Николая Японского в 5 т. Санкт-Петербург: Гиперион, 2004, Т. 3, с. 487.

²⁴ Some 100 km away from Tokyo.

²⁵ Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/3-6, dated July, 20th, 1886.

²⁶ Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/35-36, dated November, 14th, 1891.

local people, travelling to the neighbouring towns and villages to preach the Gospel of Christ and was celebrating the Church Services on a regular basis²⁷.

Father Georgi felt that the whole Orthodox Mission liked him. He wrote: *“The Mission Superior, Bishop Nikolai, our most kind Father Archimandrite Anatoly, and the rest of our mission-fellows love me sincerely and treat me as their own friend, brother and co-worker.”*

Although far away from the native Monastery, Father Georgi felt deeply connected to it. He called it *our Mother* and felt enormous gratitude. *“Your joy and happiness, your sadness and your unpleasantness,”* wrote Father George from Tokyo, *“are my joy and sorrow.”*²⁸

His mission in America

Father Georgi did not cease and continued his missionary activity even after his departure from Japan. After a year stay at his native monastery on Mount Athos, he set off for America, for San Francisco (SF), where he joined Bishop Vladimir (Sokolovsky) of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. They had worked together in Tonosawa, Japan.

On May 9th, 1889, on the very day of its Patronal Feast, Saint Nicholas's Cathedral in San Francisco burnt down. Father Georgi fell into the flames and was nearly lost²⁹. Bishop Vladimir offered to Father Georgi to go north to Alaska in order to enlighten the indigenous people there. On June 24th, he arrived on Killisnoo³⁰, a tiny island very close to the Admiralty Island, where he built a church dedicated to the Holy Apostle Andrew the First-called. His preaching efforts were fruitful – every Sunday he was baptising 10 to 15 people³¹. At the end of his six months stay on Killisnoo, he had baptised more than 500 indigenous people³².

He converted to Christianity a whole local tribe, known as Koloshi Indians, together with the tribal leaders and the shamans. After performing the sacrament of Holy Baptism upon them he received some *“magic items”*

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 42/178, from 1885.

²⁹ *Amerikanskii Pravoslavnyi Vestnik* [Orthodox American Messenger], Nos. 15 (1-13 April 1898, pp. 455-460), 16 (15-27 April, 1898), pp. 479-482, available at: https://www.holy-trinity.org/history/1898/04.01-27_RAPV-SF-History.htm

³⁰ Chudnovski, *Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 36/823 - 824, dated September 1st, 1889.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Игумен Георгий Чудновский. Available at: https://vk.com/topic-5981654_27567243

which had been used for shamanic, pagan purposes. He donated these items (robes, drums, rattles and the like)³³ to the Ethnographic and Anthropology Museum in St. Petersburg in 1891. During the autumn of that year Father Georgi left the US³⁴ with a steamer towards Japan that he reached for a second time in November 10th, 1891.

His second stay in Japan was a short one (approximately one month). Bishop Nikolai of Japan proposed to Father Georgi to visit those places where he had initially worked, and to take a rest at the mission House in Tonosawa, which Father Georgi had built³⁵.

The last years of his life Father Georgi spent in Jerusalem, at the Russian Spiritual Mission³⁶. At the end of his life he returned to his native monastery Zograph on Mount Athos, to the *Holy Mother*, as he called it. He passed away there on December 15th, 1896, from a throat disease³⁷.

5. The Japanese Archive kept at the Holy Monastery of Zograph

At the Monastery's library of Zograph there is a specially designated Japanese Archive which contains six items – both in a printed form and in the form of manuscripts. Recently some twenty six letters, a correspondence between the two missionaries – Father Anatoly Tikhai and Father Georgi Chudnovski – and the Holy Monastery of Zograph, were found and added to the Archive. These letters have been unknown to the scientific community so far.

The printed editions and manuscripts have already been researched by G. Besstremjannaja³⁸. This article only briefly mentions them and focuses at the unexamined und unpublished letters. They are the following:

³³ *Chudnovski, Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/37 - 38, dated October 13th, 1892.

³⁴ *Chudnovski, Father Georgi*. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 32/19/35 - 36, dated November 14th, 1891.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ He sent his last letter to Zograph on June 6th, 1894. He also sent 10 golden French francs for the construction of the new Monastery's refectory as well as 5 golden French francs for "consolation" of the brotherhood (see Chudnovski, Father Georgi. Letter sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive, Zogr. Arch. 36/907, dated June 6th, 1894.)

³⁷ *Pravoslavni Amerikanski Vestnik* [Orthodox American Messenger]. No. 11, February 1-13, 1897, p. 213-214, available at: <https://www.holy-trinity.org/history/1897/02.01.RAPV.Chudnovsky.html>

³⁸ Бесстремяная, Г. Е. Японският архив на българския светогорски манастир Зограф. В: Зографски Съборник. *Зографският архив и библиотека. Изследвания и перспек-*

Printed editions and manuscripts

- A Textbook of Calligraphy, most likely used as a textbook for teaching the Japanese language to the missionaries³⁹.
- A Manuscript of a Russian-Japanese dictionary, containing about 10 thousand words with original title *Japanese Dictionary*.
- A Manuscript containing the text of the Divine Liturgy and of the All-night Vigil in Japanese, transliterated with Cyrillic letters.
- A Manuscript containing the text of the Panikhida, the supplications of the Litany as well as the Kneeling Prayers at the Vespers of Holy Pentecost.
- A Manuscript containing the order of the Divine Liturgy, of Vespers, of the Panikhida, of the Litany for the departed, the order of confession, the order of blessing of palm fronds on Palm Sunday, the order of blessing of cheese and eggs on Easter Sunday as well as the Kneeling Prayers at the Vespers of Holy Pentecost.
- Printed edition of the Services of the Divine Liturgy, of Vespers and of Matins, published around 1881-1882⁴⁰. The text in this printed edition corresponds fully to the text in the both manuscripts, which were from a later date.

Recently found letters

The following section describes the recently found letters from which seven have direct connection to Japan. The other nineteen are from the period of Father Georgi Chudnovski's mission to America as well as from the period thereafter. Here we focus on the seven letters directly connected to Japan.

- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 33/392 - 33/399), dated February 6th, 1883, from Abbot Kliment of Zograph to Father Anatoly of Zograph, sent to Osaka, Japan. The Monastery's elders express their pleasure and joy about the stay of Father Anatoly in Japan for missionary and apostolic work. They wish him success in this holy ministry for his own salvation and for the honour and glory of the Holy Mother – the Holy Monastery of Zograph – which is honoured to have its dear child in such a high-level apostolic ministry. The elders also inform Father Anatoly about the construction of the new monastery buildings.

титул. Изд. Д. Пеев и др., София 2019, Университетско издателство, с. 711 - 722.

³⁹ Its author, Maki Ryotan (1846-1886) was one of the most famous calligraphers of the second half of the 19th century of Kanji, the adopted Chinese Characters.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 717.

- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 42/182 - 42/183), dated May 28th, 1883 sent from Archimandrite Anatoly of Zograph in Osaka, Japan to the Abbot Kliment of Zograph. Father Anatoly wrote in excellent Bulgarian. He writes about the newly established base in Osaka where he had less work compared to Tokyo. There a catechism school has been established, at that time with 13 students. He feels alone in Osaka, but for the major ecclesiastical feasts like Nativity and the Holy Resurrection of Christ he has to go to Tokyo since he is the rector of the church at the Russian Embassy.
- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 33/928 - 33/929), dated October 15th, 1883 sent from the Monastery of Zograph to Father Anatoly in Osaka, Japan. The monastery elders praise Father Anatoly for his clearly and correctly letter written in Bulgarian (Zogr. Arch. 42 / 182-183), even though he had left the fatherland long time ago. They praise also his spiritual attitude – he walks on a humble and a meek road, which is the key to his personal perfection and also a key to success in his apostolic and missionary work. The elders inform him also about the fact that the Monastery regularly receives its Bessarabian income from the Russian government, unlike other Greek Athonite monasteries, because Zograph does not share the Hellenic hostile attitudes towards Russia.
- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 42/180), dated October 26th, 1883 sent from Osaka in Japan from Archimandrite Anatoly of Zograph and Japan to the Abbot Kliment of Zograph. This time Father Anatoly writes in Russian. He appeals on behalf of the entire Japanese mission, led by Bishop Nikolai, and sincerely asks the Holy Monastery of Zograph to give its blessing to Father Georgi [Chudnovski] to serve the Orthodox Church in Japan.
- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 42/176), dated November 21st, 1884 sent from Tokyo, Japan, from Hieromonk Georgi of Zograph to the Abbot Kliment of Zograph. Father Georgi, as he puts it, is at the edge of the universe, but for the honour and glory of our Holy Mother – the Monastery of Zograph that has been miraculously protecting him, has honoured him with the priesthood, and had gladly sent him to an apostolic and missionary work. Bishop Nikolai and Father Anatoly are very fond of him and see him as a brother, friend and associate. He holds the position of a chief steward, a teacher in moral theology and often celebrates the Divine services in Japanese.
- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 42/178), from 1885, without exact date, sent from Surugadai, Tokyo from Missionary Georgi of Zograph to the

Abbot Kliment of Zograph. Father Georgi was praying for the salvation of the soul of the newly departed father Paisii of Zograph, who had been a hard-working, patient and humble man. He feels deeply connected to the Holy Monastery: *Your joy and happiness, your sadness and your sorrow*, wrote Father George *are my joy and sorrow*. Father Archim. Anatoly also sent greetings.

- Letter (Zogr. Arch. 32/19/3 - 32/19/6), dated July 20th, 1886 sent from Tonosawa Mountains in Japan from Hieromonk Georgi of Zograph to the Abbot of Zograph and the Monastery's Elders. Two years and three months have passed since Father Georgi has arrived to Japan from the Holy Mount Athos. He describes his arrival. Initially he held the position of a steward, treasurer and librarian. After only two months, he was able to celebrate the whole Service entirely in Japanese. He was sent around the country (initially with a translator) to preach the Gospel. At first the local monks were looking at him "with a bad heart", but later they became friends. Both old and young listen to his sermons with great attention. The second year, which he spent in the Mountains of Tonosawa (which are very similar to those around Zograph) has been very favourable. They have been preaching, translating spiritual books into Japanese, celebrating daily the Divine Services and maintaining correspondence with local people. There is mineral water close to the mission house. Father Georgi asks, in case someone was to visit him in Japan, to bring him bread, because people there eat only pilaf (rice) without salt ...

6. Conclusion

Nowadays, the Orthodox Church of Japan has three dioceses – the Archdiocese of Tokyo, the Western Diocese based in Kyoto, and the Eastern Diocese based in Sendai, 65 parishes and over thirty thousand believers, thanks to the efforts of Saint Nikolai of Japan and not without the labours of two Zograph monks, Father Anatoly Tikhai and Father Georgi Chudnovski.

Father Anatoly arrived in Japan in 1871, almost hundred and fifty years ago. Hence, in my view, it will not be an exaggeration to re-state the title of the current Conference as follows: *"Japan and the European Southeast – Almost a Hundred and Fifty Years of Spiritual, Political, Economic, Cultural and Academic Interactions"*.

Bibliography:

Primary Sources

Chudnovski, Father Georgi. 22 Letters sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive.

Tikhai, Father Anatoly. 2 Letters sent to the Monastery of Zograph, currently held at its Japanese Archive.

Holy Monastery of Zograph. 2 Letters sent to the Father Anatoly Tikhai in Japan, currently held at the Japanese Archive of Zograph.

Secondary Sources

Savchuk, R. Orthodoxy in Japan. Missionary work of Russian Orthodox Church in Japan at the turn of XIX - XX centuries. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2018;

Van Remortel, M. and Chang, P. Eds. Saint Nikolai Kasatkin and the Orthodox Mission in Japan. Point Reyes Station. CA : Divine Ascent Press, 2003;

Бесстремянная, Г. Е. Японская Православная Церковь. История и современность. М., Троице-Сергиева Лавра, 2006;

Бесстремянная, Г. Е. Японский архив на българския светогорски манастир Зограф в: Зографски Съборник. Зографският архив и библиотека. Изследвания и перспективи. Изд. Д. Пеев и др. София 2019, Университетско издателство, с. 711 – 722;

Гавриков, А. А. Дневник русского православного миссионера в Японии о иеромонаха Анатолия как источник по изучению отношения православных японцев к событиям русско-турецкой войны 1877–1878 гг. Уральское востоковедение: международный альманах. Екатеринбург, Изд-во Урал. ун-та, 2013- Вып. 5, стр. 176-178;

Накамура, К. Сост. *Дневники святого Николая Японского в 5 томах.* Санкт-Петербург 2004, Гиперион;

Оно, иеромонах Николай. *Становление Японской Православной Церкви при архиепископе Николае (Касаткине) в период с 1876 г. по 1891 г.: обзор первоисточников из архивов Японской Православной Церкви.* Диссертация на соискание ученой степени кандидата богословия. Религиозная организация – духовная образовательная организация высшего образования Русской Православной Церкви «Общецерковная аспирантура и докторантура им. святых равноапостольных Кирилла и Мефодия», Научный руководитель Г. Е. Бесстремянная, 2018;

Тихай, иеромонах Анатолий. Письмо из Японии. Letter sent from Nakodate, dated December 1st, 1873. В: Труды Киевской Духовной Академии, 1874, кн. 2 (апрель), с. 106-118.

Electronic Resources

Amerikanskii Pravoslavnyi Vestnik [Orthodox American Messenger], Nos. 15 (1-13 April 1898, pp. 455-460), 16 (15-27 April, 1898), pp. 479-482, available at:

https://www.holy-trinity.org/history/1898/04.01-27_RAPV-SF-History.htm

Historical collection section on the Internet portal of the Library of the state of Alaska.

<http://vilda.alaska.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/cdmg21/id/5018/rec/6>

Matushima, Maria J. Saint Nikolai of Japan and the Japanese Church Singing.

<http://www.orthodox-jp.com/maria/Nikolai-JAPAN.htm>

Open Orthodox Encyclopedia DREVO:

<https://drevo-info.ru/articles/14735.html>

Tan, Yvette. The Japanese Christians forced to trample on Christ.

Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-50414472>

Гавриков А.А. «Московские ведомости» о распространении православия в Японии в период становления Японской Православной Церкви (1860-е – 1880-е гг.). Available at: <http://ckitalets2000irkutsk.narod.ru/moskovskie-vedomosti.htm>

Моя Кунсткамера:

https://vk.com/topic-5981654_27567243

Православная Энциклопедия. ЗОГРАФ

<http://www.pravenc.ru/text/199949.html>

Appendix



Archimandrite Anatoly Tikhai⁴¹

⁴¹ Source: Open Orthodox Encyclopedia DREVO, <https://drevo-info.ru/articles/14735.html>

Амѣнъ ✝ 24/11/3
Моносковская
Пустынь.
20 июля
1888' Высокопреподобный
Отец Игуменъ съ со-
вѣтниками вселенныи
Старцы и Соборни-
чешные да съ радо-
вуются и преуспѣвай-
те о Господи Боже!

Ети двѣ годины и три
мѣсяца съ исполниха
отъ когдѣ азъ съ со-
вѣтниками съ прости и
како покорно то кадо
съ рѣшилъ за дѣлѣнїемъ
путь въ Японїю,
кадѣ ночь моли въ, ко-
го у Васъ оше день
Четвергъ и пятъ
день и ночь съ снамъ

Letter which father Georgi Chudnovski sent from Japan to his native Monastery
Zograph, currently held in the Monastery's archives.

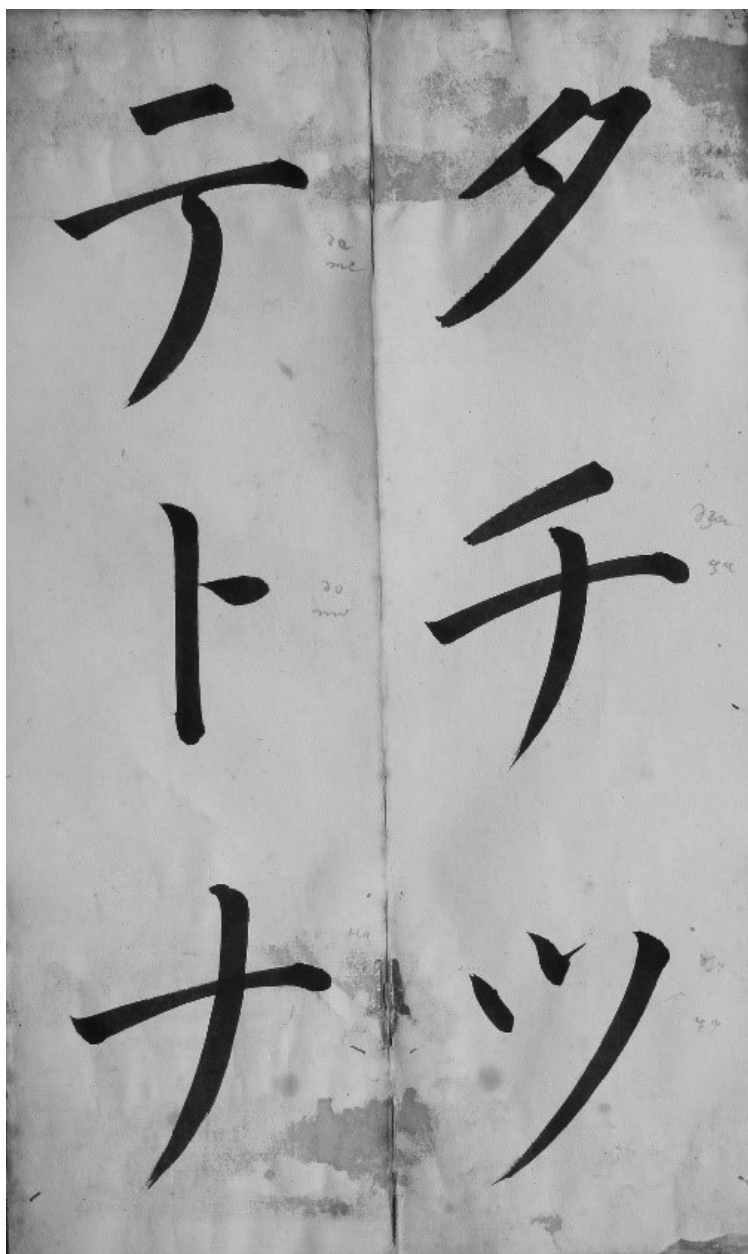
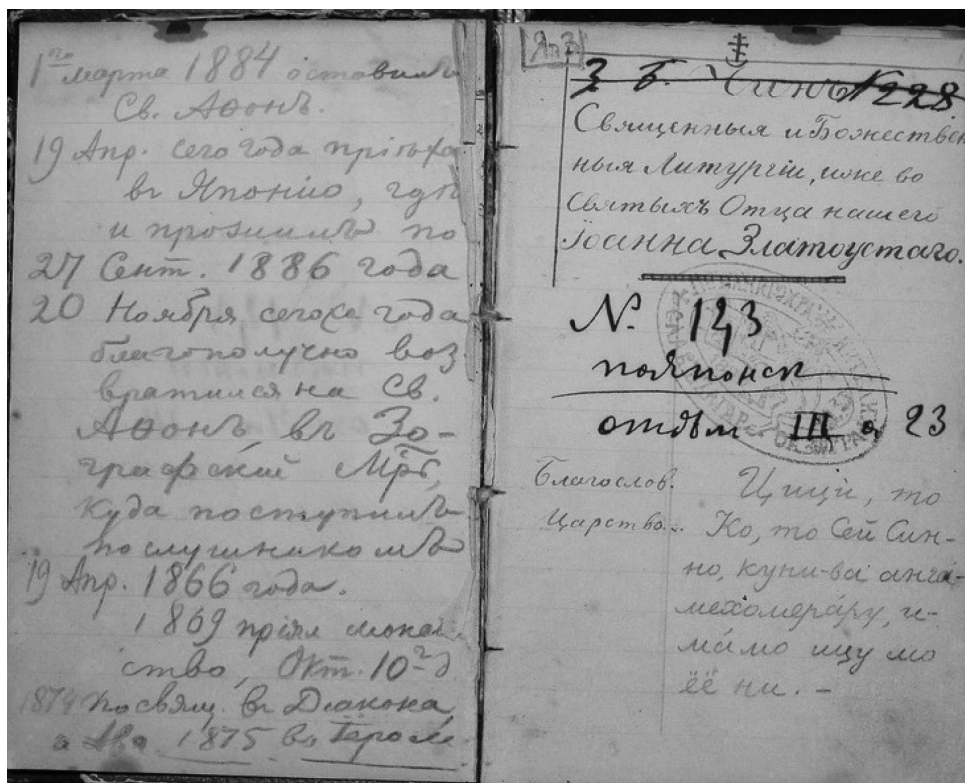


Photo of the Calligraphy book, which Father Georgi brought from Japan to Zograph.⁴²

⁴² Source: Monastery of Zograph's Archive.



A manuscript with The Order of the Holy and Divine Liturgy of our Father Among the Saints John Chrysostom; All-night Vigil which Father Georgi brought from Japan to Zograph⁴³

⁴³ Source: Monastery of Zograph's Archive.

Communication Through Education and Academia

Academic exchange between Japan and Bulgaria. From during the World War 2 until the 1980's

Junko SUGAHARA*

Nishogakusha University

Abstract: *I report on the academic exchanges between two countries, during the World War 2 and after the war until the 1980s.*

At first, I mention two Japanese people who pioneered the relationship between Japan and Eastern Europe before and during the World War 2.

After the diplomatic relations between Japan and Bulgaria was restored in 1959, the Japan-Bulgarian Friendship Association was established in Tokyo in 1961. People who were interested in Bulgaria gathered in this association. This association recruited students to study in Bulgaria a few times and the first students studied in Sofia from 1962 to 1967. Since there was no governmental exchange program between Japan and Bulgaria, Tokai University played a major role in academic exchange from the end of the 1960s to the 1980s. After returning to Japan, some of early Japanese students worked at universities or in the field of translating Bulgarian literature. Some of them worked for trading companies and engaged in trades between Japan and Bulgaria.

Translation of East European literature began around 1950s, but Bulgarian literature was translated mainly from Esperanto, English and Russian. The first translation from Bulgarian was 1961. Besides literature, poetry, folk tales and Bulgarian history were translated one after another by the end of 1980s.

In the 1970s, the number of researchers who studied about East European countries gradually increased in Japan. In this situation, the Association for East European Studies was established in 1975 in Tokyo. This Association invited Japanese researchers from East European countries to hold a symposium on cultural exchange between Japan and East European countries. This symposium itself was the starting point of the studies about academic exchanges between Japan and Bulgaria.

* Dr. Sugahara Junko is Professor Emerita, Nishogakusha University.

I report on the academic exchanges between the two countries during the World War 2 and after the war until the 1980s.

1. Two Japanese before and during World War 2

First, I would like to talk about two Japanese people who pioneered the relationship between Japan and Eastern Europe before and during the World War 2. They are Ryouchu Umeda who wrote “A study of the History of Volga Bulgar”¹ in 1958 and Junichirou Imaoka who published “Bulgaria”² in 1962. I think their books are still valuable today.

Japan and Bulgaria established a formal diplomatic relationship in 1939, and Bulgaria joined the Tripartite League in 1942. A cultural agreement was signed between the two countries in 1943, and many books related to Japan were published and Japanese literature was translated into Bulgarian. However Japan had little interests in Bulgaria and only two Bulgarian books were published. Even under such circumstances, Umeda and Imaoka were actively involved with Bulgaria.

Umeda was a Zen Buddhist priest who graduated from Soto Daigakurin in 1922 and left Japan to study in Germany. But he met a Polish person during the travel, and decided to go to Poland instead. In Poland, he entered the Department of Philosophy at the University of Warsaw. After that, he became a professor there and worked for 14 years to introduce Japanese culture. He also served as a commissioner for the Japanese Embassy in Warsaw. When Germany invaded Poland in September 1939 and World War 2 began, he moved to Bulgaria via Romania and became the commissioner of Japanese Legation just opened in Sofia in December 1939. While working at the legation, he made a connection with professors at Sofia University and developed his research on the culture and history of the South Slavs. From around 1942, he began sending news to Japan as a correspondent of the Asahi Shinbun journalism company. But later he was suspected of being a spy and left the legation, and for this reason, the important news which he sent that the Soviet Union agreed to participate in the war against Japan at the Tehran meeting in November 1943 was not accepted by Japanese government. In September 1944, when the Soviet

¹梅田良忠『ヴォルガ・ブルガール史の研究』弘文堂、1958年。

²今岡十一郎『ブルガリア』新紀元社、1962年。

army advanced into Bulgaria, the Fatherland Front started a coup, declared a war against Germany and in November, they broke off the diplomatic relations with Japan. He left Bulgaria with Japanese envoy Mr. Yamaji and other legation members and headed for Istanbul. Getting a transit visa from the Soviet Union, they could return to Japan via Moscow on the Siberian Railway. Umeda became a university professor after the war. He became the editor of “History of Eastern Europe”³ and wrote a lot of items related to Eastern Europe in many encyclopedias, except his representative work “A study of the History of Volga Bulgar”.

Several years ago, a university professor handed me a booklet written by his father and archived documents which his father had. His father who was a resident official in Finland since 1940 was appointed as a secretary of the resident military officer from Helsinki to Sofia in 1943. Unfortunately I couldn't analyze the documents which I received in time for this symposium, so I would like to make an announcement when my analysis is complete.

Some researchers have criticized Imaoka's work for his ideology, but I disagree with them. Imaoka studied German at Tokyo Foreign Language School. Since he accompanied a Hungarian professor as an interpreter to research in Hokkaido and Karahuto, he got interested in Turanism. He went to Hungary in 1922 and entered the Department of Philosophy at the University of Budapest. In 1924, he traveled to Bulgaria in relation to Turanism and deepened his interest in Bulgaria. Imaoka stayed in Hungary until 1931 and introduced Japanese culture there. After returning to Japan, he continued to work for Turanism while working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the war, he published not only Hungarian but also Finnish dictionaries. His “Bulgaria” is a 400-pages book. He introduces the geography, history, culture and economy of Bulgaria in this book and in its preface he wrote: “The idea of introducing Bulgaria dates back to the time when the cultural agreement was concluded between Japan and Bulgaria in 1943. Since there wasn't a single book about Bulgaria in Japan, I tried to publish one, but it was burned to ashes by air raid in May 1945. Ten years later, a diplomatic relation resumed, but there is still no introduction to Bulgaria. Based on the old memo, I have completed such a book.”⁴

³ 梅田良忠編『東欧史』山川出版社、1958年。

⁴ 今岡 前掲書、2ページ。

Although it is not possible to confirm whether the cultural agreement was made during the war, the children's book "Dobri"⁵ was translated from English in 1942. The original book was awarded the Newbery Award in 1935, which is given to the best children's book in the United States every year. This book depicts Atanas Kachamakov's childhood in Bulgaria. He drew the book illustrations and later became a famous sculptor in the United States. The Japanese translator was a child book author, and he wrote in the afterword: "It is important to know about nature and customs of Bulgaria, because Bulgaria is an Axis country."⁶

2. Japan-Bulgaria exchange after World War 2

Now, I would like to talk about the academic exchange between Japan and Bulgaria after the restoration of diplomatic relations in 1959.

i) Early international students

Even before the restoration of diplomatic relations, some young people who were studying Russian were interested in Bulgarian as the same Slavic language, and were studying themselves. Mr. Junichi Sato who later became a professor at the Tokyo University and Mr. Rokuya Matsunaga, a famous translator of Bulgarian literature were such people.

After the restoration of diplomatic relations, the Japan-Bulgarian Friendship Association was established in 1961 in Tokyo. People who were interested in Bulgarian culture, literature, music, dance and cooking gathered in this association. Having a close relationship with the Bulgarian Embassy, it endeavored to introduce Bulgaria to Japanese society. We can find lots of information about Bulgaria in the association's journal "Bitosha"⁷ such as culture, literature, political news so on. This association recruited students to study in Bulgaria a few times and the first students who applied and studied in Sofia from 1962 to 1967 were Ms. Toki, Mr. Iwabayashi and Mr. and Ms. Miura. And also Mr. Yoshida and Mr. Izumikawa studied there later.

At the same time many Japanese people began to visit Bulgaria. For example, a Nobel prize winner Kenzaburo Oe visited Bulgaria in 1961, and he wrote in his book "Youths of the World"⁸ published in 1962 that

⁵ モニカ・シャノン著 小出正吾訳『ドブライ』実業の日本社、1942年。

⁶ 同上書、338～339ページ。

⁷ 『びとしゃ』日本ブルガリア友好協会発行

⁸ 大江健三郎『世界の若者たち』新潮社、1962年。

he met two young Bulgarian who spoke Japanese fluently. They were Mr. Selvezov and Mr. Dichev, who later became ambassadors to Japan. Besides Oe, a popular novelist Hiroyuki Itsuki visited Sofia in 1968 and he wrote "The autumn in Sofia"⁹ which depicts the quietness and calmness in Sofia.

Since there was no governmental exchange program between Japan and Bulgaria, Tokai University played a major role in academic exchange from the end of 1960s to the end of 1980s. The memorandum exchanged in 1969 started the communication between Bulgaria and Tokai University. It was also related to the fact that Shigeyoshi Matumae, the president of Tokai University, was appointed to the president of non-governmental association which is called Japan Cultural Association. Its aim was promoting cultural exchange with socialist countries in Eastern Europe.

Both Tokai University and Bulgaria have started accepting students mutually, but the first ones sent from Tokai Univ. to Sofia University by the memorandum weren't students. They were Mr. Monji Obunai, a professor of Russian language and Mr. Morimitaro Fuji, an assistant in Western history. They studied in Sofia Univ. for 2 or 3 years, and in particular, Mr. Fuji taught Japanese in the Japanese language course at night that was just opened in 1968 at Sofia Univ. After their return to Japan, Tokai Univ. sent specialists of Japanese language education, including Ms. Shimosegawa and Mr. Taniguchi in 1970s and 1980s. Tokai Univ. signed an official agreement with Sofia Univ. in 1973, and Mr. Yasuo Kinbara who later became a professor at Tokai Univ. was the first student by this agreement. Two Bulgarian students have been sent every year since 1977. I would like to mention that Mr. Bashkarov who became a Bulgarian ambassador in Tokyo in 1986, Ms. Dora Barova and Ms. Silvia Mileva Popova who worked on translation of Japanese literature also studied in Tokai Univ.

During this period, the exchange system was limited though, the Friendship association started a Bulgarian language course with the support of the Bulgarian Embassy. The students who returned from studying in Sofia and sometimes the family of Embassy staff served as lecturer. The people who took this course began to participate in summer language seminars in Bulgaria like I did.

In addition, the Bulgarian National Conservatory has opened its door to young Japanese opera singers since the mid-1970s, and Bulgarian vocal education has strengthened its relationship with Japan. Furthermore, through the Embassy, Mr. Matsunaga in 1960's, Ms. Akiko Igaya, current

⁹ 五木寛之『ソフィアの秋』文芸春秋、1968年。

president of Japan-Bulgarian Exchange Association, Ms. Yoko Yaoita, and Mr. Kenji Terajima studied in Bulgaria in the 1970s. It was Soka University in 1984 and Tokyo University in 1988 that signed the academic exchange agreement with socialist Bulgaria following Tokai Univ.

I would like to mention the career of early Japanese students after they returned to Japan. Some of them worked at universities, or in the field of translating Bulgarian literature. Some of them worked at the Bulgarian Embassy or worked for trading companies and engaged in trades between Japan and Bulgaria.

ii) Translation of Bulgarian literature

Next, I would like to introduce you to the translation of Bulgarian literature. Translation of East European literature including Bulgaria began around 1950s, but Bulgarian literature was translated mainly from Esperanto, English and Russian. The first translation from Bulgarian was 1961 when Ms. Misako Maki published Erin Perin's short story "The next world"¹⁰. I think that a series of "Contemporary East European literature" which was published by Koubunsha since 1966 and based on direct translation played an important role to introduce East European literature to Japan. The first volume was directed to Bulgarian literature. "Love of Nonka" by Ivan Petrov and 2 other novels were translated by Mr. Mtsunaga and Mr. Kazuo Yasiro¹¹. It is amazing that Ms. Maki and Mr. Matsunaga taught themselves Bulgarian through Russian, though later they both experienced studying in Bulgaria. Koubunsha continued to translate and publish Bulgarian and other East European literature. Bulgarian literature such as "Under the yoke"¹² by Ivan Vazov and "Tobacco"¹³ by Dimitar Dimov were translated by Mr. Matsunaga and at the same time Peio Yavorov's poem collection¹⁴ was translated by Ms. Yaoita who just came back from studying in Bulgaria. Poetry, folk tales, children's literature, and Bulgarian history were translated one after another by the end of the 1980s. On the other hand, Japanese literature begun to be translated directly into Bulgarian since the mid-1970s.

¹⁰ エリン・ペリン著 志村三三子訳「あの世で」『ヨーロッパ短編名作集』学生社、1961。

¹¹ 『ノンカの愛 他2篇』松永緑弥・矢代和夫訳 『現代東欧文学全集』第1巻 恒文社、1966年。

¹² イヴァン・ヴァーゾフ著 松永緑弥訳『軛の下で』恒文社、1973年。

¹³ ディミタル・ディーモフ著 松永緑弥訳『タバコ』第1部・第2部 恒文社、1977年。

¹⁴ ヤーヴォロフ詩集 八百板洋子訳『ふたつの情念』新読書社、1976年。

iii) Academic exchange

When discussing academic exchanges with Bulgaria during this period, first I should mention the Balkan and Asia Minor Research Center at Tokai Univ., but Mr. Kinbara has already reported it so I will omit this part. In the 1970s, the number of researchers who studied about East European countries gradually increased in Japan. In this situation, Association for East European Studies was established in 1975 and almost all researchers in Japan who were studying the history, politics, economy, culture, literature etc. of East European countries joined this Association. “The Journal of East European Studies”¹⁵ is published every year and we, the researchers who are here today also contribute to this journal.

Finally, I would like to tell you that this Association invited Japanese researchers from East European countries to hold a symposium on cultural exchange between Japan and East European countries in 1981. Ms. Mileva Popova and Ms. Tsuvelana Kulisteveva were invited from Bulgaria and they gave valuable reports at the symposium¹⁶. I think that this symposium itself was the starting point of the studies about academic exchanges between Japan and Bulgaria.

Bibliography:

- 今岡十一郎『ブルガリア』新紀元社、1962年；
イヴァン・ヴァーゾフ著 松永禄弥訳『軛の下で』恒文社、1973年；
梅田良忠『ヴォルガ・ブルガール史の研究』弘文堂、1958年；
梅田良忠編『東欧史』山川出版社、1958年；
エリン・ペリン著 志村三三子訳「あの世で」『ヨーロッパ短編名作集』学生社、1961年；
大江健三郎『世界の若者たち』新潮社、1962年；
五木寛之『ソフィアの秋』文芸春秋、1968年；
ディミタル・ディーモフ著 松永禄弥訳『タバコ』第1部・第2部 恒文社、1977年；

¹⁵ 『東欧史研究』東欧史研究会発行

¹⁶ 『日本と東欧諸国の文化交流に関する基礎的研究』日本東欧関係研究会、1981年。

モニカ・シャノン著 小出正吾訳『ドブレイ』実業の日本社、1942年；

ヤーヴォロフ詩集 八百板洋子訳『ふたつの情念』新読書社、1976年；

『ノンカの愛 他2篇』松永禄弥・矢代和夫訳 『現代東欧文学全集』第1巻 恒文社、1966年；

『東欧史研究』東欧史研究会発行；

『日本と東欧諸国の文化交流に関する基礎的研究』日本東欧関係研究会、1981年；

『びとしゃ』日本ブルガリア友好協会発行。

The cultural bridge between Bulgaria and Japan, One example from Sofia University and Soka University

Yumi NINOMIYA *

Soka University

Abstract: *In 1981, the founder of our university, Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, visited Sofia on the occasion of the 1300th anniversary of the founding of Bulgaria, and was awarded as Doctor Honoris Causa by Sofia University. During the ceremony, he read a speech called “The road to the flowering plane of the cultural relationship between the West and the East”. This speech was the starting point for my academic interest in Bulgaria. The Student Exchange Agreement between Sofia University and Soka University started in 1985. Many faculty members and students, including prof. Bliznakov, prof. T. Krusteva and prof. A. Djourova visited our university. The total number of exchange students is over 100 people.*

In my opinion, a metaphor for cultural exchange is the image of a bridge. People come and go across the bridge, so the bridge must be strong. Roads are then formed as a result. Roads for peace and mutual understanding.

Keywords: Sofia University, Soka University, cultural exchange, Daisaku Ikeda, T. Krusteva, A. Djourova, “The spirit of the lion”, The Institute for Oriental Philosophy, Ivan Douichev, Cyrillic, Cyril and Methodius, Seigo Yamazawa.

I would like to share with you, my colleagues, an example of the cultural exchange in education between Bulgaria and Japan, on the occasion of the triple anniversary.

In 1981, the founder of our university, Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, visited Sofia on the occasion of the 1300th anniversary of the founding of Bulgaria, and was awarded as Doctor Honoris Causa by Sofia University. During the ceremony, he read a speech called “The road to the flowering plane of the cultural relationship between the West and the East” (A Harmonious Blend

* Dr. Yumi Ninomiya is a lecturer at Soka University in Bulgarian language, and researcher at The Institute for Oriental Philosophy.

of Cultures).¹ This speech was the starting point for my academic interest in Bulgaria.

As a big brother, the Japanese Tokai University and Rector Matsumaye have helped us a lot.

The Student Exchange Agreement between Sofia University and Soka University started in 1985. Many faculty members and students, including prof. Bliznakov, prof. T. Krusteva and prof. A. Djourova visited our university. The total number of exchange students is over 100 people. One Bulgarian is working as a lawyer in Tokyo and one Japanese is working as a businessman in Sofia. Prof. Djourova has a book-dialogue with our founder, the title of the book being “The spirit of the lion” (2000).² It addresses topics such as ‘man and language’, ‘man and culture’, ‘towards the 21st Century Way of Life’ and others.

Also, the Institute for Oriental Philosophy, founded by Dr. Ikeda collaborates with the Research Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies “prof. Ivan Dujcev” at Sofia University. In 2011, they jointly organized a symposium around the theme of „cultural dialogue between the West and the East“. Thus, student and faculty exchanges and academic exchanges have been ongoing between Soka University and Sofia University for about 40 years.

“Knock and it will open to you” – was inscribed on the front door of prof. Ivan Douichev.³ This verse is from the Bible (Matthew 7:7), and is expressing something very important. This openness is one of the most impressive characteristics of Bulgarians.

I had the opportunity to study at Sofia University from 1985 to 1993 as one of the first exchange students under the contract between Sofia University and Soka University. And while I was studying in Bulgaria, I experienced a bloodless Transition in Sofia on November 10. On this day, I went to the national library st.st. Cyril and Methodius as usual, and returned home to the student dormitory in the evening. The lady in the dormitory told me: “Yumi, freedom has arrived!” and she held me tight. By the way, this year marks the 30th anniversary of November 10, 1989.

Twenty years ago in Tokyo, I had a conversation with a Bulgarian journalist. I told him that I had the opportunity to study in Bulgaria thanks to

¹ Ikeda, Daisaku. *A new Humanism – The University addresses of Daisaku Ikeda*. New York, 1996, p. 79-86.

² Икеда, Дайсаку. Джурова, Аксиния. *Духът на лъва*, София, 2000.

³ Почукайте и ще Ви се отвори – *Летопис на центъра за славяно-византийски проучвания „проф. Иван Дуйчев“* (1986-2016). София 2016, с. 9.

a scholarship developed to commemorate 100th year anniversary of Sofia University. Then he told me that was fine, but that I had to know that his mother works as a dressmaker every day, and that people like her contribute to the scholarship. His words remain in my soul now.

Before Bulgaria joined the European Community, the then Minister of Education, Mr. Krasimir Valchev, visited our university. During his meeting with the Rector, Mr. Valchev said the following: There is one secret that the commission does not yet know. The secret is that Bulgaria will be a member of the European Community as the first country to have a Slavic alphabet – the Cyrillic.

I would like to stop here to reflect on the Cyril and Methodius. In the 9th century, in Rome, the brothers defended the Slavic language and the right of the Slavs to worship in their native language.

Around 1100 years after the deeds of the Cyril and Methodius brothers, Bulgaria joined the European community with the Cyrillic alphabet. At first glance, it may not seem like a great deal, but on the other hand, it has immense cultural value, the result of years of struggle.

I would like to share that the Vatican Council officially allowed the use of a local language, ie. the language of the people, at the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s (1962-1965). So, Cyril and Methodius' deeds were over 1000 years ahead of their time. Therefore, the deeds of the brothers may be considered to be as precious as gold.

Our human life may be short, but if meaning can be found, then it will carry value. It is as if a thread becomes fabric. And that is probably the power of culture and education.

Several years ago, during the time of Ambassador Mr. Vassilev, we received as a present seedlings from the Bulgarian damascene rose and every year the roses bloom thanks to the people who take care of them, and this year the students from our women's college made rose water from the roses.

There are many cherry blossom trees at our university. Our founder wrote a story entitled "The Boy and the Cherry Blossom."⁴ The action unfolds in a war-torn field, and tells of a boy and a grandfather who takes care of the cherry trees. The cherry tree blossoms in spring past the harsh winter. Its purity is an expression of the sense of aesthetics of the Japanese.

In the history of the bilateral relations between Bulgaria and Japan, the name of colonel Seigo Yamazawa appears, a participant in the Russia-Turkish war at the end of the 19th century. The record of his name is

⁴池田大作、絵・清沢 治、『少年とさくら』、潮出版社、昭和49年。

a unique case and remains one of the starting points of contact between Bulgaria and Japan. It was a time of war then, but now, since the mid-20th century – early 21st century, there is a bridge of education and culture between the two countries.

In my opinion, a metaphor for cultural exchange is the image of a bridge. People come and go across the bridge, so the bridge must be strong. Roads are then formed as a result. Roads for peace and mutual understanding.

Bibliography:

Ikeda, Daisaku. A new Humanism – The University addresses of Daisaku Ikeda. New York 1996.

Икеда, Дайсаку. Джурова, Аксиния. Духът на лъва. София 2000.

Почукайте и ще Ви се отвори. Летопис на центъра за славяно-византийски проучвания „проф. Иван Дуйчев“ (1986-2016). София 2016.

池田大作、絵・清沢 治『少年とさくら』潮出版社、1972年。

Comparative Analysis of the Grammatical Terminology Used in Learning Materials for the Bulgarian Language for Japanese Native Speakers

Kenta SUGAI*

Hokkaido University

Abstract: *This article focuses on the grammatical terminology used in learning materials for the Bulgarian language for Japanese native speakers. The aim of this article is to discuss more comprehensible grammatical terms for Japanese learners through a comparative examination of previously published textbooks and grammars of Bulgarian for Japanese learners. It was found that the authors of each book strove to describe and explain Bulgarian grammar for Japanese native speakers, as they devised many different options for grammar terms, especially when there were no unified terms in Japanese. It can also be argued that some technical grammatical terms and concepts should also be adopted for the better understanding and faster acquisition of Bulgarian grammar.*

Keywords: Learning Materials of Bulgarian Language in Japan, Terminology for Grammar

1. Introduction

Widespread interest in Bulgarian culture in Japan is definitely a positive product of the long-term friendship and cultural exchanges between the two countries, which started 110 years ago. Nowadays, increasing numbers of Japanese citizens visit Bulgaria, and their numbers are said to be increasing every year. In recent years, it seems that Bulgarian cultural events and concerts are frequently organized in Japan as well, and the opportunities to come in touch with Bulgarian culture and language in Japan are increasing,

* Dr. Kenta Sugai is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Human Sciences, Hokkaido University.

especially in the larger cities. Under such circumstances, the number of Japanese people who wish to learn Bulgarian is expected to grow as well — in fact, not a few Japanese wish to learn Bulgarian. It is thus necessary to make learning materials for Bulgarian that can meet their needs.

In this paper, based on my experience as a teacher of Bulgarian in university classes as well as in extension courses intended for non-university students, the problems and tasks of teaching Bulgarian to native speakers of Japanese will be discussed in order to search for a better solution. This paper will focus particularly on the grammatical terminology. Given the fact that some of the technical grammar terms often induce confusion among Japanese learners, more convenient and adequate options will be considered to resolve possible confusion. In the course of discussion, previously published textbooks and grammars of Bulgarian for Japanese native speakers will be examined through a comparative analysis. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to give suggestions on the terminology to be used in teaching Bulgarian to Japanese native speakers.

The structure of this paper is as follows: First, before the comparative analysis of previously published textbooks and grammar, the characteristics of each book will be briefly reviewed. Second, the books will be analyzed in terms of the terminology used to describe Bulgarian grammar. Third, grammatical terminology useful and comprehensible to Japanese learners will be discussed based on the analysis of the books, and finally, I shall offer suggestions on the considerations to be borne in mind in selecting terminology suitable for native speakers of Japanese.

2. Objects of the Comparative Analysis

For the comparative analysis in this paper, I have chosen six books published in Japan on Bulgarian grammar for native speakers of Japanese language. The oldest of the six books dedicated to the description of Bulgarian grammar is *Gendai Burugaria-go Nyūmon* written by Hideo Yajima in 1984. In the following year, *Gendai Burugaria-go* by Kimiko Yamazaki was published. Both are intended to provide a comprehensive and systematic description of Bulgarian grammar for reference, but the description the authors adopted are totally different. The former is intended for practical use, but the author's description of Bulgarian grammar is a bit peculiar and sometimes inaccurate, in my opinion. On the other hand, the latter (by Yamazaki) is written within the framework of a strictly linguistic description. As a linguist, the author strove to

describe Bulgarian grammar with linguistic precision, using technical terms as well, which in turn makes it difficult for beginners to use, although the author states in the beginning that it is also intended for practical (Yamazaki 1985: 2). In short, the two books are more like reference grammars.

Five years later after Yamazaki (1985), a new textbook of Bulgarian language written by Kenji Terajima, *Express Burugaria-go*, was published in 1990 by the publishing company Hakusui-sha as part of its *Express* series of foreign language textbooks. This textbook is different from the two earlier books on Bulgarian grammar above in having conversations and grammar exercises besides explanations of grammar. In this sense, this is rather a textbook for self-study, but of course may be used in part as a reference grammar as well. This textbook was revised by the same author as the *New Express Burugaria-go*, published in 2012. This new textbook has almost entirely replaced the older one in the market. In this paper, *Express Burugaria-go* from 1990 and *New Express Burugaria-go* from 2012 will not be analyzed independently since the terminology used does not substantially differ,¹ although the contents of the textbooks are different. In 1991, *Burugaria-go Bumpo* was published by Rokuya Matsunaga. As the author writes in the preface (Matsunaga 1991: i), this book is designed for learners at an intermediate level who have completed basic Bulgarian grammar. Thus, this book is obviously intended for reference. Although the book is relatively small, the contents cover not only morphology, as in the previously mentioned grammar books, but also syntax. It is also worthy of note that this grammar book follows the tradition of grammatical description in Bulgaria, as the author refers to the Academic Grammar (1982–83), Stojanov (1964), and other standard grammar books written by distinguished Bulgarian linguists. The way Matsunaga describes Bulgarian grammar to a great extent corresponds to the Bulgarian tradition of grammatical description. Finally, *Mazuhakoredake Burugaria-go*, written by Yumi Ninomiya, was published in 2006 as part of a series of foreign language textbooks by the publishing company Kokusai Gogaku-sha. This textbook is exclusively for beginners and is intended to be used as a phrase book as well. Since the grammar part is restricted to essential information, the analysis of terminology used in the textbook will naturally be rather limited.

Now I shall move on to the analysis of these books.

¹ *CD Express Burugaria-go*, published in 2005, and *New Express Burugaria-go plus*, published in 2019 (both by the same author), will not be considered in this paper, since the former has exactly the same content as *Express Burugaria-go* and the latter the same as *New Express Burugaria-go*.

3. Comparative Analysis — Grammatical Terminology

First, I will analyze the grammatical terminology used in the aforementioned six books on Bulgarian grammar, with a focus on the terminology for the grammatical categories of the verb and noun.

3.1. Grammatical Categories of the Verb

To start with, I will examine the terminology for the grammatical categories of the verb.

Among the five authors, the peculiarity of the terminology that Yajima (1984) used in his book stands out, especially in the field of verbal categories. He uses, for instance, *daini-dōshi* ‘second verb’ for verbs with perfective aspect and *daiichi-dōshi* ‘first verb’ for verbs with imperfective aspect, while the rest of the authors adopted the traditional terminology used in Russian linguistics, *kanryō-tai* and *fukanryō-tai*, respectively. Yajima (1984: 58-61) explains the reason for his choice: “in this book I purposely do not use *fukanryō-tai* and *kanryō-tai* in order to avoid any confusion in meaning and contents with imperfective and perfective verbs in Russian.” He considers the relationship between perfective and imperfective verbs to differ in Russian and Bulgarian (Yajima 1984: 60), and thus avoided using the same terminology as in Russian. It is worthy of note that his choice was made to ensure no confusion for readers. Moreover, Yajima (1984) differs from the other authors in using *futē-hō* ‘infinitive’ for the verb form used after the particle *da*. The other authors called the combination of the particle and conjugated verbal form the ‘*da* construction’. He adopted the term ‘infinitive’ probably because the use of ‘*da* construction’ in Bulgarian is somewhat similar to the ‘to-infinitive’ in English grammar, although they differ in many uses. Thus, the selection of the term ‘to-infinitive’ rather brings about confusion among beginners who have learned English.

Besides the terms for verbal aspect, the term for ‘participle’ also has two variants, one of which is borrowed from textbooks of Russian for Japanese learners. While Yamazaki (1984) and Matsunaga (1991) adopt the “borrowed” term *keidōshi*, Yajima (1984) and Terajima (1990) selected the generally used term for participle *bunshi* instead. The term *keidōshi* might be understandable to those who have learned Russian, but the term *bunshi* should be familiar to more readers since a vast majority of Japanese would know this term from English grammar. Thus, some authors applied grammatical terms used in Russian linguistics to

the description of Bulgarian grammar, others those used in general linguistics.

Another example of such diversity of choices is observed in the description of past tense.

	Yajima (1984)	Yamazaki (1985)	Terajima (1990), (2012)	Matsunaga (1991)	Ninomiya (2006)
aorist	second past	aorist	perfect past	perfect past	perfect past
past tense	第二過去	アオリスト	完了過去	完了過去	完了過去
imperfect	first past	imperfect	imperfect past	imperfect past	imperfect past
past tense	第一過去	インペル フェクト	未完了過去	不完了過去	未完了過去

Table 1 *The diversity of terms for past tense*

Yamazaki (1985) adopted *aorisuto* ‘aorist’ and *imperufekuto* ‘imperfect’ for the respective tenses without translating them into Japanese. Although these terms are widely adopted in general linguistics, they are definitely unfamiliar to Japanese native speakers as much too technical. It would seem that Yamazaki (1985) borrowed the general linguistic terms via Russian, as suggested by the transcription reflecting the Russian pronunciation of *imperfect*. In Bulgarian grammar and textbooks for Russian native speakers, *aorist* and *imperfect* are adopted for the description of Bulgarian tense system (Maslov 1956, 1981, Ginina, Platonova, Usikova 1985, etc.). It should be noted, however, that *aorist* and *imperfect* are used by some Bulgarian authors as well (Nicolova 2008, etc.), although *минало свършено време* and *минало несвършено време* are considered the traditional terms for these tenses in Bulgarian and in fact are much more commonly used (Stojanov 1964, Andrejčin 1978, Pašov 1999, etc.).

Terajima (1990), on the other hand, adopted *kanryō kako* for ‘aorist’ and *mikanryō kako* for ‘imperfect’. Matsunaga (1991) used *kanryō kako* for ‘aorist’ in the same way as Terajima (1990), but *‘fu’kanryō kako* for ‘imperfect’ instead of *‘mi’kanryō kako*. In either case, these Japanese grammar terms seem to be translations of the Bulgarian traditional terms for both tenses, although the term *mikanryō kako* for ‘imperfect’ adopted in Terajima (1990) is commonly used in the grammatical description of other languages as well.

Yajima (1984), who adopted *daiichi-dōshi* ‘first verb’ and *daini-dōshi* ‘second verb’ for imperfective and perfective aspect, used *daini kako*

‘second past’ for aorist and *daiichi kako* ‘first past’ for imperfect because, according to the author, the second verb is capable of forming the second past, the first verb the first past (Yajima 1984: 19). It is an interesting approach that seems to work well, but such a use of terms gives learners the impression that there are no ways of forming the first past from the second verb and vice versa, although this is in fact possible, which may cause confusion for learners.

To sum up thus far, while Yamazaki (1985) chose to transliterate general linguistic terms without translation for the aorist and imperfect tenses, Terajima (1990) and Matsunaga (1991) adopted traditional Bulgarian terms that they translated into Japanese. Yajima (1984) introduced new terminology within the framework of his own approach to the description of Bulgarian verbal system. The observed diversity of terminology for the aorist and imperfect tenses seems to have resulted from the lack of generally accepted grammatical terms for these tenses in Japanese. The translated terms used by Terajima (1990) and Matsunaga (1991) might be more accessible than those used by Yamazaki (1985) and Yajima (1984), at least to a beginner, in that the terms themselves “explain” what each verbal tense form stands for. *Kanryō kako* can be literally understood as an action completed in the past, and *mikanryō kako* an action not completed in the past.

3.2. Grammatical Categories of the Noun

With regard to the terminology for the grammatical categories of the noun, all six of the books, generally speaking, do not show great diversity. But I will note two points.

As can be seen from Table 2, almost the same terms are used for the two different forms of personal pronoun in the oblique case, i.e., clitic and non-clitic forms.

	Yajima (1984)	Yamazaki (1985)	Terajima (1990), (2012)	Matsunaga (1991)	Ninomiya (2006)
non-clitic form e.g., мене, на мене...	long form 長形	common form for oblique case 斜格共通形	long form 長形	full form 完全形	long form 長形
clitic form e.g., ме, ми...	short form 短形	enclitic エンクリティ ック	short form 短形	short form 短形	short form 短形
clitic doubling e.g., мене ме, на мене ми...	—	emphatic form for oblique case 斜格強調形	doubled use of pronoun 代名詞の2重使用	simultaneous use of full and short forms 完全形と短形 の同時使用	—

Table 2 *Terms for the non-clitic and clitic forms of personal pronouns in the oblique case*

In Yajima (1984), Terajima (1990), Matsunaga (1991), and Ninomiya (2006), *tan-kei* ‘short form’ is used for the clitic form and *chō-kei* ‘long form’ or *kanzen-kei* ‘full form’ for the non-clitic form. Yamazaki (1985), however, did not choose to use these terms, instead adopting the technical linguistic term *enclitic* for the ‘short form’ of the personal pronoun, having introduced the readers to the concept of ‘enclitic’ and ‘proclitic’ words at the beginning of the book (Yamazaki 1985: 10). As for the ‘long form’, she used *shakaku kyōtsū-kei* ‘common form for oblique case’, as she took into account the fact that one and the same pronominal form is used for both the accusative and dative cases of the ‘long form’, the formal difference of which is marked solely by the preposition *на*. Compare the accusative and dative forms for the 1st person singular: *мене* and *на мене*. Yamazaki (1985), which was written, as I have already argued, with strict linguistic precision, successfully described the complicated system of personal pronoun with a precise grammatical description, but the binary opposition between ‘short form’ and ‘long form’ might be a better solution for those who are not familiar with linguistic terminology. However, I would suggest rather using *jak-kei* ‘weak form’ and *kyō-kei* ‘strong form’, following the terminology adopted in Romanian grammar, where the same formal opposition exists in the system of personal pronouns. ‘Weak’ and ‘strong’ are suggestive of the phonetic features that the clitic and non-clitic forms carry.

Now I will turn to the terminology for the grammatical case of definite articles.

As it is well-known, the definite article in the masculine has a formal distinction between the nominative and oblique cases in the literary language.

	Yajima (1984)	Yamazaki (1985)	Terajima (1990), (2012)	Matsunaga (1991)	Ninomiya (2006)
Nominative e.g., -ЪТ, -ЯТ	long form 長形	nominative 主格用	subject 主語	full form 完全形	subject 主語
Oblique e.g., -а, -я	short form 短形	oblique 斜格用	other than subject 主語以外	short form 短形	other than subject 主語以外

Table 3 *Terms for nominative and oblique forms of the masculine definite article*

In Yamazaki (1985) the names of the two forms are *shukaku* ‘nominative’ and *shakaku* ‘oblique’, respectively. In Yajima (1984) and Matsunaga (1991), however, the authors used the same terms as they used for the non-clitic and clitic forms of the personal pronoun, i.e., *chō-kei* ‘long form’ or *kanzen-kei* ‘full form’ for nominative, *tan-kei* ‘short form’ for oblique. Their terms obviously correspond to *пълна форма* and *кратка форма*, which are the traditionally accepted terms in describing Bulgarian grammar, but I would suggest that this was not a favorable solution for Japanese native speakers, even if the terms ‘full form’ and ‘short form’ are broadly accepted in Bulgarian linguistics. Such misleading terminology, in my opinion, should be avoided by using different terms as in Yamazaki (1985). Other terminology is proposed by Terajima (1990) and Ninomiya (2006) who adopted such beginner-friendly terms as *shugo* ‘subject’ and *shugo igai* ‘other than subject’, having avoided using a relatively unfamiliar linguistic term like *shakaku* ‘oblique’.

3.3. The Diversity of the Grammatical Terminology Adopted in the Books

As a result of our analysis of grammatical terminology, it seems that differences in selection of grammar terms are observed precisely when a corresponding grammar form is absent from or is barely described in text-

books of English for Japanese speakers. One such example is verbal aspect. In English there are no verbal forms corresponding to the perfective and imperfective aspectual forms of Bulgarian. In other words, in describing English grammar it is usually unnecessary to introduce such technical terms as perfective and imperfective aspect, especially in a textbook for beginners. For lack of a grammar term easily accessible to the Japanese speakers, the authors of the six books analyzed in this paper looked for terms suitable for expressing Bulgarian *свършен вид* and *несвършен вид*. Needless to say, the same grammatical concept exists in Russian, and there are many more textbooks and grammars of Russian for Japanese native speakers since there is a fairly long history of Russian language pedagogy in Japan. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of the authors cited technical terms for verbal aspect used in Russian grammar. I would argue that there is a point to introducing Russian grammar terms because those who study Bulgarian are more likely to have learned Russian first.

Likewise, English lacks the aorist and imperfect verbal forms, or, more precisely, the binary opposition in the past tense. There are no corresponding forms in Russian either. In such a case, the authors were forced to adopt another solution. Yamazaki (1985), for instance, adopted the general linguistic terms without translating them into Japanese. On the other hand, Terajima (1990) and Matsunaga (1991) adopted the traditional terminology in Bulgarian grammar and translated it into Japanese. Yajima (1984) introduced terminology original to himself to describe and denote the tense. The same can be said about the terms for the nominative and oblique case forms of the definite article. A formal distinction of case is lacking for the English definite article, and the definite article itself does not exist in Russian. Thus, Matsunaga (1991) used the traditionally accepted technical terms *kanzen-kei* ‘full form’ and *tan-kei* ‘short form’, whereas Terajima (1990) and Ninomiya (2006), in order to avoid technical terms for the sake of clarity, made up simple terms suitable for beginners. Another such example concerns the so-called ‘masculine-personal numerals’ such as *двама*, *трима*. Terajima (1990) adopted explanatory terminology for this form of numerals, i.e., *dansei no ninzū wo arawasu sūshi* ‘numerals that express the number of male persons’. The same grammatical form has a different name in each book. For example, *dansei ningen kei* ‘masculine-personal numerals’ is used in Yamazaki (1985), which is a translation of the Bulgarian traditional term *мъжско лични форми*, while *dansei sūshi* ‘masculine numerals’ is used in Matsunaga (1991). Although the terminology adopted

in Terajima (1990) is not as concise as Yamazaki's (1985), in my opinion it conveys the grammatical meaning of the form more clearly for beginners.

Consequently, this analysis of the grammatical terminology used in books on the Bulgarian language for Japanese native speakers found that no unified grammar terms are used for the description of Bulgarian grammar, except in a few cases. Instead, each author seems to have striven to adopt terminology that would be more comprehensible for Japanese native speakers. They selected general linguistic terms in combination with certain traditional terminology, occasionally introducing the respective terminology of Russian linguistics as well. In some cases, they created original terminology to ensure greater accessibility to readers without ignoring linguistic precision.

4. What is the Most Adequate Terminology for a Beginner?

Given the fact that a unified grammatical terminology is lacking in many cases, what kinds of grammatical terms should be adopted in teaching Bulgarian language to native speakers of Japanese? As we have seen so far, a variety of proposals for useful terminology have been made in previously published books on Bulgarian grammar for Japanese, but which options are best?

Obviously, terms that are easy to understand without causing confusion are most desirable. However, it is difficult to propose terminology that is comprehensible and acceptable to everyone who plans to study Bulgarian. First, learners themselves may have a variety of backgrounds and foreign language proficiency. For example, those who have learned Russian should know the terms used in Russian grammar such as *tai* 'verbal aspect' or *keidōshi* 'participle'. Moreover, their aims in studying Bulgarian may also differ considerably. Some of them wish to study the Bulgarian language for a better understanding of Bulgarian culture, history, or politics, but they might not have studied foreign languages other than English in high school. Others might just enjoy learning foreign languages, and it is often the case that they are accustomed to learning foreign languages and thus are already familiar with various grammar terms.

Now I shall move on to my suggestions based on this analysis of previously published books for Japanese speakers.

In Yamazaki (1985), the author seems to have intended to describe Bulgarian grammar precisely within the framework of general linguistics,

targeting particularly those who have learned Russian. Thus, technical linguistic terms are constantly used in this book to explain the grammatical system. In this respect, Yamazaki (1985) might not be suitable for beginners, especially who do not have knowledge of Russian. However, I would argue that the technical terms adopted in Yamazaki (1985) could be useful and even necessary to understand a grammatical concept in some cases. I would thus suggest that there should be room for adopting some technical linguistic terms, with slight modifications for beginners.

One such example is the technical term for a clitic form or word, i.e., *enclitic*. *Enclitic* could be applied to the description of syntactic behavior, such as the ‘short form’ of personal pronouns as well as the *be*-verb, *сьм*, in the present tense, because both are enclitic and show the same syntactic behavior, despite being different parts of speech. The introduction of the technical term *enclitic* makes it possible for the learners to recognize the phenomenon and concept of the enclitic as such, which would help them to understand the characteristics of these clitic words. It would thus be more effective for mastering one of the difficult features for beginners. However, in adopting the term, it might be necessary to translate it into Japanese, i.e., *zensetsugo*, for better comprehensibility.

Another technical term that I find useful even for a beginner is *L-bunshi*, or ‘L-participle’, the name of which comes from the form of the participle ending in ‘l’. The system of participles in Bulgarian, particularly that of active participles, is quite complicated. Besides the past passive participle, there are three different active participles: one present active participle and two past active participles made from different stems. The term L-participle, therefore, could be useful in making a distinction between the present and past active participles as well as in memorizing the forms of the past active participles themselves. It can thus be argued that there would be a certain utility even for beginners in introducing the term ‘L-participle’ instead of *nōdō kako bunshi* ‘active past participle’.

Among the books analyzed in this paper, Terajima (1990) might be the most balanced book for a beginner in terms of the selection of terminology, successfully adopting generally accepted grammatical terms as well as traditional terminology when necessary. On the other hand, the author does not stick to the traditional terminology for the sake of clarity. As I use this textbook in my classes, I have discovered that my students are often confused by the grammatical terms used in it. As can be seen from Table 4, *kanryō* ‘perfect or perfective’ is used in many of the grammatical terms for verbal categories.

Terajima (1990), (2012)	English
kanryō tai 完了体	perfective aspect
fukanryō tai 不完了体	imperfective aspect
kanryō kako 完了過去	aurist past tense
mikanryō kako 未完了過去	imperfect past tense
genzai kanryō 現在完了	perfect tense
kako kanryō 過去完了	past perfect tense
kanryō kako nōdō bunshi 完了過去能動分詞	aurist active participle
mikanryō kako nōdō bunshi 未完了過去能動分詞	imperfect active participle

Table 4 *Terms for some verbal categories adopted in Terajima (1990, 2012)*

It seems that the overuse of the term *kanryō* caused confusion among students, and accordingly hindered the faster acquisition of the tense-aspect system of Bulgarian. Also, *kanryō* is an ambiguous term because the word could mean either ‘perfect’ or ‘perfective’. This confusion could be avoided if such general terms as *aurist* and *imperfect* were introduced for the two past tenses together with the Japanese terms *kanryō kako* and *mikanryō kako*, as in Yamazaki (1985). This would avoid the overuse of the ambiguous term *kanryō*. The Japanese translated terms might be usefully written together, at least at the beginning of the explanation, to allow the readers to grasp the tense meaning. Nevertheless, if the two terms are redundant, this might lead some to expect it to be rather confusing for learners, but I would argue that the simultaneous use would promote comprehensibility. The adoption of the terms *aurist* and *imperfect* would also be beneficial in that they are easily associated with the two past active participles, or L-participles, formed on the *aurist* and *imperfect* stems.

As for the Japanese translated term for perfect tense, or *genzai kanryō*, and past perfect tense, or *kako kanryō*, these are sufficiently recognizable by Japanese learners since both tenses exist in English grammar as well. This is why I propose not to use decidedly technical terms like ‘perfect’ and ‘pluperfect’ (or ‘plusquamperfect’) for these tenses. As for *kanryō tai* and *fukanryō tai*, they are also recognizable to those who have learned Russian or other Slavic languages, and thus it seems unnecessary to change them.

Terajima (1990), (2012)	A New Possibility
kanryō tai 完了体	kanryō tai 完了体
fukanryō tai 不完了体	fukanryō tai 不完了体
kanryō kako 完了過去	aorist アオリスト(完了過去)
mikanryō kako 未完了過去	imperfect インパーフェクト(未完了過去)
genzai kanryō 現在完了	genzai kanryō 現在完了
kako kanryō 過去完了	kako kanryō 過去完了
kanryō kako nōdō bunshi 完了過去能動分詞	aorist L-bunshi アオリストL分詞
mikanryō kako nōdō bunshi 未完了過去能動分詞	imperfect L-bunshi インパーフェクトL分詞

Table 5 *A new possibility for grammatical terminology for verbal categories*

Consequently, introducing general linguistic terminology and concepts into Bulgarian language teaching has been useful to a certain extent and some technical terms are necessary even for a beginner to understand the grammatical system more deeply. I would thus argue that some technical linguistic terms and concepts should also be adopted for the description of Bulgarian grammar, as long as they are not overused.

5. Conclusion

The selection of grammatical terminology in Japanese is extremely important particularly for beginners. Some of them are not used to learning foreign languages in general and thus most of the grammatical terms used in the textbook might be unfamiliar to them. Grammatical terminology itself should not be an obstacle in learning Bulgarian, as learners are about to face the complicated grammatical system of Bulgarian, which is not even close to that of their native language.

In focusing on the terminology used in the six books on Bulgarian grammar published so far in Japan, I have tried to show that the authors strove to describe and explain Bulgarian grammar for Japanese native speakers, as they devised many different options to make up for the lack of a unified terminology for the description of Bulgarian grammar in Japanese. As a result of this analysis, I suggest that some of their technical terms should also be adopted in Bulgarian language teaching since they are not only necessary for understanding grammatical concepts, but also useful in grasping the essence of the grammar.

Bibliography:

- Andrejčin, L.* Osnovna bālgarska gramatika. Sofia 1978, Nauka i izkustvo;
- Ginina, St. C., Platonova, I. V., Usikova, R. P.* Učebnik bolgarskogo jazyka. Moscow 1985, Izdatel'stvo moskovskogo universiteta;
- Maslov, Yu. S.* Očerki bolgarskoj grammatiki. Moscow 1956, Izdatel'stvo literatury na inostrannyh jazykah;
- Maslov, Yu. S.* Grammatika bolgarskogo jazyka. Moscow 1981, Vysshaja škola;
- Matsunaga, R.* Burugaria-go Bumpō. Tokyo 1991, Daigaku Shorin, 1991;
- Nicolova, R.* Bālgarska gramatika, Morfologija. Sofia 2008, Universitetsko izdatelstvo "Sv. Kliment Ohridski";
- Ninomiya, Y.* Mazuhakoredake Burugaria-go. Tokyo 2006, Kokusai Gogaku sha.
- Pašov, P.* Bālgarska gramatika. Sofia 1999, Hermes;
- Stojanov, S.* Gramatika na bālgarskija knižoven ezik, fonetika i morfologija. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1964.
- Terajima, K.* Express Burugaria-go. Tokyo 1990, Hakusui sha.
- Terajima, K.* New Express Burugaria-go. Tokyo 2012, Hakusui sha;
- Yajima, H.* Gendai Burugaria-go Nyūmon. Tokyo 1984, Tairyū sha;
- Yamazaki, K.* Gendai Burugaria-go. Tokyo 1985. Kuroshio.

Tradition and Innovation: the Selection of Materials for Teaching Japanese Language at Various Levels at the Department of Japanese Studies of Sofia University

Stella ZHIVKOVA*

Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

Abstract: *In its three-decade long history of teaching Japanese language, the Department of Japanese Studies at Sofia University has relied on various sets of teaching materials. Starting with “Nihongo Shoho”, continuing with the so far, the best structured set of “Min-na no Nihongo”, we are now making first steps in using the state-of-art system “Marugoto”. This paper aims at paying special attention to “Marugoto” as a well-rounded product based on an entirely new concept of teaching a foreign language as well as on the innovative standards for foreign language acquisition set by the Japan Foundation.*

Keywords: Teaching, Japanese language, Japan Foundation, JF Standards, CEFR, Marugoto

The Very Beginning and the Current Situation

Laying a cornerstone of a building has long been a symbolic act in many cultures. The cornerstone has been thought to possess supernatural qualities and to be a factor of utmost importance for the building. In Japan, time capsules are often put in the stone, containing not only historical data about date and founder, but also keeping a message for the future generations.

A cornerstone of Japanology in Bulgaria is the evening course supervised by Todor Dichev. It commenced in 1967.² A japanologist, diplomat, interpreter, ambassador – he was the one who first offered to Bulgarians a

* Dr. Stella Zhivkova is Assistant Professor at the Department of Japanese Studies of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

¹ Dichev, T. The Very Beginning – the Founders of Bulgarian Japanology. In: *Bulgaria-Japan-the World, Proceedings from International Jubilee Conference held on the occasion of 20th anniversary of Japanese studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”*. Sofia University Press, 2013, p. 21-31.

glimpse into Japanese language and the culture that underlies it. The first teaching materials were scarce and he used any printed material he could with great effort find at that time. They were written in Russian and English. He also used DIY magnetic tape recordings in order to introduce to his students the real atmosphere of Japanese language. In the autumn of 1968, Dichev completed the first ever textbook in Japanese.¹ For about a decade, the course went a long way and was taught by the titans of Japanology in Bulgaria: Boyka Tsigova, Tsvetana Kristeva and Sylvia Popova.² With some discrepancy the evening non-degree course was the only way Japanese was taught in Bulgaria.

Later on, in 1990, Sofia University officially inaugurated a five-year program in Japanese language, then called “Japanese philology”.³ One of the first officially used teaching materials was *Nihongo Shoho* (“First Steps in Japanese”) of the Japan Foundation. The system requires the student to have already acquired the basic scripts of *hiragana* and *katakana* in order to be able to read Japanese on a level that does not include *kanji* (Chinese characters). Progress is based on gradual introduction of sentence patterns, the most important of which is usually used in the lesson title. Sentence construction is demonstrated and student learns the rules of the patterns through repetition, filling in the blanks, replacing words in the patterns etc. *Kanji* are also gradually introduced.

The textbook is printed monochrome, contains some illustrations and tends to follow a regular lesson pattern. Published in the mid-eighties of the twentieth century, it is one of the first systematic attempts to present Japanese as a foreign language in a sustained way. It is still being occasionally used as a supporting teaching material.

Following the agreement between Sofia University and the Japan Foundation, Japanese studies at Sofia university has been relying on the assistance of specialists who would come to Bulgaria for two years and provide support in dissemination of Japanese language.⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.; Tsigova, B. 20 Years of Japanology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” – Achievements and Future Challenges – In: *Bulgaria-Japan-the World, Proceedings from International Jubilee Conference held on the occasion of 20th anniversary of Japanese studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”*. Sofia University Press, 2013, p. 9-16.

³ Ibid.; Petkova, G. Boyka Tsigova and Bulgarian Japanology. – In: *Japan, Times, Spirituality and Perspectives*. Sofia University Press, 2016, p. 7-18.

⁴ Tsigova, B. Op. cit.

Naturally, a set of new textbooks, which was a result of long research was the well-rounded series of materials named *Minna no Nihongo* (“Japanese for Everyone”). Following the beginning of the 21-st century, it was first introduced and gradually adopted. The system became a reliable, steady progress-providing set for ensuring an unshakable ground for acquiring steady language competency. It has been actively used for the 4-year undergraduate course in Japanese language, as well as for the Evening Non-Degree courses in Japanese (open to public, held twice a week for four semesters).

Ever since *Minna no Nihongo* has started to appear, it has become clear that it would beyond doubt soon turn out to be one of the most frequently used Japanese language textbooks across the world. Essential grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking are instilled in students through daily conversations. What makes *Minna no Nihongo* a long-time favorite is its astonishing quality of being both complete and balanced, thus avoiding both emotional and intellectual overload in students.

First series of the teaching set (*Minna no Nihongo Shokyu 1 and 2*), is intended for beginners. It naturally flows in after a one-week course in *hiragana* and *katakana* scripts. A textbook (accompanied by CDs), three workbooks, translation and grammar notes comprise the main corpus. The textbook (*honsatsu*) contains grammatical points and exercises, reading and writing sections, drills and practice. It also includes speaking and listening tasks which are well-developed and follow a tendency for lightening the purely theoretical burden for students and channeling effort towards cultivating communication skills (a tendency that becomes clearly visible in the most recent product of Japan Foundation, named *Marugoto*). First of the three workbooks (*Hyojyun Mondaishu*) contains exercises and tests that check what the student has learned from the textbook. Answer key is provided at the end of the workbook. The second workbook (*Kanji Renshucho*) is structured in a way that the learner studies *kanji*, followed by reading and writing practice. Regular review tests allow for checking the steady progression. The third workbook (*Bunkei Renshucho*) stresses on reviewing grammatical items and vocabulary. It contains illustrations, easy-to-understand charts and diagrams which reinforce memory and facilitate comprehension. A useful part of the teaching set is a booklet entitled “Translation and Grammatical Notes” that provides clear and detailed explanations in English. Teacher’s book is also a valuable addition that is provided in several languages. Supplementary booklets on Reading (*Yomeru toppiku 25*) and Listening are also provided (*Choukai Tasuku 25*).

Second series of *Minna no Nihongo* (*Chukyu 1 and 2*) are aimed at Intermediate and Upper-intermediate levels. They cultivate and round practical skills in talking, listening reading and writing. In the upper-intermediate textbook learners practice reading comprehension on abridged reading material, including newspaper articles, essays, short novels etc. In both textbooks communication skills are gradually taken to higher levels – from conversations about day-to-day problems to fine socio-culturally defined skills such as the art of consoling, praising, and empathy-expression. *Chukyu* textbooks set the ambitious goal of covering all grammatical items for upper-intermediate level in their entirety. Each textbook is accompanied by two workbooks (*Hyojyun Mondaishu* and *Vocabulary*). They focus on confirming, organizing and fixing new grammar and lexical items for the learner. In a way similar to Beginners' level, *Minna no Nihongo* (*Chukyu 1 and 2*) also include “Translation and Grammatical Notes” – a booklet that provides English translation to new vocabulary, set expressions and proper nouns found in the texts from the main textbook.

Minna no Nihongo has been and perhaps will continue to be the main system used for teaching Japanese at the Department of Japanese Studies of Sofia University. A number of additional textbooks (*Dekiru, Genki, Tobira* etc.) are also occasionally used as a supporting material. During the third and fourth year of study on the bachelor program, students occasionally use textbooks teaching specialized knowledge, such as business communication skills, academic writing etc. But they all would be an impossibly high target if a steady study course based on *Minna no Nihongo* had not been previously passed.

Prior to 2018, *Minna no Nihongo* was the system used for the Non-Degree course taught at the department. However, considering the cultural, business and political dynamics of times, a decision to utilize *Marugoto* was made.

***Marugoto* – Current Situation and Prospects**

In 2007, professor Boyka Tsigova developed a curriculum for the non-degree course in Japanese language and culture.⁵ In search for a reliable textbook in Japanese, for a long time the course was taught using *Minna no Nihongo*. However, owing to the fact that it demands a certain frequency and consistency in studying, it could be said that course partici-

⁵ Petkova, G. Op.cit.

pants – most of whom working or studying individuals – were not always able to effortlessly follow the educational process.

Considering students' needs and the original user-friendly idea of *Marugoto*, namely that “the system is designed so that people can easily study at their own pace, even people who only have time to study Japanese once a week”(Marugoto, 2019), the non-degree course started using it (October 2018).

What is *Marugoto*?

Designed as a rounded set of teaching materials, *Marugoto* is based on the concept of maximum effectiveness and immediate application in practice of what has been learned. The system was developed by specialists of Japan Foundation, which since its establishment in 1972 has constantly aimed at international cultural exchange and by means of culture to contribute to the mutual understanding between Japan and other countries. Thus, needless to say, it has become the slogan of the JF product *Marugoto* that it is meant to encompass both language and culture, feature real-life communication, and allow the experience of lifestyle and culture that form the backdrop to such communication. The designation *marugoto* refers to “entirety”, “wholeness”, “totality”. All these form the base of the *marugoto* -ideology, namely to offer knowledge in Japanese language, integrating it with the traditional and modern culture, lifestyle in Japan, while simultaneously giving top priority to communication.

Marugoto emphasizes learner's independence and offers a wide spectrum of answers on topics related to Japanese culture while aiming at satisfying everyone's curiosity. An innovative feature of the system is the self-assessment made possible by regular tests and tasks. The tests form a part of the learner's portfolio and help both teacher and student easily evaluate the study progress.

The team of specialists who created the teaching set relied on the active participation on the side of the learner, hence the topic selection for each unit: themes are stimulating for the learner to seek and exchange information with others.

The structure of the system begins with Starter level, followed by Elementary 1, Elementary 2, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.⁶ The first three stages use two textbooks – *Rikai* and *Katsudo* which are

⁶<https://www.marugoto.org/en/about/>

roughly comparable with what is known as “textbook” and “workbook”. *Rikai* (“understanding”) is the textbook that aims at presenting through real-life situations phrases and grammatical patterns, introducing new vocabulary and stimulating learners to elucidate understanding. *Katsudo* (“activity”) is the booklet that applies in practical situations what the corresponding unit in *Rikai* textbook gives as a theoretical matter. Surprisingly enough, the topic selection at each level is almost identical.⁷ The idea behind that is to use already familiar topic but to expand the grammatical and lexical elements, as well as communication skills, that are taught through it. The more than ten-year-long process of research had led to the creation of multifunctional textbooks. They ensure steady progress and each level can be chosen for a starting point of studying, that is to say – despite their connectedness, textbooks also possess certain independence.

JF Standards for Measuring Language Competences Compared with their CEFR Counterparts

All the levels (currently – up to Intermediate 2) develop linguistic competences that correspond to JF Standards.⁸ “Standards” or “can-dos” refer not to grammar rules that are studied, number of *kanji* or lexical units memorized, but they describe certain abilities at completing tasks. In other words, they are learning objectives that focus on actual communication strengths.⁹ JF Standards are relatable to Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR) standards, but due to specific features of Japanese graphics, grammar and lexicology they do not completely overlap. One of the main differences between CEFR and JF standards could be described as follows: while CEFR are multipurpose abstract descriptors, JF can-dos are examples of practical language activities related to situations where one uses Japanese language. To give but one example, a description of CEFR standards for measuring linguistic competences most commonly begin with “the capacity to deal with ...”, “the ability to communicate with the emphasis on how...”, “the capacity to achieve most goals and express oneself

⁷<https://www.marugoto.org/en/teacher/feature/>

⁸www.jpf.go.jp/urawa/e_rsorcs/jfs2015_pamphlet_eng; <https://jfstandard.jp/top/ja/render.do>

⁹Most of the commentary and interpretation of “can-dos” etc. are performed on the basis of knowledge acquired during a Sakura Network Training Course at the Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai in August 2019.

in familiar contexts” etc.¹⁰ While a JF standard would approximately read “can understand/express/describe/react in such-and-such situation”, meaning that it is more concrete and illustrative than the European standards.¹¹

The novelty of *Marugoto* is that it is based on a strong innovative theoretical ground – JF standards. They, respectively, are based on CEFR. Why are CEFR and JF standards important for foreign language education?

Twenty-first century was significant not only in political plan, but also in its foreign language acquisition aspect. European Union demanded common rules for judging language competences and a common framework was needed to provide comparativeness between foreign language skills. In times when “plurilingual” and “pluricultural” enriched their inherent meaning, a “transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency”¹² was seriously in demand. Together with the on-going processes of globalization and mobility, CEFR ameliorates the cooperation between European educational institutions in their effort toward equal measurement of foreign language competences against a fixed scale for all European languages. CEFR provides indicators for foreign language competences on the A2-C2 scale and gives clear definition of the general language competences that are measured, namely – listening, reading, speaking and writing.

About a decade later, as a result of multifaceted research, observation and testing, JF formulates standards, which are based and resemble CEFR standards, but are adjusted to the specificity of Japanese language. A very easy-to-understand illustration of the language acquisition standards is the so-called JF standard “tree”.¹³ As explained on the home page of Japan foundation, “The part of the tree where the branches spread out and produce flowers shows specific communicative language activities, divided into receptive activities, productive activities and interactive activities. The Can-dos represented by the branches of the tree are examples of communicative language activities. The roots show communicative language competences, which correspond to knowledge of the Japanese language, such

¹⁰ <https://www.examenglish.com/CEFR/cefr.php>

¹¹ https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/urawa/e_rsrcs/seikatsu.html. See also <https://jfstandard.jp/publicdata/ja/render.do> (in Japanese).

¹² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>

¹³ [jfstandard.jp › pdf › jfs2010_all_en](https://jfstandard.jp/pdf/jfs2010_all_en) p. 7

as knowledge of Japanese characters, vocabulary, grammar, etc., and these support the communicative language activities.”¹⁴

To sum up, language competences are measured against six levels (A2-C2), can-do skills, adjusted to the peculiarity of Japanese language as compared with the European languages, and include students’ portfolio in a way similar to CERF assessment requirements.

After a long period of attempts to create a **communication-based** Japanese-language teaching tool, *Marugoto* succeeds in providing skills for dealing in real-life situations. Namely this highly practical aspect is provided by the can-dos and differentiates the new system from its predecessors. It can be safely said that *Marugoto* overcomes some of the shortcomings such as “starchiness” of topics, grammar overload and the sensation of distractedness from real life. Richly illustrated, with a good number of real maps, schemes, pictures of artifacts it not only creates the impression that the learners acquire useful abilities, but it also assures them that what they study is interconnected, intertwined with an actually spoken language in real situations. This motivates students and engages them in making effort to further progress.

This **active** role that learners play in the educational process is perhaps the most salient feature of *Marugoto*. Mini-discussion participation, opinion statement, counterargument, description are only few of the useful skills that are developed in the course of study. The natural environment in which such activities emerge plays a vital role in overcoming negative moments such as embarrassment, confusion, indecisiveness, dependence on the teacher etc.

Marugoto: Speaking from Experience

A new, highly competitive Japanese-language teaching system as *Marugoto* is, it relies on technological novelties such as full E-learning supporting tools, on-line available materials, sophisticated visuality etc. It certainly meets the needs of young learners who seek hip and state-of-art teaching tools. However, the system is sometimes criticized for its being “grammatically-shallow”, scattered and dull in respect of its repeating identical topics on each level.

Author’s observations after a year-and-a-half experience of teaching are mostly positive and completely confirm that in terms of learning Japa-

¹⁴ <https://jfststandard.jp/summaryen/ja/render.do>

nese language for communication and for dealing with real-life situations, *Marugoto* proves truly invaluable. As a teaching material for non-philologists, it is also appropriate for the non-degree course taught at Sofia University. And, as it is with all great and challenging enterprises, “Only time will tell.” Which might as well be the message hidden in the time-capsule of the cornerstone of Japanese Studies long time ago...

Bibliography:

Dichev, T. The Very Beginning – the Founders of Bulgarian Japanology. In: *Bulgaria-Japan-the World, Proceedings from International Jubilee Conference held on the occasion of 20th anniversary of Japanese studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”*. Sofia University Press, 2013, p. 21-31.

Petkova, G. 25 Years of Japanese Studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”: Achievements and Perspectives. In: *New Horizons, Proceedings from International conference held in on the occasion of 25th anniversary of Japanese studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”*. Sofia University Press, 2015, p. 21-27.

Petkova, G. Boyka Tsigova and Bulgarian Japanology. – In: *Japan, Times, Spirituality and Perspectives*. Sofia University Press, 2016, p. 7-18.

Tsigova, B. 20 Years of Japanology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” – Achievements and Future Challenges – In: *Bulgaria-Japan-the World, Proceedings from International Jubilee Conference held on the occasion of 20th anniversary of Japanese studies at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”*. Sofia University Press, 2013, p. 9-16.

Electronic sources (Last accessed February 2nd, 2020):

Marugoto HP: <https://www.marugoto.org/en/about/>

Council of Europe HP: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home>

JF Standards available at: [jfstandard.jp › pdf › jfs2010_all_en](https://jfstandard.jp/pdf/jfs2010_all_en), p. 7

JF Standards Booklet available at: <https://jfstandard.jp/summaryen/ja/render.do>

JF Language Institute, Urawa: https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/urawa/e_rsorcs/seikatsu.html

JF Japanese Language Institute, Kansai: <https://kansai.jpf.go.jp/>

JAPAN
AND THE EUROPEAN SOUTHEAST
OVER A HUNDRED YEARS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL
AND ACADEMIC INTERACTIONS

Bulgarian
First edition

Editors
Evgeniy Kandilarov, Martin Dimitrov

Graphic design
Antonina Georgieva

St. Kliment Ohridski University Press
unipress.bg



ISBN 978-954-07-5232-7



9 789540 752327

www.unipress.bg

