



**SILVA IAPONICARUM 日林**  
**FASC. LVI/LVII/LVIII/LIX**  
第五十六・五十七・五十八・五十九号  
**SUMMER/AUTUMN/WINTER/SPRING 夏・秋・冬・春**  
**2018/2019**

**SPECIAL EDITION**  
**PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR JAPAN**  
**IN A CHANGING WORLD:**  
**THIRTY YEARS OF JAPANESE STUDIES IN POZNAŃ**

edited by Arkadiusz Jabłoński, Justyna Walkowiak  
Posnaniae, Cracoviae, Toruniae, Varsoviae MMXVIII/MMXIX

ISSN (Online) 2543-4500



Drodzy Czytelnicy.

Oto specjalne wydanie kwartalnika *Silva Iaponicarum* 日林.

W dniach 7-9 grudnia 2017 w Katedrze Orientalistyki Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu odbyła się międzynarodowa konferencja japonistyczna *Problems and Perspectives for Japan in a Changing World: 30 Years of Japanese Studies in Poznań*. W trakcie konferencji wygłoszono 70 referatów, w tym 3 wykłady inauguracyjne, w obecności kilkuset uczestników z Polski, Europy, Japonii oraz innych krajów.

Niniejsze zeszyt specjalny zawiera artykuły nadesłane przez uczestników konferencji oraz jeden tekst wykładu inauguracyjnego. Dziękujemy bardzo autorom artykułów oraz wszystkim osobom zaangażowanym w jego redakcję.

Kolegium redakcyjne

E-mail: [silvajp@amu.edu.pl](mailto:silvajp@amu.edu.pl)

Poznań-Kraków-Toruń-Warszawa, grudzień 2020

Dear Readers,

This is a special edition of the *Silva Iaponicarum* 日林 quarterly.

On December 7-9th 2017 an international conference on Japanese studies *Problems and Perspectives for Japan in a Changing World: 30 Years of Japanese Studies in Poznań* was held at the Poznań Adam Mickiewicz University Chair of Oriental Studies. 70 presentations, including 3 keynote speeches, were delivered during the conference, in presence of several hundred participants from Poland, Europe, Japan and other countries.

This special edition contains the papers contributed by the conference participants and one text of keynote speech. We would like to thank the contributors and all people involved in its compilation.

The editorial board

E-mail: [silvajp@amu.edu.pl](mailto:silvajp@amu.edu.pl)

Poznań-Cracow-Toruń-Warsaw, December 2020

読者のみなさまへ

*Silva Iaponicarum* 日林特別号をお届けいたします。

2017年12月7～9日、ポズナンのアダム・ミツケヴィチ大学東洋学科にて国際日本学会議「変更する世界における日本の課題と展望——アダム・ミツケヴィチ大学日本研究 30 年記念」が開かれました。基調演説者 3 名を含めポーランド・ヨーロッパ諸国・日本などからの報告者は70名、聴衆は数百名来場しました。

この特別号には、会議参加者から寄せられた論文と、基調講演 1 本が掲載されています。論文の著者、そして編集に尽力されたすべてのみなさまに、お礼申し上げます。

編集委員会

E-mail: [silvajp@amu.edu.pl](mailto:silvajp@amu.edu.pl)

2020年12月 ポズナニ・クラクフ・トルン・ワルシャワ



## ***Silva Iaponicarum*** 日林

Kwartalnik japonistyczny / Quarterly on Japanology / 日本学季刊誌

ISSN (Online 2543-4500)

**THE ELECTRONIC VERSION IS THE PRIMARY VERSION OF THIS PERIODICAL**

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### **Silva Iaponicarum**

Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza  
Katedra Orientalistyki, Zakład Japonistyki  
ul. Grunwaldzka 6  
60-780 Poznań, Poland  
**E-mail: [silvajp@amu.edu.pl](mailto:silvajp@amu.edu.pl)**  
[www.silvajp.amu.edu.pl](http://www.silvajp.amu.edu.pl)





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基調演説

砂川有里子

ORCID: 0000-0002-2732-7295

コーパスを活用した日本語の研究

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.1

#### ABSTRACT

Corpus is a large collection of digitized linguistic material of written or spoken language. The corpora designed especially for linguistic research are annotated in various ways such as part of speech, pronunciation, word type, written form, etc. Using corpus enables us to analyze language used in real situation, and to utilize objective indicators such as frequency of occurrence and statistical data.

I will introduce two types of corpora, both of which were compiled by National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics. One is “the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ)”, and the other is “the International Corpus of Japanese as a Second Language (I-JAS)”. BCCWJ was compiled in order to grasp the diversity and the breadth of contemporary written Japanese. It contains samples of modern Japanese texts from extensive fields such as novels, essays, newspapers, magazines, web texts, etc. I-JAS is a learner’s corpus created in order to analyze Japanese used as a foreign language or a second language. It contains spoken and written samples collected from Japanese learners in various countries. I-JAS is still being compiled, and it is due to be completed in 2020. A brief introduction of books and papers concerning Japanese linguistics and Japanese language education using these corpora will be given.

**KEYWORDS:** corpus, Japanese linguistics, Japanese language teaching, Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), International Corpus of Japanese as a Second Language (I-JAS)

### 1. はじめに

コーパスとは、書き言葉や話し言葉を大量に集めて文字化したものを、コンピュータで処理できるように電子化した言語資料のことで、文字化したテキストを電子化しただけのものもコーパスと呼ばれているが、言語研究のために設計されたコーパスは、語を区切るための形態素解析がなされており、品詞、読み、活用、語種など言語研究に必要なさまざまな情報が付与されている。この種のコーパスを

活用することにより、コーパスでの出現頻度という客観的な指標が利用できるようになり、内省では気付かれなかったさまざまな言語現象の分析が可能となった。その結果、例えば、言いよどみなどの非流ちょうな発話に潜む規則性、言語の地域的・時代的な多様性、レジスター（使用域）による規則性の違いなどを扱う研究が進展し、脚光を浴びるようになってきている。また、言語教育の世界でも、学習者のレベルや母語によって異なる誤用の原因究明、あるいはどの学習者にも共通して起こる誤用の究明などが進められ、教育への応用につながる基礎研究の進展に大きく貢献している。

本稿では、国立国語研究所が開発した「現代日本語書き言葉均衡コーパス（BCCWJ）」と、同研究所が開発を進めている「多言語母語の日本語学習者横断コーパス（I-JAS）」を取りあげ、それらのコーパスを活用した日本語学と日本語教育に関わる研究事例の概要を紹介する。

## 2. 「現代日本語書き言葉均衡コーパス（BCCWJ）」

このコーパス<sup>1</sup>は、現代日本語における書き言葉の多様性をできるだけ正確に反映した日本語の全体像が把握できるよう、多様なレジスターからバランス良くサンプルを収集して構築されたコーパスで、新聞、雑誌、書籍など出版物として刊行された書物や、Yahoo!知恵袋、Yahoo!ブログのウェブ文書など、各種のジャンルにまたがる 1 億 430 万語のデータを格納している。英語名 of **Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese** を略して **BCCWJ** と呼ばれている。BCCWJ では、表 1 に挙げた 3 種の検索システムがオンラインで無償公開されている。以下、それらについて概要を説明する。

タイプ	概要	URL
少納言	文字列検索	<a href="http://www.kotonoha.gr.jp/shonagon/">http://www.kotonoha.gr.jp/shonagon/</a>
中納言	文字列検索／短単位検索／長単位検索	<a href="https://chunagon.ninjal.ac.jp/">https://chunagon.ninjal.ac.jp/</a>
NINJAL-LWP	レキシカルプロファイリングにより、語の共起関係などを検索	<a href="http://nlb.ninjal.ac.jp">http://nlb.ninjal.ac.jp</a>

表 1 BCCWJ の検索システム

<sup>1</sup> BCCWJ について詳しくは国立国語研究所のサイト ([https://pj.ninjal.ac.jp/corpus\\_center/bccwj/](https://pj.ninjal.ac.jp/corpus_center/bccwj/)) をご覧ください。

## 2.1. 「少納言」と「中納言」

「少納言」は利用登録の必要がなく、インターネットに接続できさえすれば、だれでも手軽に使える便利なシステムだが、文字列検索しかできないという制約がある。文字列検索とは、語の区切りを考慮せず、入力した文字列に一致するものを抽出することで、例えば「国（くに）」という語を検索したはずなのに、検索結果には「国民」「国際」「国家」「愛国者」なども表示される（図 1）。また、検索した総件数は表示されるが（「国」の場合は 284,908 件）、画面に表示される用例数は 500 例に制限されている。

一方の「中納言」は、利用登録が必要だが、文字列検索の他に、短単位検索や長単位検索ができるという利点がある。短単位検索・長単位検索というのは、形態素解析を行って語として区切られた単位を検索に利用できるということで、短単位検索は、「図書／館」、「大学／院／生」のように形態素ごとに語を区切って検索すること、長単位検索は、「図書館」「大学院生」のように複数の形態素から成る複合語も全体を語と認定して検索することである。

「中納言」ではデータに付与された品詞情報や語彙素 (Lexeme) などの情報も利用できるため、調べたい語を的確に検索できる。例えば、「国（くに）」を調べたい場合は、キーの書字出現形を「国」、品詞を「名詞」、語種を「和」と指定すれば、和語の「国（くに）」だけを検索する（図 2）。また、書字出現形の代わりに語彙素を使って検索することにより、「書く」「書け」「書き」のように活用形の違う語や、「熊」「くま」「クマ」のように表記が異なる語を一括して検索することができる。図 3 は語彙素を「熊」と指定して検索した結果である。文字列検索しかできない「少納言」の場合は、それぞれ別個に検索して集計しなければならないのだが、「中納言」はこのように、いろいろと柔軟な検索が可能である。さらに、「中納言」は、品詞検索を行うこともできるので、語の文法的な性質を調べるのにも便利である。図 4 は、「動詞の連用形＋動詞」の検索設定画面、図 5 はその検索結果の一部である。

「中納言」の場合も、表示される用例数は 500 例だが、全ての検索結果をダウンロードすることができる。



# 少納言

KOTONOHA「現代日本語書き言葉均衡コーパス」

**検索結果**

284908 件の結果が見つかりました。そのうち 500 件を表示しています。

表示番号	前文脈	検索文字列	後文脈	執筆者	生年代	性別	メディア/ジャンル
1	年金保険事業の財政の安定が損なわれることのないよう、特別適用期間経過後において、	国	の財政状況を勘案しつつ、特別適用期間における各年度に係る厚生年金保険法第八十条第				法律/財務通則
2	↑/▼コンビニエンスストア（ファミリーマート・サークルKサンクス）【共催】（附）	国	民公園協会新宿第8【問合せ】新宿区観光協会☎（3344）3160へ。				広報紙/関東地方/東京都
3	址収入に依存し他の産業育成が遅れ、経済構造が脆弱な面を持つ国もあります。これらの	国	にとっては産業の多角化が急務であり、わが国は、職業訓練をはじめ国内技術者の育成の				白書/外交
4	的な無形遺産や緊急に保護する必要のある口承伝統などを指定する。 同条約は、三十カ	国	が批准してから三カ月後に発効する。 日本は世界に先駆けて無形文化財の保護に取り組	共同通信社(著)/ 西日本新聞社(著) /		/	新聞/ブロック紙
5	があります。きっかりさえあれば、先頭を立てて走りましょう。どうせこれからの飛売は	国	と国にまたがってやる以外にはないのですから。 但しそのどこの部分を受け持つか	邸 永漢(著)	1920	男	書籍/3 社会科学
6	れた目的と任務を達成するため、感染症や風土病に対する対策、衛生統計、基準づくり、	国	際保健に関する条約、協定、規則の提案、技術協力や援助、研究開発などの活動が広範に	別府 正敏(著)	1940	男	書籍/4 自然科学
7	義」紀伊屋書店、一九七九年、一七〇一七二ページ。 まずオルテガは、人間社会や	国	家に関していかなる考えを持っていたのであるか。彼の言説を引用して、その社会観・	長谷川 高生(著)	1950	男	書籍/1 哲学
8	ています。 この仕組みは今日にいたるまで、いわゆる官僚化した共産主義体制をとった	国	では、そのまま受け継がれてきていると言わざるを得ない。だめな人間の立場がない良	田中 直毅(著)/ 長田 弘(著)	1940/ 1930	男/ 男	書籍/2 歴史
9	れる。「南朝鮮で、米軍を撤退させた、社会の民主化と祖国の統一のためにたたかう愛	国	者に対して、すなわち人間に対して非人間が死刑を宣告し虐殺をするという事態がいまお	小野 悌次郎(著)	1940	男	書籍/9 文学

図 1 「初納言」：「国」の検索結果画面（一部）

**短単位検索**

☑ 前方共起条件の追加

① キー     ①

書字形出現形

AND 語種  の 大分類

AND 語種  が 和

☑ 後方共起条件の追加

図 2 「中納言」：和語「国」の検索条件設定画面

サンプルID	開始位置	連番	前文脈	キー	後文脈
OY15_18251	13980	7990	はどちらにもビックリドッキリメカ機能が...にここに来てはいい。# サッターマンの北極代表ホッキョク	グマ	とドロンポーの(南極)代表コウテイペンギン...戦いは(環境)問題に。# 脱み合いの結果和順し
OV0X_00009	13720	8180	指がりに置く(鹿子)の(実)の(異)々た(ら)む(と)き(に)お(ど)く(る) # し(づ)か(な)る(間)違(り)あ(る)木(々)の(の)	くま	(草)々(の)く(ま)淡(き)舞(れ)ま(を) # いつ(し)ん(に)指(を)下(り)あ(る)指(の)む(ね)さ(び)し(き)、(履)列
LBp6_00036	67190	43220	3(1)画(で)送(る)奥(山)筋(脈)や電(気)柵(の)効(果)も(あ)る(た)る(う)が、(両)腕(が、)	クマ	(が)出(る)こ(と)に(慣)ね(て)ま(た)い(う)こ(と)も(あ)る(よ)う(だ)。# し(か)し、(1)こ(の)こ(と)
OC01_06728	420	300	「(1)客(原)の(男)性(は)強(制)退(席)さ(せ)ら(れ)て、(ICM)明(け)に(男)性(の)席(に)	熊	(の)ぬ(い)ぐる(み)が、(1)重(が)ね(て)い(た)い(と)こ(と)で(す)が、(1)そ(ね)を(見)る(け)サ(イ)トと
OC06_00035	650	390	か? # (1)抜(粋) # クマ(1)撃(退)ス(プ)レー(の)効(き)め? # クマ(1)撃(退)ス(プ)レー(は、(実)際(逆)上(し)た)	クマ	(を)撃(退)す(る)事(が)で(き)る。# こ(の)ス(プ)レー(の)中(身)は(ア)ト(ウ)ガ(ラ)シ(の)カ(ブ)サ(イ)シ(ン)と(い)う(1)エ(キ)ス(で)
LBs4_00043	26040	16400	く(だ)さ(い) # と(の)こ(と)。# (土)に(う)め(る)の(は)、(1)コ(ン)ポ(ス)ト(に)入(れ)る(の)と(お)な(じ)で、(1)	クマ	(は)鼻(が)か(き)た(め)、(ほ)じ(く)り(返)し(て)食(べ)て(し)ま(い)ま(す)。# (1)で(は)、(1)に(お)い(酒)し(を)
LBs7_00051	60550	39440	語、初(め)て(で)す。# 南 # (1)山(道)で(金)太(郎)に(な)っ(て)た(ら)さ(あ)、(ま)さ(か)り(持)っ(て、)	熊	(は)小(さい)ぬ(い)ぐる(み)な(ん)だ(け)ど(ね)。# そ(し)た(ら)、(向)う(か)ら(オ)ジ(サン)が(歩)い(て)
LBIn_00012	55280	32660	か(ら)移(入)て(や)る(が、(1)最(近)、(1)ゴ(ン)ゲ(ン)山(に)は(クマ)が(出)る(そ)う(じ)ゃ。# 真(一) # (1)	クマ	(1)? # 真(男) # (ま)さ(か)。# お(じ)さん # (い)や、(ほ)ん(と)う(じ)ゃ。# つ(い)二、(三)日(前)も
LBIn_00205	125040	81700	た(の)だ。# (十)六(夜)の(月)に(茶)色(い)毛(皮)が(ま)ら(り)と(光)っ(て)い(た)。# (1)そ(の)	熊	(の)前(に)立(ち)す(く)ん(で)い(る)の(は)、(確)然(と)さ(ん)だ。# (1)「(確)然(1) # (1)太(郎)

図3 「中納言」：語彙「熊」の検索結果画面（一部）

**短単位検索**

前方共起条件の追加

キー    キーの条件を指定しない

品詞  の 大分類  が 動詞  の

AND 活用形  の 大分類  が 連用形  の

後方共起  キーから  語  キーと結合して表示

品詞  の 大分類  が 動詞  の

後方共起条件の追加

図4 「中納言」：「動詞連用形+動詞」の検索条件設定画面

	キー	後文脈
溜まり、  疲(れ)て(い)る(こ)	慣(れ)	(1) (す)ぎ(1) (無)痛(症) (1) (な)っ(て)
結(し)て(1)ミ(ロ)シ(ェ)ビ(ツ)チ	引(き)ず(り)	(1) (下)る(し) (1) (民)主(派) (勢)力(か)
い「(持)た(げ)る(リ)ス(ク)」	感(じ)	(1) (始)め(た) (1) (1) (大)手(証)券(1)
ま(す)。# (人)を(1)め(ぐる) (物)	沓(せ)	(1) (く)だ(さ)い)。# 電(子)メ(ー)
り、  ぼ(う)然(と)し(し)た(1)表(情)	滑(り)	(1) (始)め(た) (1) (ウ)ォ(ザ)ー(ス)フ(ー)
か(1)パ(ー)ティ(ー)を(1)奪(い)、(1)	逃(げ)	(1) (き)っ(た)。# (1) も(と)も(と)
的(な)性(格)で(あ)っ(た)ら(し)	し	(1) (過)ぎ(1) (右)手(1) (自)由(を) (1)
ん(な)勇(太)が(字)の(勉)強(を)	言(い)	(1) (出)し(1)た)。# (1) 入(院)し(1)た(1)

図5 「中納言」：「動詞連用形+動詞」の検索結果画面（一部）



## 2.2 NINJAL-LWP for BCCWJ (NLB)

前節で紹介した「少納言」や「中納言」は、検索語を中心に表示し、その前後に文脈を配置する KWIC (Key Word in Context) という方式によって結果が示される。このシステムでは、大量のデータから抽出された用例を一覧することで、語がどのような使われ方をしているのかを知ることができるが、その語の使われ方を分析するには、用例の数を数えたり分類したり統計的な処理をしたりする必要がある。それに対して、NLBは、あらかじめ特定の方式でコロケーションを網羅的に抽出し、それを文法パターンごとに整理して統計的な処理をほどこした結果を一覧できるシステムである<sup>2</sup>。図6が「中納言」、図7がNLBで、どちらも「冷える」という語の検索結果の一部を示している。

前文脈	キー	後文脈
を飲みます。おなか(が)	冷え	ているときは、腹巻きをしたり、
りか、と食った。からだ(が)	冷え	かけていたから、それと、わず
を示す。食べ物の残り(が)	冷え	て固まった白い血が散らかって
を帯びていたが、それ(が)	冷え	て消えてしまうと、雲切れ自身
血行が悪くなり、カラダ(が)	冷える	傾向に。できるだけ脚を組んだ
よって、ますますカラダ(が)	冷える	という悪循環におちいることも。
トではますますカラダ(が)	冷え	てしまいます。できればパンツ
床からの冷気でカラダ(が)	冷え	てしまいます。ベッドを使用す
やれのためならカラダ(が)	冷え	たって平気だもん！」なんて意
中のキャラメル・ナッツ(が)	冷える	と切りにくいので、ほんのり温
ただし、上昇したマグマ(が)	冷え	て固まれば、全てダイヤモンド
つ行ってもシャンパン(が)	冷え	てた。できる限りそれを続ける
口を嚙んだ。コーヒー(が)	冷え	きっていた。皿に盛られた

図6 「中納言」の検索結果画面(一部)

図6だと、例えば「体が冷える」「カラダが冷える」など、「体」に対してどんな表記が多く使われているかを調べたいと思ったら、自分でそれぞれの数を数えなければならない。しかし、図7では

<sup>2</sup> NLBについて詳しくは国立国語研究所のサイト (<https://nlb.ninjal.ac.jp>) をご覧下さい。

「体が冷える」が 48 回、「身体が冷える」が 15 回、「からだが冷える」が 7 回使われていることが一目で分かる。また、図 7 には「体」と「冷える」などの結びつきがどのくらい強いかわかる統計数値が MI と LD に示されている。MI とは Mutual Information (相互情報量), LD とは logDice (ログダイス) のことで、共起する 2 つの単語それぞれの頻度を加味した上で、それらがどれくらい強く結びつくかを示すものである。

...が冷える 115種類			
コロケーション	コーパス全体		
	頻度	MI	LD
体が冷える	48	8.66	5.04
身体が冷える	15	9.06	5.43
足が冷える	12	8.28	4.65
【人名】が冷える	8	1.31	-2.29
お腹が冷える	8	9.72	6.02
下半身が冷える	8	12.40	8.24
からだが冷える	7	9.64	5.93
手足が冷える	6	11.09	7.16
マグマが冷える	5	12.73	8.17
空気が冷える	5	8.45	4.78
頭が冷える	4	5.87	2.25
足元が冷える	4	9.48	5.71

図 7 NLB の検索結果画面 (一部)

このように、NLB はコロケーションを始めとする語のさまざまな振る舞いを短時間で調べることができるため、多義語の意味記述や類義語の使い分けの研究、あるいは語の文法的な振る舞いの研究などに威力を発揮する。

### 3. 「多言語母語の日本語学習者横断コーパス (I-JAS)」

英語の名称は International Corpus of Japanese as a Second Language で、それを略して I-JAS と呼ばれている<sup>3</sup>。2 節で紹介した BCCWJ は日本語母語話者の書き言葉を集めたコーパスだが、I-JAS は日本語を外国語または第二言語とする学習者の話し言葉と書き言葉を集めた

<sup>3</sup> I-JAS について詳しくは国立国語研究所のサイト (<http://lsaj.ninjal.ac.jp>) をご覧ください。

コーパスである。構築されたデータは順次公開されており、完成時の2020年3月には1,050名分のデータ全てが公開される予定である。日本語学習者コーパスは他にもいくつか公開されているが、I-JASの特徴は、データの規模が大きいことと、12言語という多様な言語を母語とする学習者のデータを集めたことである。また、外国語として日本語を学ぶ海外の学習者、第二言語として日本語を学ぶ国内の学習者、教室で日本語を学ぶ学習者、自然習得で日本語を学ぶ学習者のように多様な学習環境のデータが集められていることや、ストーリーテリング、ストーリーライティング、インタビュー、ロールプレイなど、多様なタスクを行っていること、さらには学習者一人一人の日本語能力のスコア<sup>4</sup>や学習歴などのプロフィールが参照できることなどが挙げられる。

表2は完成時の学習者の内訳である。対照データとして日本語母語話者のデータも50名分含まれている。

内訳		人数
海外の学習者		850人
国内の学習者	教室環境	100人
	自然環境	50人
日本語母語話者		50人

表2 I-JAS 完成時のデータ

#### 4. BCCWJを使った研究事例

この節ではBCCWJを使った日本語と日本語教育の研究事例を紹介する。BCCWJは2011年に公開されて以来、多くの研究に活用されており、国立国語研究所のホームページからアクセスできる「BCCWJを用いた研究業績一覧 ([http://pj.ninjal.ac.jp/corpus\\_center/bccwj/list.html](http://pj.ninjal.ac.jp/corpus_center/bccwj/list.html))」には999件の論文リストが挙げられている(更新日時は2019年10月2日)。また、BCCWJ関連の書物もすでに数多く刊行されている。以下では刊行された書籍に的を絞って紹介する。

BCCWJを活用した日本語や日本語教育の研究を紹介した書物として、BCCWJ構築プロジェクトの代表者である前川喜久雄氏監修の『講座日本語コーパス』(全8巻)が挙げられる。そのうちの第6

<sup>4</sup>全ての学習者に対してSPOT 90とJ-CATという日本語能力テストを行っている。

巻, 田野村編 (2014) は, コーパスを用いた語彙研究, 文法研究, 言語変化の研究や多様なコーパスの可能性などについての解説のほか, BCCWJ を使った具体的な分析事例や BCCWJ の資料的特性が示されている。また, 第 5 巻, 砂川編 (2016) では自作コーパスの作り方, 学習支援コーパスやコーパス検索ツールの紹介などのほか, BCCWJ を活用した語彙表の作成, 類義表現の分析事例などが紹介されている。例えば, 類義表現の分析では, 「中納言」を使った「からいうと／からいえば」と「からみると／からみれば」の比較, NLB を使った「海外」と「国内」の比較が行われている。なお, 「中納言」と NLB を使った類義表現の分析方法については砂川 (2014) を参照されたい。

日本語教育の実践に役立つ BCCWJ の活用事例としては中俣 (2014) と山内監修・中俣編 (2017) が挙げられる。中俣 (2014) は BCCWJ を使って「ている」「たことがある」などの機能語がどのような内容語 (動詞や形容詞など) と共起するかを調べ, その結果とともに意味や使い方についての説明を行っている。例えば「のに」の前にくる動詞は, 「来る」「する」「ある」の順に多く, その結果を日本語教科書データでの検索結果と比較し, BCCWJ にはあまり出現しないのに教科書には多く出現する語があることなどを指摘している。また, 「ないでください」の出現率は非常に少なく, 出現率の高い「てください」と同列に扱う必要はないといった考察も行われており, 教科書でどのような項目に重点を置くか, 学習項目をどのような順番で配置するかなどを考える際に役立つ内容となっている。山内監修・中俣編 (2017) は, 典型的な例を BCCWJ に基づく客観的な根拠とともに示すことを目的として, 「話題・対象を表す表現」「状況・場合を表す表現」「原因・理由を表す表現」など, 機能語的な表現を対象とした例文作りを試みている。分かりやすい用例作りに悩む教師にとって典型的な用例を考える上での重要な手がかりを与えてくれる書物である。

NLB の使い方や, NLB を使った研究成果の紹介に関しては赤瀬川・プラシャント・今井 (2016) が挙げられる。NLB と同じシステムで 11 億語のコーパスを検索できる NINJAL-LWP for TWC (NLT) も紹介されている。これらのシステムを利用する人には欠かせない参考書である。

## 5. I-JAS を使った研究事例

I-JAS を活用した研究について書物として刊行されたものはまだ見られない。しかし、研究論文として発表された事例はすでに少なからず挙げられる。I-JAS が学習者コーパスであるため、これまでに発表された論文はほとんどが日本語教育への応用を目指したものである。以下ではそれらのうち主なものを紹介する。

学習者の過剰使用や過少使用の研究としては小西（2017）と石川（2017）が挙げられる。小西（2017）は、ストーリーテリングとロールプレイのタスクごとに語の頻度表を作成し、それぞれのタスクで母語話者と学習者が使用した語を比較している。その結果、学習者が過少使用するものとして「てしまう」「てくる」「ていただく」などが、過剰使用するものとして「てくれる」などがあることや、母語話者は「は」と「が」を使い分けられているのに対し、学習者は「は」を多用することなどを指摘している。一方、石川（2017）は、中国人学習者の L2 である英語と日本語の使用を分析した結果、複雑なアスペクトや文構造を回避し、相互参照を強調する傾向が両者に共通して見られることなどを指摘した上で、この種の研究が学習者の過剰・過少使用と母語干渉との関連を議論するのに重要な知見を与えうることを論じている。

迫田（2016）はロールプレイに見られる依頼表現を分析し、フランス語、スペイン語、英語、中国語母語話者に共通して見られる問題と、特定の母語話者に多く見られる問題について論じている。また、迫田・蘇・張（2017）は依頼のロールプレイで中国語母語話者に多く見られる「念押し」表現を分析し、中国語で行った同様のロールプレイの分析と比較することで、「念押し」表現が母語の語用論的転移である可能性を論じている。

ストーリーテリングの談話展開表現を分析したものに小口（2017）と砂川（2017）が挙げられる。小口（2017）は、意外な出来事を表すときに、韓国語母語の学習者は日本語母語話者と同様に動作主を「が」で受けるが、英語や中国語母語の学習者は「は」で受けること、どの学習者も母語話者が使っている「と」「とたんに」「すると」などの接続表現が使えないことなどを指摘している。砂川（2017）は学習者と母語話者が用いた順接表現を分析し、学習者は時間関係や因果関係を表す表現は使えるが、「すると」「そこで」「…ところ」など、談話の重要な展開場面をマークし、次に起こる

ことの意外性や期待感を表す表現を使えないためにダイナミックな談話展開が困難であることを論じている。

奥野・リスダ (2015) はストーリーテリングとストーリーライティングを比較し、学習者はライティングのほうが複雑な表現を使用するケースが多いものの、そのために正確さが犠牲になったり、正確さを優先させるためライティングに単純な表現を使用したりする場面があることを指摘し、中間言語変異性にさまざまな知識が関わっていることを論じている。

発音に関しては、砂川・黒沢 (2017) と砂川・黒沢 (2018) が挙げられる。前者は中国語母語話者の漢語名詞の発音について調査し、中国語に同じ形態の単語が存在しない「非同形語」より、同じ形態の単語が存在する「同形語」のほうに多くの誤用が生じることを明らかにし、漢字単語の習得の際に中国語の字音による負の転移が生じる可能性について論じている。後者は中国語母語話者の漢語名詞の発音とフランス語母語話者の漢語名詞の発音を比較し、それぞれの母語の干渉と思われる特徴的な誤りがあることや、漢字圏の中国語母語話者のほうが、母語の漢字音の影響を受けて発音の誤用が多くなることを論じている。

## 6. おわりに

本稿は、国立国語研究所が開発したコーパスのうち、日本語母語話者コーパスの代表として BCCWJ、日本語学習者コーパスの代表として I-JAS を取りあげて紹介した。国立国語研究所では、このほかに、「日本語話し言葉コーパス (CSJ)」「日本語歴史コーパス (CHJ)」「国語研日本語ウェブコーパス」など多数のコーパスを公開しているし、現在も自発的な会話コーパスや方言コーパスなどの構築が進行中である<sup>5</sup>。

コーパスを活用することは日本語が実際に使用されている状況を大規模かつ客観的に把握することを可能にするだけでなく、時代・地域・レジスターの変異といったさまざまに異なる言語使用の比較を可能にする。また、コーパスを活用することで言語教育のための教材や辞書の編集、学習支援ツールの開発など、教育への応用も大い

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<sup>5</sup>国立国語研究所が公開しているコーパスについて、詳しくは国立国語研究所のサイト (<https://www.ninjal.ac.jp/database/>) をご覧ください。

に期待できる。言語研究、言語教育への応用になくってはならない貴重な資源として今後ますます重要性を増すものと思われる。

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## AUTHOR'S PROFILE

### **Yuriko Sunakawa**

Present status: Professor Emerita, University of Tsukuba.

Field of specialization: Japanese Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, Japanese Language Teaching, PhD (linguistics).

Award of the Year: The Society of Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language (May 2012).

Recent publications:

1. 2016.3 砂川有里子編『講座日本語コーパス5 コーパスと日本語教育 (Corpus and Japanese Language Education)』朝倉書店 203 pages.
2. 2018.7 李在鎬・石川慎一郎・砂川有里子『新日本語教育のためのコーパス調査入門 (Introduction to Corpus Survey for Japanese Language Education, new edition)』くろしお出版 288 pages.
3. 2019.11 プラシヤント パルデシ・靱山洋介・砂川有里子・今井新悟・今村泰成編『多義動詞分析の新展開と日本語教育への応用 (Analysis of Polysemy Verb and its Application to Japanese Language Education)』開拓社.
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## Boy or Girl? The Rise of Non-Gender-Specific Names in Japan

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.2

### ABSTRACT

One current issue concerning Japanese given names is the increasing number of names lacking gender-distinctive features in their graphic and/or phonological form. Unlike in the past, recently even some of the most popular names are given to both boys and girls. This paper explores this phenomenon in the context of the changes in name selection in the last several decades, analyzing names given to 4,567 boys and 4,806 girls born 2008–2016. Comparing these two name sets from the point of view of their orthography, length, structure, and *kanji* selection brought forth the main distinctive features between current male and female names. A further analysis revealed some features common to the gender-neutral names, and various aspects related to losing gender distinction. The explanations of the parents' reasons for selecting the particular name, included in the corpus, provided some insight into why some parents select names that do not indicate the gender of their child.

**KEYWORDS:** name selection, Japanese given names, non-gender-specific names, gender-neutral names

### 1. Introduction

In contemporary Japan, traditional gender differences have been fading from various areas, including language, fashion, self-image, careers and life goals, and this convergence of the male and female worlds can be seen in given names as well. Current name selection has been greatly influenced by the accelerating changes of the second half of the twentieth century, especially its last two decades. These include changes in external influences (sources of inspiration, the people with whom parents consult their ideas, etc.), changes in the method of and the criteria for name selection (now with an emphasis on the sound and the overall image of the name rather than primarily on the meaning of the *kanji* used), and also changes in the way parents perceive their children (now with an emphasis on the individual qualities and uniqueness of their child). Last but not least is the increasing tendency to select a name based on the child's place in the family rather than in respect to the child's future social roles (e.g., Kobayashi 2009, Nakaya 2012, Barešová 2016).

In the quest for expressing their child's special individuality, recent generations of parents have been investing a great deal of time and effort into name selection, the process of which is often quite elaborate, an interplay involving phonological, semantic and visual dimensions. The resultant name is often a unique choice, which would only fit that particular child, reflecting the time of birth or expressing the parents' aspirations for their child, and in numerology calculated in combination with the surname to bring fortune and happiness.

The above-mentioned priorities increasingly eclipse the traditional methods of expressing gender and gender roles. As a result, a growing number of currently bestowed names have no gender-distinctive features, and sometimes even utilize *kanji* whose meanings are usually associated with the opposite sex. While in the past most names could be clearly identified as male or female, an increasing number of currently bestowed names are ambiguous or even counterintuitive, as in the following example:

“Ever since junior high my husband had wanted to name his child, whether a boy or a girl, Runa (‘luna’), and our son became Runa the very moment we found out I was pregnant. [...] The *kanji* we chose, 月華 (‘moon’ + ‘flower’), are pretty, and although there is nothing like a moon flower, we included through this image a wish for our son to grow up to be a boy who has dreams as big as flowers blooming on the Moon.”

Runa's mother (2009)<sup>1</sup>

The name Luna (Runa in Japanese) is of Latin origin; according to Roman mythology Luna was the goddess of the Moon. This name has been growing in popularity not only in Japan, but also in the US and Europe, probably influenced by the Harry Potter character Luna Lovegood, and by the Sailor Moon franchise character Runa. Consequently, the name the parents chose for their son is generally perceived as a female name, and the chosen *kanji* even strengthen this perception.

Such names are becoming something of a cultural phenomenon, which is attracting increasing curiosity. What is the nature and origins of such names? Do they share any common features or distinctive characteristics? What motivates parents to give such names to their children? Answers to such questions were sought by examining a corpus of recently bestowed

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<sup>1</sup> The example comes from the corpus described in Section 4: Gender-specific features of currently bestowed names.

names from the point of view of gender distinction. This paper presents the findings of the analysis of these names (and the reasons for their selection), providing some insight into this emerging trend.

## 2. Formal Limitations to Japanese Given Names

In many countries, most names clearly indicate gender, and gender-neutral names (also called androgynous or unisex names) are an exception (e.g., the Czech Republic and many other European countries), where giving a boy a girl's name or vice versa is sometimes even prevented by law (e.g., Willson 2009, Knappová 2017). On the other hand, there are countries in which gender-neutral names are quite common and are recently enjoying growing popularity (e.g., Britain and the USA).

In Japan, there are no limitations to name selection in terms of gender indication. The only limitations concern the orthography. A Japanese given name can be written in *kanji*, *kana*, or some combination of the two, but cannot include letters from the Roman alphabet or Arabic numerals. The Chinese characters permitted for use in names are regulated, and it is not possible to register a name written in other than permitted characters. Currently, names can include the 2,136 *Jōyō kanji* (lit. Chinese characters for common use) and the additional 863 *Jinmeiyō kanji*, a specific list of additional characters which can also be used in names.

Although Japanese given names are not required to indicate gender, in the past it was usually possible to distinguish males and females by their name (Jugaku 1979: 123), although this does not mean that there were no names given to both boys and girls. There are names bestowed upon both men and women, but usually not within the same period. In other words, in each previous period there was usually a distinction between male and female names (ibid.).

## 3. Gender-Specific Features of Names in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

This section briefly summarizes the most typical features of male and female names prevalent for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, until in the 1970s various new types of names started to emerge, causing the current blurring of gender in names, among other phenomena.

Starting with the orthography, names written in *kana* or combining *kana* and *kanji* were typically feminine (e.g., ハナ *Hana*, はな *Hana*, はな子 *Hanako*). On the other hand, single-*kanji* names were typically masculine (e.g., 昇 *Noboru*, 茂 *Shigeru*, 清 *Kiyoshi*).

Male and female names were somewhat distinctive also in their phonological length and structure. Male names usually varied between

three to six morae<sup>2</sup>, but female names were two or three-mora long. Thus, four, five and six-mora names (e.g., *Hideyoshi*, *Taketarō*, *Seichirō*) were male names, while two-mora names (e.g., *Hide*, *Take*, *Sei*) were more often female names.

But even with the same phonological length and number of *kanji*, male and female names could be distinguished from each other, usually by a gender-specific end *kanji*, with the corresponding end syllable(s)<sup>3</sup>. For instance, the male name 春雄 *Haruo* and the female name 春子 *Haruko* consist of the same core *kanji*, 春 ‘spring’, but each is complemented with a different end *kanji* to give the name its final form, both graphic and phonological, and also to make it gender specific.

The end *kanji* used in male names include: *kanji* with the meaning ‘man’ (夫, 男, 雄, 郎 /o<sup>4</sup>/; 彦 /hiko/), *kanji* signifying the order of birth (e.g., 一 /ichi/; 二, 次 /ji/; 三 /zō/) and various other male name end *kanji* (e.g., 平 /hei/; 人 /hi)to/; 治, 司 /ji/; 樹, 記, 紀, 基, 規 /ki/; 生 /o/; 志, 司, 史, 士 /shi/; 介, 輔 /suke/; 也, 矢, 弥, 哉 /ya/).

The typical end *kanji* and gender marker of female names was 子 /ko/, which, at the height of its popularity in the 1940s, was used in eight out of ten female names (Sakuma 1969: 98). Another popular end *kanji*, which became widespread in female names in the 1960s, is 美 /mi/. There are a number of other end *kanji* that were used in female names, for example, 恵, 江, 枝, 栄 /e/; 穂, 保 /ho/; 香, 佳 /ka/; 乃 /no/; 利, 里, 理 /ri/ and 代 /yo/.

For most of the twentieth century, the majority of Japanese given names followed structural patterns typical for the male and female names of that particular period. The gradual shift from name selection based on meaning or preference for some particular *kanji* to name selection based on the sound and overall image of the name, combined with the growing emphasis on individuality and uniqueness, caused the formerly popular name patterns to be increasingly replaced as new names emerged, creating great diversity in structure and sound. Due to these changes, some of the name features that were gender-specific ceased to be used in names (e.g., typical end *kanji*, such as the feminine 子) or became no longer gender specific (e.g., single-*kanji* names).

<sup>2</sup> Two-mora names utilizing the Sino-Japanese reading of one *kanji* were also used, but these only became more frequent after WWII.

<sup>3</sup> Unlike when considering the length of names, here it is more useful to consider syllables than morae.

<sup>4</sup>郎 is also read as /rō/.

#### 4. Gender-Specific Features of Currently Bestowed Names

The corpus used for the present study contains data collected over the course of several years from the website *Bebī karendā* [Baby Calendar]<sup>5</sup>. Each of the 9,373 entries of names of children born 2008–2016 (4,567 male and 4,806 female names) contains the graphic and phonological form of the name, the year of birth and gender of the child, and also includes a short explanation (*nazuke episōdo*) of the parents' motivation for selecting the particular name, as well as their interpretation of its meaning, the main criteria for their selection, and so forth.

##### *Orthography*

The overwhelming majority of currently bestowed names, both male and female, are written in *kanji*, as shown in Table 1. Unlike *kana*, *kanji* make it possible to convey various meanings, create interesting images, and express desired aspirations and hopes for the child's future.

*Hiragana*, which has been traditionally considered feminine, still appears mainly in female names, mostly in a limited number of popular names, while male names written in *hiragana* are very rare. Some of them, such as けんぞう *Kenzō*, だigo *Daigo* and うえりやむ *Weryamu* (William), sound like male names; however, いと *Ito*, うた *Uta*, しん *Shin* or こはち *Kohachi* resemble names bestowed on females more than a century ago. But despite its minor occurrence in male names, *hiragana* can still be considered a feminine feature.

The use of *katakana* is marginal for either gender, which can be at least partially attributed to the above reasons.

	<i>kanji</i>	<i>hiragana</i>	<i>katakana</i>	<i>hiragana</i> + <i>kanji</i>	<i>katakana</i> + <i>kanji</i>
M	99.63 %	0.22 %	0.09 %	-	0.07 %
F	93.11 %	6.26 %	0.23 %	0.35 %	0.04 %

Table 1: The distribution of types of orthography in the corpus

##### *Phonological Length*

As Table 2 shows, more than two thirds of the male names are three-mora long. Two and four-mora names are equally frequent, with 14 percent each. A small portion of the names have five or six morae. The majority of

<sup>5</sup> <https://baby-calendar.jp/>. Accessed 2017.08.10.

female names are also three-mora long. Almost all the other female names have two morae, except for an insignificant number of four-mora names.

It can be concluded that a bearer of a five or six-mora name can be quite safely considered male, and the gender of a four-mora name can be usually inferred correctly as well. Female four-mora names are very rare and most of them have some typically feminine features. For example, the corpus names *Sakurako*, *Akariko*, *Yukariko*, *Kaoruko* and *Mashiroko* end in the feminine /ko/, *Marumika* ends in the feminine /ka/, *Himawari* means ‘sunflower’ and is typically used as a female name, and *Aimī* is a foreign female name. *Jūnon* resembles *Kanon*, which is now quite fashionable among female names.

	male	Female
2 morae	14.06 %	38.14 %
3 morae	67.40 %	61.51 %
4 morae	14.54 %	0.35 %
5 morae	3.55 %	-
6 morae	0.46 %	-

Table 2: Phonological length of male and female names in the corpus

### *End Syllables and End Kanji*

Parental desire for a unique name has led to the rise of the so-called *ateji* type names (Barešová 2016). The selection process of such a name usually starts with a desired phonological form (often foreign-sounding), to which *kanji* are assigned based either on phonological or semantic relationship. This is one reason why currently bestowed names display such a great variety of end syllables as well as end *kanji*.

The most frequent end syllables in either male or female names are gender-specific, with the exception of /ki/, which very frequently appears in both male and female names. The currently most frequent masculine end syllables are /to/ (e.g., *Haruto*, *Kaito*, *Minato*, *Yamato*, *Yūto*), /ta/ (e.g., *Haruta*, *Kōta*, *Shōta*, *Sōta*, *Yūta*) and /ma/ (e.g., *Haruma*, *Kazuma*, *Ryūma*, *Sōma*, *Yūma*). Other strongly masculine end syllables, some traditional and some recent, and with varying frequency of occurrence, include: /dai/, /ga/, /ei/ /hei/ (/pei/), /kei/, /sei/, /ji/, /shi/, /suke/, /go/ and /rō/. The most frequent feminine end syllables are /na/ (e.g., *Hina*, *Kokona*, *Mana*, *Rina*, *Yuna*) and /ka/ (e.g., *Honoka*, *Ichika*, *Momoka*, *Yuika*, *Yūka*). Other strongly feminine syllables used in currently bestowed names include /e/, /ne/, /ho/, /ko/, /no/ and /yu/.

However, at the same time there is a number of end syllables that occur in both sets of names, although most of these are still significantly more common for one gender than the other (in some cases limited to a few popular names), with the exception of /ki/.

The graphic representations of individual end syllables also display a great variety. For example, the masculine /to/ is represented by over 40 different *kanji* in the corpus, although the three most frequent ones, 斗, 人, and 翔, make up over 65 % and are gender-specific. Similarly, the feminine /na/ is written with over 30 different *kanji*, but the two most frequent ones, 菜 and 奈, account for almost 60 % of all occurrences and are gender-specific as well.

Male names	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
	太	斗	翔	人	真	大	希	郎	輝	生
	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.
	空	介	樹	音	士	朗	仁	雅	也	馬
	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.
	汰	和	平	琉	陽	心	弥	志	成	哉
	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.	37.	38.	39.	40.
	晴	月	葵	登	海	貴	夢	磨	一	星
	41.	42.	43.	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.	49.	50.
	向	悟	佑	稀	都	央	誠	吾	叶	助
Female names	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
	愛	花	菜	奈	音	子	香	乃	希	月
	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.
	衣	美	桜	夏	羽	華	海	里	莉	結
	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.
	那	空	優	佳	咲	葉	実	梨	帆	彩
	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.	37.	38.	39.	40.
	心	歩	依	緒	良	生	一	葵	陽	央
	41.	42.	43.	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.	49.	50.
	穗	和	南	織	来	奏	夢	紗	姫	春

Table 3: The most frequent end *kanji* in the male and female names in the corpus



In the past, there were very few end *kanji* that appeared in names bestowed on both girls and boys. However, the following table now gives us a very different picture. Thirteen out of the fifty most frequent end *kanji* in male and female names in the corpus appear on both lists. Some of these *kanji* represent different readings in names for girls and for boys, and so while the phonological form of the name is still gender-specific, the graphic form no longer has the ability to distinguish between genders.

### 5. Gender-Neutral Names and Their Characteristics

Using the methods already mentioned, it is still possible to clearly mark gender, and most parents still do, but there have been an increasing number of names which lack any gender-specific features in their phonological and/or graphic form, and there also have been an increasing number of names that are used by both sexes. Due to the way Japanese names are formed, there are numerous names with very low occurrence. Therefore, I prefer using the term non-gender-specific names as a more general term covering all names which cannot be clearly determined as male or female, and gender-neutral names when discussing names which have above average occurrence in both sets of names. The 9,373 names in the corpus have 1,897 different phonological forms. 170 (8.96 %) of these were found as both male and female names. In many cases the name was significantly more frequent as male or female, with only one or two occurrences of the other. If we select names that have at least five, i.e. above average occurrences in both sets<sup>6</sup>, we get the following 31 names:

*Aoi, Asahi, Chiaki, Chihiro, Haru, Haruhi, Hinata, Ibuki, Iori, Kaede, Kanade, Keito, Makoto, Mitsuki, Mizuki, Nao, Noa, Natsuki, Rei, Rio, Rion, Ruka, Sena, Shion, Sora, Tsubasa, Yura, Yū, Yūki, Yūri, Yuzuki*

In the 2016 survey by Meiji Yasuda Insurance Company, three of these, *Aoi*, *Hinata* and *Yū*, ranked among the fifty most popular names given to boys, and also among the top fifty for girls. *Aoi* even ranked 6<sup>th</sup> among names given to girls and 9/10<sup>th</sup> among names given to boys. Lieberson, Dumais, and Baumann (2000), who have researched androgynous names in the US<sup>7</sup>, point out that it is very rare for androgynous names to be at the same time popular for both boys and girls.

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<sup>6</sup> An average occurrence of one phonological form in the set of names bestowed on boys is 4.26, and 4.84 in the set of names bestowed on girls.

<sup>7</sup> On the data of all white births in Illinois in 1916–1989 and in 1985.

Let us have a closer look at these 31 names. Most of them end in a syllable which is not strongly associated with either gender, the most frequent being /ki/ (*Chiaki, Ibuki, Mitsuki, Mizuki, Natsuki, Yūki, Yuzuki*). There are some exceptions, such as the name *Keito*, which is usually perceived as a male name, due to the strongly masculine final /to/. However, when bestowed on a girl, it is meant to imitate the English female name Kate. In other words, the male *Keito* and the female *Keito* emerged through separate pathways (cf. Lieberson, Dumais, and Baumann 2000). The name *Yūri*, on the other hand, is more often perceived as a female name, resembling female names such as *Airi, Akari, Ayuri, Juri*, etc. Some hints as to why it is also bestowed on boys can be found in the parents' explanations: it has a soft, gentle sound, more often associated with female names, but resembles the foreign masculine name Yuriy. Similar reasons can be found for the name *Iori*. It seems to be appealing for both genders as it sounds soft and gentle, but is known as originally being a male name due to Miyamoto Iori, an adopted son of the famous Miyamoto Musashi.

A number of the examined names are of foreign origin or at least foreign sounding, such as the above mentioned *Keito* (Kate) and *Yūri* (Yury, Yuri, Yuriy, etc.), also *Noa* (Noa(h)), *Rei* (Ray, Rey), *Rio* (Rio), *Rion* (Lion, Rion), *Ruka* (Luca, Lucca, Luka, etc.), *Sena* (Sena), and *Shion* (Sion), and are usually chosen in the hope that the child would be active globally in the future<sup>8</sup>. Some of these names are used in some countries as male and in others as female or gender-neutral, as a result of which they are used in Japan by both genders. For example, the name *Ruka* is used in Japan for both boys and girls (with a slight preference for girls, although the Italian name Luca is a male name, probably because of the final /ka/, perceived in Japanese names as strongly feminine). The fact that some of these names are listed in various publications inconsistently as male, female or both, also contributes to their perception as being gender-neutral. For example, the name *Sena* is listed in Yasuda (1998) as a female name, in Tamiya (2003) as a male name, in Kuniwaki (2005) as both male and female and in Happi Nēmu Fāzāzu (2014) again only as a female name. In the corpus it is similarly frequent as male and female.

Another thing these names have in common is that many of them are known as names of various celebrities and popular fictional characters from manga, anime or TV shows. *Kaede* is a good example of a name of numerous fictional characters, both male and female. In order to become gender-neutral, it is important for a name which is originally associated only with one gender to receive public attention as a name used by the

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<sup>8</sup> This motivation applies to *Keito* only when chosen for a girl.

other gender, through a popular artist or some other famous personality, or a popular fictional character. Name popularity in general has been strongly influenced by the media, and many parents get inspired by the name of their favorite celebrity or character, who they perceive as a role model for their child.

Names that are gender-neutral from the point of view of their pronunciation often retain gender specificity at least in their graphic form. For example, if the name *Keito* is written as 慧人 or 啓斗, it looks very masculine, as these two end *kanji* appear exclusively in male names. On the other hand, if the name is written as 恵都 or in *hiragana*, けいと, it looks feminine.

Conversely, names that are gender-neutral in their graphic form usually have a gender-specific pronunciation. For example, the graphic form 心 represents in the corpus the feminine phonological form *Kokoro*<sup>9</sup> (utilizing the *kun*-reading of the *kanji*), and masculine form *Shin* (utilizing the *on*-reading of the same *kanji*). The name 和 represents the feminine *Nodoka* and *Nagomi*, and the masculine *Yamato* and *Nagomu*. The name 結音 is found as a male name with the readings *Yūto* and *Yuito*, but as a female name with the readings *Yuine* and *Yuno*.

The following 41 graphic forms appear at least twice (i.e. above average) in both sets in the corpus:

葵, 優, 和, 碧, 凌, 遙, 心, 凜, 縁, 蓮, 樹, 湊, 翼, 蒼, 奏, 楓, 晴,  
 優心, 瑠海, 愛琉, 奏音, 真生, 悠月, 柚希, 結音, 陽葵, 結生,  
 心音, 碧音, 優月, 璃音, 心優, 結心, 琉夏, 陽向, 伊織, 蒼空,  
 悠希, 光希, 朝陽, 優希

Some of the listed single *kanji* names (e.g., 優) were previously used as male names, but most of these *kanji* have become popular only recently, in the last decades of the twentieth century, when single-*kanji* names started to be increasingly given also to girls. The *kanji* used in the end position of the listed two-*kanji* names are also mostly newly popular *kanji*. Many of them denote natural phenomena/world (e.g., 海 ‘sea’, 空 ‘sky’, 陽 ‘sun’, 月 ‘moon’, 葵 ‘hollyhock’, 琉 ‘precious stone, lapis lazuli’), or have meanings that allude to human relationships or qualities that are now

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<sup>9</sup> Actually, there is now a popular Japanese child actor and TV personality Terada Kokoro (born 2008, pseudonym). It is likely that he will inspire some parents to name their son *Kokoro*.

desired in both boys and girls (e.g., 心 ‘heart, mind, soul’, 優 ‘kind, excellent’, 希 ‘hope, wish, aspiration’).

Some of the names that are used for both boys and girls have the same phonological as well as graphic form. From these names it is truly impossible to recognize the gender of the child. Those that appear repeatedly include:

*Aoi* 葵/碧/蒼, *Asahi* 朝陽, *Haru* 晴, *Hinata* 陽向, *Iori* 伊織, *Itsuki* 樹, *Kaede* 楓, *Kanade* 奏, *Minato* 湊, *Ren* 蓮, *Rion* 璃音, *Ruka* 琉夏/瑠海, *Rin* 凜, *Ryō* 凌, *Sora* 蒼空, *Tsubasa* 翼, *Yū* 優, *Yūki* 優希 and *Yuzuki* 悠月/優月/柚希

The above discussed tendencies are demonstrated in the following two diagrams, using examples from the corpus. Diagram 1 presents one gender-neutral phonological form (*Aoi*) represented by numerous graphic forms, some of which were found only among male or female names, and some in both parts of the corpus. Diagram 2 shows the opposite situation: one graphic form (璃音) with several phonological forms, one of which, *Rion*, is used for both genders.

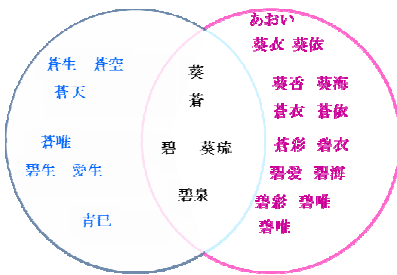


Diagram 1:  
Graphic forms of the name *Aoi*

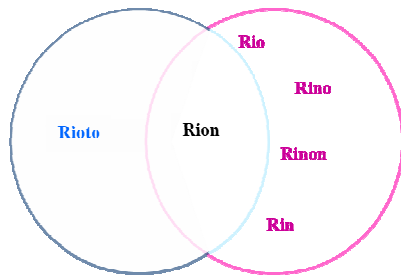


Diagram 2:  
Phonological forms of the name 璃音

## 6. From Masculine to Gender-neutral to Feminine or the Other Way Around?

In Western countries, it is generally acknowledged that a gender-neutral name is more advantageous for girls than boys (e.g., Lieberson, Dumais, and Baumann, 2000). According to Barry and Harper (1982), who examined the psychology of name selection in the US, names tend to

evolve from masculine to gender-neutral and from gender-neutral to feminine.

Also in Japan, there are cases when an originally male name became popular as a female name and now is more frequently chosen for girls. For example, the Shōwa male name 優, usually pronounced as *Masaru*, became popular as a female name under the influence of the Japanese singer and TV actress with the stage name Hayami Yū 早見優 (Makino 2017). In the present corpus the name 優 *Yū* appears for both boys and girls, but more frequently for girls (優 pronounced as *Masaru* was not found in the corpus). Similarly, the name *Yūki* (with various graphic forms) was first used as a name for boys, but later became to be used also for girls. However, some currently gender-neutral names, such as *Aoi*, *Haru*, *Hinata*, *Mahiro*<sup>10</sup>, *Mizuki*, *Rei* and *Shion* were originally used only for girls (ibid.). Of these, *Haru*, *Hinata* and *Mahiro* are now even more frequent in the corpus as names for boys. In fact, according to Makino, nowadays it is mostly boys who get a name originally given to the opposite sex; the majority of names that end up gender-neutral were originally female names which became popular and are increasingly used for both girls and boys (ibid.).

There has also been a tendency to create male names inspired by recently popular female names by attaching to them an end syllable typical for male names, as in the following examples: *Ai* → *Aito*, *Hina* → *Hinato*, *Mana* → *Manato*, *Saki* → *Sakito*, *Yui* → *Yuito*. Such names sound masculine, but they have a soft, feminine touch. The tendency to use in names for boys features that are more frequently associated with women is even more apparent at the graphic level. Names such as 愛音 *Akito* ('love' + 'sound'), 優心 *Yūshin/Yūshi/Yūgo* ('kind' + 'heart'), or 結心 *Yūshin/Yushin* ('to tie, bind, join' + 'heart') sound masculine but evoke images associated with females rather than males.

## 7. Reasons for Bestowing Non-Gender-Specific Names

There seem to be various reasons why contemporary parents choose non-gender-specific names. For some of them the gender indication simply is not one of the key criteria they consider in the process of name selection. As the example of naming a boy *Runa* showed, for some parents the fact that a name even strongly indicates the opposite gender is no obstacle to bestowing upon their newborn their favorite name.

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<sup>10</sup> *Mahiro* is not so frequent in our corpus for both genders.

On the other hand, there are parents who intentionally aim for a gender-neutral name. In some cases, the reason is purely practical. They want to decide the name before birth, but often prefer to wait until birth to find out their child's gender.

Another explanation can be found in the parents' aspirations for their children, which are now more similar for boys and girls than they were in the past. Whether they have a boy or a girl, many parents wish for their child to become strong and ambitious, but also to be sensitive, empathetic and caring, and they want the name to reflect this accordingly. And here again a possible source of influence can be seen in the already mentioned manga and anime characters. Many of these popular fictional characters possess both masculine and feminine traits, which makes them appealing to the audience.

Makino (2017) suggests that the tendency to give boys female-looking names or names with feminine features might be influenced by the fact that unlike in the past, when it was usually the father who decided the children's names, nowadays women are more engaged in name selection and more of them want to treat their sons the same way they would treat a daughter. The data examined in this study support this opinion, indicating that women seem to be the more active ones in the name selection process.

## 8. Conclusion

Japanese names need not indicate gender, and it is even possible to give a girl's name to a boy or vice versa. Despite this, the majority of currently bestowed names are somehow gender-specific, especially due to their use of gender-specific end syllables and end *kanji*, both traditional and new, and some also due to their orthography or phonological length. Many, however, lack gender-distinctive features in either their phonological or graphic form, and some have none at all. Such names are often foreign-sounding and utilize currently popular *kanji*, such as those denoting the natural world, which are used with multiple readings (even in the end position), to evoke images expressing similar aspirations for boys and girls. Often names have jumped the gender gap led by the popularity of a famous personality, either real or fictional.

Japanese methods of name formation have encouraged a great variety of names in some way lacking gender clarity. Not only is it clear that parental tolerance of such names is rising, but there is also mounting evidence that some parents actually seek a more gender-neutral identity for their child. Whether the bearers of such names are as enthusiastic remains to be seen.

In either case, the result has been a serious drop in our confidence that we can predict someone's gender from seeing or hearing their name.

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## AUTHOR'S PROFILE

### **Ivona Barešová**

Ivona Barešová, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor at the Department of Asian Studies at Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic. Her research interests concern modern Japanese language and society, recently focusing on the field of Japanese given names. Her publications include *Politeness Strategies in Cross-cultural Perspective: Study of American and Japanese Employment Rejection Letters* (Olomouc: Palacký University Press, 2008) and *Japanese Given Names: A Window Into Contemporary Japanese Society* (Olomouc: Palacký University Press, 2016).

Tatsuro Debroux  
ORCID: 0000-0002-0588-1164

## **Analysis of Japanese, US and Chinese Political Leaders' Statements about Japan's Foreign Policy**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.3

### **ABSTRACT**

The article explores in the light of role theory the statements (speeches, interviews and remarks at the media) of Japanese and foreign political leaders (including high-ranking officials who are probably a reliable indicator of the political leader's preference) related to foreign policy during the first and the second Abe administrations. In this article, qualitative content analysis is used to analyze the statements. The two main roles: 1) Japan is a reliable security partner, and 2) Japan is a pacifist country whose foreign policy is based on non-militarism are dealt with. Statements are categorized into either of them from a role theory viewpoint. The Abe administration's role location, role competition, role conflicts, consistency and inconsistency between Japan's National Role Conceptions (NRCs) and the main alter-parts (the other countries that can be allied or foes, the US and China in this article) roles representing the expectation and proscription of Japan can be analyzed. It is argued that Prime Minister Abe's attempts to reinforce the assertiveness of Japan's foreign policy have a result of strengthening ties with the US, which can deter China. Abe does not incur role conflicts either in security or historical issues. He conducts his foreign policy by adjusting NRCs and accommodating role expectations.

**KEYWORDS:** Abe's foreign policy, Japan-US relations, Japan-China relations, role theory

### **Introduction**

This article answers the research question why and how Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo cautiously but steadily proceeded to change Japan's NRCs: 1) Japan is a reliable security partner, and 2) Japan is a pacifist country whose foreign policy is based on non-militarism, during his first and second administrations (2006-2007 and 2012-2018). To do so, it examines how and to what extent those changes in NRC have the potential to induce transformation in Japan's foreign policy. Within the role theory framework, it is observed that Abe administration's policy may have impact on the consistency of some roles between Abe administration and the US and China (ego-part and alter-parts respectively, as explained later).

It cannot be excluded that role inconsistency and role conflict emerge as a result.

Abe's policies vis-à-vis the world can be regarded as his desire to play representative roles that can be separated in the two NRCs. This research is indeed all the more needed because opinion is divided among all political actors, scholars and critics about the assessment of Abe's foreign policy initiatives. Some say his foreign policy is offensive and nationalistic, while others say it does not depart from traditional Japan's foreign policy and shows restraint. Should key aspects of the traditional NRCs during the postwar period be reconsidered these role changes could subsequently impact on ego-part and alter-parts with the possibility of inducing changes in the direction of Japan's foreign policy.

This article consists of three sections and a conclusion. The first section explains the role theory's key concepts and methodology. The second section examines how Japan, the US and China recognize Japanese role and duty according to the role of "Japan is a reliable security partner". Similarly, the third section examines the role of "Japan is a pacifist country based on non-militarism". The conclusion makes an assessment of the influence of role expectations and the possible evolution of NRCs.

## **1 Role Theory Framework**

Role theory originates from social psychology and sociology. Holsti (1970) applied it to state behavior as a theoretical tool of analysis to explain the regulative and constitutive effects of roles in international relations. The evolving intersubjective process between ego-part and key alter-parts nurtures NRC. Holsti defines NRC in the following way:

"A national role conception includes the policy-makers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems" (1970: 245-246).

NRC comprises two parts: 1) Ego-part is composed of duty and responsibility that political leaders who represent their own country perceive. It leads to specific performance conforming to the recognition of the roles: 2) Alter-part is a role expectation from foreign countries. In this case too it leads to specific performance concerning the perception and performance of the ego-part (Harnisch 2013).

NRCs do not cause states to conduct foreign policy directly. Instead, they give support in providing motives for behavioral patterns (Aggestam 2004) and enable researchers to interpret the decision-makers' perceived appropriate roles and objectives. Unlike constructivism, role theory cannot explain foreign policy in a positivist way. However, it can be utilized as it is an interpretative tool to shed light on decision-makers' perception and try to link it to foreign policy (Sakaki 2011: 21). Since decision-makers generally reflect the dominant ideas of the society, their statements are suitable to uncover the roles of Japan. Moreover, as social interaction (including confrontation) with other actors continuously prompts a redefinition of a role conception, role theory makes it possible for scholars to move away from a target actor's self-perception of the society.

There is research on Japan's foreign policy using role theory. Macleod (1997), Sakaki (2011), and Hirata (2016) point out that Japan's decision-makers have consistently supported 'universal values' since the Cold War and adopted a balance of power policy in securing the US' presence in East Asia, changing its pacifism and security orientation gradually. Some studies take into account international dimensions. Maull (2011) argues that Japan is expected by the US to remain a "follower" which contributes to sustaining its regional and global policies through material, financial, political and security support. Maslow (2016) says that rising China's role change to be more assertive prompts Japan to play more positive security roles in accordance with the US' "pivot to Asia" under the Obama administration. Researches above-mentioned enable one to understand Japan's behavior, but focus almost exclusively on Japan's ego-part (Macleod 1997; Sakaki 2011; Hirata 2016). They do not incorporate alter-parts into their research. Even though they include alter-parts, they focus on the bilateral ties, Japan-US (Maull 2011) and Japan-China (Maslow 2016), although it is natural to think that the US and China should be taken into account concurrently. They also do not include the second Abe administration, which is eager to play more positive roles in international security than its predecessors, and do not tell readers about the current state of affairs. This article attempts to overcome these limitations to enlarge the scope of the analysis in considering the roles of two key alter-parts, the US and China, comprehensively in Abe's second office term.

Should expectations be considered adequately met, no role inconsistency will occur and the political leaders' roles will be incarnated in foreign policy subsequently. However, if role expectations are not fulfilled adequately, it may lead to role inconsistency that could induce role conflict, which potentially may entail a change in foreign policy (Le Prestre 1997).

Based on these things, the statements of Abe and foreign leaders are classified into the two appropriate role categories and interpreted by using this framework in the following sections.

## **1.2 Methodology**

Role theory assumes that top political decision-makers' remarks generally reflect the main role conceptions on foreign policy issues that international society ascribed to a given country and the role concepts ego-part expects (Edström 2004). A content analysis of important foreign policy statements (speeches, interviews and remarks in the media) related to roles, expectations and proscriptions as well as giving indications about the evolution of NRCs of Abe and of his foreign key alter-parts (the US and China) is conducted.

This research adopts a deductive approach with predetermined NRCs: 1) Japan is a reliable security partner and 2) Japan is a pacifist country whose foreign policy is based on non-militarism, in classifying statements regarding security and historical issues into either of them to avoid putting several distinct roles and expectations under one label.

## **2 Japan Is a Reliable Security Partner**

### **2.1 The Role toward the US**

Abe's aim is to make Japan a reliable security partner in the region and beyond. Abe argued in favor of the necessity of expanding Japan's role along with the US. He already argued in the Diet session the necessity of expanding Japan's role in concert with US policy in 2006 and 2007. He expressed the objectives of his initiatives as such:

“In order to enable swift decisions under strong political leadership on national security and diplomatic strategies, the headquarters function of the Prime Minister's Office will be reorganized and strengthened, and intelligence gathering functions will also be enhanced. Regarding the Japan-U.S. alliance, I will put in place a framework that ensures constant communication between the Prime Minister's Office and the White House in order to further consolidate the trust, which forms the bedrock of the alliance” (Abe 2006).

He also declared in a press conference:

“We have to reconstruct a legal basis for security that befits the times in which we live, aiming to make a greater contribution to peace in the international community. I will continue to examine and study on the basis of the typified, individual, specific cases how to organize the relationship between our security policy and the Constitution, including the issue of the right of collective self-defense” (Abe 2007).

The second Abe administration put even more emphasis on the importance of the relationships with the US. It can be argued that Abe’s foreign policy corresponds to what Barack Obama’s administration had envisioned for the Japan-US relationship. Abe expressed his vision as follows:

“America is the world's greatest naval power and preeminent economic superpower; Japan is Asia's largest maritime democracy and a liberal capitalist state second only to the United States. It stands to reason that our two nations should be partners. Today the United States is shifting its focus to the confluence of the two oceans, the Indian and the Pacific--this very region where we stand today. At such a time, the Japan-US alliance takes on a more vital significance than ever before” (Abe 2013a).

This speech concentrates on Japan’s responsibility to share the burden with the US. Japan’s contribution must be reinforced by making laws and building institutions. In this sense, the enactment of the law allowing the limited exercise of the right of collective self-defense reflects the concern of Abe that Japan’s self-restraint in the exercise of the right will bring disadvantages to the Japan-US alliance.

The traditional stance, expressed since the end of the Second World War, that Japan does not need to take on security burden-sharing is not observed in Abe’s statements. Rather, he has consistently aspired after having Japan play leading and pivotal roles in the world with the US and other friendly countries. It can be assumed that his perceived international environment is becoming severe. He expressed this idea in a press conference during his visit to the US, which showed his confidence that Japan and the US shared the same viewpoint on security issues:

“First of all, with regard to security, given the increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan, Japan is determined to

fulfill its responsibilities together with the United States, and President Obama fully shares this recognition. In concrete terms, I explained to President Obama Japan's own efforts toward reinforcing the alliance, including such matters as the right to collective self-defense, increased defense spending, and the review of our National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPGs)" (Abe 2013b).

This concern that the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming severe mainly due to the rise of China, as explained later, prompts Abe to reconsider Japan's security role, resulting in highlighting willingness and necessity for Japan to be a reliable security partner in the region and the world. In fact, it could be said Abe concretized in his second term what he had advocated during the first one. He did it through legislation, i.e. in setting a National Security Council, enacting the state secrecy law, a conspiracy law and diverse other security-related bills, increasing defense budget and reviewing the NDPGs. Among others, security-related laws that took effect on 29 March 2016 are remarkable because collective self-defense became legalized to the minimum extent necessary. Rear area support does not have geographical restraint and the role of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) expands. It is also possible to protect UN staff when they are attacked (The Mainichi 2016).

After the revision in 2013, NDPGs were revised again in December 2018. The new NDPGs emphasize maintaining Japan's superiority in new areas, such as cyberspace and space. In addition, Japan begins to defend not only the Nansei Islands, near Okinawa prefecture, but also the Pacific Sea. Japan also decided to upgrade the Izumo-class helicopter carrier in order to give it the capability to allow the F35B fighter to take off and land. Overall it can be said that the new version of the NDPGs clarifies Japan's sense of crisis to China (Tanaka 2018). Abe's role performance to be a reliable partner of the US remains not only unchanged but even strengthened. This is related to the Japanese government's perception that the influence of the US may decline as long as it is distracted by the Middle East and the fact that the Trump administration (since January 2017-) has also a strong concern about China's expansionism.

Fatton reports the tour of the South China Sea (SCS) of the Izumo helicopter carrier. The Izumo stopped at several ports and participated in exercises with US forces during its tour (Fatton 2017: 274-275). The Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) sent P-3C patrol planes to the SCS 100 to 200 kilometers away from the disputed area to do a training for

search and rescue in September 2017. In addition, they exercised conjointly with US nuclear-powered aircraft carriers in the Sea of Japan in November of the same year in reaction to the increased threat of North Korea (Reuters 2017). Abe's role that to consistently fall in line with the US is Japan's national interests is visible from his statements and role performances. Thus, Abe's role performance so far indicates the high priority of fulfilling Japan's roles in keeping with the expectations related to a reliable security partner role conception in regional and global affairs.

## **2.2 Roles toward China**

Abe's statements about China reflect his perception of a threat coming from China. The attachment to universal values discourages and restrains Japan from deepening ties with China. Although Abe rarely acknowledges it explicitly in official statements, he identifies China with a country not sharing political values with Japan. His concern about the rise of China was expressed as such:

“As Prime Minister I intend to demonstrate my resolution to defend fully people's lives, our territory, and our beautiful ocean. Right now, at this very moment, the Japan Coast Guard and members of the Self-Defense Forces are defending Japan's seas and skies off the coast of the Senkaku Islands. The security of Japan is not someone else's problem; it is a crisis that exists right there and now” (Abe 2012).

In an interview with the Washington Post, Abe responded to questions about Japan-China relations and maritime dispute in the SCS as follows:

“What is important, first and foremost, is to make them [Chinese leaders] realize that they would not be able to change the rules or take away somebody's territorial water or territory by coercion or intimidation. Accordingly, for the first time in 11 years, I have increased our defence budget, as well as the budget for the Japan coast guard. It is important for us to have them recognize that it is impossible to try to get their way by coercion or intimidation. In that regard, the Japan-U.S. alliance, as well as the U.S. presence, would be critical” (Abe 2013c).

In the interview, Abe was trying to put China in a different camp. China is described as a revisionist power intending to change the regional status quo



that the Japan-US alliance is defending. This response reveals his realistic world view that Japan must increase its military power to deter China with the US to maintain the balance of power to Japan's advantage. Otherwise, its survival will be in danger. In this connection, as if Abe wanted to support his idea that China is a threat, the SDF (land, sea and air) has conducted a joint exercise in the Nansei Islands since 2014 to simulate that islands are conquered by the enemy and must be retaken (Ono & Fukumoto 2017). In addition, in 2016, Abe launched an idea of "Indo-Pacific Strategy" and has steadily developed its reliable security partner role in enlarging Japan's activity area from South Asia, the Middle East to Africa. One of the important objectives is to form an "alliance against China" to maintain maritime order to oppose China's unilateral change of status quo in Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific (Okada 2018). The emergence of the concept of Indo-Pacific means the continuity of the power struggle between Japan and China. As a whole, it can be said that Abe has steadily developed its countermeasure against China during his office term.

The Maritime Safety Agency strengthened its mechanism to patrol around the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea (ECS) by having 12 large-sized patrol boats (10 in Ishigaki Island, 2 in Okinawa Island) by the end of 2016. The total number of the staff of the Maritime Safety Agency in Ishigaki island near the Senkaku Islands is about 700 (Asahi Shimbun 2017). After all, Abe's goal is to deploy a large number of SDF and MSDF personnel in the islands in the ECS in addition to a 'network of antiship and antiaircraft missiles' there (Austin 2016).

Abe's policies reveal that considering Japan's concerns about China's long-time interference with Japan's sovereignty, it is natural that Japan increased deterrence in the ECS to guarantee freedom of navigation, which is essential for Japan's prosperity. This fundamental principle does not change to date as shown in Abe's address to the personnel of the Japan Coast Guard: "The situation of the ocean areas surrounding our nation is more severe than ever [...] The future of Japan as a maritime nation will be uncertain without the Coast Guard" (Abe 2018a). These are clear messages that there is no room for discussion about Japan's sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands and Japan is not complacent in this regard.

Still, Abe wants to avoid deterioration of the Japan-China relationship because it would be against US expectations as seen below. During the Asian-African Conference in Indonesia in April 2015, Abe held talks with Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Communist Party. Abe told reporters after they met that they decided to improve the relations for regional stability: "We want to make the improving trend in the bilateral relations

solid” in promoting “mutually beneficial strategic ties” (Abe 2015), signaling Japan’s desire to remedy the relations that had become critical during the Democratic Party of Japan-led government (2009-2012) and promote a reconciliation. This stance remained unchanged. When Abe visited Beijing in October 2018, Abe told Prime Minister Li that “[s]witching from competition to collaboration, I want to lift Japan-China relations to a new era” (Abe 2018b) with his expectation of Xi to visit Tokyo reciprocally. Therefore, it can be assumed Abe builds on its Chinese strategy on dual pillars, i.e. engaging with China while balancing its power, although it seems to be contradictory at a glance.

### **2.3 US Expectations of Japan**

The US welcomes Abe’s approach, including some of the changes he has made. Japan answers to the US expectations that it is now ready to play more active roles in promoting peace and stability in the Asia and Pacific region. US statements seem to reflect this perception that the US has raised its expectation of Japan as a reliable security partner. In this regard, Ambassador Kennedy made the following statement of support of Abe’s promotion of collective self-defense in an interview in the Japanese press:

“Whether Japan should reinterpret its Constitution is an issue for the Japanese people and their elected representatives to decide, after genuine and informed debate. However, the U.S. understands why some in Japan would like to revise some of the restrictions. Japan will be a more effective alliance partner if its Self-Defense Forces are able to help defend American soldiers or sailors if they are attacked while, for example, participating in a peacekeeping operation, or if they are targeted by a hostile missile strike” (Kennedy 2014).

Thus, the US thinks that changing the decades-old interpretation of the constitution to allow to exercise its right of collective self-defense can help Japan to play more constructive roles with the US regionally and globally. As for the scope of the Japan-US alliance, Obama expects Japan to widen it to become a global partner to cooperate on a wide range of issues. He placed importance on Japan as US’s global partner and his 2015 remark shortly after the legislation of security bills reflected this eagerness: “I want to congratulate Prime Minister Abe on his recent legislation related to bolstering Japanese capabilities and it will give us a chance to talk about a wide range of threats, both regionally and internationally” (Obama 2015a).

The US's support of Japan's security strategy remains unchanged even after Trump took power. He followed Abe in using the term the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) instead of Asia-Pacific during his speech at the US Air Force Yokota Air Base in Japan: "We will seek new opportunities for cooperation and commerce, and we will partner with friends and allies to pursue a free and open Indo-Pacific Region" (Trump 2017). In this line of thought, the name of the US Pacific Command changed to the US Indo-Pacific Command in May 2018 (Asahi Shimbun 2018). The content analysis reveals that Japan gains support from the US as a whole because the US has always asked Japan for expanding its involvement in international stability and peace<sup>1</sup> and Abe generally responds well to the demand as he began to expand its security contribution. As statements expressing dissatisfaction with Japan's security contribution are not to be found, it can be said that Abe has succeeded in preventing US accusations that it is not sharing the military burden by making efforts to improve its defense capabilities and buying US military equipment.

## 2.4 Chinese Expectations of Japan

China shows a strong reservation in respect to Japan's role of a reliable security partner. Abe's argument that Japan will remain a peace-loving country despite the changes in security policy is received with skepticism. As the China Daily (2013), a government-run newspaper, stated "[t]he catchy but vague expression of 'proactive pacifism' is Abe's camouflage to woo international understanding of Japan's move to become a military power". In a 2014 interview with Lesotho Times, Chinese Ambassador to Lesotho Hu (2014) stated: "[o]n the one hand, Abe preaches peace and democracy but on the other hand lobbies for militarism by pushing to change its pacifist constitution and textbooks to increase the military budget and war capability in Japan", pointing out Abe's double standard. China does not want Japan to have a strong military capability and to emphasize universal values such as the rule of law that may be used as a pretext to intervene in China's politics and engage in the territorial dispute in the SCS. From China's point of view, Japan's self-restraint in the use of force is necessary and that is why China voices resentment against Japan's proactive pacifism and wants to proscribe it. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang stated that Japan "should exercise caution in its own words and deeds and stop hyping up and interfering" because Japan is not a state concerned in the SCS's territorial issue (Li 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the 2000, 2007 and 2012 Nye-Armitage Reports (Kawasaki & Nahory 2014).

Nevertheless, China does not want to quarrel with Japan. Xi emphasizes his political will to mend political ties with Japan partially. He sends signals indicating that China wants to avoid regional conflict and expects Japan and China to become “partners that do not impose a threat to each other” (Xi 2015a). Chinese willingness to improve relations led Prime Minister Li in a meeting with Abe in October 2018 to argue that ‘now that relations between the two countries have returned to a normal track, we would like to achieve win-win outcomes by stably developing our ties in the long term’ (Li 2018). Abe and Li agreed that military authorities held a meeting within the year regarding “sea-air liaison mechanism” to avoid contingencies between the SDF and Chinese army in addition to an agreement on a cooperative search and rescue in the ECS (Nihon Keizai Shimbun 2018).

However, it should be noted that China is not satisfied with Abe’s role performance. Fundamentally, Abe’s security policy, which aims to involve non-Asian countries for Asian security stands in direct opposition to Xi’s regional security view: “It is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia” (Xi 2014).

Abe and Xi did not conduct bilateral summits in Tokyo and Beijing, i.e. each country’s capitals, in the same year until the end of 2018. Until the end of that year, they had only used several occasions to meet briefly during multilateral forums and conferences (Lam 2017) except for Abe’s visit to Beijing in October 2018.

Abe’s FOIP is a developed version of containment of China from China’s perspective. China understands Japan and the US changed the international environment first and it just takes countermeasures, for example, by creating the Belt and Road Initiative to US rebalancing policy (Castro 2018). Chinese Ambassador to Japan Cheng criticized Japan and the US for increasingly strengthening the security alliance: “It sounds as if Japan and the United States are purposely taking China as their enemy and saying ‘Let’s join hands and go at China’” (Cheng 2017a). Thus, the gap between the two countries is still evident today. While showing that it privileges dialogues and communication as instruments for building up trust and reducing misunderstanding, China does not view Japan as a security partner at all.

### **3. Japan Is a Pacifist Country Based on Non-Militarism**

#### **3.1 Abe's Attempt to Replace Traditional pacifism with Proactive Pacifism**

During his term of office, Abe promised that Japan would not be a “military power” (Abe 2013a) or a “country that would go into war” (Abe 2014a). To avoid stirring fear among neighboring countries, he views the pledge to the invaded countries as an important role. However, Abe wants to change the concept of pacifism. He criticized the current pacifism as “one-state pacifism” (Abe 2014b) for its insular attitude which is only interested in Japan's peace. In the same statement, he claims:

“Now is the time for Japan to hoist the banner of ‘Proactive Contribution to Peace’ and play an even greater role in fostering world peace and stability. I firmly believe that therein lies a path that is more suited to the principle of a peace-loving nation set forth in the Constitution of Japan” (Abe 2014b).

This speech reveals that Abe is not satisfied with the conventional concept of pacifism and wants to change its content in order to be more proactive. Japan seeks to create an image of being influential in the international society which is not overly constrained by the past under the Abe administration. For Abe, a deterrent is more and more important than self-regulation in using military force. Self-regulation was born after the war to ease concerns of those Asian countries that suffered from Japan's past colonization and invasion. Abe thinks that increasing deterrent effect is necessary for Japan's survival.

In a different speech, Abe claimed: “I perceive that precisely by having the ability to respond to every possible situation and developing a legal system which enables such responses, deterrence will be enhanced, and thus conflict will be prevented and Japan's embroilment in war will be eliminated” (Abe 2014a). Abe's conception of pacifism thus attempts to replace the one-sided view promoted by traditional pacifism according to which Japan is always presented as an invader violating international law and jeopardizing peace and stability. Rather, his concept of proactive pacifism contains the meaning that Japan may be a victim and it has to prepare for threats to avoid tragedy. This tendency can be found in the efforts he has taken on in the building of new security policies.

### **3.2 US Expectations of Japan**

While the US does not show any opposition to Abe's desire to change Japan's pacifism, it proscribes him from raising historical issues that challenge the postwar accepted view on war responsibilities. The US wants Japan to be a role model of a successful democratic country. Obama pointed to it in this statement:

“There are times where when we speak out on these issues we are told that democracy is just a Western value. I fundamentally disagree with that. (Applause.) Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, they have built thriving democracies” (Obama 2014a).

Thus, the US considers Japan to have been a peaceful country firmly rooted in democratic value during the postwar era and thus today's Japan must be different from prewar Japan. Therefore, the visit of Japanese leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine raises a question concerning Japan's recognition of its militaristic, aggressive and colonial history.

When Abe compared official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine with those of US leaders to Arlington National Cemetery to justify his visit as a moral responsibility to the spirits of the dead, the US expressed its disagreement with the idea. In October 2013, the US Secretary of State Kerry and Defense Secretary Hagel visited Chidorigafuchi National Cemetery in Tokyo, where unidentified Japanese soldiers' remains are enshrined (The Japan Times 2013). This gesture was an apparent attempt to make Japan understand that the US did not accept Abe's idea about the Yasukuni Shrine. They wanted to express the viewpoint that the right comparison with Arlington National Cemetery is with Chidorigafuchi and not with the Yasukuni Shrine.

In addition, troubles in East Asia go against US national interests. When Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in 2013, the US Embassy made the following statement:

“The United States is disappointed that Japan's leadership has taken an action that will exacerbate tensions with Japan's neighbors. [...] The United States hopes that both Japan and its neighbors will find constructive ways to deal with sensitive issues from the past, to improve their relations, and to promote cooperation in advancing our shared goals of regional peace and stability” (A US Embassy in Tokyo 2013).

This indicates that the US expects Japan to foster stability and to avoid making troubles in East Asia. In a 2014 speech in South Korea, Obama said: “[w]hat we’re going to have to do is to continue with a consistent, steady approach. And the single most important thing is making sure that there’s strong unity of effort between ourselves, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and other like-minded countries in the region” (Obama 2014b) to deal with North Korea which continued nuclear development. For the US, displaying unity and shared determination provide the means to overcome the threat. Considering the Senkaku territorial dispute, the US expects Japan and other parties to solve the issue through peaceful, diplomatic means. As Obama demanded in the same speech: “We will continue to encourage all the parties concerned -- whether it’s Japan, China, the Republic of Korea, or with respect to disputes in the South China Sea -- to use the law and diplomacy to resolve these disputes” (Obama 2014b). Those statements show that US opposition to coercive behaviors is not only directed toward China but also toward its ally, Japan, because East Asian stability equals US national interests.

Regarding Japan’s pacifism, the US considers Japan to observe pacifist principles well. This appreciation appears in Obama’s statement during a joint press conference with Abe in the US: “We have seen over multiple decades now that Japan is a peace-loving country having absorbed some very difficult lessons from the past. Japan does not engage in aggression on the international stage, or in its region” (Obama 2015b). Therefore, the US wants to convey the message that it does not think Japan has the ambition to be a militaristic country again. As stated by Obama in the same conference: “Japan does not engage in aggression on the international stage, or in its region. And that the alliance that has been built with the United States is principally one that seeks to defend our countries from potential attack or aggression. So, new defense guidelines and the collective self-defense are simply for that purpose” (Obama 2015b).

The US’s speeches reveal that antagonism no longer exists and Obama expects Japan to remain a model of democracy and a reliable partner as ever. The Trump administration is also satisfied with Japan’s pacifist and non-military role. Trump is pleased with Abe’s decision to buy US weapons such as Ground-based Midcourse Defense System Aegis Ashore, F35A stealth fighter and Vertical Take-Off and Landing Osprey, etc (Wall Street Journal 2018). However, Trump does not say Japan should use them. The Trump administration does not push Japan to remilitarize and does not desire Japan to get involved more deeply in the SCS or North Korean issues, let alone to develop its nuclear armament. Similarly to Obama,

Trump does not regard Japan as a threat either, emphasizing the reconciliation as he says “today, nations that once waged war now stand together as friends and partners in pursuit of a much better world” (Trump 2017). The US perceives Japan as qualified to pursue proactive foreign policy without hesitation but it continues to expect reconciliation with neighboring countries and it remains intransigent in its opposition to historical revisionism.

### **3.3 Chinese Expectations of Japan**

From China’s statements, it is clear China does not want to see proactive pacifism play roles in the region. It arouses anxiety from neighboring countries and so China wants Japan to keep a low-profile. Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hong expressed in 2014 a distrust of Japan when asked about reinterpretation of Article 9 to exercise collective self-defense: “We urge the Japanese side to face up to and earnestly reflect upon its history, respond to the concerns of its Asian neighbors and the international community, follow the path of peaceful development and play a constructive role for regional peace and stability” (Hong 2014). The statement proves confrontational viewpoints still linger between Japan and China due to historical reasons.

After Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013, a symbol of Japanese past militarism from China’s viewpoint, China’s Ambassador to the UK Liu declared: “We do hope that they will change their course, show remorse and make apology not only to Chinese people, but also to Asian people, to all the peoples they have caused casualties and damages, and to start a new life, a new Japan” (Liu 2014). From China’s viewpoint, a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine equals paying homage to the war criminals and China wonders whether Japan is trustworthy when it claims to keep committed to peace.

In an Asian-African summit in Jakarta in April 2015, Abe met with Xi. Xi stressed that the history issue is fundamental in the political relations between China and Japan (Xi 2015a), expecting Japan to consider Japan’s neighbors and send out positive signals on the issue. The statements indicate that China wants Japan to renounce permanently military might as an instrument of politics. China was consistently dissatisfied with Abe’s approaches to security and historical issues. It reacted without positive appreciation to Abe’s statement on history in August 2015 that “the Chinese side has taken note of the statement made by the Japanese leader” (Hua 2015). It also criticized Japan’s effort to improve Izumo to convert it



into a “de facto aircraft carrier” as Japan was abandoning its exclusive defense posture (Kyodo 2018).

However, this does not mean that other things in the bilateral relationship are put aside. Japan and China cannot ignore the increased importance of the bilateral economic relations in which they need each other. With regard to economic policy, China expects Japan to work together to make more contribution to economic prosperity in the region. In May 2015, Nikai, Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)’s General Council, visited China with about 3000 members of financial, economic and cultural circles. He met with Xi, who delivered a speech at the meeting, in which he declared: “The China-Japan friendship is rooted in the people, and the future of the bilateral relationship is in the hand of the people of the two countries” (Xi 2015b). Xi’s thinking is featured by his favor of stable economic development and therefore he is interested in ensuring peace and friendship.

As seen above, China expects Japan to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship. For example, in an interview with Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun, Ambassador Cheng remarked:

“We hope that Japan can move in the same direction with China by taking practical actions and finding appropriate methods to settle the issues through dialogue, and push the bilateral relations back on the sound track of development as soon as possible. Under the current situation, China and Japan should further strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation. China welcomes Japanese enterprises to continue to invest in China. Japan has quite a lot of experiences and technologies in fields such as energy conservation and environmental protection, green economy, health care and sanitation, and elderly care, so there is great potential in exchanges and cooperation between the two countries” (Cheng 2013).

On a different occasion, he also insisted on keeping close human interaction to increase mutual understanding. For example, he reminded that 6.37 million Chinese people visited Japan in 2016, showing the constant and fast increase of Chinese tourism in Japan again (Cheng 2017b). Improvement of the bilateral relations is all the more important when Trump favors economic protectionism and targets China along alongside Japan. The emergence of Trump encouraged China to strengthen ties with other countries (Kyodo News 2018).

As for the Senkakus, Abe maintains the status quo of the Senkaku Islands not to stimulate China by stationing official workers he promised in the manifesto for the 2012 general election (The Japan Times 2012) because China perceives them as stolen by imperialist Japan at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and this fact can transform into a historical issue easily (Berger 2014: 10).

Thus, Chinese policy-makers conceive of the economic dimension of the Japanese concept of a non-military country as an important foreign policy that contributes to Japan-China relations, ensuring peace and stability. This is not to say that Chinese political leaders are oblivious of history issues and accept Japan's historical viewpoint as it is. Indeed, they stress it time and again. Overall, China wants Japan to manage historical issues and reduce stumbling blocks.

### **Conclusion**

Role expectations are diverse: sometimes compatible with the Abe administration's NRCs, sometimes not. The US and Chinese statements indicated that the two countries' decision-makers have different expectations regarding Japan's behavior in security and pacifism-related role conceptions. A most noticeable difference was found regarding the question how Japan should ensure stability in the region and the world. Japanese statements emphasized deterrent and the deepening of the cooperation with the US are the key to Japan's and regional peace. In this regard, Japan perceived itself as pressured by the US to cross the line of the geography and the size to take more responsibility for the international order. Japan has two options: 1) expanding security role to the extent that role conflict does not happen with China, and 2) dismissing China's expectations to keep the exclusively defense-oriented foreign policy. Whether and how much Japan will live up to US and Chinese expectations is determined by the weight of their importance. For the time being, Abe obviously supports the US by emphasizing that Japan will act together with the US and other like-minded countries and disappointing China's expectations in terms of reinterpretation of Article 9, collective self-defense and the visit to the Yasukuni Shrine. Furthermore, Abe emphasizes the importance of universal values in his foreign policy. Thus, it is unlikely Abe will listen to China, which emphasizes renouncement of military instruments in its foreign policy, at the expense of its relations with the US and other like-minded countries. As a consequence, Abe's NRCs indicate there is a security dilemma between Japan and China and Abe perceives it can be overcome with security cooperation with the US. The analysis

suggests Abe's security policy reflects a realist mindset regarding the relations with China. Only if Japan became more cautious by not emphasizing values and exercising self-restraint in security roles, would Japan be able to avoid role conflict with China.

My analysis does not reveal any serious role conflicts for the time being. Japan's proactive pacifism is welcomed by the US. Although China does not welcome the concept at all, it wants to avoid exacerbating the relations. Both Japan and China seem to seek mutually a beneficial relationship and dialogue, helping foster stability in the region.

Noticeable evolution is not found in "reliable security partner" and "non-military pacifist state" NRCs. Although Abe has relaxed the legal constraints that limited Japan's ability to contribute proactively to regional stability as a necessary step for roles he wants to play, he does not abandon traditional pacifism completely. Instead, Abe attempts to introduce gradual change. The historical aspect of the Japanese conception coincides with expectations and proscriptions focused on historical revisionism. Abe refrained from historical revisionism in considering possible role conflict. There is historical role conflict between Abe's NRC of inherent conservatism manifested in insisting that Japan's political leaders have to visit the Yasukuni Shrine, against US and China's expectations that he would not do so, but he has managed the issue well. He has not visited the Yasukuni Shrine since December 2013. Likewise, he does not stir up a territorial dispute over the Senkaku Islands.

However, this article cannot make an ultimate judgement on the results of Abe's diplomacy. It focuses only on the statements of Abe and of American and Chinese leaders, excluding those of leaders in other countries, such as Australia and India, and putting aside domestic politics where the LDP's coalition partner New Komei Party (NKP) must play important roles. So, it is necessary to examine to what extent there is consistency between Abe's roles and those countries (Yes) and the NKP's expectations not discussed in this article.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Tatsuro Debroux**

Tatsuro Debroux is a doctor in law. After graduating from the faculty of law in Chuo University (Japan), he obtained a master degree in Political Science (2013) in Free University of Brussels (Belgium). Thereafter, he also obtained another master degree in Current Democracies: Nationalism, Federalism and Multiculturalism (2015) in Pompeu Fabra University. His two master theses were about the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands territorial dispute between Japan and China. After master degrees, he obtained PhD in law in Pompeu Fabra University in 2018. The thesis was about foreign policy of the first and the second Abe administrations by role theory.

## A Proposal for the Stratification of Textual Markers in the Japanese 'Role Language' Fictional Speech Stylizations<sup>1</sup>

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.4

### ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on introducing an addition to the 'role language' studies (Kinsui 2003) as a framework for the stylistic analysis of fictional speech utterances. Firstly, the core concepts of the 'role language' studies are shortly presented. Secondly, a stratification of the phenomena described as role language into the 'multi-layered character stylization' (MLCS) framework is introduced. It consists of single textual markers ('character stylization markers', abbrev. as CSM), sets of such markers ('character stylization patterns', abbrev. as CSP) and narrative descriptions of the stylized characters ('character textual presentations', abbrev. as CTP). Thirdly, the aforementioned concept of role language and the first two layers of the newly-proposed framework are applied in a descriptive analysis of five particular 'character stylizations' observed in *Bureiburii Deforuto. R no techō* by Sōki Tsukishima, a two-volume 'light novel' derived from a video game set in a fantasy world. The conducted analysis is followed by graphical presentations of correlations between layers of separate character stylizations. Lastly, the proposed stratification is reviewed as a framework for stylistic analysis of role language.

**KEYWORDS:** Japanese linguistics, role language, stylistics, sociolinguistics, stereotype

### Introduction

Stylistic analysis can be viewed as a methodological tool aiding research on the choice of linguistic units made for the purpose of stylizing characters in literary fiction. In this paper, such qualitative approach on stylistics will be applied to the Japanese literary and linguistic phenomena of the 'role language' (Kinsui 2003), 'speaker's character' (Sadanobu 2015) and

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented on December 8th, 2017 at the international conference "Problems And Perspectives For Japan In A Changing World: Thirty Years Of Japanese Studies In Poznań" organized by the Department of Japanese Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (AMU) in cooperation with the Polish Association for Japanese Studies (PSBJ). The title of the presentation was "Stylistic Analysis of Sociolinguistic and Pragmatic Information Marked by 'Role Language' and 'Character Language' in Modern Fictionalized Japanese Text", and has been changed for the publishing purposes.

‘character language’ (Kinsui, Yamakido 2015). The three aforementioned concepts emerged from a thorough analysis of speech patterns typical for particular fictional character archetypes that appear in contemporary Japanese popular culture. These pre-existing concepts shall be viewed as frames for introducing a new concept of ‘multi-layered character stylization’ as lexical, pragmatic, grammatical and semantic ‘character stylization markers’ and their sets called ‘character stylization patterns’. A qualitative study will be conducted on some instances of stylized fictional utterances from one work of the Japanese literary genre of light novel<sup>2</sup>. The stress will be put on the classification of each character stylization in the ‘character language’ framework, and on the advantages of adopting the alternatively proposed ‘multi-layered character stylization’ framework. Descriptive analysis of particular character stylizations will be followed by graphical presentations of some correlations between some of the analyzed speech stylizations.

### Core Concepts of the ‘Role Language’ Studies

‘Role language’ (*yakuwarigo* 役割語) is a term coined by Satoshi Kinsui, originally defined as:

“A set of spoken language features (such as vocabulary, grammar and phonetic characteristics) that can be psychologically associated with a particular character type. (Character’s attributes include age, gender, occupation, social status, appearance and personality.)<sup>3</sup>”

In his paper introducing the concept of role language (here abbreviated as ‘RL’), Kinsui lists some classes of its textual markers, such as personal pronouns, copula, emotive sentence-ending particles and interjections, mentioning that RL appears in ‘speech style’ (*watai* 話体) rather than in ‘literary style’ (*buntai* 文体)<sup>4</sup>. This remark points at instances of speech in works of fiction.

Psychological association of speech and character attributes takes the form of ‘stereotypization’. It is understood as the way the association of

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<sup>2</sup> Light novel (*raito noberu* ライトノベル) – a genre of contemporary Japanese literary fiction seemingly difficult to define; here: books read mainly by receivers of contemporary Japanese popular culture that consist of written text accompanied by small numbers of monochromatic pictures.

<sup>3</sup> Kinsui 2003: 205 (English translation cited from: Kinsui, Yamakido 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

RL, and the archetypes of characters using it, is created and re-created in Japanese popular culture<sup>5</sup>. Stereotypes are the foundations of RL and as such have to be shared by the author of a particular work of fiction (a “virtual reality”), and by the community of its receivers<sup>6</sup>. In the case of RL, people in the real world undergo stereotyping to become fictional characters. This includes the language they speak, but the process of stereotypization in Japanese popular culture tends to create speech patterns observed solely in virtual reality<sup>7</sup>.

The idea of a separate category for language that focuses on reflecting sociolinguistic features of the speakers with their speech is shared by Toshiyuki Sadanobu in his concept of the ‘speaker’s character’ (*hatsuwa kyarakuta* 発話キャラクタ). As an example, Sadanobu writes about one of the Japanese personal pronouns and its properties in a role language.

“[...] language (e.g. the Japanese word *ore*), in addition to expressing meaning (e.g. the speaker; “I”), can implicitly express the character of the speaker (“an unrefined male”). I refer to the speech-producing character as the “speaker's character,” and call the language such characters produce, taking a cue from Satoshi Kinsui, “role language.”<sup>8</sup> ”

It is commonly understood that certain elements of speech utterances in Japanese language, such as personal pronouns, could mark both pragmatic (deictic) and sociolinguistic (gender: male) information about the speaker. It could be also said that the ‘unrefined’ property of the pronominal *ore* is indeed stylistic, and as such is stereotyped into an element of RL.

In order to present some actual examples of RL in use, a Japanese sentence meaning ‘Yes, I know’ has been stylized to represent fictional speech of six archetypical characters<sup>9</sup>. The following examples 1-6, as well as every example analysed further in this paper, were transliterated according to Hepburn’s transliteration.

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<sup>5</sup> Kinsui et al. 2014: XIII.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Kinsui 2003: 11 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Sadanobu 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Kinsui et al. 2014: V.

1. **Ō, sō-ja, washi-ga shitte oru-n-ja.**

おお、そうじゃ、わしが知っておるんじゃ。

- *rōjin* 老人 ‘elderly person’

2. **Ara, sō-yo, watakushi-ga shitte orimasu-wa.**

あら、そうよ、わたくしが知っておりますわ

- *ojō-sama* お嬢様 ‘young lady from a good family’

3. **Un, sō-da-yo, boku-ga shitteru-yo.**

うん、そうだよ、ぼくが知ってるよ。

- *otoko-no ko* 男の子 ‘boy’

4. **N-da, n-da, ora shitteru-da.**

んだ、んだ、おら知ってるだ。

- *inakamono* 田舎者 ‘countryman’

5. **Soyasoya, washi-ga shitemassē.**

そやそや、わしが知ってまっせー。

- *Kansaijin* 関西人 ‘person from the Kansai region’

6. **Umu, sayō, sesssha-ga zonjite orimasuru.**

うむ、さよう、せっしゃが存じておりまする。

- *bushi* 武士 ‘samurai’

The bolded parts of each sentence point at elements of RL that are thoroughly explained in *The Concise Dictionary of Role Language* (Kinsui et al. 2014). Most of these elements belong to categories listed by Kinsui. There are interjections (*ō, ara, un, nda, soyasoya, umu*), personal pronouns (*washi, watakushi, boku, ora, washi, sesssha*), and sentence-ending emotive particles (*yo, wa*), or variants of copula (*da, ja*). Some other bolded elements are grammatical and vocabulary modifications, including honorific markers and alternative variants of verbs *iru (oru)* and *shiru (zonjiru)*. Sentences 1-6 correspond with different character archetypes. These speech styles over-emphasize some of the sociolinguistic attributes of stylized characters. The sole notion about speech styles that evoke some character archetypes points at the existence of stereotypes concerning the way some members of society tend to speak. To paraphrase the two introduced concepts, role language points at linguistic markers of particular character archetypes that appear in some of the Japanese works of fiction, and sociolinguistic information

imprinted in character stylizations as character's speech allows for its accurate interpretation.

Role language was further divided into subgroups based on their leading characteristics, most of which address sociolinguistic aspects of the characters seen as stylized people<sup>10</sup>. These subgroups are: 'Gender', 'Age / Generation', 'Social class / occupation', 'Region / nationality / ethnicity', 'Pre-modern' and 'Imaginary creatures'. The first four subgroups are easily explainable by sociolinguistic and dialectic variation of language. On the other hand, the last two subgroups seem to be purely stylistic. The 'pre-modern' quality of characters can be achieved by archaizing their speech, as seen in example sentence 6 (the 'samurai' RL). The subgroup of 'imaginary creatures' does not seem to limit the stylization by anything other than the need of compatibility of linguistic units used in stylization with a particular stereotype psychologically associated with some attributes of a fictional character.

Such categorization and other advances in this field of study led to the formation of the 'character language' (abbreviated as CL). It is noted by Kinsui and Yamakido that the seemingly clear definition of RL pointed in fact at a set of phenomena that differ when it comes to the relations between existing stereotypes and their linguistic representations<sup>11</sup>. RL was divided into four types of CL. The definitions, based on Kinsui and Yamakido's article are listed below, with the names of each subtype bolded.

Character Language Type (i): **Restricted Role Language** - particular speech style shared only among the fanatics (*sic!*) of Japanese comic-book and animation.

Character Language Type (ii): **Role Language Shifted Outside of Its Social or Cultural Groups** - existing speech styles used to create the speech of characters that would never speak that language or do not speak at all, e.g.: speech of animals or foreign dialects appearing in translated literary works.

Character Language Type (iii): **Regional Dialect Employed to Represent a Character's Personality** - the speaker of the dialect exhibits some stereotypes associated with the region,

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<sup>10</sup> Kinsui, Yamakido 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



Character Language Type (iv): **Unique Character Language** - attributes cannot be analysed as the application of any stereotype, e.g. Mr Nakata from Haruki Murakami's *Umibe-no Kafuka*.

Although this paper focuses particularly on the 'Restricted Role Language', all of the four types should assist the case study on some examples of stylizations that appear in contemporary Japanese literary fiction.

It is important to note that CL is viewed here as styles that appear in various genres. Japanese comic books and animation are the 'native' registers of this subtype. There are accounts of particular newspaper texts, such as passages of translated speech of foreign sportsmen stylized to stress their characteristics, e.g. manliness of sprint runner Usain Bolt expressed by personal pronoun *ore* and sentence-ending particle *-ze*<sup>12</sup>. Other registers of role language usage include ludic language usage in humorous acts, mainly the Kansai dialect, where a particular kind of stereotype about people from that region has been formed with the emergence of mass media in contemporary Japan<sup>13</sup>.

To sum up, the findings of RL studies presented above could be interpreted as stylistics of fictional characters' speech in contemporary Japanese culture. These mechanisms are based on stereotypes that are connected with sociolinguistic features of existing people or such features associated with character archetypes that prevail in Japanese popular culture. Major categories of vocabulary and grammar that RL consists of are personal pronouns, emotive sentence-ending particles, interjections and copula. These elements emanate the 'speaker's character', as they seem to transfer not only the pragmatic meaning of each element, but also stereotyped sociolinguistic information about the character.

Such information can be put into several subgroups corresponding to each social attribute that could affect human speech. Some of these subgroups are clearly stylistic, e.g. the 'Pre-modern' subgroup based on archaisms or the 'Imaginary creature' subgroup that does not point at existing entities. RL corresponds to sociolinguistic information in different ways, categorized into four major types. Usage of the first type is restricted to particular genres (Restricted Role Language), the second type is based on an existing style used in order to simulate speech that would be nonexistent otherwise (Role Language Shifted Outside of Its Social or

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<sup>12</sup> Futoda 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Kinsui 2003: 92 ff.

Cultural Groups), the third type focuses on particular stereotypes associated with users of dialects (Regional Dialect Employed to Represent a Character's Personality), and the fourth type points at individual speech that does not reappear in other works of fiction as the other subtypes do (Unique Character Language).

### **An Introduction of the ‘Multi-Layered Character Stylization’**

All types of character language introduced in the first passage seem to consist of linguistic markers corresponding to particular archetypes of fictional characters. The findings of role language studies contribute to the understanding of how stereotypes that exist in contemporary Japanese society can affect linguistic stylization of fictional characters in particular genres. However evident CL is, the whole concept seems to be lacking precise terms for the elements on each layer it consists of. As a proposal for filling this gap, this paper introduces a stylistic concept of ‘multi-layered character stylization’.

Strong connections between sociolinguistic attributes of fictional characters and their linguistic markers are a foundation for a precise interpretation of CL. As the usage of the term ‘markers’ seems plausible with respect to vocabulary, grammatical and phonetic aspects of speech utterances, and fictional ‘characters’ are the objects of this inquiry, the term ‘character stylization markers’ (abbreviated as CSM) should suffice for the aforementioned terminological absence. This term should point at singular elements that non-semantically suggest a particular character’s attributes, e.g. personal pronouns or sentence-ending emotive particles listed in examples 1-5. This shall be the lowest layer of the MLCS (‘multi-layered character stylization’) framework.

According to the findings of RL studies, particular units of RL (here: character stylization markers) form compatible sets that reappear in numerous works of fiction to aid the stylization of characters with similar sociolinguistic features and stylistic conventions<sup>14</sup>. Such sets can be observed in the first passage, where various examples of role language for the Japanese sentence meaning “Yes, I know” have been cited as example sentences 1-6. Character stylization markers in a set compose a ‘character stylization pattern’ (abbreviated as CSP), the second layer of the MLCS. Such stylization reappears patterned – fully or partially – as speech style of archetypical fictional characters that share some personal traits, including sociolinguistic attributes. This includes attributes explained by the

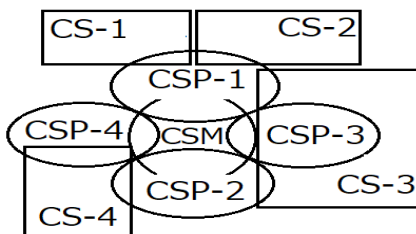
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<sup>14</sup> For a thorough list of linguistic elements and some examples of their registers see: Kinsui et al. 2014.

contributors of the role language studies, and corresponding stereotypes about them.

As singular linguistic elements and their sets were described as the two lower layers of MLCS, the highest of them points at the whole presentation of a character as an entity existing in the presented world, and as such shall be called a ‘character textual presentation’ (abbreviated as CTP). It includes character stylization patterns and narrative descriptions of fictional characters’ attributes that point at semiotic modes other than textual, such as visual or vocal mode, contributing to the description of a fictional character as an entity living in the presented fictional world. The layer of CTP is omitted in this paper.

For a better differentiation between CSP and singular cases of fictional speech stylization observed in this paper, a generic term ‘character stylization’ (abbreviated as CS) shall point at the latter. The graph below is an example of how a single character stylization marker could belong to multiple stylization patterns that contribute to different character stylizations.



Picture 1. Generic multi-layered character stylizations and their intertwining layers.

The terminology proposed above could aid in clarifying the differences of scale between particular elements of role language. The lowest layer (character stylization markers) refers to singular linguistic units pointing at a character archetype via stereotypical biases, and the second level (character stylization patterns) consists of sets of such linguistic units. This concept could serve as a stratification of the phenomena known as role language, or more recently as character language.

### Stylistic Analysis of Particular ‘Character Stylizations’

In this passage, character stylization patterns appearing in one work from the genre of ‘light novels’,<sup>15</sup> shall be analyzed with a cue to the findings of RL studies. Source texts for such character stylizations analyzed in this paper are *Bureiburii Deforuto. R no techō*, volumes I and II, written by Sōki Tsukishima. For easier reference throughout the analysis, the source text will be marked as [1]. The choice of source text was made based on high frequency of role language in the stylized speech of fictional characters.

Character stylization markers in character stylizations presented below have been bolded, and the choice made with reference to *The Concise Dictionary of Role Language*. Phrases suggesting the attitude and personality of characters have been underlined, as they aid the stylizations by emphasizing some traits of the characters important story-wise. These elements were treated as purely stylistic features, and their compatibility with other elements of CSP put into consideration in the process of stylistic analysis. Five character stylizations from [1] have been analyzed with reference to the findings of RL studies.

The first character stylization analyzed in this paper is that of a character named Edea Lee, an example of a ‘young fighting heroine’ CS<sup>16</sup>.

#### 7. *Atashi-wa atashi-no kokoro-o shinjita-n-da-mon.*

あたしはあたしの心を信じたんだもん。<sup>17</sup>

‘Cause I listened to my heart.’

#### 8. *To iu wake-de atashi, dassōhei-ni nacchatta-kara, anatatachi-to issho-ni ikasete morau-yo.*

というわけであたし、脱走兵になつちやつたから、あなたたちと一緒に行かせてもらうよ。<sup>18</sup>

‘I became a deserter, so I’ll be going with you guys.’

#### 9. *Anta-ga maketara atashi-ga iku-kara-ne!*

あんたが負けたらあたしが行くからね!<sup>19</sup>

‘If you lose, I’ll go!’

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<sup>15</sup> Here understood as ‘scarcely illustrated books read primarily by receivers of Japanese popular culture, often containing fantastic elements, often written in first-perspective narration with a focus on relationships between characters, manifested in many dialogues’.

<sup>16</sup> The names for each character stylization were chosen purely for the purpose of this analysis and are based on the most evident attributes of analyzed characters.

<sup>17</sup> [1] vol. I: 62.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> [1] vol. II.: 80.

Character stylization markers bolded in utterances 7-9 are personal pronouns (e.g. stereotypically feminine 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun *atashi*, and 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun *anta*), emotive sentence-ending particles (e.g. *-yo*, *-ne*), grammatical elements from youth slang (e.g. form *-chau* derived from *-te shimau* and sentence-ending phrase *-da-mon*). These CSM point at the sociolinguistic attributes of the character such as gender (female) and age (teenager). The underlined passages of example sentences 6-8 seem to stylistically inform readers about other character traits of Edea Lee; they show her hot temper and strong-headedness. Such stylistic elements are put out of CSM count; however, they at least to some extent contribute to the ‘stubborn young heroine’ CS. It consists mostly of spoken familiar contemporary Japanese, as it is a stylization of a protagonist. Stronger stylization tends to be more frequent in the case of minor characters<sup>20</sup>. Edea Lee is portrayed as a young female wearing armor, a depiction matching attributes emphasized with elements of spoken Japanese language that contribute to this multi-layered character stylization.

Another CS is that of an archetypical ‘male brute’ character called Barras Lehr. The following sentences 10-14 are examples of fictional speech stylized for the purpose of creating this character.

10. *Te, temē! Oresama socchinoke-de, Hōrii o kudoite-n-ja nē!*

て、手前えええ！俺様そっちのけで、ホーリーを口説いてんじゃねえっ！<sup>21</sup>

‘Damn you! Don’t you dare ignore me and try to win Holly over!’

11. *Ō, omaera-to-nara te-ni asenigiru shitō-ga dekisō-da-to-omotte-yo.*

おう、お前らとなら手に汗握る死闘ができそうだと思うてよ。<sup>22</sup>

‘Oh! I think I could fight with you in excitement to the death.’

12. *Dō darō-nā. Da-ga oresama-wa tatakaerya sore-de ii-no-sa.*

どうだろうなあ。だが俺様は戦えりゃそれでいいのさ。<sup>23</sup>

‘I’m not sure. If only I’m able to fight, it’s good for me, though.’

13. *Yare, gara-ni-mo naku hanashikomu nante koto shichimatta-ze. Ore-wa yappa komuzukashii koto-wa kangaenēde, tatakau hō-ga muiiteru-na.*

やれやれ、柄にもなく話し込むなんてことしちゃったぜ。俺はや

<sup>20</sup> Kinsui 2003: 43.

<sup>21</sup> [1] vol. I: 127.

<sup>22</sup> [1] vol. I: 137.

<sup>23</sup> [1] vol. I: 141.

っぱ小難しいことは考えねえで、戦う方が向いてるな。<sup>24</sup>

‘Oh well, I did it and dragged on, which doesn’t suit me. I really shouldn’t think about small stuff, ‘cause fighting’s the thing for me.’

14. *Yōshi yoku itta! **Son-ja** chiwaki niku odoru tataakai-o hajimeru-kā!*

よおしよく言った！**そんじや**血湧き肉躍る戦いを始めるかあ！<sup>25</sup>

‘You’ve hit the spot! Let’s start the fight with all we have!’

Elements bolded as character stylization markers in sentences above are personal pronouns (e.g. stereotypically male and coarse 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun *ore*, a more boasting variant *oresama* or pejorative 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun *temē*), unrefined grammar (e.g. *-nē* instead of negative *-nai*, *-rya* instead of *-reba* and *-chimatta* instead of *-te shimatta*), and emotive sentence-ending particles (stereotypically male and unrefined *-ze*, *-na* and its prolonged variant *-nā*). Such unrefined style of contemporary spoken Japanese seems to successfully hint at some major attributes of the character. Underlined portions of text describe brutality of attitude that stylistically copes well with bolded CSM. Overt usage of CSM highlights those attributes of the character that emphasize its attitudinal traits. CS-2 is portrayed as a muscular man, the character stylization markers are masculine and crude, and the underlined passages emphasize the character’s aggressive attitude. The third stylization analyzed in this paper is the ‘greedy merchant’ CS, observed on a choice of utterances of a fictional character appearing in [1], Chairman Erutus Profiteur.

15. *Akan, ano ō-wa mō dame-ya! Kaze-no Miko gotoki-ni*

*iimakasareyotte-kara-ni, **honma-ni** bonkura kokuō-ya-na!*

あかん、あの王はもうダメや！風の巫女ごときに言い負かされよ  
つてからに、**ホンマ**にボンクラ国王やな！<sup>26</sup>

‘It’s no good, that king is done for! Talked down by the likes of the wind vestal, what a stupid king!’

16. *Fun, mā kono kuni-de-wa **anjō** kasegashite morota-shi, mō ē-wa.*

ふん、まあこの国では**あんじょう**稼がしてもろたし、もうええわ。<sup>27</sup>

‘Hm, well, I made enough profit in this country, that’s it for me.’

<sup>24</sup> [1] vol. I: 143.

<sup>25</sup> [1] vol. I: 143.

<sup>26</sup> [1] vol. I: 201.

<sup>27</sup> [1] vol. I: 201.

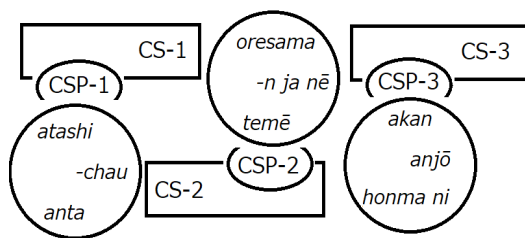
17. *Otto ichiban daiji-na mono-o wasuretotta-wa... Kore-o motte-kana hajimaran-de.*

おっと一番大事なものを忘れとったわ...これを持ってかな始まらないで。<sup>28</sup>

‘Oops, I forgot about the most important thing... Without it there is no starting.’

In Kinsui and Yamakido’s terms, the ‘greedy merchant’ CS could be referred to as an example of either ‘Regional Dialect Employed to Represent a Character’s Personality’ or ‘Role Language Shifted Outside of Its Social or Cultural Groups’. Dialectal elements, including vocabulary *akan* (‘no good’), *honma-ni* (‘really’) or *anjō* (‘sufficiently’), and grammar *-rōta* instead of *-ratta*, link the stylized character with a particular stereotype of a person from the Kansai region. Here it seems that the choice of wording was made to match both the profession and the personality of the character. This statement is based on the list of existing stereotypes about the inhabitants of the Kansai region, as one of these prejudices concerns stinginess and greed for money<sup>29</sup>. However prejudicial this notion is, in [1] it is exploited on a fictional plane – Erutus Profiteur is neither Japanese, nor of Kansai origin, and the aforementioned stereotype about greed for money imprinted into the dialect simply aids this character stylization.

Below is a graph (Picture 2) depicting the correlation between the ‘young fighting heroine’ CS (CS-1), the ‘male brute’ CS (CS-2) and the ‘greedy merchant’ CS (CS-3).



Picture 2. Correlation between selected CSM in CS-1, CS-2 and CS-3.

<sup>28</sup> [1] vol. I: 201.

<sup>29</sup> Kinsui 2003: 82 ff.

As there bolded CSM in cited spoken passages of CS-1, CS-2 and CS-3 do not intertwine with one another, it is evident that they represent separate character stylization patterns.

The fourth example of character stylization seems to be equal to the CSP of the ‘elderly speech’ (*rōjingo* 老人語) in RL terminology. It can be observed in the spoken passages of Sage Yulyana, a fictional character appearing in [1], and thus can be temporarily called the ‘elderly male’ CS.

18. *Onushira-wa, isogi kimenakereba naran koto-ga aru. Nozomu basho-o kimeru-n-ja.*

おぬし等は、急ぎ決めなければならんことがある。望む場所を決めるんじゃ。<sup>30</sup>

‘You have to hurry up and decide. Choose the place you wish to go to.’

19. *Ha-ha, kō miete-mo washi-wa gen’eki-de-nō. Sore-ni onushi-wa oboete oranu-kamo shirenu-ga, ichiō atta koto-wa aru-zo.*

はっは、こう見えてもワシは現役でのう。それにおぬしは覚えておらぬかも知れぬが、一応あったことはあるぞ。<sup>31</sup>

‘Ha-ha, I may look like that, but I’m still on active duty. Also, you may not remember, but in fact we’ve already met.’

20. *Sō iu hanashi-de-wa nai-no-ja-yo. Kore-wa shin’nen-no mondai-ja.*

そういう話ではないのじゃよ。これは信念の問題じゃ。<sup>32</sup>

‘It’s not about that. The problem lies in belief.’

21. *Jijitsu, onushi-no ishi-ni sandō shita nakama-ga takusan iru-jarō?*

事実、おぬしの意思に賛同した仲間がたくさんいるじゃろう？<sup>33</sup>

‘In fact, you already have many friends who agreed to your will, right?’

22. *Fumu. Tōmen-no michi-wa mieta yō-ja-na. Naraba washi-kara, senbetsu-o hitotsu yarō.*

ふむ。当面の道は見たようじゃな。ならばワシから、餞別を一つやろう。<sup>34</sup>

‘Hmm. It seems you know what to do for now. If that’s so, I shall give you a parting gift.’

<sup>30</sup> [1] vol. I: 15.

<sup>31</sup> [1] vol. II: 110.

<sup>32</sup> [1] vol. II: 112.

<sup>33</sup> [1] vol. II: 113.

<sup>34</sup> [1] vol. II: 115.



Character stylization markers bolded in sentences 18-22 seem to have been used primarily to emphasize the age of Sage Yulyana, and they could be grouped as archaisms. The 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun *washi*, 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronoun *onushi* (pl. *onushira*) are some instances of such stylization. Other noticeable markers are copula *-ja* instead of standardized *-da* (e.g. in *-arō* instead of *-darō*), sentence-ending emotive particle *-nō* (often following the aforementioned variant of copula), and a set of archaizing grammar (e.g. *renyōkei* variant *isogi* instead of *isoide*, *-n(u)* instead of *-nai*, and the verb *oru* instead of *iru*). Other than the age and gender of a character, the ‘elderly male’ RL suggests his high social or academic status, for example as a scientist, and suggests that this character is siding with the protagonists of the story<sup>35</sup>. Sage Yulyana is portrayed in [1] as an elderly male with a cane, and the fact that he is called a sage suggests his role in fantasy setting as a potential mentor for the protagonists<sup>36</sup>.

As the first few analyzed character stylizations presented a speech style observed also in natural Japanese language usage (sentences 7-9), the stylizations of ‘male brute’ (10-14) and ‘elderly male’ (18-22) exaggerated some attributes of stylized characters, and the ‘greedy merchant’ stylization (15-17) was based on a stereotype about people from the Kansai region, the following CS is an example of a more character-specific language. Utterances 23-27 represent the ‘superior female magical creature’ character stylization, observed in the fictional speech of Victoria F. Stein, a character from [1].

23. *Warawatachi-o ‘teki’ yobawari suru-to-wa, taishita dochō-ja-nō?*  
 わらわたちを『敵』呼ばわりするとは、大した度胸じゃのう。<sup>37</sup>  
 ‘You have some nerve to call us your ‘enemies’.’

24. *Uragirimono-wa reigai naku shokei, sore-ga warawa-no shinpan-ja.*  
 裏切り者は例外なく処刑、それがわらわの審判じゃ。<sup>38</sup>  
 ‘Death to all traitors, with no exceptions. This is my judgement.’

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<sup>35</sup> Kinsui 2003: 2 ff.

<sup>36</sup> For further references concerning roles played by particular characters in fictional storytelling see: Christopher Vogler 2007. *The Writer’s Journey – Mythic Structure for Writers*. Third Edition. Studio City: Michael Wiese Production.

<sup>37</sup> [1] vol. II: 15.

<sup>38</sup> [1] vol. II: 17.

25. *Masaka kisama, warawatachi-o-mo nakama-ni hikiireyō-to shite oru-no-ka.*

まさか貴様、わらわたちをも仲間に引き入れようとしておるのか？<sup>39</sup>

‘You’re not telling us to join your side, are you?’

26. *Hō, nakanaka-no chikara-ja-no. Omoshirō natte kita-wa.*

ほう、なかなかの力じゃの。面白うなってきたわ。<sup>40</sup>

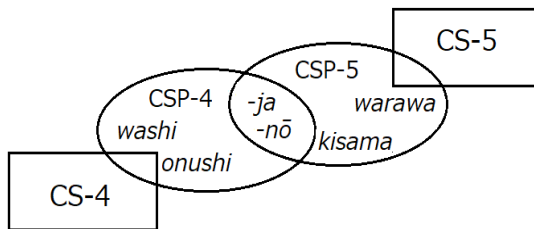
‘Huh, you’ve got some strength. It’s getting interesting.’

27. *Ahaha, zuibun kodawatteru yō-ja-nō? Shikashi zan’nen-jatta-na.*

アハハ、ずいぶんこだわってるようじゃのう？しかし残念じゃったな。<sup>41</sup>

‘Ha-ha, you really seem to care, don’t you? What a pity, though.’

The CS observed above seems to operate on character stylization markers present in some other stylizations. The temporary name of this CS points at the most prominent attributes of Victoria F. Stein: her attitude, gender and category as a fictional character (‘magical creature’). In contrast with how superior her tone is, she is portrayed as a child turned into a cold-blooded magical creature. CSM like the 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun *warawa* (‘used by women of status or power to mark that others are below them’<sup>42</sup>) and 2<sup>nd</sup> person pejorative pronoun *kisama* seem to reflect both gender (female) and attitude (looking down on other characters).



Picture 3. Correlation between selected CSM in CS-3 and CS-4.

<sup>39</sup> [1] vol. II: 20.

<sup>40</sup> [1] vol. II: 22.

<sup>41</sup> [1] vol. II: 153.

<sup>42</sup> Kinsui et al. 2014: 208.

Some archaisms used in the ‘elderly male’ CS appear also in this ‘superior female magical creature’ CS, seemingly serving the purpose of boosting the superior aspect of the stylized character. Even though this CS could be classified as an example Unique Character Language, it operates on certain CSM observed in other stylizations, which makes its stylistic analysis partially possible. Below is a graph depicting the correlation between the ‘elderly male’ CS (CS-4) and ‘superior female magical creature’ CS (CS-5).

Some CSM were observed both in CS-4 and in CS-5. In other words, there is a partial correlation between the two character stylizations, and the correlation seems to be rooted in grammar (the copula *-ja*) and emotiveness (the sentence-ending particle *-nō*). There is no correlation in the pronominal character stylization markers for these two CS. Such graphical presentation points at the possibility of mapping similarities and differences between various character stylization patterns and particular instances of character stylizations.

### **Conclusion**

Both ‘role language’ presented in the first section and ‘character stylization markers’ (CSM) proposed in the second section of this paper describe linguistic units that present overt information about sociolinguistic attributes of fictional characters. Another proposed term, the ‘character stylization patterns’ (CSP), points at sets of such markers. A qualitative analysis of 21 fictional utterances found in the source text showed that even though individual character stylizations can be analyzed with reference to the concepts of ‘role language’ (RL) and ‘character language’ (CL), a better stratification of such stylistic patterns would aid such analysis. Some of the attributes emphasized in the analyzed character stylizations could be categorized as representing four types of ‘character language’ proposed by Kinsui and Yamakido (2015). This allows for understanding the way a stylization correlates with particular stereotypes. However, other cases, e.g. the ‘greedy merchant’ CS or ‘superior female magical creature’ CS, seem to blend multiple character subtypes and cannot be categorized according to the pre-existing typology of CL.

The introduction of the MLCS seems to aid stratification of the aforementioned stylistic phenomena. CSM and CSP could be used to differentiate between single lexical units of stylization and whole sets of such units that are the subjects of the RL studies. Graphical presentation of correlations between analyzed character stylization viewed through the

framework of MLCL seems applicable in the analysis of lexical and grammatical CSM that appear in other texts of contemporary Japanese popular culture.

Although the application of the proposed stratification seems to aid better distinction, the study conducted in this paper is only a qualitative analysis, and the possibility of applying such methods in a quantitative study has not been proven as of yet. Also, even though this study introduced a method for the presentation of correlations between separate character stylizations, there is a need for further clarification of the true nature of such correlations, and for a more thorough investigation into the subject.

The ‘character textual presentation’ (CTP) proposed as the third layer of the MLCS could be applied in a more literary inquiry into the nature of characters stylized in Japanese popular culture, as it consists of all passages of narration that describe the character. Furthermore, such textual presentation refers to non-textual aspects of the fictional character, such as looks and voice. A thorough analysis of corresponding semiotic modes that coexist with textual character stylization in multimodal media such as Japanese comic books and animation, could aid further understanding of the stylistic phenomena introduced in this paper.

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[1] Tsukishima Sōki. 2013. *Bureiburii Deforuto. R no techō*. [Bravely Default. The pocketbook of R] Vol I&II. Tōkyō: Square Enix. (月島総記『ブレイブリーデフォルト。アルの手帳』スクエアエニックス).

## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Wojciech Gęszczak**

MA in the field of Japanese Studies (Nicolaus Copernicus University). Currently a PhD Student at Warsaw University (Department of General Linguistics, East Asian Comparative Linguistics and Baltic Studies). His main fields of interest are the stylistic, dialectological and sociolinguistic variety of Japanese language, stylistic diversity of Japanese contemporary popular culture and linguistic equivalence in translations of contemporary popular culture.

Arnaud Grivaud  
ORCID: 0000-0001-5274-0826

## **Political Power Interventionism in Bureaucrats' Appointments under the Abe Government**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.5

### **ABSTRACT**

For every government, controlling its bureaucracy is necessary to implement policies, and human resources management (HRM) is a crucial lever in order to enforce this control. Since the end of the Second World War, the Japanese bureaucracy has managed to keep a relatively strong independence toward politicians regarding HRM. But from the 1990's onwards, several reforms reinforced politicians' intervention power in high-rank bureaucrats' appointments. Since the return of Abe Shinzō to power, this tendency seems to have accelerated. Observers frequently draw attention to the particular amount of nominations influenced by prime minister's decisions, sometimes insinuating that the bureaucracy could become politicised and thusly see its principle of neutrality endangered.

This paper aims at explaining to what extent these interventions constitute a new phenomenon or not. After reassessing the situation under the "55-year system", it explores the factors that could explain the recent changes, and analyses their consequences on the bureaucracy. We consider that despite an obvious voluntarism from the Government and the creation in May 2014 of the Cabinet Bureau of Personnel Affairs, it would be overstated to speak of a revolution that could lead to a Japanese-style spoils system. In fact, we see that with some exceptions, these political interventions respect many of the old nominations habits, which suggests that senior civil servants' appointments are still resulting from a negotiation between politicians and ministries, and that the legal framework is not the only variable to take into account. We argue indeed that the prime minister's political stability determines to a great extent his room for manoeuvre regarding such interventions, and we think that his caution not to excessively antagonize bureaucrats is precisely what enabled him to break other HRM traditions.

**KEYWORDS:** bureaucracy; appointments; Abe; politics; institutional change

### **Introduction**

In a state's political system, bureaucracy plays a pivotal role, as the efficiency of the government's policies and the realisation of the democratic principle are at stake. Among the different instruments that a government holds in order to control its bureaucracy, the power over human resources management (HRM) is crucial. Since the end of the

Second World War, the Japanese bureaucracy has managed to keep a relatively strong independence toward politicians regarding HRM. However, from the 1990s onwards, the rigidity of ministries' HRM and its lack of openness have been severely criticised, which led eventually to the introduction of several reforms aimed at reinforcing politicians' influence over high-rank bureaucrats' nominations. Nevertheless, the return of Abe Shinzō to power in December 2012 seems to have been the real turning point regarding this issue. Many unexpected bureaucrats' appointments have broken unwritten rules that were rather respected so far.

After reassessing the situation under the "55-year system", this paper analyses to what extent these nominations constitute a new phenomenon, and how the recent changes can be explained. We consider that despite an obvious voluntarism from the Government, and the creation in May 2014 of the Cabinet Bureau of Personnel Affairs, it would be overstated to speak of a revolution. In fact, these political interventions respect many of the old nomination habits, suggesting that senior civil servants' appointments are still resulting from a negotiation between politicians and ministries. We argue indeed that the prime minister's political stability determines to a great extent his room for manoeuvre regarding such interventions, probably more than the legal framework. In addition, although it might sound paradoxical, we think that his caution not to excessively antagonize bureaucrats in this negotiation process is precisely what enabled him to break other HRM traditions.

### **The Merit System versus the Spoils System**

When facing the HRM issue in the Japanese public administration, and especially the politicisation of its nominations, one cannot forget to present two ideal-typical systems of recruitment in civil service, identified very early by political scientists: the spoils system (*ryōkansei* 獵官制), and the merit system (*shikaku nin.yō-sei* 資格任用制), also called career-based system. In the first system, high civil servants are nominated by politicians for political reasons, as they choose people whom they know to share their ideas or to be loyal to them. As a result, however, the staffers nominated in that manner are often quite unqualified and the risk of corruption is quite high. In addition, civil servants being replaced at each alternation of power, the administration cannot ensure the continuity of public services.

Strongly opposed to this "dilettante administration" (Weber 1963), so remote from his rational bureaucracy ideal, Max Weber advocated a merit system in which civil servants are professionals that are destined to stay in office for some time. They retain a status that they will keep throughout



their career (this is the guarantee of status, *mibun hoshō* 身分保障), and that will protect them from a discretionary demotion or an unjustified downgrading. According to the traditional conception of this system, recruitment is mainly (but not only) based on a competitive exam evaluating their knowledge and expertise. This guarantees a certain amount of knowledge, political neutrality and continuity in the delivery of public services. But this system has also some drawbacks: the administration is consequently excessively independent from the elected politicians, and can therefore open the possibility to resist the decisions made by the representatives of the people, jeopardizing the democratic principle. Although the didactic advantages of such ideal-types are undeniable, one can but only observe that today, the countries with a modern bureaucracy have in reality adopted a mixed system, some being rather on one side of the spectrum than on the other.

It has generally been noted in several countries that politicians' room for manoeuvre regarding recruitment, promotions and demotions is broader for agents occupying higher hierarchical positions in the bureaucracy than for those occupying a lower position<sup>1</sup>. Unlike the latter, who are mainly in charge of the execution of public policies while respecting a certain neutrality towards the citizens, the former are in charge of elaborating these policies in collaboration with the politicians. It is therefore believed in some countries that politicians should be able to choose their collaborators so that the government's action can be effective without being constantly disturbed by internal feuds. But as in the spoils system, the politicisation of nominations in a merit system presents several dangers, which have often been put under the spotlight by the opposition or the media. The excessive shift of the selection criteria from agents' personal level of expertise to their social capital and ability to seduce politicians can lead to a lesser quality of the agents, a politicisation by contamination of lower levels, greater insecurity in careers and a loss of motivation for the staff. One of the consequences can also be the high-rank bureaucrats' reluctance to oppose their political leaders; in consequence, they become "yes men" (*hirame komuin* ヒラメ公務員, or "flatfish civil servants"). They are therefore deprived of what British journalist Hugo Young called "institutionalised scepticism" (Plowden 1994: 104), which can sometimes help to avoid some political mistakes.

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<sup>1</sup> It is particularly true in France for positions such as administration directors (*directeurs d'administration centrale*) but also for those belonging to ministry cabinets), and in the USA for the Senior Executive Service.

### **The Case of the Japanese Bureaucracy from 1945 to the 1990s**

After the war, under the supervision of the GHQ, Japan adopted a very strict merit system with no political appointees. Even now, if we compare the situation with other countries of the OECD, Japanese bureaucracy's recruitment system is the most characterised by a career-based system (alongside with the French bureaucracy's recruitment system). But, contrary to the French system, Japanese politicians' influence over the nominations at the highest positions in the bureaucracy was regarded as very limited. According to some scholars, this autonomy of the bureaucracy regarding HRM was one of the elements supporting the theory of a "bureaucratic domination" (*kanryō shihai-ron* 官僚支配論) over the decision-making process (Tsuji 1969). That being said, from a purely legal point of view ministers clearly hold the power to nominate, to promote, to downgrade and to demote civil servants of their ministry, with some restrictions due to the guarantee of status for the latter two (article 55, 58 and 61 of the National Civil Service Act, NCSA). In practice, movements of personnel were largely decided by the high-rank bureaucrats, and ministers usually rubber stamped the proposals (*jinji-an* 人事案) presented by the human resources division of their secretariat (*daijin kanbō jinjika* 大臣官房人事課) (Iio 2009: 40-42). If they tried to influence these nominations on political or personal considerations, they would risk infuriating the bureaucrats, who would see it as an attack on the two major values on which they build their professional ethics: political neutrality and expertise. The fact that bureaucrats disliked political interventionism in their human resources was often described in the media as a corporatist reaction from an elitist group that sought to preserve their privileges and their autonomy vis-à-vis the political power.

Despite the fact that scholars underlined that the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) became more and more active in the decision-making process from the 1960's, the narrowness of ministers' room for manoeuvre regarding their ministries' HRM has rarely been denied (Muramatsu 2012: 78-79). Nevertheless, in Tatebayashi Masahiko's opinion, during the long period when LDP was in power, politicians of the majority were able to shape high-rank bureaucrats' preferences as much as if they had appointed them in a spoils system (2005: 209). In fact, without power-shift, bureaucrats could even have adopted as their own the ruling-party's preferences so that political interventionism in the HRM would have been unnecessarily risky (Nonaka 2012: 55). Moreover, Tatebayashi suggested that in this political context, a mechanism of self-censorship (*jiko sentaku* 自己選択) could have acted in such a way that students not sharing LDP's preferences chose

not to enter the bureaucracy in the first place. In addition, a mechanism of mutual selection (*sōgo senbetsu* 相互選別) could have, on the one hand, led superiors to promote subordinates who were regarded as able to collaborate with LDP politicians, and on the other hand put aside those who were not. If we can agree on the fact that such dynamics might have existed, one must not forget that LDP was ideologically extremely heterogeneous. Ministers and influential LDP backbenchers of specific policy areas (*zoku giin* 族議員) had different opinions and were sometimes opposed to one another, so it is hard to see how bureaucrats could have anticipated such blurry preferences to manage their human resources. According to several interviews we conducted with high-rank bureaucrats in January 2018, we could say that in the Japanese bureaucracy it is most likely that only few agents were anti-LDP, but it does not mean that the other agents were fervent supporters of the LDP<sup>2</sup>. A bureaucrat explained to us that a senior civil servant working with an influent politician could have more chances to be promoted because the ministry would consider that it could use his trust relationship to convince the party, but if he or she was too close to him (*bettari* べつたり) and appeared to accept whatever this politician asked of him, he would, on the contrary, be seen as potentially dangerous and put aside. In the end, the safest behaviour for bureaucrats was to stay relatively neutral and respect their legal and deontological duties of loyal subordination (article 98 of the NCSA).

### **Some Insights into Assessing the Politicians' Power of Intervention over Bureaucracy's HRM**

Assessing the extent to which Japanese ministers have been able to intervene in human resources in the years 1945-1990 is not an easy task. But in order to give a more nuanced analysis, we can distinguish three modalities of political intervention available to ministers: (1) the selection of a specific bureaucrat to appoint him to a position; (2) the demotion and the downgrading of a bureaucrat; and (3) the deselection or veto (i.e. the fact that a minister rejects the appointment of a specific bureaucrat to a position).

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<sup>2</sup> That being said, two surveys conducted in 1977 and 1983 with bureaucrats showed that they were more conservative and that their support rate of the LDP was higher than the average in the Japanese society, especially among the students of the University of Tokyo. However, in 2001 support for LDP among bureaucrats clearly dropped (Muramatsu 2010: 81-88), following the general tendency.

1. The ministers' power of selection was quite limited by several obstacles. As explained above, bureaucrats were almost all career civil servants, so a minister could not appoint a person who had not passed the first category (*isshu shiken* 一種試験) national civil service examination<sup>3</sup>. The principle of seniority was also very strictly observed, so that a minister could only choose a bureaucrat whose grade was the same or just below the one of the position he wanted to appoint him to. Thus, even if a minister wanted to intervene in the nominations at the highest positions such as director general of bureau (*kyokuchō* 局長) or administrative vice minister (*jimu jikan* 事務次官), it meant that the remaining candidates available had all already been filtered by the ministry during their 25 or more years of career. Furthermore, the habit was (and still is) that almost every personnel transfer in the bureaucracy occurred at a fixed period (in June or July). It was then hard for a minister whose time in office was generally limited to one or two years, to weigh in such bureaucrats' appointments. The bureaucrats we interviewed added also that most of the ministers could not tell before having spent a certain amount of time in their ministry who to trust and who they wanted to appoint.

2. As for the ministers' power of demotion and downgrading, it is even more limited by the legal norms related to civil servants' guarantee of status (article 78 of the NCSA, article 7 and 7-2 of the decree 11-4 of the National Personnel Authority). A minister could still transfer a bureaucrat to a position of the same grade (*ten.nin* 転任) but of minor importance or obtain from him a resignation by negotiating with the ministry to offer him a position in the private or semi-public sector with a large retribution (*amakudari* 天下り). The risk of scandal was actually quite high, as was the risk of antagonising the entire ministry so it was in fact technically very difficult to stay in office after that. Although these took place in the 2000s, the cases of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Tanaka Makiko (2002) and the Minister of Defence Koike Yuriko (2007), who were in conflict with their administrative vice ministers and tried to demote them, are striking. In both situations, the prime minister had to resolve the conflict by obtaining letters of resignation from both ministers and administrative vice ministers.

3. Based on the interviews we conducted, it appears that the safest modality of intervention for a minister was to use his veto power to reject a specific bureaucrat that the ministry proposed. Indeed, the guarantee of status does not work in such a case. But according to the interviewees,

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<sup>3</sup> Before 1984, it was the upper category civil service examination (*jōkyū shiken* 上級試験), and it became the general employee civil service examination (*sōgōshoku shiken* 総合職試験) in 2012.

most of the time, the minister did not even have to use his veto power because if they knew there was a risk he would refuse an agent; bureaucrats would not propose his name in the first place.

What conclusion can we draw if we combine the analysis of these three modalities of intervention with our previous remarks regarding bureaucrats' behaviours and preferences? If we consider that the Japanese bureaucracy was mostly filled with agents supporting the LDP or at least politically neutral and professionally loyal, it is not surprising that most of them only used their veto power occasionally, when the filter applied *ex ante* by the ministry had not been efficient enough in their view. But had they tried to intervene in a more proactive manner, the ministries would have strongly opposed their ministers, as in fact happened on some occasions. Although according to some scholars it was useless for LDP politicians to intervene actively in bureaucrats' appointments, it seems that if they could, they would have done so, considering the numerous reforms aiming at reinforcing the ministers' power of intervention in bureaucracy HRM that were debated afterwards.

### **The Reforms: Centralisation and Politicisation**

Since the end of the 1990s onwards, we have been able to witness several reforms aiming at widening the politicians' room for manoeuvre and breaking some nomination habits regarding high-rank bureaucrats. Some reforms largely inspired by the new public management were supposed, among other things, to open the bureaucrats to the private sector; to foster the movement of personnel between ministries in order to reduce the compartmentalisation of the bureaucracy (*tatewari gyōsei* 縦割り行政); to introduce notions of results and performance in career development; and to regulate *amakudari* practices. At the same time, we have seen a double phenomenon of centralisation of the HRM toward the Cabinet and a reinforcement of the prime minister's influence. We can observe the same tendency of centralisation of the HRM for the highest positions in the USA with the Senior Executive Service (1979), in Great Britain with the Senior Civil Service (1996), or in the Netherlands with the *Algemene Bestuursdienst* (1995). But whereas the agencies in charge of the HRM of high-rank bureaucrats are relatively independent from the government in these cases, the centralisation of this HRM is directed towards the core of the executive branch in Japan. From the year 2000 onwards, the appointments of bureaucrats to positions of a grade equal or superior to director general of bureau have to be examined and approved by a

committee (*kakugi jinji kentō kaigi* 閣議人事検討会議<sup>4</sup>) composed of the prime minister, the chief cabinet secretary and the three deputy chief cabinet secretaries. Before that, the nominations at these positions (about 200) were merely acted during cabinet meetings without proper control. But the most important reform regarding this issue was the creation of the Cabinet Bureau of Personnel Affairs (CBPA) (*naikaku jinjikyoku* 内閣人事局) in May 2014, after long discussions started at least in 2006. Since May 2014, this bureau has been supervising the nominations and promotions of 680 senior managers (*kanbu shokuin* 幹部職員)<sup>5</sup> in every ministry. The bureau examines agents' personnel assessments made in each ministry for aptitude to become senior managers (*tekikakusei shinsa* 適格性審査). Two CBPA bureaucrats explained to us that this examination is a mere formality as ministries usually give good evaluations to the agents they want to promote. Things are different though for the candidates coming from the private sector, which is rare<sup>6</sup>. A list of candidates that can be appointed to a senior manager position (about 1100 agents) is then sent to all ministers, who will have to pick up names in collaboration with the prime minister and the chief cabinet secretary. One of the goals of the centralisation of senior managers appointments was to foster movement of personnel between the ministries for the highest positions (as the list contains all the candidates, regardless of their ministry of origin), but there is not much change as the proportion of senior managers working in a different ministry is still around 25% (about 170 agents), most of them being detached in the Cabinet Office (*naikakufu* 内閣府) or in the Cabinet Secretariat (*naikaku kanbō* 内閣官房) to deal with an issue related to their ministry of origin. Another goal was to reinforce politicians' influence – and especially that of the Prime Minister – over high-rank bureaucrats' appointments. The Japan Federation of National Service Employees in a document addressed to the Prime Minister on 7 October 2013 expressed its concern regarding the possible undermining of the principle of civil servants' political neutrality written in the article 15 of the Constitution. Although it is mainly symbolic, the fact that the Prime Minister Abe decided that the director general of the CBPA would be a political deputy chief cabinet secretary (*naikaku kanbō fukuchōkan seimu tantō* 内閣官房副長官政務担当), and not the administrative one (*jimu*

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<sup>4</sup> From May 2014, the name has changed to *jinji kentō kaigi*.

<sup>5</sup> Senior managers occupy positions of a grade equal or superior to director of department (*buchō*).

<sup>6</sup> For example, since its creation in 2015, the director general of Japan Sports Agency (*supōtsuchō chōkan*) is Suzuki Daichi, a former swimmer who won a gold medal in 1988 Olympics in Seoul.

*tantō* 事務担当) as initially planned, was seen as another expression of this tendency to a more active political intervention over high-rank bureaucrats nominations (Tōkyō Shinbun, 20 May 2014). One could argue that since 2017, it has been the administrative deputy chief cabinet secretary who occupies that position, but he happens to be also very close to the Prime Minister Abe.

### **Recent Developments under the DPJ and the Abe Governments**

As mentioned before, reinforcing politicians' influence over bureaucrats' nominations was not a new idea. In 2009, when the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won general elections, one of its slogans was to end politicians' excessive dependence on bureaucracy (*datsu kanryō izon* 脱官僚依存) and to create a true politician-led government (*seiji shudō* 政治主導). The Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio had even declared before the elections that he would demand the resignation of all directors general of bureau and administrative vice-ministers after the alternation of power (Zakowski 2015: 55), but he eventually did not, fearing that it would create much discontent in the bureaucracy. However, he tried to pass a bill intended to put every senior manager position at the same grade, so as to enable a politician to practically “downgrade” an agent without any consideration for his guarantee of status, as it would have officially been regarded as a transfer at the same grade (*ten.nin* 転任). The bill was never passed – partly because it tried to bypass the guarantee of status – and in the end, one has to admit that during the three years it remained in power, the DPJ did not intervene in ministries HRM much more than the previous LDP governments. Maybe Hatoyama Cabinet's inability to surround itself with trustworthy bureaucrats led it to evict bureaucrats altogether from the decision-making process, instead of using them. But even if ministers could have been entirely free to appoint whoever they wanted, a Diet member from the DPJ and a former bureaucrat of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) confessed that most of them did not know who to pick up (Shiozaki 2013: 76-77).

Since the return of Abe Shinzō to power in December 2012, journalists have frequently emphasized the interventionism of the Prime Minister and his staff in the appointments of senior civil servants. These journalists usually applaud the increasing number of women appointed to the highest positions in the ministries, although the percentage of women senior managers was still at 3.8% in 2017 (while the objective is to reach 5% in

2020)<sup>7</sup>. But the observers especially draw attention to the particular number of appointments of bureaucrats described as “close to the Prime Minister”, speaking every year since June 2013 of “extraordinary” or “surprising movements of personnel” (*irei na jinji idō* 異例な人事異動 or *sapuraizu jinji* サプライズ人事) that break many nominations habits (Makihara 2016: 102-107. In fact, it would be more accurate to say that nominations habits are not as rigid as before – which creates more uncertainty in bureaucrats career development – but it seems that the Prime Minister Abe and his Cabinet Chief Secretary Suga Yoshihide remain careful not to antagonise bureaucrats excessively. There is a growing number of exceptions, but the seniority rule is still generally respected. There are very few agents skipping one grade (*tobikyū* 飛び級) when being promoted to a higher position in the ordinary national civil service (*ippan-shoku* 一般職). There are some exceptional cases, such as the nomination in 2017 of Saiki Kōzō (42 years old) as executive secretary to the Prime Minister (*naikaku sōri daijin hishokan* 内閣総理大臣秘書官) who is about ten years younger than the other executive secretaries, but this position belongs to the special national civil service (*tokutei-shoku* 特別職), for which political appointments are allowed (they are not protected by the guarantee of status). Abe had known him since 2007 and decided to appoint him to be in charge of the writing of his speeches (in Japanese). Twenty years earlier, in 1996, the Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō had appointed Eda Kenji (45 years old at that time) to the same position because he was his administrative secretary when Hashimoto Ryūtarō was minister of International Trade and Industry (1994-1996). Therefore Saiki’s nomination was not as unprecedented as it might seem. That being said, it is obvious that one of Abe’s strengths is that he personally knows from the time he was in office (2006-2007) some bureaucrats who now have reached higher positions. This includes for example his First Executive Secretary Imai Takaya, whom he trusts and relies on regarding METI’s movements of personnel, according to a bureaucrat of the ministry we interviewed.

But as mentioned before, Abe is far from being entirely free to nominate whoever he wants. In 2013, although he wanted to appoint the director general of the tax bureau as administrative vice minister of Finance, the unwritten rule was that the director general of budget bureau was to occupy

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<sup>7</sup> Cabinet Office, “Dai yon-ji danjo kyōdō sankaku kihon keikaku” [The Fourth Basic Plan for Gender Equality], 25 December 2015, p. 13: [http://www.gender.go.jp/about\\_danjo/basic\\_plans/4th/pdf/print.pdf](http://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/basic_plans/4th/pdf/print.pdf). Accessed 2018.02.24.



that position. Abe decided then to respect the rule and to transfer the director general of the tax bureau to the budget bureau so that he could appoint him the next year. In 2015, newspapers were surprised that for the third consecutive time, a bureaucrat who entered the ministry in 1979 was appointed administrative Vice-minister of Finance. The following year, bureaucrats of the ministry succeeded in getting Satō Shin.ichi, who was director general of the tax bureau at that time, appointed as administrative Vice-minister, although he had strongly opposed the government's idea to postpone the raise of the consumption tax to 10%.

## Conclusion

We can clearly see that even if political interventionism in ministries' HRM is more important than before and not limited to the use of veto, senior managers' appointments still result from a negotiation with the ministries. Moreover, the stability of the Cabinet and the political aura of the Prime Minister still determine his room for manoeuvre to a greater extent than the legal framework. In fact, the institutional change of May 2014 is not sufficient to explain the recent break of HRM habits and we argue that it should be, before all, regarded as the expression of an evolution in the mentalities and the power balance between bureaucrats and politicians, even though it will certainly contribute to the consolidation of the Prime Minister's power over bureaucracy's HRM and reinforce the idea that such consolidation is more democratic. The recent clash between the government and the Administrative Vice Minister of Education Maekawa Kihei regarding the so-called "*kake gakuen scandal*"<sup>8</sup> indicates that bureaucrats are paying more attention to the Prime Minister's intentions than before – whether clearly expressed or implicit (*sontaku* 忖度) – and we can fairly assume that this is partly because they know that his power over their careers has increased. But at the same time, this shows that this power is not unlimited and that high-rank bureaucrats can still resist and protest – essentially by leaking information – especially when they feel that the general interest is endangered by politicians. In the end, with this scandal and the rise of criticism of Abe's unilateral power (*Abe ikkyō* 安倍一強), it seems that after twenty years of reforms that reinforced

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<sup>8</sup> Maekawa Kihei alleged that the Cabinet Office have pressured the Ministry of Education (MEXT) by citing the intent of the prime minister in approving the creation of a Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at a university run by Abe's close friend, although the project did not meet any of the four criteria. Even though there was no direct order, bureaucrats from the MEXT followed what was implicitly presented as the Prime Minister's intention. After that, Abe's support rate went down in the poll, but he nevertheless managed to win the general elections of December 2017.

the Prime Minister's political leadership and control over bureaucrats, some Japanese citizens are beginning to understand that such top-down leadership and political control over the bureaucracy also comes with disadvantages.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Arnaud Grivaud**

Arnaud Grivaud is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (Inalco) in Paris and a member of the CRCAO. His researches focus on contemporary Japanese politics, and more specifically on the Japanese bureaucracy and the Diet. In 2016, he defended at the University Paris Diderot his Ph.D. thesis entitled “The Reorganisation of the Political Power in Japan: the Bureaucracy in the Japanese Political System from the 1990’s until today”, for which he has been awarded the Shibusawa-Claudé Prize in 2017. In 2014-2015, he was invited as a lecturer at the Kobe University in Japan. He is also a member of the SFEJ Board (French Association of the Japanese Studies).

Aline Henninger  
ORCID: 0000-0001-7383-4573

## Gender Equality at School in Contemporary Japan

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.6

### ABSTRACT

In Japan, since the 1970s, women's studies, then gender studies in the 1990s, have flourished in the realm of sociology faculties and notably, the relationship between education and gender has been extensively examined. This article aims to demonstrate how different actors within the compulsory education system are struggling to control these sensitive topics. If we were to consider school as a hierarchical organizational structure, the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology) would be the top of the pyramid, followed by the local board of education, the school directors and principals, the various teachers, the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association), the pupils, and lastly other external actors. The Ministry of Education openly encourages, supports and promotes gender equality. However, concrete results are still missing. The Ministry, the school educators and administrators seem to contradict one another, with many double standards. Thus a gap appears between a call for gender-equal education and the concrete implementation of gender equality education measures in schools. To which extent each actor of the school system is acting for gender equality? Which factors are relevant for an implementation of gender-equal education? To answer these questions, data based on an ethnographic research conducted in some primary schools in 2013-2014 will be used to understand what is at stake at the local level. The particular case of Machida City will be analyzed. This article will pinpoint how a single classroom is the complex product of double standards which have conflicting influence between the Ministry, educators and schools administrators, and other actors related to primary schools.

**KEYWORDS:** education, gender equality, policy, school system

### Introduction

In Japan, global moves towards gender equality in education took place at the end of the 1970s. Japanese feminists tend to consider 1975, when the first UN World Conference on Women took place, as an influential start (Murata 2006). During the 1970s and 1980s, education of girls and boys became a topic of state interest. UN Japanese delegation for Women Rights, the Ministry of Education, feminist groups, teachers, among other actors, started to recognize biases in girl education, which was called the "hidden curriculum" (Ujihara, 2003: 60). Then they advocated the necessity of

some measures against this unequal participation in the school system between girls and boys.

From the late 1980s, feminist scholars and Japanese educational scientists brought up gender discourse on education more actively (Kreitz-Sandberg 2007). Since then, the focus has slightly changed from “gender equity in education” to “gender equal education” (Kimura Ryōko 2009: 316). The mid-1990s measures for gender-equal education were not isolated reforms. They were a part of the reforms born in this decade, when gender was recognized as an analytical concept, not only by scholars, but also by the Japanese institutions (Osawa, 2011: 62). “Gender equality” was then incorporated into the national agenda (Kimura 2005: 20-22). The creation of the Council for Gender Equality (*Danjō kyōdo Sankakushingikai*) by a government ordinance in 1994 and the enactment in 1999 of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society stands for a firm result of this trend (Osawa, 2010). From 1995, some teachers and feminist movements called for a “gender-free education”, meaning an education free of gender stereotypes (Ueno 2006: 244-254). However, at the beginning of the 2000s, political bashing against the so-called “gender-free education ideas” started. Thus, Japanese scholars analyzed why gender-equal education fuelled such an unprecedented media lynching, contrary to other gender equality reforms (Kimura 2005, Ueno 2006). This article considers two main hypotheses of this research: double standards have conflicting influence upon the Ministry, educators and schools administrators, and it shapes a gap between a National Education system that encourages gender equality, and the actual implementation of concrete measures in schools.

Considering this background, this article aims to show how the different actors of the compulsory education have been struggling since the end of the 2000s to present to control these sensitive topics. To answer partly this question, in this article we will not discuss in detail the different layers of the complex links between the Ministry of Education and State machinery for gender equality, but we will focus on the local level dedicated to the implementation of gender equality measures in education, by presenting empirical micro-level data, within the frame of a 5-month fieldwork in Japanese elementary schools in the years 2013-2014. Doing this, I will show how individual actors are evolving in the given structures, but also how they can make the structures change. State and prefectural level concerns only national public school system and compulsory education<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The distinction between compulsory education and higher education has many structural and political consequences.

and for the fieldwork based in Machida City, only the primary schools would be considered here<sup>2</sup>. This analysis can contribute to the research on gender policy in order to understand which factors are relevant in the implementation of gender-equal, non-sexist education.

## **1. Towards Gender Equality Policy at School : from 1970s to 2010s**

### **1970 and 1980s: the Rise of Awareness of Sexism in Education**

During the 1970s and 1980s, the national agenda in Japan for men-women equality topics was defined both by international pressures and feminist ideas of national NGOS or women's groups. Especially, the United Nations International Decade for Women (1975-85) marked the growth in reforms geared towards redressing gender inequality. For instance, in 1979, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). After signing the convention in 1980, Japan adjusted national laws and ratified the CEDAW in 1985<sup>3</sup>. For the ratification, Japan made several main adjustments, such as the revision of the Nationality law (Fujimura Fanselow, Kameda: 356-357), the Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1986 (revised in 1997), the Childcare Leave Law in 1992, the revision of Education and Science Ministry's teaching guidelines, in which home economics was to be learned by both boys and girls (1993 and 1994). The Japanese government promoted at that time national, municipal and local women's centers (Dales, 2009). The influence of CEDAW speeded up national and international feminist claims. For instance, the Beijing International Women Conference, organized in 1995 by the United Nations, emphasized the role of political environment for gender equality reform (Yasuo 2006). Japanese feminist were actively involved in the Conference, and they, with female leaders in party politics, called for a better compliance with international norms in the Japanese agenda. But the recognition of gender equality went further from the mid-1990s with the implementation of typical gender equality laws: the revision of the Eugenic Protection Act in 1996, then renamed "Maternity Protection Act" (MPA), the law prohibiting sexual harassment in 1997, the authorization of pill contraception in 1999. Since the mid-1990s, there has been a clear increase in the number of gender issues in the public debate, because the head of the government and the upper level of political decision-makers decided to

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<sup>2</sup> Private schools do not necessarily follow national guidelines defined by the MEXT.

<sup>3</sup> The Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office provides chronologically arranged data about these achievements on [http://www.gender.go.jp/about\\_danjo/law/kihon/index.html](http://www.gender.go.jp/about_danjo/law/kihon/index.html) (last Access February 2015).

take them into account. Conservative politicians realized at that time that women issues and gender equality are precious tools to solve problems e.g. in the labor market, and the steadily declining birth rate (Osawa 2000). This idea of women's empowerment has developed strongly since the time when in the mid-1990s the Japanese government became actively involved in the process of policy implementation for gender equality (Osawa et al. 2000).

Within this movement, Japan implemented gender equality policies for education. Teaching staff in the school took action, convincing the local board for education to support them. However, the Japanese Ministry of Education did not put much stress on such questions and did not publish any specific guidelines on this subject (Kreitz-Sandberg 2007). Japan's ratification of the CEDAW means the government should implement the convention, for instance, Article 10, which called for the elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels in all forms of education. This international pressure was added to internal pressure coming from activists of women's groups, and groups including teacher activists that campaigned for one curriculum for both girls and boys. Those campaigns forced the Ministry of Education to realize a uniform curriculum for boys and girls in home economics (1993 and 1994, in junior and high schools) or in physical education (Kameda 1995: 112). Another example of gender segregation with a gendered hierarchy is the use of separate hiragana name lists for boys and girls, which give the names of the boys first, followed by the girls' ones (Kreitz-Sandberg 2007). Boys are called first, even for the various school ceremonies. In the 1980s, the vast majority of schools used such lists. Some initiatives of teachers, parents and women's centers but also city councils managed to replace such lists with mixed alphabetical-order lists (Kreitz-Sandberg 2007). Textbooks, authorized only by the imprimatur of MEXT, have also been criticised. Gender bias in textbooks was analyzed as early as the mid-1970s by women's groups or later by teachers themselves (Kameda 1995:112-113). Teachers and researchers also cooperated in research into the textbooks, practices and activities in the classroom, on student councils and in clubs (Mackie 2003:191). The Japanese Federation of Bar Associations published in 1989 a book *What we think of sex equality described as such in textbooks*. They pinpointed how sexism was ingrained in textbook images, and the Federation status gave them some audience. Thus, teachers and other liberal actors have long expressed their opinions, shaming sex segregation and sexism. In 1992, the local board of education of Yokohama City published a leaflet *Why boys and girls apart? Material for*



a gender-equal education for primary school third and fourth grade. It was distributed to the teachers working in Yokohama. In 1995, the Tokyo Women's Foundation<sup>4</sup> published, a similar leaflet for teachers, entitled *Is your class gender free? A guide for young teachers*. In 1997, the Tokyo Women's Foundation published 3 other leaflets called *Gender Check* for teachers, parents and children. All these examples show that apart from teachers, also other local actors played a role in promoting gender equality measures.

### **A New National Machinery Dedicated to Gender Equality from the Mid-1990s**

The State began to play an active role in the implementation of gender policy from the 1990s: in July 1994 the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality, headed by the Prime Minister, was set up within the Cabinet<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, the Office for Gender Equality and the Council for the Joint Participation for Men and Women (*danjokyōdōsankakuka tōgi*) were also established in the Prime Minister's office. All members of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality were Diet members (Dales 2009: 28). The Council for the Joint Participation for Men and Women, founded in 1994, was the emanation of the Cabinet. Its creation is a big step forwards women's empowerment, because the Japanese government officially included gender equality in the national agenda (Dales 2009: 27-30). A big step was made in 1996, under the initiative of the Japanese government, when the Council submitted to Prime Minister Hashimoto's Cabinet on 30 July a public policy paper, *Vision of Gender Equality: Creating New Values for the 21st Century*. It argued that only improving the status of women is not enough to ensure equality and that in order to create a gender-equal society, Japan should consider men and women as individuals, who would not be constrained by socially and culturally formed sex role stereotypes. The Council was thus defining gender as a key concept, and called for a real gender equality, with both men's and women's roles redefined (Osawa et al. 2000). This public policy paper was taken into consideration by the government (Yasuo 2006) and became the blueprint for a new law called the *Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society* (*danjokyōdo sankakushakai kihonhō*), (hereafter the *Basic Law*), enacted in June 1999 and having come into force in December 1999.

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<sup>4</sup> In Japanese *Tōkyō josei dantai*, this association is now called the Tokyo Women's Plaza, see <https://www.tokyo-womens-plaza.metro.tokyo.jp/> (last access on January 2015).

<sup>5</sup> The Office for Gender Equality, its secretariat and the Council for Gender Equality, an advisory organ to the Prime Minister, were formally set up in June 1994 by Cabinet orders.

In December 2000, the Council defined the *Basic Plan for Gender Equality (danjokyōdo sankaku kihon keikaku)* (Osawa 2011, Kimura 2009). The enforcement of the Basic Law and the Basic Plan for Gender Equality (hereafter the *Basic Plan*) can be considered as the consequence of a structural change whereby the national institutions for the promotion of gender equality in Japan has been significantly strengthened. In 2001 the Council shift to the Cabinet Office and then named the Council for Gender Equality. So nowadays four main types of gender equality policies exist: they are directly related to the Prime Minister's office and allow political, civil and academic people to work for the Prime Minister's office (Gender Equality Council website). The Headquarters for the promotion of Gender Equality (Prime Minister and ministers) promote the smooth and effective implementation of measures, the Council for Gender Equality (Chief Cabinet secretary, 12 cabinet ministers, 12 scholars) study, deliberate, monitor and survey the policies, the Liaison Conference for the Promotion of Gender Equality (women's groups, media, economic organizations, local government, scholars) exchange information and promote national measures, while the Gender Equality Bureau within the Cabinet Office (bureaucrats) assume the overall coordination and the implementation of policies by local government (prefecture and city)<sup>6</sup>.

The Basic Law provides guidelines for gender equality policy-making in all fields of society (Osawa 2011: 62-63). These guidelines have limited legal status and breaching them does not entail any penalty (Dales 2009). In order to realize the Basic Law guidelines, the Basic Plan for Gender Equality was first issued in 2000. Whereas the Basic Law is vague, the Basic Plan indicates practical measures for several arenas, including education. The Basic Plan is renewed every five years: the first version in 2000, the second in 2005, the third in 2010, and the fourth one in 2015. There is a dedicated part for education in the The Basic Plan that indicates the following responsible bodies: the Ministry of Education, the General Affairs Ministry (sōmushō) but also the “whole school system, also school administration, Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) and also surrounding local organizations”. (Basic Plan, various versions). That means that all levels of the MEXT administration (state, prefectural, local) for policy-making are concerned. The State policies are designed to be implemented at both regional and local level. Consequently, considering gender equality

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<sup>6</sup> A diagram standing for the national machinery for the promotion of gender equality is available on the Council website: [http://www.gender.go.jp/english\\_contents/about\\_danjo/prom/national\\_machinery.html](http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/about_danjo/prom/national_machinery.html) (last access February 2015).

at school consists in examining the regional and local scale of the school system's meanderings (Kimura, 2005). Gender equality measures for school also consist of questioning the efficiency of the recent coordination between the Council machinery and the MEXT (Kawana Sanae, 2010).

## 2. Case Study at the City Level: Machida City Primary School

### A City Strongly Committed to Gender Equality

In order to understand how municipal, local and state actors and institutions are constantly adjusting because of their different orientations, I would here highlight the particular situation of one City Hall: that of the city of Machida, located south-west of the Prefecture of Tokyo. I present the Machida case because I spent the most time there doing my fieldwork in a primary school<sup>7</sup>, during January and February 2014, so my observation data are more complete. The length of the observation allowed me to meet teachers of others schools in Machida, but also to attend Machida City's gender equality festival, and go to the monthly meeting of one teachers' research group on gender and education between the autumn of 2013 and the spring of 2014. In that way, I managed to get not only information relative to the City but also anthropological data relative to one school's commitment towards gender equality. Machida City should be considered as one particular case for two reasons: first, implementation of gender equality policy definitely depends on the prefecture (Holdgrün 2013) and second, the local board of education plays an active role, as few other local boards of education scattered over the national territory do (Kreitz-Sandberg 2007: 148). The case study of Machida City is not representative at all of Japan gender equal policy implementation. Machida City actually committed itself to gender equality before the enactment of the *Basic Law* and *Basic Plan*<sup>8</sup>.

The commitment of Machida City leads to concrete results in the field of education. The City supported female employees in their administrative and leading functions (such as participation in the Local Board of Education). As the ratio of full-time working women/men would then tend to become 50/50 (and not 30/70), discrimination of women at work would decrease and these structures would be likely to become more sensitive to

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<sup>7</sup> The real school's name would not be revealed to protect the anonymity of the school, its teachers and pupils.

<sup>8</sup> It can be traced to the *Machida Third Plan for Gender Equality Implementation Development* (Daisanji machidashi danjōbyōdō suishin keika)? conferences organized during the Gender Equality 14th Festival in Machida Gender Equality Center, on 2014 February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

gender equality issues. Another activity is the organization of the yearly Festival of Gender Equality. Organized in the City Association Forum Hall, this event, open to everyone, presents some local actors involved in gender equality, and shows the city politics and measures for gender equality. Concerning gender-equal education, these measures lead to the generalization of alphabetic order enrollment list at school in Machida, which took place very early in comparison with other schools. Machida schools also managed during 1990s and 2000s to change the binary blue (boys) and pink (girls) code (for suits, stationery, school colors, and various other objects belonging to the pupils) to a more relaxed color-gendered code. The best way to emphasize Machida City's distinctive role is to compare it with other cities during the 2000s, when the bashing against gender sensitive education and sex education became known as the so-called gender-free bashing (*jendā furī basshingu*) or more generally, gender backlash (*jendā bakkurasshu*). Japanese scholars clearly analyzed the political entanglement of school system education (Kimura 2005, Wakakuwa 2006, Ueno 2006). They showed that gender sensitive issues contributed to political or ideological conflicts among the prefecture and city school actors, because the heads of schools were working in cooperation with local boards of education, themselves linked with the city hall, the prefecture, and the State. In particular, the board of education is not supposed to have a political color or any specific orientation regarding gender issues. Still it can be the case when its principal bureau for education (*kyōiku chō*) is ruled by a politician and administrator clearly showing reluctance for gender equality or women's empowerment. Many teachers and scholars were aware that these political factors, together with the socioeconomic situation, had direct impact on school reforms and programs. The neoliberal orientation and composition of Koizumi and Abe government (2000-2007) were decisive factors during the revision of the Fundamental Law of Education (*Kyōiku kihon hō*) enacted in 2006. The strengthening of old and new conservative and nationalist forces within the LDP (and also in the DPJ) is one explanation of the gender-free bashing. Scholars show that this reactionary mixture is stressing the old gendered family model: a male warrior and a dedicated mother (Sekiguchi 2004: 69-70). Tokyo, with a rather extreme-right wing governor Ishihara Shintarō (1999-2012), was in the heart of the bashing for these political considerations. However, teachers strongly reacted against the suppression of article 5 (enforcing boys' and girls' equality) or against "patriotic" teaching<sup>9</sup>. On the contrary, Machida City administration and schools were

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<sup>9</sup> See for example the debates around the term "patriotism" (*aikokushin*). After the revision of the

aware of the feminist scholars' call for a gender-free education (*jendā furī kyōiku*). They were not reluctant to get information about the women's associations leaflets, pedagogical brochures and scholarly books on gender-free education, which flourished at that time (Kimura 2005: 75-94). Thus, Machida City was hardly playing a role in spreading gender-free education bashing information. The progressive initiatives of the local administration of Machida help the entire school community to promote gender-equal education. However, it should be remembered that this is not the case of all prefectures and cities.

### **Micro-Level Analysis: What's Happening in a Classroom?**

As fieldwork analysis turns out to be necessary for an understanding of the micro-level situation, I present here the results of a 2-month fieldwork in Machida. The fieldwork I lead in Machida is part of the work I conducted during a research year in Japan, when I spent altogether 5 months in four Japanese primary schools. The participant observation was conducted between October 2013 and June 2014, I joined every class and recess 4 days a week (apart from Tuesday). The choice of the schools is random: I was introduced thanks to different Japanese friends and teachers/professors<sup>10</sup>. Still, I had more difficulty in some places to get the authorization of the local board of education. In one case, in a school located in a ward of Tokyo, the director agreed but the local board of education did not, which I suppose was not accidental. Even if the head of school was clearly hesitating personally, the final decision was made by the local board of education. As gender-free education and sex education bashing was the most aggressive in Tokyo, the local board of education was probably reluctant to host me when looking at my six pages project presentation, in which I clearly mentioned the terms “gender” (*jendā*) and “gender socialisation” (*jendā no keisei katei*). If my hypothesis is true, these two elements show how local actors can influence and control school policies. This random sample allowed me to see some differences between schools. Apart from the interviews and questionnaires I did with the

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Fundamental Law, several junior high schools and high school teachers who did not want to sing the national anthem or display the national flag were dismissed.

<sup>10</sup> I spent one month with the first-grade class of Mrs. Sato (28 pupils), in H. school in Tokyo south suburban area, Yokohama, one month with the fifth-grade class of Mr. Kobayashi (36 pupils), in S. school in a middle size town of Saitama prefecture, one month with the second-grade class of Mrs. Kono (31 pupils), and another month in the fourth-grade class of Mr. Maruyama (32 pupils), in T. school, in Machida, and one month in K. school with sixth and third grade of Mr. Sakata (21 pupils) and Mr. Sakamoto (35 pupils), in a middle sized town of Yamagata prefecture.

children, I also conducted interviews with Mrs Sato, Mr Kobayashi, and Mrs Kono, and some informal interviews with Mr Sakata and Mr Sakamoto, the teachers who welcomed me in their class<sup>11</sup>. In this article, I am relying on a qualitative approach by using fieldwork negotiation data, data from participant observation and from interviews with the teachers.

During my fieldwork in various primary schools in different municipalities and prefectures, I observed severe differences regarding gender sensitive issues. Indeed, teacher behavior is quite important, even after considering the context of the city and the school. The teachers' awareness of gender issues makes a great difference when they are teaching (Naoi 2009: 89-91). To understand this, we have to look both at the professional training and at the personal interests of each teacher (Kimura Ikue 2014: 125-164). Since the 1990s, courses on gender equality have been taught to trainee teachers (Kimura Ikue 2009b: 227-246), but pedagogical materials, guidelines and hours are different, depending both on the university and also on the teacher in charge of the training (Kimura Ikue 2010). Once recruited in a school, teachers are working in a designated area shaped by the local board of education. It means they are working within a particular local frame which has political issues I want here to describe. First, they can obtain some pedagogical resources/ supervision from directors/board of education/PTAS, as well as training, such as regularly held meetings (Kimura Ikue 2009a: 425-435): this training can incite interest and lead to better comprehension of gender issues (Kimura Ikue 2010). It is also important to treat teachers as individuals who can have political views, and be engaged in a feminist network: so they can join an NPO or cooperate with it, as well as join associations and research groups working for gender equality in a school. Of course, this personal background changes in the life of a teacher. So for instance, during my fieldwork, I realized how deep was the gap between teachers aware of sex discrimination and those who were not, strongly believing that school functions as a gender-equal environment. Ironically, the director of H school suggested that I might be in Mrs Satō class, because she was aware of “the *gender*” (*jendā no koto*), or in a more derogatory way, she was “noisy about gender” (*jendā ni tsuite urusai*)<sup>12</sup>. Teachers and school board teachers spend a long time doing school work, so they well know who is interested in sport, specialized education, foreign languages, or gender equality... Moreover, once

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<sup>11</sup> I also spent time for the morning formal meetings of the school, and also some informal meetings.

<sup>12</sup> The teacher who introduced me spoke in those terms during my first interview with the director, in February 2013.

engaged in some educational activity, teachers can be actively involved in providing their pupils a non-sexist education. They get involved in those activities at some point of their personal and professional life. Mrs Satō and Mrs Kono, working and living in two different prefectures, did tell me that it was almost by chance that they got interested in gender issues (interviews with Mrs Satō and Mrs Kono<sup>13</sup>. For instance, Mr Kobayashi became aware of the female/male name-ending particle (*kun* for boys/*chan* for girls) when being told to use “kun” for male pupils in a vocational school (interview with Mr Kobayashi)<sup>14</sup>. Thus, those teachers became aware of the sexist education during their training for specialized education. They can also, through continuing education, learn more about gender equality (by encountering some teachers involved in that topic or working in a sex education research group, by learning through their union, or by coming across a specific issue with some pupils. The tiny window of opportunity that Japanese teachers get can be highly relevant. So the decisive argument for non-sexist education will be the teachers themselves. Consequently, there is no absolutely certain way to know if a school, or a particular teacher, is involved in non-sexist education. The *Basic Plan* and one single classroom with one teacher in front of thirty people constitute the first and the last link of this giant chain that is gender equal education.

## Conclusion

To conclude, there is no way to evaluate gender equality policy only by looking at national and regional structures such as MEXT, Gender Equality Council and prefecture or local governance. These institutions play a dual role: they define the rules and the actors' constellation, but they also shape the normative orientations of those actors. However, the great number and heterogeneity of actors involve individual actions of their part, difficulty to cooperate, and sometimes an adjustment to the structures that are changed. In that frame, MEXT orientations and *the Basic Plan* do not consist of a whole set of definite measures uniformly applied in each school. Looking at the same time at the very structure and at the various actors is one way to grasp the complexity of gender equal education policy implementation. Indirect, horizontal and vertical hierarchical entanglement, combined with political and economic factors, shape a complex multi-level decision-making process. Inside those structures the role of the actors, who can be international, national, governmental, local and non-governmental actors,

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<sup>13</sup> Interviews conducted in October 2013 and January 2014 with Mrs Satō and Mrs Kono.

<sup>14</sup> Interview conducted in December 2013 with Mr Kobayashi.

is also decisive. Within a prefecture, the prefecture's governor and administration would give a specific gendered color orientations as they will support strongly or not local and national gender equity policies. As we saw in the case of Machida City, the commitment of a mayor and the city administration to gender equality could also allow for variation in the degree of implementation of the legislation. Individual actors, in particular teachers and school boards, are also influencing a lot the structure itself. Each teacher still has some freedom in her/his own classroom to raise pupils' awareness of gender sensitive issues. Examining further all these relations seems the key to understanding why the Japanese school system as a whole is not acting for gender-equal education. This also explains why, among other national policies for equal participation by women and men, gender-equal education caused so much resistance. Consequently, this delicate situation, in which measures towards gender equality are difficult to implement at the (primary) school level, still obtains.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Aline Henninger**

Aline Henninger is a lecturer at University of Orléans (France) where she teaches Japanese language and Japanese contemporary history. She received her M.A. in Japanese Studies from INALCO University (France) in 2012 and earned in 2016 her doctorate in Japanese Studies (anthropology) at INALCO University. She conducts research on gender and education in contemporary Japan, focusing on children's gender socialization and sex education.

Naoko Hosokawa  
ORCID: 0000-0001-6746-6292

## ***Katakana* and Japanese National Identity. The Use of *Katakana* for Japanese Names and Expressions**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.7

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines Japanese names and expressions written using *katakana* in the contemporary Japanese media and their relation to Japanese national identity. In modern Japanese, *katakana* is normally used for Western loanwords as well as certain mimetics and phonetic annotations. However, it is observed that today some Japanese words are also written in *katakana*. They include place names associated with past tragedies such as *Hiroshima*, *Nagasaki*, or *Fukushima*, as well as names and expressions associated with internationally renowned Japanese culture such as *Kurosawa*, *Kitano*, *Murakami*, *samurai*, etc. The use of *katakana* for these words reflects the awareness of the Japanese that they are known to the world outside Japan. Such words are treated as if they were ‘re-imported’ to Japan following their acceptance as loanwords abroad. It also involves a change in perception of certain historical events or cultural products from something seen and discussed within Japan to something that is exposed to external eyes. In other words, when the script type is shifted to *katakana*, the gaze looking at Japan from within is replaced by a gaze looking at Japan from without. This shift is important in understanding the current dynamics of Japanese identity negotiation. Drawing on media accounts, the paper will analyse recurrent wordings in the news media to reveal: 1) the types and characteristics of Japanese words and expressions written in *katakana*, 2) how those specific words are associated with Japanese national consciousness and 3) images of Japanese identity suggested by the use of *katakana*. It will be argued that Japanese words in *katakana* represent images that the Japanese themselves project onto the eyes of the external world. Through the examination of the primary data extracted from media sources, the ultimate goal of the paper is to contribute to the understanding of Japanese national identity and its representation in contemporary media.

**KEYWORDS:** discourse, media, identity, *katakana*, loanwords, translation

### **1. Introduction**

The *katakana* script, the angular syllabary of Japanese, was developed during the Heian Period (794-1185) as a derivative of Chinese logographic writing (*kanji*), together with *hiragana*, the cursive syllabary. The two syllabaries were originally used to write grammatical elements of the

Japanese rendition of Chinese texts, *kanbun-kundoku*, which became the basis of the writing system of modern Japanese (Frellesvig 2010: 157-158). In the contemporary orthographic system of Japanese, *katakana* has been mainly used for Western loanwords (*gairaigo*), mimetics, phonetic annotations for *kanji* and other situations in which the phonetic element of the speech is emphasised. As a result, the use of *katakana* is often associated with a sense of exoticism or foreignness (Stanlaw 2005) with further manifestation of particular characteristics such as quality, reliability, and practicality (Haarman 1989), modern, sophisticated, and cosmopolitan character (Takashi 1990), ambivalence and hybridity (Guarné 2015), as well as social identity of the users such as age, gender, profession and educational level (Ishiwata 1985, Loveday 1996, Jinnouchi 2007) and global and international identity of Japan (Jinnouchi 2007).

It should however be pointed out that the use of *katakana* is not limited to the ‘standard’ purposes but extended to many other creative ones as a means of visual differentiation for various reasons. In particular, it is interesting to note that certain Japanese names and expressions have a tendency to be written in *katakana* in the contemporary Japanese media. They are often names of Japanese people or places as well as words that are known internationally, such as *Kurosawa*, *Murakami*, *Hiroshima*, *Nagasaki*, *samurai* and so on. This tendency has become evident in the past few decades. One of the possible roots of the trend, although the practice had existed previously, was the death of Akira Kurosawa in September 1998, followed by the decision to bestow a People’s Honour Award (*Kokumin Eiyoshō*) in October of the same year, on which occasion many media sources quoted his name as *sekai no Kurosawa* ‘world-class Kurosawa’, using *katakana* for his name and praising his international achievements. This paper will examine the motivation and effect of the use of *katakana* for such words, placing a particular focus on its relation to Japanese national identity. The hypothesis of the paper is that the use of *katakana* for Japanese words reflects the awareness of the Japanese that they are known to the world outside Japan and therefore the names and expressions written in *katakana* represent images that the Japanese project themselves onto the eyes of the external world as a sender of messages to the world.

## **2. *Katakana* as a Mode of Visual Representation of Meanings**

The discussion in the paper will be based on the premise that linguistic communication is a negotiation of meaning between ‘encoder’ (meaning producer) and ‘decoder’ (meaning interpreter) (Hall 1980) and that shared



common sense is built through the mediation of language (Fairclough 1989, 1995, Fowler 1991, Conboy 2007). Thus, by analysing a particular use of language in the mass media, it is possible to gain an understanding of certain facts or events in a given society. In this context, language includes a number of constituents, from the choice of vocabulary or expressions to the tones of voice or intonation in the case of spoken language and images or other visual signifying elements in the case of written language (Talbot 2007: 10). From this point of view, the paper will consider the choice of scripts from among *kanji*, *hiragana*, and *katakana* as a mode of visual representation of certain meanings.

Regarding the use of *katakana*, Guarné (2015: 179) states:

“There is a common denominator between the special conditions in which the *katakana* is applied to Japanese and Sino-Japanese words and its use for writing a loanword, that is the graphic representation of a difference, whether related to the particular features, intentionality, or the origin of the written word”

In other words, through the use of *katakana*, a certain particularity related to the word is emphasised. The analysis in the paper will therefore discuss what particular images are evoked and what messages are encoded in relation to Japanese national identity when *katakana* is chosen for Japanese names and expressions that are normally written with *kanji* and/or *hiragana*.

### **3. Types, Categories, and Recurrent References**

The analysis was carried out employing written texts in news media extracts from both online and printed sources in contemporary Japan (2010-2017) in order to reveal the following elements:

- I. Types and characteristics of Japanese words and expressions written in *katakana*;
- II. How those specific words are associated with Japanese national consciousness;
- III. Images of Japanese identity suggested by the use of *katakana*.

With regards to I., the following three groups of Japanese words were commonly identified in the choice of *katakana* as a script:

- Names of Japanese persons in cultural fields;

- Names of places in Japan related to negative legacies of the past;
- Words or expressions related to Japanese cultural symbols and slogans.

With regard to II., the following three recurrent references and features were recognised:

- Japanese names tend to be in *katakana* when they follow the expression *sekai no* [world-class, global-level];
- Japanese words or names tend to be in *katakana* when they are in a quote from an overseas media or celebrity;
- Japanese words or names tend to be in *katakana* when there is an explicit or implicit overseas recipient of the information.

Based on the above features, it can be said that whenever *katakana* is used for Japanese words or names, it implies the recognition of an ‘Other’ outside of Japan and therefore shifts the point of view from the domestic to the foreign. In other words, the use of *katakana* can be seen as a sign of the consciousness of the Japanese that a particular term or name is recognised abroad.

#### 4. Analysis

The following are some examples of the use of *katakana* for each of the three categories introduced above. In each extract, the part written in *katakana* and its associated reference are underlined.

##### *Names of Japanese Persons in Cultural Fields*

In this category, the expression *sekai no* [world-class, global-level] is often observed, the most eminent example of which is *sekai no kurosawa* to refer to the internationally renowned film director Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998) (Extract 1-3). Following the example of Kurosawa, *katakana* is used for the expression *sekai no*, followed by the names of other film directors, music composers, novelists, and artists, such as Takeshi Kitano (1947-), Hayao Miyazaki (1941-), Seiji Ozawa (1935-), Ryūichi Sakamoto (1952-), Haruki Murakami (1949-), and Ryū Murakami (1952-) (Extract 4-9). The format [*sekai no* + name in *katakana*] is often emphasized with quotation marks. The implicit message seems to be that the person in the reference has created cultural works of such high quality that Japan can proudly uphold them to the world.

Names of Japanese athletes who perform abroad are also often written in *katakana*. In some of such cases, there is a referent to the word *sekai* [the world] (Extract 10), while in other cases their names are introduced as part of a quote from a foreign source such as a local expert of the sport or an authority figure such as (then) President Barack Obama (Extracts 11-13). It should also be mentioned that when their full names are quoted, the order of the names is also often reversed in the Western style whereby the given name comes first rather than the Japanese style in which the family name comes first, such as “Shinji Okazaki” in Extract 11 and “Hideki Matsui” in Extract 13. In particular, in Extract 13, the name of the other athlete, Yoshitomo Tsutsugō, is written in *kanji* and in the Japanese order with his family name first (Tsutsugo Yoshitomo), implying that he has not yet reached an international level of recognition, although he is expected to in the future.

1.ここで「世界のクロサワ」組の俳優とスタッフがロケ撮影を敢行した。

*Koko de “sekai no Kurosawa” gumi no haiyū to sutaffu ga roke satsuei o kankō shita.*

‘Here, the actors and staff members of the “sekai no Kurosawa” team carried out shooting.’ (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 13 May 2016)

2.世界のクロサワと言われる映画監督、黒澤明氏の代表作を一つ挙げろと言われたら、やはり「七人の侍」だろう。

*Sekai no Kurosawa to iwareru eiga kantoku, Kurosawa Akira-shi no daihyōsaku o hitotsu agero to iwaretara, yahari “Shichinin no samurai” darō.*

‘When it comes to Akira Kurosawa, also known as sekai no Kurosawa, the first film we think of would be *Seven Samurai*.’ (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 14 October 2016)

3.江戸期の浮世絵が 世界のクロサワを生んだ。

*Edoki no ukiyoe ga sekai no Kurosawa o unda.*

‘Ukiyoe during the Edo Period gave inspiration to sekai no Kurosawa.’ (*Diamond Online*, 17 December 2016)

4.世界のキタノ、仏勲章叙勲式

*Sekaino Kitano, futsu kunshō jokunshiki*

‘Sekai no Kitano attends the award ceremony in France to receive the Legion of Honor.’ (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 26 October 2016)

5. 雪国の看守を演じるのに、日焼けをしてもはずいと気づいたあたりはさすが名監督「世界のキタノ」  
*Yukiguni no kanshu o enjiru no ni, hiyake o shite wa mazui to kizuita atari wa sasuga meikantoku sekai no Kitano.*  
'It is the great movie director "sekai no Kitano" who noticed that it would be no good to have a sun tan when acting as a prison guard in a snowy region.' (*Sankei Shimbun*, 6 April 2017)
  
6. 「体調？こればかりは天のみぞ知る。自分にできることはしています」とだけ明かした“世界のサカモト”  
*“Taichō? Kore bakkari wa ten nomi zo shiru. Jibun ni dekiru koto wa shite imasu ga” to dake akashita sekai no Sakamoto.*  
“My health condition? Only God knows. I am doing what I can do though”, said “sekai no Sakamoto”.’ (*Hōchi Sports*, 21 December 2016)
  
7. 「世界のオザワ」のエピソードは、あまりにも有名である。  
*“Sekai no Ozawa” no episōdo wa, amari ni mo yūmei de aru.*  
'This anecdote of “sekai no Ozawa” is too well known.’ (*Sankei Shimbun*, 27 October 2016)
  
8. 「世界のムラカミ」はここで生まれた。  
*“Sekai no Murakami” wa koko de umareta.*  
““Sekai no Murakami [Haruki Murakami]” was born here.’ (*Huffington Post*, 13 October 2016)
  
9. “世界のムラカミ”の圧倒的な芸術世界をご堪能ください。  
*“Sekai no Murakami” no attōteki na geijutsu sekai o gotannō kudasai.*  
'Please enjoy the breath-taking artistic world of “sekai no Murakami [Ryū Murakami]”’. (*Asahi Shimbun*, 8 October 2015)
  
10. 4年前のワールドカップ・南アフリカ大会では (...) 世界に「ナガトモ」の名前を響かせた。  
*Yonenmae no wārudo kappu Minami Afurika taikai de wa [...] sekai ni Nagamoto” no namae o hibikaseta.*  
'He made the name “Nagatomo” famous *in the world* at the FIFA World Cup in South Africa four years ago.’ (*Huffington Post*, 13 June 2014)

11. 我々はクレバーにスマートに戦い、シンジ・オカザキが2つのチャンスをものにしてくれた。

*Wareware wa kurebā ni sumāto ni tataikai, Shinji Okazaki ga futatsu no chansu o mono ni shite kureta.*

‘We played in a clever and smart manner and Shinji Okazaki successfully seized the two opportunities.’ [a quote from a British football club coach] (*Sankei Sports*, 21 September 2016)

12. イチローのような野球選手がマイアミの球場を輝かせる。

*Ichirō no yō na yakyū senshu ga Maiami no kyūjō o kagayakaseru.*

‘Baseball players like Ichirō give lights to the ball park in Miami. [quote of President Obama] (*Asahi Shimbun*, 28 December 2016)

13. 「ヒデキ・マツイの後継者になるのでは……」とメジャー関係者が熱視線を送るのが(...)筒香嘉智だ。

*“Hideki Matsui no kōkeisha ni naru no de wa” to Mejā kankeisha ga neshisen o okuru no ga [...]Tsutsumo Yoshitomo da.*

‘It is Yoshitomo Tsutsumo that the Major League Baseball experts expect to be the successor of Hideki Matsui.’ (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 27 March 2017)

#### *Names of Places in Japan Related to Negative Legacies of the Past*

It is also common to write Japanese place names such as Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Fukushima in particular, in *katakana*. These places are internationally well-known due to their tragic history – destruction by atomic bombs in 1945, and devastation by a large tsunami followed by a nuclear plant accident in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011. In such cases as well, the reference to the world or to the international community is frequently observed (Extracts 14, 16, and 17), while an implicit or explicit reference to international audiences is also common (Extract 15). It is important to note here that these place names also appear often in their *kanji* variation in the media. When written in *katakana*, the place names Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Fukushima are not merely references to geographic location but symbolise a historical experience that should be remembered not only by Japan but all over the world. This image is reinforced by the terms *sekai* [the world] and *kokusai shakai* [the international community]. In the same context, the word *hibakusha* is also written in *katakana*, particularly in relation to the draft Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in which the Japanese word *hibakusha* was used to refer to the victims of atomic bombs (Extract 18). In this category, therefore, *katakana* is used for negative memories

that the world should learn a lesson from, while in the first category – positively to refer to the talented Japanese that Japan should be proud of. In both cases, *katakana* is employed to highlight international relevance, indicating an international audience.

14. 世界の原子力関係者が「フクシマの教訓」を総括したうえで、原発の安全性強化に動き始めた。

Sekai no genshiryoku kankeisha ga “Fukushima no kyōkun” o sōkatsu shita ue de genpatsu no anzensei kyōka ni hatarakihajimeta.

‘Those who are involved in nuclear power generation in the world have started working to enhance the safety level of nuclear power plants based on the “Fukushima lessons”.’ (Nikkei Shimbun, 6 March 2012)

15. 「フクシマ」を題材にしたドキュメンタリー映画(...)特別上映される。

“Fukushima” o daizai ni shita dokyumentarii eiga [...] tokubetsu jōei sareru.

There will be a special projection of a documentary film about “Fukushima”. (Mainichi Shimbun, 30 September 2016)

16. 第二のヒロシマ、ナガサキをつくらないために世界へ呼びかけ続けている被爆者の方たち

Daini no Hiroshima, Nagasaki o tsukurenai tame ni sekai e yobikaketsuzukete iru hibakusha no katatachi

‘Those who were affected by the atomic bombs continue calling out to the world not to make the second Hiroshima and Nagasaki’ (Kōchi Shimbun, 15 June 2017)

17. ここ数年は、国際社会が「ヒロシマ・ナガサキ」を再発見する過程でもあった。

Koko sūnen ha, kokusai shakai ga “Hiroshima/Nagasaki” o saihakken suru katei de mo atta.

‘There was a process in which “Hiroshima and Nagasaki” were re-discovered by the international community in the past several years.’ (Asahi Shimbun, 20 June 2017)

18. 核兵器禁止条約草案の前文に「ヒバクシャ」

Kakuheihi kinshi jōyaku sōan no zenbun ni “hibakusha”

“*Hibakusha*” used for the preamble of the draft *Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*’ (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 23 May 2017)

*Words or Expressions Related to Japanese Cultural Symbols and Slogans*

Finally, there are other Japanese words and expressions sometimes written in *katakana*. Common examples include *samurai* (Extracts 19 and 20), *emoji* [pictograph] (Extracts 21 and 22), *omotenashi* [Japanese hospitality] (Extracts 23 and 24), as well as *mottainai* [wasteful] (Extract 25) and *karōshi* [death caused by overwork] (Extract 26). There are certain common features in these words and expressions.

In Extract 19, the term *samurai* is written in *katakana* to refer to the football players in the Japanese national team in the FIFA World Cup. This is based on the fact that the nickname for the Japanese team is ‘Samurai Japan’ and as such, the term *samurai* is sometimes used to refer to a Japanese man, while the original meaning of the word is a warrior in the feudal period, in which case the word is written in *kanji* or *hiragana*. By writing the term in *katakana*, therefore, the meaning shifts from a warrior in feudal Japan to a Japanese man in general. Furthermore, the term in the second meaning is often used in an international context, such as the FIFA World Cup. In Extract 20, the meaning of the term *samurai* shifts even further. The *samurai* bond is a term officially used in finance to refer to foreign bonds denominated in Japanese yen. The term was created in line with other foreign bonds such as Yankee bonds for U.S. dollar-denominated bonds, bulldog bonds for British pound denominated bonds. It is interesting to note that *katakana* is always used for this term, presumably because it is considered to be an international term created for the global financial market.

The word *emoji* was registered in the Oxford Dictionaries in 2013 as “a small digital image or icon used to express an idea or emotion”, along with other new terms such as *bitcoin*, *selfie*, and *phablet*. Furthermore, the term was chosen as the Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2015<sup>1</sup>. According to its website, the word was selected as the use of the word *emoji* “more than tripled in 2015 over the previous year according to data from the Oxford Dictionaries Corpus”. This was reported also in Japan, and at around the same time, the term started to be written in *katakana* as well, especially when there is a reference to ‘the world’ as well as to foreign sources such as Oxford Dictionaries (Extract 21) and President Obama (Extract 22). In Extract 22, other well-assimilated Japanese loanwords used

<sup>1</sup> <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2015>

in English, such as *karate*, *karaoke*, *manga*, and *anime*, are also written in *katakana*.

Another Japanese expression that has recently been written in *katakana* is *omotenashi*. This is a term used for Japanese hospitality. The word gained attention in 2013 when a Japanese newscaster Christel Takigawa made a speech at the 2020 Olympic bid, using the word as one of the reasons to promote Tokyo as the host city. After this speech, Tokyo won the bid and with the gesture of joining both hands and bowing used by Takigawa pronouncing this word, *omotenashi* became a buzz word of the time, often written in *katakana*. It is of a particular interest that the gesture used by Takigawa is not a common one to greet people in Japan, although it is used for prayers in Shinto shrines and in other special situations. The gesture is more commonly used for greeting in Southeast Asia, such as Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia, although it is sometimes mistakenly believed to be Japanese by foreigners. The use of the gesture by Takigawa can be considered to be a sort of self-Orientalisation and treated as something exotic. The gesture is now copied by many Japanese when referring to the term *omotenashi*. It can therefore be suggested that along with this gesture, the term *omotenashi* was also re-translated and self-Orientalised by the use of *katakana*. This phenomenon of re-translation and self-Orientalisation applies not only to the case of *omotenashi* but also to that of other Japanese words and expressions written in *katakana* when there are explicit or implicit foreign audiences, such as ‘visitors to Japan’ (Extract 23) and foreigners receiving Japanese hospitality, with fortune-telling paper strips written in foreign languages and bilingual shrine maidens (Extract 24).

The expression *mottainai* first attracted international attention when a Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai introduced this term as a slogan for environmental protection in 2005. Since then, various Japanese politicians including former Prime Minister Jun’ichirō Koizumi, as well as the current Tokyo Mayor and former Minister of Environment Yuriko Koike, have used this expression in their speeches. As a result, overseas media and journalists started quoting this expression, using *katakana* script. In Extract 25, the expression is written in *katakana* as part of a quote from the President of the International Olympic Committee Thomas Bach. Similarly, the expression *karōshi* is sometimes written in *katakana* and it is considered to be related to the fact that the term *karōshi* is included in Oxford Dictionaries Online, as “(in Japan) death caused by overwork or job-related exhaustion”. As the Japanese have become aware that the problem of overwork is attracting international attention, this term is written in *katakana* in certain situations, even though *kanji* is the most



common script choice. In Extract 26, a lamp designed by a British designer is introduced, which shifts the focus of the phrase to an outside vantage point, which is considered to be the reason for the choice of *katakana*. It is also worth noting that there is a contrast between ‘Anglepoise’ as the overseas product name and ‘the Japanese’ in the extract, which also implies the use of *katakana* for *karōshi* as symbolic of ‘the characteristics of the Japanese seen from the outside’.

19. サッカー・ワールドカップ南アフリカ大会で(...)サムライたちはどこまで勝ち進むのか。

*Sakkā wārudo kappu Minami Afurika taikai de [...] samurai tachi wa doko made kachisusumu no ka.*

‘How far can *samurai* go at the *FIFA World Cup* in South Africa?’ (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 25 June 2010)

20. 海外勢による円建て外債（サムライ債）も発行された。

*Kaigāzei ni yoru endate gaisai (samuraisai) mo hakkō saretā.*

‘Bonds of foreign companies denominated in Japanese yen (*samurai bonds*) were also issued by overseas issuers.’ (*Nikkei Shimbun*, 31 May 2017)

21. 「エモジ」は世界共通語？ オックスフォード辞典に登録。

*“Emoji” wa sekai kyōtsūgo? Okkusufōdo jiten ni tōroku.*

‘Is “emoji” a world common word? Registered in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.’ (*NewSphere*, 30 August 2013)

22. 「カラテ、カラオケ、マンガ、アニメ、エモジ（絵文字）」。

今年4月の安倍晋三首相の訪米時、オバマ米大統領が披露した日本語だ。

*“Karate, karaoke, manga, anime, emoji”.* *Kotoshi shigatsu no Abe Shinzō shushō no hōbeiji, Obama beidaitōryō ga hirō shita nihongo da.*

“‘Karate, karaoke, manga, anime, and emoji’ these are the Japanese words that the U.S. *President Obama* used when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the U.S. in April this year.’ (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 31 July 2015)

23. シニア、ガイドで生き生き 訪日客を「オモテナシ」。

*Shinia, gaido de ikiiki hōnichikyaku o “omotenashi”.*

‘Elderly people are enjoying their active life as tour guides, offering “omotenashi” to visitors to Japan.’ (*Nikkei Shimbun*, 30 May 2016)

24. 神社も オモテナシ 外国語おみくじ・バイリンガル巫女...  
*Jinja mo omotenashi gaikokugo omikuji/bairingaruru miko...*  
 ‘Shrines also offer *omotenashi* with *omikuji* (fortune telling paper strips) in *foreign languages* and *bilingual* shrine maidens...’ (*Asahi Shimbun*, 7 September 2016)

25. バッハ会長は「『モッタナイ』を避けなければならないという精神で協力する」と経費削減方針に理解を示した。  
*Bahha kaichō wa “‘mottainai’ o sakenakereba naranai to iu seishin de kyōryoku suru” to keihi sakugen hōshin ni rikai o shimeshita.*  
 ‘President (of the IOC) Bach expressed his understanding of the cost cut plan by stating “we will cooperate with the spirit of avoiding *mottainai*”.’ (*Nikkei Shimbun*, 20 October 2016)

26. アングルポイズの売り上げは恐らく、「カロウシ (過労死)」現象に日本人が感じているつらさの度合いを明らかにするだろう。  
*Angurupoizu no uriage wa osoraku, “karōshi” genshō ni nihonjin ga kanjite iru tsurasa no doai o akiraka ni suru darō.*  
 ‘The sales of *Anglepoise* (lamps designed by a British designer) will probably demonstrate the degree of tiredness felt by the Japanese with the “*karōshi*” phenomenon. (*Nikkei Shimbun*, 19 October 2016)

## 5. Impact on Japanese Identity

Based on the extracts examined in 4. certain characteristics are found to be common to the cases in which *katakana* is used for Japanese names, words, and expressions, which can be summarized in the following way:

- 1) The term in *katakana* is often emphasised with quotation marks or parentheses;
- 2) The term has a strong association with the image of Japan as seen from abroad, whether in a positive or negative light;
- 3) The meaning of the term can shift, with the new meaning related to the original one by metonymy<sup>2</sup>: when written in *katakana*, a word such as

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<sup>2</sup> Geeraerts (1997:96) defines metonymy as “a semantic link between two readings of a lexical item that is based on a relationship of contiguity between the referents of expression in each of those readings”. He shows an example of the expression ‘one drinks a whole bottle’, by explaining that “it is not the bottle but merely its contents that are consumed: bottle can be used to refer to a certain type of receptacle and to the (spatially contiguous) contents of that receptacle”. Further, he explains, “the concept of contiguity mentioned in the definition of metonymy should not be

*samurai* is interpreted to refer to a Japanese man accomplishing a remarkable achievement in the international arena, rather than to a warrior, and *Fukushima* is interpreted as the overall experience related to the Great East Japan Earthquake with the subsequent nuclear plant accident rather than as a place name. Such a semantic shift can also be found in foreign loanwords coming into Japanese as *gairaigo*<sup>3</sup>.

This paper suggests that from the above characteristics, it is possible to infer important implications related to the recent shift and development in Japanese identity in three intertwined steps. First of all, it is important to note that the choice of *katakana* for Japanese goes against the general convention of employing *kanji* or *hiragana*. It is therefore clear that the script choice is deliberate and intentional, as signaled by the frequent emphasis with quotation marks and parentheses. It is thereby underlined that the Japanese term in *katakana* has international relevance and that the Japanese are aware of it. Finally, it is important to draw a comparison between Japanese terms written in *katakana* and foreign loanwords that are also, but more conventionally, written in *katakana*.

Despite the diversity in the creative use of *katakana* observed in the fields of literature or mass media, the script is today so strongly associated with foreign (English) loanwords that the term *katakanago* (words in *katakana*) is used synonymously to the term *gairaigo* (words that come from the outside, loanwords). At the same time, however, the increasing use of such *katakanago* has been highly controversial with many claiming that it is a sign of the impoverishment of the Japanese vocabulary. Such critical views on *katakanago* are considered to stem from the fear of losing Japaneseness (Hosokawa 2015), as the increase in loanwords is seen as the representation of increased foreign influence threatening the Japanese national identity.

This has resulted in the psychological demarcation between *kanji* (along with *hiragana*) as Japanese and *katakana* as foreign (Loveday 1996: 48), despite the fact that all the three script types combine to create the Japanese orthographic system. It recently attracted the attention and criticism of the mass media that under the current Japanese family registration (*koseki*) system, the names of non-Japanese nationals, even if they were born in

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understood in a narrow sense as referring to spatial proximity only, but broadly as a general term for various association in the spatial, temporal, or causal domain”.

<sup>3</sup> Examples include *ridayūsu* [reduce], from the general verb that means to make the quantity smaller, to the environmental term that means to reduce waste, or *reshipiento* [recipient], from a person to receive something, to a patient to receive organ transplantation (NINJAL 2006:187, 194).

Japan, are supposed to be registered in *katakana* (or *kanji*)<sup>4</sup>, which can be considered discrimination based on nationality. Apart from its nationalistic characteristics, this example shows strong mental associations between nationality and script type.

Furthermore, *katakana* is also associated with foreigners' speech and *katakana* is often used to transcribe into Japanese the speech of a foreigner<sup>5</sup>, or, in fictional settings, of a creature from outer space. This fact is often criticised by foreigners living in Japan or by students of Japanese, as it gives an impression that their Japanese sounds like a foreign language, very different from the Japanese spoken by the Japanese. On the other hand, when the Japanese speak non-fluent broken English or English with a strong Japanese accent, it is derided as *katakana eigo* (*katakana* English). Thus, in this case, broken English is associated with *katakana*, whereas fluent English is associated with the Roman alphabet. In both cases, the use of *katakana* can be linked with the inferiority complex of the Japanese, who on one hand feel the increasing dominance of English influence on their language, while on the other are not confident about their English, which at least partially explains the negative images associated with *katakana*, whether with *katakanago* (loanwords) or *katakana eigo* (bad English spoken by Japanese).

In such a context, the use of *katakana* for Japanese names and expressions can be seen as an antithesis of the conventional view on *katakana*, suggesting that Japanese words can be exported abroad, just like numerous English loanwords that we are witnessing in Japanese, and that *katakana* can thus be not only a sign of threat to the national identity but also a way by which to manifest Japanese identity. With rapid internationalisation, globalisation, the digitalisation of information, and shifts in the power structure of the world, many societies are experiencing identity crises and searching for new forms of expressing their identity. As part of such a global trend, the use of *katakana* for Japanese terms can be seen as a statement that Japanese society can be a source of global concepts and international influence.

Japanese linguistic identity has long been associated with *kanji* and *hiragana*, as well as each of the corresponding vocabulary types, *kango* (Sino-Japanese) and *yamatokotoba* (Japanese native words). In the same way, Japanese cultural identity is rooted in Buddhism, Shintoism and Confucianism. While these values remain important elements in the Japanese language and culture today, it is merely a partial representation of

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000011715.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> For example, see: <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASK4W66G8K4WUCVL01T.html>.

contemporary Japan and the country faces a two-fold challenge to its identity. On one hand, Japan's modern profile is, for the most part, not easily distinguished from that of Western societies, from which loanwords are flowing to Japan, while on the other hand, the rise of Japan's East Asian neighbours, such as China and Korea, which share common Buddhist and Confucian heritage, may undermine the distinctiveness of traditional Japanese values. From this point of view, writing Japanese terms in *katakana* can be seen as a response to the challenges to the future linguistic identity of Japan.

The shift of script type for Japanese words from *kanji* and *hiragana* to *katakana* can thus be interpreted as a shift of Japanese identity from that of a recipient and learner of concepts imported from abroad via loanwords to a producer and sender of new international concepts through its own words exported abroad. It can be understood as an antithetical response to the inferiority complex surrounding loanwords and *katakana* expressive of an identity crisis in contemporary Japan. From this point of view, *katakana* is not merely an indicator of the etymology of a word but also the graphical representation of its symbolic meaning and therefore its use should be regarded and examined as a manifestation of diverse messages and creativity.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has examined cases in which Japanese names, words and expressions are intentionally written in *katakana* against the general orthographic rule and its aim has been to see its implications for the linguistic and national identity of contemporary Japan. The analysis of extracts from news media, both printed and online, has revealed the fact that particular Japanese names and words tend to be written in *katakana* following common patterns. Whether it is the names of famous Japanese figures achieving success abroad, place names associated with a tragic history, or Japanese slogans made famous internationally, *katakana* is chosen to highlight the consciousness of eyes outside Japan looking in. One of the most obvious arguments to support this hypothesis is the frequent reference to the word *sekai no* [world-class] that accompanies names in *katakana*. Given the fact that *katakana* is mainly used for Western loanwords today and that the increase in the number of such loanwords has been a contentious issue, perceived as a threat to linguistic identity of Japan, the use of *katakana* for Japanese terms has important implications for Japanese identity. The long-held inferiority complex represented by words in *katakana* is now being transformed into

confidence, in line with the idea that loanwords can be Japanese. In other words, the Japanese word in *katakana* is a word re-translated into Japanese from an international context, and therefore a representation of ‘re-translated Japan’ that is a sender of international messages. This phenomenon is also important to study, as it shows the process in which Japanese terms are ‘de-semanticised’ and ‘re-semanticised’. First of all, they partially lose their original meaning, as *katakana* tends to highlight the phonetic element of speech. Secondly, they are re-defined as internationally relevant words through the association of *katakana* with the idea of ‘something foreign’. While the debates on the increase of *katakanago* as Western loanwords capture substantial attention both in the public and academic arena, this paper has thus shed light on a less discussed but increasingly important use of *katakana* to contribute to the understanding of the depth and complexity of script choice in Japanese.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Naoko Hosokawa**

Naoko Hosokawa is a Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellow at the European University Institute. She obtained a PhD in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford. She also holds an M.Sc. in International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science, an M.A. in Political Science from Columbia University, and a B.A. in Policy Management from Keio University. Her main fields of research are sociolinguistics and media discourse analysis related to the question of national and regional identity.



## Party System Fragmentation and Institutionalization: Japan's Party System in the 2010s

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.8

### ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the party system change at the level of Japan's national politics. The party system after the 1990s can be classified into three periods according to some indicators to measure party system change. The present party system in the 2010s is characterized by the LDP dominance and fragmentation and fluidity of opposition parties. It is called "Abe ikkyō politics (安倍一強政治)" which means the LDP dominance under Abe administration. At the final section of the paper the problem of party system fragmentation and ruling party dominance is argued referring to the theory of party system institutionalization and democratic consolidation.

**KEYWORDS:** Japanese politics, political party, party system, insitutionalization, democratic consolidation

### Introduction

The Abe administration started again in December 2012 lasts for more than seven years to the present<sup>1</sup>. It is exceptionally long in Japan's politics since the average years of an administration in post-war period has been approximately two and a half years and after 1993 in particular only one and a half. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) with the second Abe administration won three general elections (2012, 2014 and 2017) and was reelected in each of them. The LDP and its coalition partner the Clean Government Party (CGP) not only won the elections but also secured absolute majority (two-thirds) in the House of Representatives (HR). It is called "Abe ikkyō politics (安倍一強政治)", which means the LDP dominance under Abe administration.

Researchers of Japanese politics have analyzed and argued the reasons of Abe dominance. A group of analyses emphasizes centralized power of the

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<sup>1</sup> First Abe administration started in September 2006 was enmeshed in some scandals including cabinet ministers and resigned one year after. "Abe administration" in this paper refers to the second one.

Prime Minister (PM) and his office (Aoki and Nonaka 2016; Nakakita 2017: Ch. 3; Makiyama 2016: Ch. 2; Asakura 2016; Tasaki 2014). Some other researches focus on the failure of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) that was in power before the LDP and Abe came (back) to government in 2012 (Sunahara 2017; Maeda and Tsutsumi eds. 2015; Japan Rebuild Initiative ed. 2013). Although these are not studies on party system, there have already been analyses of the party system change in the 1990s and 2000s (Matoba 2012; Yamamoto 2010). However, these studies do not have enough theoretical implications of party institutionalization to develop the theories for comparative studies of politics.

In this study, I will analyze Japan's party system change since the 1990s, particularly in the 2010s<sup>2</sup>. From the analysis, I will lead theoretical implication of party institutionalization in comparative perspective. The paper is structured as follows. Firstly, some characteristics of party system change since 1993 will be analyzed. The party system after the 1993 general election can be classified into three periods according to some indicators to measure party system change. Then, in the second section, I will focus on the party system in the 2010s referring to the fragmentation of opposition parties that occurred in the latest general election held in October 2017. It will indicate the LDP and Abe administration dominance and also fragmentation and fluidity of opposition parties. In other words, the fragmentation of the opposition allows the LDP and Abe administration to be consolidated.

Thirdly, I will argue the problem of party fragmentation referring to party institutionalization theory that was usually argued for party politics in developing countries. As political scientists studying party politics in developing countries argued, weak institutionalization of party system that can often be seen in developing or newly democratized countries will harm democratic consolidation with making politics destabilize. They therefore argued that party system institutionalization is necessary for consolidating democracy. Although Japan is a developed and consolidated democratic country, the argument of party system institutionalization will shed light on the present situation and problem of Japan's politics and democracy

### **Party System since the 1990s: the Three Periods**

Japan's politics in the post-war era is called "the 1955 system", named so after the foundation of the LDP and of the Socialist Party of Japan (SPJ) in this year the LDP is twice larger than the largest opposition SPJ and it

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<sup>2</sup> I have published a paper analyzing party system change from the 1955 system to the one after the 1990s (Kanamaru 2009).

sustained government until 1993 for 38 years. The 1955 system ended in August 1993 when the LDP lost majority at the general election and eight parties formed a coalition government (Hosokawa administration). Although the anti-LDP government lasted only for eight months and LDP came back to government in coalition with the SPJ and a new party Sakigake, the party system in the Diet in this period was extremely in flux (Kanamaru 2009).

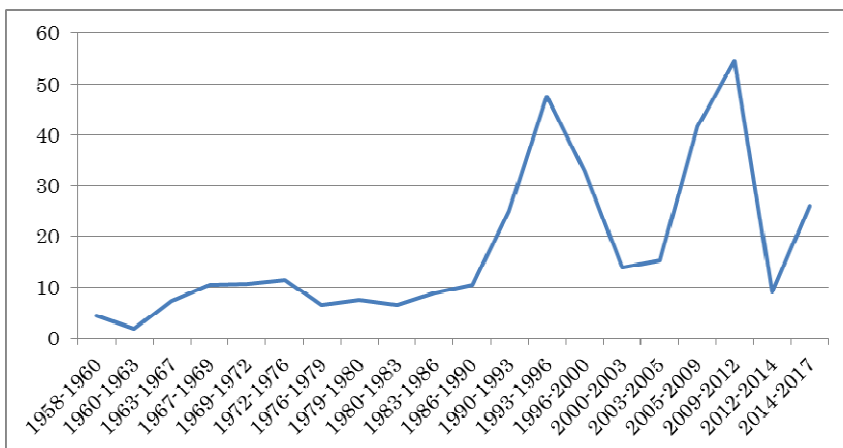


Figure 1.1: Change of electoral volatility index: 1958-2017

Source: Ishikawa 2004 (1958-2003) and Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Website on election related resources (2003-2017).

Party system stability in the 1955 system and instability in post-1955 system is clearly shown in the change of electoral volatility index (Pedersen 1979). The index shows how the number of seats each party wins has changed between two successive elections. The more seats each party wins have changed between elections, the higher the index goes up. Figure 1.1 shows the change of index since 1958 (the first general election after 1955) to 2017 (the latest general election). The index had been quite low and stable in the 1955-system era, while it increased steeply after 1993.

#### *Party System Change after the Breakdown of the 1955 System*

Although the party system after 1993 has been quite unstable in general, the change of party system is not always equal if you take a close look at the change of index during this period (Figure 1.2).

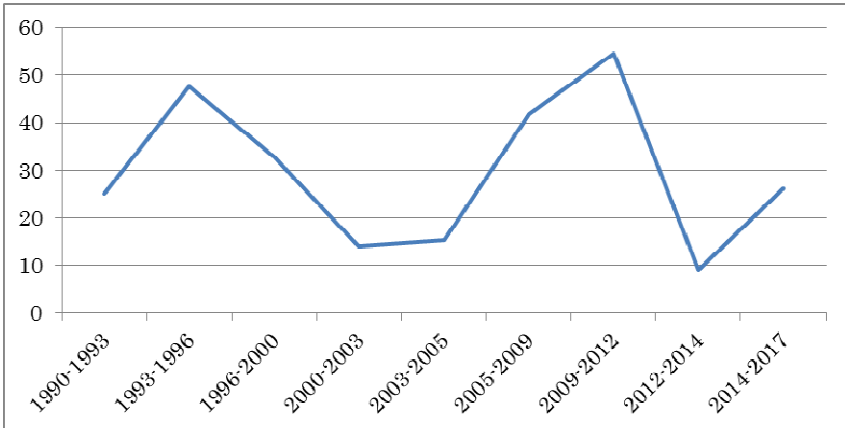


Figure 1.2: Change of electoral volatility index: 1993-2017

Source: Matoba 2012: Appendix 6 and 7 (1990-2005); Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Website on election related resources (2009-2017)

High instability of party seats in the 1990s is a result of new party formation in this period. Many parties were formed and distinguished in this period. Seats moved from an old party to the other new party is reflected in high electoral volatility in this period. High volatility, however, as shown in 2005-2009 and 2009-2012 elections, reflects a big swing from the LDP to DPJ and back again from the DPJ to LDP. In 2009 general election the DPJ won two thirds of total seats in the Lower House, although the LDP kept the same two thirds seats before. In the next election (2012), the LDP won two thirds again while the DPJ lost. These big swings in the 2009 and 2012 elections show quite high volatility in this period. In a period between these highly volatile elections, from 2000 to 2009, party system seems to be highly stable.

Electoral volatility index does not always show how fragmented a party system is. This parameter is indicated by fragmentation index, invented by Douglas Rae (1968)<sup>3</sup>. The higher the value (up to 1.0) is, the more fragmented a party system is. Figure 1.3 demonstrates the change of fragmentation index of the party system in the HR since 1993. It shows that the high values in the 1990s keep decreasing until 2009 and then rise in the 2010s.

<sup>3</sup> Fragmentation index (FI) is calculated by the formula:  $FI=1-\sum Si^2$ .  $Si$  represents the proportion of seats won by party  $i$ .

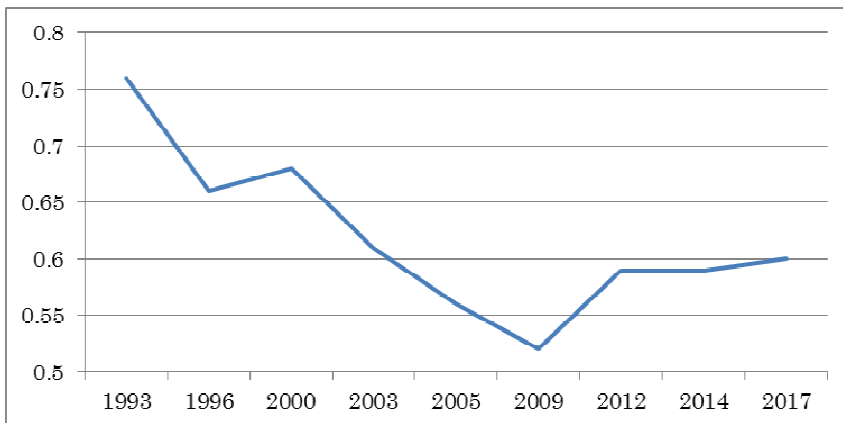


Figure 1.3: Fragmentation index: 1993-2017

Source: Matoba 2012: Appendix 6 and 7 (1990-2005); Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Website, Election related resources (2009-2017)

The change of party system can be seen in the other index, the effective number of parties index<sup>4</sup> invented by Laakso and Taagepera (1979), which “takes both the number and size of parties into account in order to give a more accurate depiction of a particular party system” (Reilly 2006: 126). This index in Japan’s HR since 1993 again demonstrates almost the same trend as fragmentation index (Figure 1.4). Throughout the 2000s, effective number of parties index gradually went down to two. This means that a two-party system was formed in this period.

<sup>4</sup> Effective number of parties (ENP) Index is calculated by the formula:  $ENP = 1 / \sum Si^2$ .  $Si$  represents the proportion of seats won by party  $i$ .

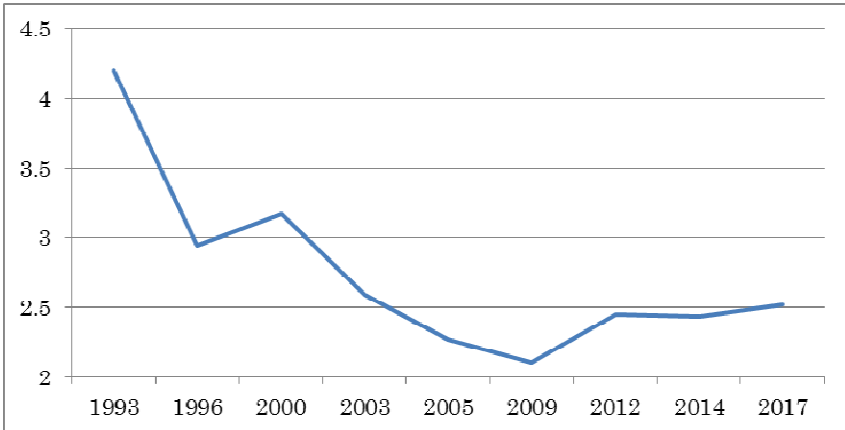


Figure 1.4: Effective Number of Parties index: 1993-2017

Source: Matoba 2012: Appendix 6 and 7 (1990-2005); Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Website on election related resources (2009-2017)

### *Three Periods of Japan's Party System since the 1990s*

According to the indices of party system change, the party system after the breakdown of the 1955 system can be classified into three periods: the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s.

#### *(1) Party System in the 1990s: 1993-2003*

In this period, three general elections were held (1993, 1996 and 2000). One of the outstanding features of the party system in this period is the fact that no party could achieve a majority. Even the LDP could win less than half of the total number of seats in the HR. This enabled the opposition to come to power after the 1993 general election, although there were as many as eight opposition parties. This is in contrast with the 1955 system. Another distinguishing feature of party system in this period is extreme fragmentation and fluidity of opposition parties. Although they could form a coalition government in 1993, it was too unstable to remain in power. After the breakdown of the Hosokawa coalition government, which lasted for eight months, a minority-coalition Hata administration started, lasting but two months. Ichirō Ozawa, who was the “kingmaker” of Hosokawa administration, amalgamated seven opposition parties to form the New Frontier Party (NFP) in order to challenge the LDP. The NFP was able to win 31.2 percent in the 1996 general election, while the LDP won 47.8 percent. The percentage of these two parties seemed to show a new two-

party system was formed. But the NFP consists of too various members to be sustainable. Then, in the next general election held in 2000, the NFP was dissolved and nine parties in total won seats in the HR.

Not only the opposition but also the governing parties were seriously unstable in this period. The LDP, the usual governing party, was broken down in 1993, and then they managed to come back to administration in 1995 to form a coalition with the SPJ, a former rival under the 1955 system. Since 1995, the LDP remained in administration with a coalition partner. After the 1996 general election, the LDP again formed a coalition with the SPJ and new party Sakigake. After that, the LDP exchanged its coalition partner with the Liberal Party (LP) and the CGP in 1999, with the CGP and the Conservative Party (CP) in 2000, and with the CGP in 2003.

### *(2) Party System in the 2000s: 2003-2012*

Three general elections were held in this period: in 2003, 2005 and 2009. Party system change in this period is characterized by the convergence of opposition parties and the formation of a two-party system. The LDP, however, consolidated under the leadership of PM Koizumi, and was supported by various strata of society including young people and urban dwellers. Opposition parties, on the other hand, were encouraged to converge and to become larger to be a countervailing power. In 2003, the Liberal Party led by Ozawa merged with the largest opposition DPJ in 2003. After the DPJ was defeated in the 2005 general election in a sweeping victory of the LDP led by Koizumi, the DPJ broadened its support when unpopular Abe, Fukuda and Asō administrations succeeded after Koizumi. Then, in the 2009 election, the DPJ won back about two-thirds of the total number of seats in the HR and took over from the LDP. The DPJ government was not stable. The administration changed every year, from the first Hatoyama administration to the third Noda administration. The DPJ government at last gave way to the LDP in the next general election held after Prime Minister Noda dissolved the HR in 2012.

### *(3) Party System in the 2010s: 2012 to present*

The third period starts with the LDP's landslide victory in the 2012 general election. The second Abe administration began with an absolute majority (two-thirds of total seats) by the LDP and CGP coalition and has lasted for more than five years. One distinguishing characteristic of the party system in this period is obviously a strong, stable and sustainable government by the LDP and CGP. Conversely, the opposition parties, including the DPJ,

were seriously fragmented and fluid in this period. Many opposition parties formed and disappeared in this period, and the fluidity has continued until the latest general election held in October 2017. The fragmentation of the opposition parties is the other feature of party system in this period. In the next section, the features of the party system in the 2010s will be analyzed in detail. The party system in each period is summarized in Table 1.1.

	Government	Opposition	
1990s	Fragmented	Fragmented	Weak government and weak opposition Overall unstable party system
2000s	Solid	Solid	(Forming) Two-party system Change of government (2009 and 2012 general election)
2010s	Solid	Fragmented	Strong government and weak opposition “Abe-Ikkyou” (The LDP and Abe dominance)

Table 1.1: Party fragmentation of governing and opposition parties

### **Party System in the 2010’s: LDP Dominance and Fragmentation of the Opposition Parties**

#### *The Abe Administration with the LDP Dominance*

One of the outstanding features of the party system since 2012 has been the LDP dominance in the Diet. Thanks to the Single Member District (SMD) majoritarian electoral system, the LDP swept to victory in every general election since 2012, and Prime Minister Abe has maintained his administration for more than five years until now. Although the LDP has a majority in the Diet, they formed a coalition with the CGP and dominate more than two thirds of the total number of seats in the Lower House, as presented in Table 2.1.



General Election	LDP	CGP	LDP+CGP
2012	61.3	6.5	67.8
2014	61.1	7.4	68.5
2017	60.4	6.2	66.6

Table 2.1: Percentage of seats in the HR: LDP, CGP and coalition

The absolute majority in the Diet enabled the government to pass some controversial bills listed in Table 2.2 (Makihara 2016: Ch. 2-3). The Abe administration steamrolled some controversial bills through the Diet, against a fierce opposition. The bills included many national security or defense issues that were so controversial or confrontational that the LDP governments in the 1955 system could not easily pass them in the Diet.

2013	Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets
2014	Change of Constitutional interpretation to allow the right to collective self-defense (decided by cabinet council)
2016	Security-related bills
2017	Conspiracy bill
In the near future?	Amendment of the Constitution

Table 2.2: Controversial Bills passed in Abe (second) Administration  
Source: Makihara 2016: Ch. 2-3.

Abe administration passed the controversial bills by means of centralized power of Prime Minister's office and an absolute majority in the Diet. That is the reason why it is called the politics of "Abe and the LDP dominance". On the other hand, the opposition's weakness is another factor that allows the LDP and Abe's dominant power.

### ***Fluidity and Fragmentation of Opposition Parties***

Another feature in this period is fragmentation and fluidity of opposition parties. It already began under the DPJ government. Before the 2009 election, Yoshimi Watanabe, Kenji Eda and other the LDP members and DPJ's Keiichirō Asao founded Your Party (みんなの党). In 2010, some previously LDP members, including Takeo Hiranuma, Kaoru Yosano and Shintarō Ishihara (Governor of Tokyo at that time) formed the Sunrise Party of Japan, and some LDP and DPJ members formed the Japan

Renaissance Party (改革クラブ), later renamed to New Renaissance Party (新党改革).

While in the years 2010-2011 new parties were formed mainly by the LDP members, in 2012 some DPJ members left to form new parties. The most serious example was fifty members of Ozawa group left the DPJ when they disagreed with Noda administration's proposal of Consumption Tax reform to raise its rate from eight to ten percent. The Ozawa group formed the Party of People's Life First (国民の生活が第一) in this year but the name was changed in several times and the membership was unstable (Maeda and Mori 2015: 249-257).

Only a few months before the 2012 general election was held in December, the Osaka Restoration Party (ORP 大阪維新の会), a local party led by Governor of Osaka prefecture and former famous attorney and TV commentator Tōru Hashimoto, formed a national party by the name of the Japan Restoration Party (JRP 日本維新の会) with seven Diet members of the LDP, DPJ and Your Party. A month later former Governor of Tokyo prefecture Ishihara and his party the Sunrise Party (太陽の党) joined the JRP (Yomiuri Shinbun ed. 2012: Ch. 4).

These cases of new party formation since 2009 show the reality of the opposition's fragmentation and fluidity that is more serious than some indicators (electoral volatility, fragmentation and effective number of parties index) revealed. In this period, about 30 parties appeared in the Diet as listed in List 2.1. An analysis reveals four patterns of forming new parties: 1) division – a split from a party, 2) a merger with another party/parties, 3) only a change of the name, and 4) the founding of a party by new members from outside the Diet. Incumbent members of the Diet (pattern 1, 2 and 3) formed most of the new parties. Only some are totally new parties formed by non-incumbent members of the Diet.

List 2. 1. List of parties formed in the 2010's  
2009 (1)

Your Party (みんなの党)

2010 (3)

Sunrise Party of Japan (たちあがれ日本)

Spirit of Japan Party (日本創新党)

New Renaissance Party (新党改革)

2011 (3)

Tomorrow Party of Japan (日本未来の党)

Daichi/ True Democratic Party (大地・真民主党)

Kizuna Party (新党きづな)

2012 (8)

New Party Daichi/ True Democrats (新党大地・真民主)

People's Life First (国民の生活が第一)

Japan Restoration Party (日本維新の会 (旧))

Sunrise Party (太陽の党)

Green Wind (みどりの党)

Tax Cuts Japan – Anti-TPP – Zero Nuclear Party (減税日本・反 TPP・脱原発を実現する党)

New Party Daichi (新党大地)

People's Life Party (生活の党)

2013 (1)

Unity Party (結いの党)

2014 (3)

Restoration Party (維新の党)

Party for Future Generations (次世代の党)

People's Life Party & Taro Yamamoto and Friends (生活の党と山本太郎となかまたち)

2015 (4)

Assembly to Energize Japan (日本を元気にする会)

OSAKA Restoration Party (おおさか維新の会)

Party for Caring Japanese Kokoro (日本のこころを大切にする党)

Vision of Reform (改革結集の会)

2016 (3)

Democratic Party (民進党)

Japan Restoration Party (日本維新の会 (新))

Liberal Party (自由党)

2017 (3)

Party for Japanese Kokoro (日本のこころ)

Party of Hope (希望の党)

Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (立憲民主党)

### *The 2017 General Election*

The 2017 general election again led to the creation of new parties. This process suddenly started when some newspapers reported on 21 Oct. that PM Abe had decided to dissolve the HR in the very near future. And this began opposition parties' fragmentation. More than a year before, Koike

Yuriko, who was a LDP Diet member, left the party to run Tokyo gubernatorial election, held in July 2016. With her personal popularity, she won the election as an independent candidate against the LDP candidate and became the Governor of Tokyo. A few months later, she founded a new local party – the Tokyo Citizen First Party (CFP 都民ファーストの会) to take part in Tokyo Prefectural Assembly election in the following year. At the Assembly election held in July 2017, the CFP won a sweeping victory against the LDP and CGP, which showed her popularity and the strength of her party.

A month before the 2017 election, on 25 Sept., Koike by herself announced at a press conference the foundation of the new Party of Hope (PoH 希望の党) to stand for general election. The announcement was only several hours before PM Abe announced at a press conference the dissolution of the HR. As soon as Koike and some of the HR member formed the PoH, other opposition members began to join it because her popularity was expected to help them to win seats. One of the opposition members was Seiji Maehara, the president of the largest opposition party, the Democratic Party (DP 民進党). He had a meeting with Koike on Sept. 26th and agreed for the DP and the PoH to merge. On the day the HR dissolved, the general assembly of the DP members of the Diet approved the dissolution of the party and its members would stand for election under the PoH (*Asahi Shinbun*, 29, Sep. 2017). On the other hand, Koike declared that she was not going to accept all the members of the DP, and excluded some members who did not differ ideologically. This “exclusion statement” moved some members of the DP to form another new party, the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP 立憲民主党), headed by Edano Yukio, previously a chief secretary of the DPJ (*Asahi Shinbun*, 3, October 2017). Some other members of the DP participated in the general election independently and members of the House of Councilors remained in the DP.

Party formations that took place around the 2017 general election are shown in Figure 2.1. As indicated in this figure, four patterns of new party formation can be seen in this series of events. The first pattern, division, occurred dramatically when the DP’s leader Maehara decided to merge his party with the PoH. Some members of the DP, excluded by the PoH, formed the CDP. As a result, the DP divided into four parts: the members 1) who went into the PoH, 2) who formed the CDP, 3) who remained to the DP, and 4) who became independent. Before that some members went out from the JRP to join the DP. This is also a case of a split of a party. The second pattern, a merger, usually coincides with a split. Many DP members

joined the PoH when they left the DP. The case that the JRP members joined the DP is another case.

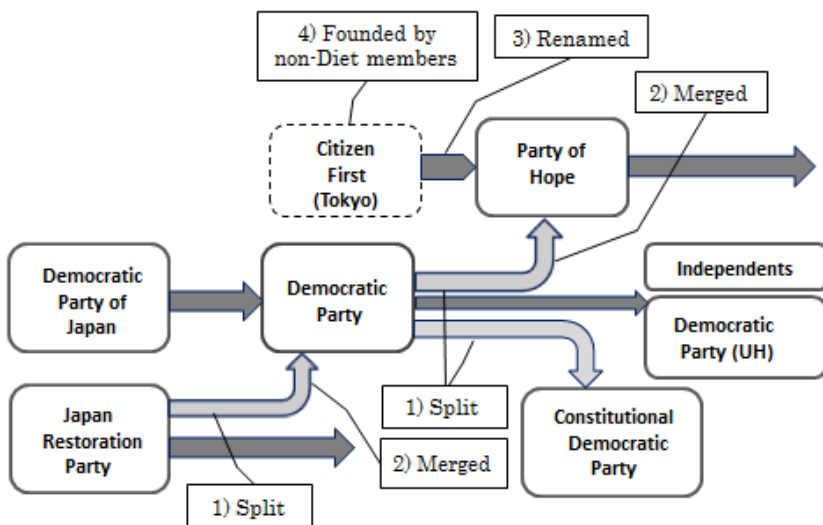


Figure 2.1. New party formation at the 2017 general election

Thirdly, the CFP is a party newly formed by the Governor of Tokyo, Koike, to take part in prefectural assembly election. Thanks to Koike's popularity, the new party won the election and many new members won seats in the assembly. Koike aimed to win the general election in order to form a new party, PoH, after the CFP's success in the Tokyo assembly election. Almost the same thing happened in Osaka in 2008. After a popular TV commentator and lawyer, Hashimoto Toru won the gubernatorial election in Osaka prefecture, he formed a new party, the Osaka Restoration Party, to participate in the prefectural assembly election. He intended to control the assembly through the party, and then succeeded in winning the election. It seems easier for local parties to win the assembly election rather than national elections for two institutional reasons. One reason is that Japan's local politics is a presidential system, and the other – the fact that local assembly elections are held under the Single Non-transferable Vote (SNTV) system that resembles to the proportional representation in its effect to give advantage to small and new parties (Sunahara 2017). These

institutional reasons enabled Tokyo's Koike and Osaka's Hashimoto to succeed in their new parties at the local level but not at the national level. The fourth and final pattern can be observed in the formation of the PoH and to some extent in the name change from the DPJ to DP (since some members joined the DP from JRP).

## **Party System Institutionalization and Democracy**

### *Party System Institutionalization of Japan's Post 1995 System*

Japan's party system in the 2010s is characterized on the one hand by a dominant, powerful and stable government, and by fluid, fragmented and unstable opposition on the other. While the governing parties, the LDP and the CGP, have gained absolute majority in every general election since 2012 and Abe administration is continued, opposition parties have been desperately fragmented and fluid in this period. In sum, the LDP's dominance and fragmentation of opposition are two sides of the same coin. The reasons why the LDP and Abe's dominance is successfully maintained are variously analyzed by researchers, as outlined in the introduction.

What, then, will be the problem for party system fluidity and fragmentation? Many developing countries including those from Asia, Africa and former Communist countries, were democratized in the 1990s and afterwards, but many of them were led into political instability, ethnic conflict, civil war or an authoritarian regime. Introducing free election with a multi-party competition did not always help to consolidate democracy and stabilize party politics. Political scientists studying party politics in developing countries, therefore, argued that *institutionalization* of the party system and party organization would be significant for newly democratized countries to achieve these objectives.

In a frequently cited article, Scott Mainwaring, specializing in party politics in Latin America, identified four dimensions of party system institutionalization (Mainwaring 1998: 69-70).

- 1) Stability in Patterns of Interparty Competition
- 2) Party Roots in Society
- 3) Legitimacy of Parties and Election
- 4) Party Organization

These points are applicable to Japan's party system in the 1990s and to the opposition parties in the 2010s. Firstly, electoral volatility is obviously high in the general election held in the 1990s and then in the 2010s, as we saw in Figure 1.2. Secondly, party and society relations have weakened since the 1980s not only for the opposition but also for the LDP. On the one hand, this is shown in the volatility of party support, as mentioned

above. On the other, the relations with intermediate groups like business groups, labor unions, local communities or individual support groups have weakened. Although the support base for the LDP is relatively deep and solid compared with that of the DPJ and other opposition parties, the organization of their supporters, especially *Kōenkai* and interest groups, have deteriorated in comparison with the ones under the 1955 system (Sugawara 2009).

The third point does not fit Japan's case since the history of democratic practice is longer there than in newly democratized developing countries. But the seriously decreasing level of voter turnout casts doubt on the electoral and democratic legitimacy. Decline of voter turnout is a problem of Japan's politics as in other advanced democratic countries. The declining trend can be seen in Figure 3.1 that plots the average voter turnout of general elections held in successive ten years since the 1950s. The average turnout began to decline in the 1990s and steeply dropped in the 2010s.

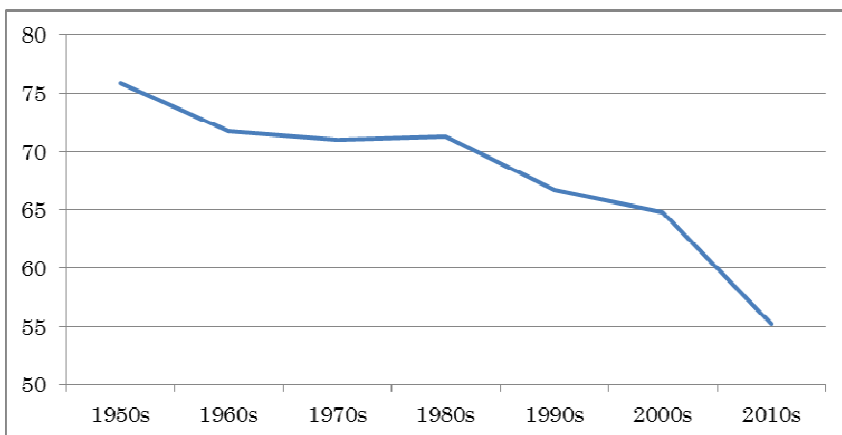


Figure 3.1: General Trend of Voter Turnout: the 1950s-2010s

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Website on Election related resources

Interestingly, a closer look at the change of voter turnout since 1990s reveals the fact that voter turnout moves inversely to the fluidity of party system shown in Figures 1.1 to 1.3. In the 1990s, when the party system was seriously fragmented for both the government and the opposition, voter turnouts were relatively low. In 2005 and 2009, however, when the two-party system was consolidated, the turnout was high. Conversely, in

the years 2012-2017, the turnout declined again when the opposition parties became fragmented.

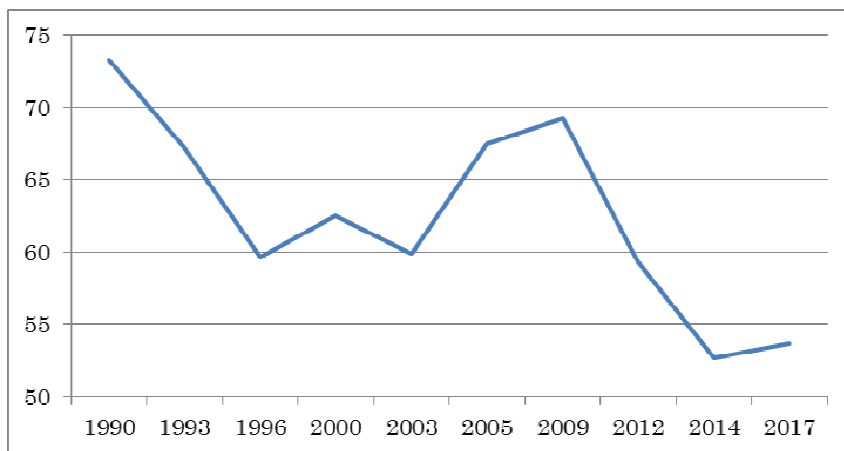


Figure 3.2: Voter Turnout of General Elections: 1990-2017

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Website on Election related resources

The change of voter turnout seems to be influenced by party system fragmentation. In fact, in the latest general election, held in 2017, it was often reported that opposition parties were too fragmented and most of them were too new for voters to support. Conversely, in 2009 general election when the DPJ was consolidated to be a challenger to the LDP, voters were excited to change government by their votes for the first time since the 1955 system was broken. It can be supposed that voters cannot decide for which party to vote, nor do they recognize the new parties when the party system is too fluid and many parties are born and disappear.

Finally, newly formed opposition parties have quite weak or no organization. Moreover, a weakly organized opposition party is often dependent for support on the popularity of the leader. A detailed analysis of new parties formed in the 1990s found that each party had weak organization (Kabashima ed. 1998). Political scientists have already published many analyses of the DPJ and its administration (Uekami and Tsutsumi eds. 2011; Mikuriya ed. 2012). Most of the analyses of the DPJ indicated the weakness of the organization. A joint research project led by Maeda and Tsutsumi, in particular, emphasizes that the (Diet) members of



the party were too diverse in their ideology, policy preferences and origins to integrate to form a solid organization.

On the dimension of party organization, Mainwaring specifically argued about *personal parties*. A personal party is characterized by the presence of a strong (sometimes charismatic) leader and direct support to the leader without an institutionalized organization. As he wrote, in numerous developing countries “many parties are little more than personalistic vehicles for their leading figures” and “in more institutionalized systems, the party is not subordinate to the leader” (Mainwaring 1998: 77-78). This means that party system instability is often led by personal parties.

Two types of personal parties can be seen in developing countries (Kanamaru 2014): the large personal party and the small personal party. Large personal parties win massive support in election and sometimes gain power by virtue of personal popularity of their leader. They can be seen in the presidential system since a popular president forms their own party to win parliamentary election. In the parliamentary system, however, large personal parties emerge and take control in parliament. One of the typical cases is Thaksin in Thailand, who won a parliamentary election and seized power with his personal party, the Thai Rak Thai Party. Small personal parties can often be observed in the elections that were held soon after democratization. In the early elections held after the newly introduced multiparty system, innumerable influential individuals form parties to stand for election. As often said in the Philippines, the “one person, one party” situation is usually observed in developing countries.

In Japan in the 2010s, the ORP in Osaka was Governor Hashimoto’s personal party and the CFP in Tokyo was a personal party of Governor Koike. Hashimoto’s ORP tried to organize a national party in the Diet by merging with the Sunrise Party but it was not successful. In the 2017 general election again Koike attempted to form a national party, the PoH, accepting some members from the DP, and she could not succeed either. These cases show that it is easier for personal parties to succeed in the presidential than in the parliamentary system.

When we take a close look at the case of Koike’s CFP and PoH, the CFP at the time of Assembly election was heavily dependent on her popularity and the organization was not institutionalized at all. The party was, in fact, Koike’s personal party. When the 2017 election was announced, Koike declared the creation of the PoH at a press conference, saying “*I myself found the new party.*” In fact, two career Diet members, Wakasa (previously a LDP member) and Hosono (a DP member) had been preparing to build a new party for her. This indicated that Koike took the

process to build a party away from Wakasa and Hosono, and then she herself created the new party. The press conference symbolizes that the PoH is obviously Koike's personal party and the party did not have official organization, a party platform or other official rules.

*Party System Institutionalization and Democracy*

The reason why political scientists emphasize the significance of party system institutionalization is that it is necessary for consolidating democracy, particularly in developing and newly democratized countries. Why, then, is party system institutionalization necessary for consolidating democracy? Mainwaring and Torcal pointed out that weak institutionalization leads to uncertainty of electoral outcomes and undermines electoral accountability. They wrote:

“In contexts where parties disappear and appear with frequency, where the competition among them is ideologically and programmatically diffuse, and where personalities often overshadow parties as routes to executive power, the prospects for effective electoral accountability suffer.” (Mainwaring and Torcal 2005: 25-6)

In sum, electoral accountability is the essence of democracy. Weak institutionalization undermines democracy by damaging electoral accountability.

Then, political scientists studying developing countries emphasize how instability of party system leads to instability of the politics itself and undermines the legitimacy of electoral politics and democracy. Some of the developing countries that introduced multi-party free election suffered from serious instability of politics, conflicts or a civil war (Mansfield and Snyder 2005), difficulty in peace building (Paris 2004), and underdevelopment (Collier 2009). Some of the countries that experienced political instability after introducing free election reverted to authoritarianism. These cases show that attempts at democracy combined with a weakly institutionalized party system damage the legitimacy of free election and democracy itself. Although it is difficult to imagine that civil war and serious political conflict will arise in Japan, it is possible that the legitimacy of election and liberal democracy will be undermined in Japan's politics. As seen before, the undermining of electoral and democratic legitimacy can already be observed in the serious decline in voter turnout.

Finally, the danger of “populism” against democracy that is often argued in Japan and other Western democracies seems to be a result of weak institutionalization. A personal party, in general, is one of the results of weak institutionalization of a party system, as Mainwaring and others argued. Personal parties are mostly dependent on their leaders’ popularity, have weak or no organization, and are often identified with “populism”. Hashimoto and Koike have been called populist politicians and some researchers analyzed their political style as “populism” (Arima 2017; Matsutani 2010). Populism itself has both positive and negative effects for democracy, as Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017) indicated. They identified four negative effects of populism on democracy: 1) circumventing minority rights, 2) eroding the institution to protect fundamental rights, 3) establishing a new political cleavage, and 4) making agreement difficult by moralizing politics. Some populist parties in Western Europe have succeeded at the national politics, which is perceived as the crisis of democracy, with an emphasis on these negative effects. The negative effects seem to apply to Japan’s personal parties as well.

### **Conclusion**

Political reform carried out in the middle of the 1990s, particularly the electoral system reform, aimed to form party-centered politics or party competition by a two-party system to enable governmental change. After a turbulence of party system fragmentation in the 1990s, the two-party system was being formed gradually until the 2000s, and in 2009, at last, the DPJ could defeat the LDP to form a government. Although the DPJ could win electoral support at that time, it could not consolidate its organization and support base, as many researchers have observed. In other words, it was not successfully *institutionalized*. The failure of institutionalization of the opposition – not only in the case of the DPJ but of all the other opposition parties – led the fluid and fragmented opposition in the 2010s. In addition, it allowed the LDP dominance again.

From the perspective of comparative politics, party competition with free election is necessary, but it is not enough to consolidate democratic party politics. Not only party competition but also party system *institutionalization* is necessary for democracy. The conclusion from the analysis of Japan’s party system fluidity since the 1990s is that party institutionalization for both government and opposition is necessary for democracy. Analyzing closely the 2010s party system in Japan, opposition fragmentation caused by weak institutionalization enables Abe administration and LDP dominance. Abe and LDP dominance is often

criticized for its steamroller and nationalistic ideology. However, the problem in Japan's politics is not only connected with Abe and LDP dominance but there is also a more serious problem with weak institutionalization of opposition, because party system institutionalization is necessary for electoral legitimacy, democratic accountability and consolidating the democratic regime.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Yuji Kanamaru**

Ph. D in Law (Kyushu University).

Professor, Department of Global Studies, Faculty of Global Studies,  
Wayo Women's University.

Speciality: political science, comparative politics, development studies.



Justyna Weronika Kasza  
ORCID: 0000-0001-8869-9474

## ***Sekai wa bungaku de dekite iru: Teaching Japanese Literature as World Literature*<sup>1</sup>**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.9

### **ABSTRACT**

In his seminal study, *Sekai wa bungaku de dekite iru* ('the world is made of literature'), Numano Mitsuyoshi reconsiders the grounds for comparison of diverse literary traditions as well as the position of Japanese literature within the "world literature" scholarship.

This paper is inspired by the conviction that, as Numano claims, "the world is made of literature" but, at the same time, it aims to disclose a number of challenges and obstacles that might occur when Japanese texts are to be read and taught beyond their linguistic or cultural boundaries.

The objective of the project is to reassess the applicability of "world literature" discourse in teaching Japanese literature courses at the university level. The focal points under consideration here are the methodology, the potential reading lists and the assessment criteria.

The rationale behind this distinctive approach that departs from a predominantly historical development of literary tradition and does not emphasise the singularity of the Japanese literature, is founded on the belief expressed by Zhang Longxi that "world literature provides a welcome opportunity to return to the reading of literature on a much larger scale" and on David Damrosch's perception of literature as "great conversations among works grouped in an ideal simultaneity". The paper intends to re-evaluate the pedagogical benefits of world literature as a complementary course to the existing modules within the Japanese Studies and aims to establish its cognitive functions as an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, cross-national and transnational outlook on the canon of the Japanese literature in the globalized world.

**KEYWORDS:** Japanese literature, world literature, Global Age, cross-cultural communication, distant reading

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a revised version of the paper presented at the International Conference: *Problems and Perspectives for Japan in a Changing World: Thirty Years of Japanese Studies*, Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU), Poznan, Poland, 7-9 December 2017.

“[...] the highest accomplishment of a people is to transform as much as possible of its national history into world history, its private people’s myth into world myth. What ultimately counts are the spiritual values a single nation can offer humanity as a whole.”  
Stefan Zweig, *History as Poetess*

### **Introduction: The Relevance of *sekai bungaku***

As we celebrate thirty years of Japanese Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and reconsider the problems and perspectives for Japan in a changing world, we undertake multiple tasks of reconsidering not only the position and status of Japan in a globalized world but also the challenges that lie ahead for the existing scholarship within the Japanese or broadly understood Oriental Studies.

The challenges we face in the academia could be identified as the consequences of two major factors observed in recent years: the weakening position of the humanities (with the closure of a number of departments, also in Japan)<sup>2</sup> and the decreasing number of language courses in higher education. However, with regard to these tendencies, Japanese has secured a relatively privileged position as one of the most popular languages taught at universities<sup>3</sup>. While it is not my intention to make further comments or to elaborate on statistics, a thorough consideration on how these tendencies affect (or may affect) the entire curriculum of the Japanese Studies in the future should become a necessity. Regardless of the numbers, it is still reasonable to ask: Are we offering students enough? Are we providing them with expertise, and do we make sure that they are equipped with the skills that meet the requirements of the present-day job market? Furthermore, what could the courses we teach, the methodology we apply, or the dissertations we supervise reveal or tell us about the status of the Japanese Studies? Thus, my curiosity lies in the subject matter that by far exceeds the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, if I were to keep it short and put it in one sentence, it would take a form of the question: how do we, scholars in the Japanese studies, participate in a globalized world? How does our research address the issues of contemporaneity?

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<sup>2</sup> For more details see the website of World University Rankings: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/social-sciences-and-humanities-faculties-close-japan-after-ministerial-intervention> and the *Japan Today* article: <https://japantoday.com/category/national/are-national-universities-getting-rid-of-their-humanities-departments>.

<sup>3</sup> According to the latest figures in the report prepared by Modern Languages Association show the staggering decrees by 7.8% in enrolment for the Japanese language courses in the United States alone and similar changes have been observed by British Council regarding the United Kingdom.

The main objective of this paper is to assess the applicability of the world literature framework to the reading and teaching of Japanese literature modules at the university level. The approach adopted here is based predominantly on observations, class performances, student-led-presentations and the learning outcomes involving both undergraduate and graduate students. To teach literary texts comparatively is to appreciate how people from different cultures act, communicate and perceive the world, but first and foremost, to examine how literature engages in social, political or ethical issues by addressing the problems of language, nation, ethnicity, gender, or the minorities (to mention just a few). Students are encouraged to use their analytical and language skills that shed light on the structures and functioning of a wide range of discursive practices shaping both individuals and cultures. In addition, world literature offers the development of a wealth of transferable skills and teaches how to apply various interdisciplinary research methods: literary criticism, social sciences, anthropology, cultural studies, linguistics (philology), and translation studies. However, as much as diversity of disciplinary and critical approaches within the world literature studies may enrich academic discourse, creating a comprehensible curriculum designed specifically for Japanese studies may remain challenging. Theoretical approaches to teaching courses in Japanese studies have not attracted much attention. An interesting comment on this issue was made by the editors of *Teaching Japanese Popular Culture*, who observed that ‘[...] pedagogical scholarship has not been a priority in Japanese studies because of the way the tenure system ranks and rewards different types of academic publishing. Publications on pedagogy simply do not count for much in most universities’ system, apart from language teaching.’ (Shamoon and McMorran 2016: 3-4).

Therefore, not surprisingly, this paper discusses a range of pathways and strategies aimed to redesign the paradigms of thinking about Japanese literature and to explore it within the framework, of what I term, *cross-cultural communication through world literature*. My interest lies in presenting a reasonably comprehensive overview of a tentative curriculum that would coincide with the recent development of a transdisciplinary approach in the East Asian Studies, targeting a wider audience and, where applicable, meeting the demands of the current job market in arts and humanities.

*Sekai wa bungaku de dekite iru* 『世界は文学でできている』 – the title of the paper – was borrowed from Numano Mitsuyoshi’s 沼野充義

seminal multivolume work that has become a significant point of departure and a point of reference for my discussion. Numano deliberates on Japan's position on the world's literary map; he searches for its transnational and transcultural dimension and recreates the process of Japan's becoming a part of *sekai bungaku* since the Meiji period or, more recently, a part of *gurōbaru bungaku* グローバル文学<sup>4</sup>, re-evaluating “grounds for comparisons” between diverse literary traditions. His research has significantly contributed to the existing comparative as well as translation and culture studies in Japan. The book was published in three separate volumes with slight changes made to the titles: *Yappari sekai wa bungaku de dekite iru* 『やっぱり世界は文学でできている』 (Still, the World Is Made of Literature), and *Soredemo sekai wa bungaku de dekite iru* 『それでも世界は文学でできている』 (Nevertheless, the World Is Made of Literature). These were followed by *8 sai kara 80 sai made no sekai bungaku nyūmon* 『8歳から80歳までの世界文学入門』 (The Introduction to World Literature from Eight to Eighty Years Old), published in 2016, and 『つまり、読書は冒険だ』 in 2017 (In Other Words, Reading and Writing is Fun). The volumes consist of interviews with prominent Japanese writers and critics, including Ogawa Yōko 小川洋子, Ikezawa Natsuki 池澤夏樹, Ono Masatsugu 小野正嗣, Kawakami Hiromi 川上弘美, Aoyama Minami 青山南, and the translator, Michael Emmerich.

Numano's approach to Japanese literature consists in reinventing the notions of the national versus the foreign and perceiving “otherness and inclusiveness” as an immanent feature of every single literary text regardless of its cultural or linguistic background. This, in turn, corresponds with Pascale Casanova's view that treats literature as a coherent entity. As she remarks in *The World Republic of Letters*,

“The persistent tendency of critics to isolate texts from one another prevents them from seeing in its entirety the configuration [...] to

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<sup>4</sup> With regards to a commonly used term *gurōbaru* グローバル ‘global’, it replaced the previously used *kokusai* 国際 ‘international’. As much as *gurōbaru bungaku* ‘global literature’ may still not be commonly used, there are other connotations: *gurōbaruka* グローバル化 ‘globalization’, *gurōbaru jidai* グローバル時代 ‘the age of globalization, global age’ and even *gurōbaruujin* グローバル人 ‘a global person’.

which all texts belong; that is, the totality of texts and literary and aesthetic debates with which a particular work of literature enters into relation and resonance, and which forms the true basis for its singularity, its real originality [...]. Each work that is declared to be literary is a minute part of the immense »combination« constituted by world as a whole.” (Casanova 2013: 3)

As an advocate of comparative, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approach to literary studies, I believe that world literature provides an insight into world’s changing and colliding cultures and becomes a medium for intercultural communication. It addresses the notions of diversity, plurality, multiplicity<sup>5</sup>. Although often criticised for not having a clearly delineated theoretical framework, or even for its lack of methodology, and for being too speculative with some of the findings unsubstantiated or not textually evident enough, its flexibility undoubtedly opens the possibility for more comprehensive, wide ranging and multidimensional outlook on literary studies and humanities in general<sup>6</sup>. Let us first scrutinise some methodological and terminological issues pertinent to world literature in order to accurately measure its applicability and relevance to Japanese or East Asian Studies.

The term *Weltliteratur* (world literature) was coined by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who in 1827 stated that: ‘National literature is now a rather unmeaning term; the epoch of world literature is at hand, and everyone must strive to hasten its approach.’<sup>7</sup> (Damrosch 2003: 1).

Continuing the legacy of Goethe, Milan Kundera in his essay *Die Weltliteratur* elaborates on the term and argues that it is necessary to perceive “literatures in the plural.” (Kundera 2008: 36). The Czech writer

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<sup>5</sup> An important issue is the interdependence and theoretical relationship between world literature and postcolonial studies. This refers to the method of exploring the ambiguous notion of “world”, the relation to Other, inequality of cultures, as well as canon-formation processes. The studies that offer a deep examination of these two cognitive perspectives are, for example, Homi Bhabha’s *Location of Culture and Nation and Narration*. Most recent studies that contribute to the debate are Pheng Cheah. 2016. *What Is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*. Durham: Duke UP and Aamir R. Mufti. 2016. *Forget English! Orientalism and World Literatures*. Cambridge, Massachusetts. Harvard University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Holmes introduces the concept of “limit” and claims that “understanding world literature as the limit allows literary texts and theory to be read as an event of thinking that is in - progress, in-common an incomplete, an analogue to the necessary impossibility of knowing the world”. Holmes offers a methodology that frees world literature from expectations of coverage and classifications and revitalizes the term as a call to engage the literary text as thinking with rather of the world. Christopher Holmes “The Limits of World Literature.” *Literature Compass* 13/9 (2016), 572-584.

<sup>7</sup> Above quotation from Damrosch, D. 2003. *What is World Literature*.

(notably in French, his language of choice) endorses the “distant reading” for, according to Kundera “[...] the geographic distance sets the observer back from the local context and allows him to embrace the large context of world literature, the only approach that can bring out a novel’s aesthetic value – that is to say: the previously unseen aspects of existence that this particular novel has managed to make clear; the novelty of form it has found.” (Ibid.)

Following this line of thinking, and focusing on the notion of ‘distant reading’, David Damrosch maintains that:

“[...] reading a work from a distant time or place involves back-and forth movement between familiar and unfamiliar [...] a view of the world is always a view from wherever the observer is standing and we read through our experience of what we have read in the past [...] reading our way, beyond our home tradition involves a more pronounced revision of the part-whole dilemma of hermeneutic circle that we already encounter in a single tradition.” (Damrosch 2009: 3)

In *Teaching World Literature*, Damrosch points out how the course ‘can emphasise the gradual unfolding of a classical tradition, but the presentation of world masterpieces can equally take the form of multipolar “great conversations” among works grouped in an ideal simultaneity.’ He concludes his remarks by defining world literature as ‘a set of windows on the world’ and encourages teachers and course instructors to broaden ‘their focus to include intriguing conjunctions of compelling works of many origins’ (Damrosch 2009: 5).

The pedagogical values of studying ‘literary cultures’ have been endorsed by Anders Pettersson, who, in the Introduction to *Literary History: Towards a Global Perspective*, explains the necessity of incorporating literary texts into cross-cultural studies:

“[...] there must obviously also be room for many other kinds of transcultural studies of literature in a broad temporal and geographical perspective. It would arguably be a good thing if literary studies could advance a clearer view of literary cultures of the world and make them, and their mutual relationships, more comprehensible, to students of literature and to a wide audience [...]

Transcultural literary competence is also of value for purely scholarly and critical purposes. Much as our knowledge of the map of the world gives a perspective on our location in space, some knowledge of the world history of literature will undoubtedly help students of literature to orientate themselves regardless of their specialities.” (Pettersson 2006: 2)

At the same time, he points to a number of obstacles, even challenges, that need to be taken into account when implementing “world literature approach” to cross-cultural studies. Pettersson suggests that:

“If one wishes to engage in transcultural literary studies, one has every reason to reflect on world histories of literature and on the problem associated with them. Transcultural literary investigations must of necessity negotiate many of the problems that surface with special, pedagogically rewarding acuteness in the transcultural historical studies that are widest in scope: world histories of literature.” (ibid: 5)

J. Hillis Miller, co-author of *Thinking Literature Across Continents*, similarly emphasises the challenges in teaching world literature classes, and specifies three reasons for pedagogical concerns. These, according to Miller, are “translation, representation and the notion of literature”. In other words: “in what language to read the texts of world literature”, “how to select the most representative texts (to avoid the biased selection), and finally “different conceptions of literature across time, places, cultures”. Miller argues that:

“Teachers of world literature and editors of textbooks on world literature still need to decide, however, which works to help circulate and get read. Such experts also need to decide what to tell students about a work from a culture that is different from their own [...] The challenges to world literature I have identified do mean, however, that one should not exaggerate the degree to which courses in world literature are any more than a valuable first step toward giving students knowledge of literatures and cultures from all corners of the earth.” (Miller 2016: 140-142)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Above quotations are from Miller’s chapter ‘Globalization and World Literature’ (134-152). He also explores the pedagogy of world literature in further chapter ‘Should We Read or Teach Literature Now?’ (177-203).

As I intend to demonstrate in the next section, teaching Japanese literature as world literature consists in “simultaneous” or “synchronized reading”, which, from the pedagogical point of view, requires a justified decision when it comes to module reading list. One of the most problematic aspects of such an approach is to what extent reading in translation (considering that, in accordance with the definition proposed by Damrosch, ‘literary texts gain in translation’) remains compatible with course objectives. Maruya Saiichi 丸山才一, one of the most influential post-war Japanese critics and intellectuals, considered the practice of simultaneous reading of world literary texts in relation to ‘coming into being’ of what he terms *gurēto noweru* グレート・ノベル ‘great novelistic tradition’.

“It seems to me that there is no other way of looking at modern Japanese literature as the imitation of the eighteenth-century French and British novels, followed by the entire nineteenth century European literature (...) However, the literary tradition of Japan is amazingly longer than in Europe. I mean, for example, *Genji monogatari* ... Or the way *Genji monogatari* is written. If we were to apply features of European novel, we will be able to discover Murasaki’s novel anew. I wonder if it would be possible to call it *gurēto japanīzu noweru*, however ridiculous it sounds. But if we look at this issue deeply, we notice that there is a strong connection between translations modern or contemporary Western novel into Japanese and *Genji monogatari*. Today the number of readers who read *Genji monogatari*, those who read Fitzgerald in Murakami Haruki’s translation, or Chandler gradually increase. For me the question is what happens then.”<sup>9</sup> (Maruya 2015: 52-53)

The above standpoint raises an important methodological but also pedagogical question, notably whether we are required to take into consideration the linguistic background of the text. Gayatri Spivak (the author of *Death of a Discipline*), stresses the importance of area studies

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<sup>9</sup> An interesting evaluation of the translational dimension of modern Japanese literature is given by Aoyama Minami 青山南, translator of American literature, in his book *Eigo ni natta Nippon shōsetsu* 『英語になったニッポン小説』 (The Japanese Novel that Became English). Aoyama traces how the expansion of Japanese literature in English language translation since 1980s has significantly changed the notions of ‘national language’ *kokugo* 国語 and Japanese national literature *Nihon bungaku* 日本文学).



and language as she proposes that the comparatist pays attention to area studies and the linguistic conditions (language) of the literary texts.

While the above dilemma might be solved, it does not diminish the significance of the question: to whom does world literature belong? The adjective *global* – the word that conditions the validity of world literature – was challenged by Adam Kirsch in his study *The Global Novel: Writing the World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. He claims that ‘global literature requires translation, “[b]ut is translation a valid form of interpretation, or does it obscure more than it reveals? Does the hegemony of English threaten the diversity of literatures and cultures?’ Kirsch provides a thorough assessment of the keywords *world/global literature* and states that,

“[...] the question of whether world literature can exist – in particular, whether the novel, the preeminent modern genre of exploration and explanation, can be »global« – is another way of asking whether a meaningfully global consciousness can exist. Perhaps the answer is already suggested by the question: It is only because we have grown to think of humanity on a planetary scale that we start to demand a literature equally comprehensive. The novel is already implicitly global as soon as it starts to speculate on or record of human beings in the twenty-first century. Global novels are those that make this dimension explicit.” (Kirsch 2016: 12)

With regard to the above definition, I believe that it is still justified to ask: how to tackle the notion of *global*<sup>10</sup> and how relevant, for literary studies, are definitions formulated by other disciplines: social sciences, politics, economics? Is it the question of periodization and locating *the global* on the timeline of history? Again, whose history would that be? Does the concept of *universality* include *the global*? Are these notions interchangeable? For understandable reasons, it would not be possible to adequately address the above questions within the limited scope of this paper.

Literature’s response to *global* and *globalization* was addressed in *Literature and Globalization: A Reader* (2011), the study that offers a multidisciplinary approach, starting with an attempt to define “globalization” from the academic and historical perspective. The objective of the study was to indicate that conceptualising the phenomenon of

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<sup>10</sup> グローバル化 *gurōbaruka* in Japanese is the equivalent of the English *globalization*, there is also 世界化 *sekaika*, which corresponds to the French *mondialisation*.

globalization involves the attention to the spectrum of discourses such as historical, cultural, social, political. Examining the relation between literature and globalization, Paul Jay approaches the topic historically, but at the same time suggests that globalization cannot be limited to the contemporaneity, and seeks for testimonies of diverse manifestations of *globalizations* throughout human history.

Literature's relations to the processes of globalization as they manifest themselves in a variety of historical periods – indeed, literature's facilitation of economic and cultural globalization – is becoming a potentially important field of study that might get short-circuited if we think of globalization only as a postmodern eruption. (Jay 2011:106)<sup>11</sup>

As already stated, it would be erroneous to perceive world literature as an inclusive or all-embracing phenomenon: its scale and framework have not been properly established yet. Damrosch distinguishes key conceptual questions that accompany us when we teach literature not from national perspectives but as part of world literature discourse:

1. What is literature?
2. Whose world?
3. How has literature been understood in its myriad manifestations over time and across space?

There exists, however, the ethical dimension highlighted by Zhang Longxi, who states that “world literature [...] offers us not just the occasion to appreciate works from different traditions for their aesthetic appeal and broadly human interests but also a glimpse into the specific conditions in which those works are created and circulated, the opportunity to understand different cultural and historical circumstances that necessarily deepen our appreciation” (Zhang 2015: 2).

While Zhang perceives world literature in its ethical dimension, Rebecca L. Walkowitz points out yet another significant aspect that needs to be taken into consideration: the changing patterns of reading among global readers. In one of the most recent essays written for ACLA (American Comparative Literature Association), Walkowitz poses the questions: “How will we read literary works in the future? And how does thinking about the future of literary works change the way we read?”, to which she provides four separate answers. The first is: “Future reading will require foreign reading”, by which she means that we readers must see the novel as a work existing

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<sup>11</sup> Jay's essay in *Literature and Globalization: A Reader*.

simultaneously in different languages, in different media and artistic forms, thus being addressed to the plurality of audience.

Secondly, future reading is a “[F]oreign reading, recognizing the foreignness of literary texts, animates collectivities that are both smaller and larger than the nation, and that operate both within and across languages”. Third, “In the future, we will need to read comparatively, by which I mean reading across editions and formats and also recognizing that any one edition and format contributes to the work rather than exhausts it. This changes reading, philosophically as well as technically, because it defines the work by its appearance in the world rather than by its inherent or original characteristics.” Finally, as Walkowitz notices, “Instead of asking where or in what language a work of literature belongs, we need to ask how it belongs”. (Walkowitz 2017: 108-110).

The focus on the figure of the reader (specifically, a foreign reader) modifies the framework of a (national) literary canon. “Texts become world literature by being received into space of a foreign culture a space defined in many ways by the host’s culture national tradition and the present needs of its own writers (...)” maintains Damrosch (Damrosch 2009: 283). Numano also observes the recent changes in reception of classical (canonical) Japanese literature (following new English language translations). In a conversation with Michael Emmerich, the author of *The Tale of Genji: Translations, Canonization and World Literature*, Numano points out that,

“If we consider *Genji monogatari* as world literature, we wonder if the Japanese language used a thousand years ago is continued in present-day Japanese or is it completely distant. Or maybe, we should perceive the language of the text as an entirely foreign language, I wonder. When it comes to world literature, the differences between Japanese and English are not only on linguistic level. We tend to think of diverse literatures: Japanese, European, Asian, American, African that coexist geographically. But the example of *Genji monogatari* shows that a one-thousand-year-old text is still a literary work. In other words, world literatures exist not only in spatial terms but also within time.” (Numano 2016: 264-265)

Numano, similarly to Damrosch, appreciates the contribution made by translation and links *bungaku* 文学 ‘literature’ and *hon’yaku* 翻訳 with the

process he terms *sekaisei* 世界性 ‘worlding’. The same approach is also demonstrated by Michael Emmerich, who provides a new reading of *Genji monogatari* by assessing Murasaki Shikibu’s masterpiece as a text that ‘demands to be read again’. He offers a fresh appraisal of the canonical work, precisely by interpreting it ‘translingually, transnationally, transhistorically’. Emmerich’s scholarship embraces Genji ‘as a work of world literature, Genji as a work that exists first and foremost in translation, and Genji as a work that is discursively figured as participating in world literature through translation.’ (Emmerich 2015: 1 and 315).

### **Sekai bungaku: Locating Japan on World Literary Map(s)**

The notion of literary canon in Japan constitutes one of the most problematic issues. Despite a long literary tradition, with some texts dating back to as early as the seventh century, the literary canon has been considerably revised and reorganized since the second half of the nineteenth century with the introduction of Western literary patterns, genres or styles. It could be claimed that the process has not been completed yet, and it can be identified as the *canon in the making*.

Though the Japanese literature is no longer considered to be the periphery on the world literary map, the question is to what extent does it possess a secured position as part of world literature. Does it contribute to the global literary canon? If, not what could be the factors that make Japanese literature *unreachable* or *remote* for the global readership?

One of the biggest challenges, highlighted by Numano, is the scope of *sekai bungaku*, which does not necessarily include Japanese literature<sup>12</sup>. As the term itself remains imprecise, it includes: *hikaku bungaku* 比較文学 ‘comparative literature’, *gaikoku bungaku* 外国文学 ‘foreign literature’, and *hon’yaku bungaku* 翻訳文学 ‘translated literature’<sup>13</sup>. Despite the growing interest in *sekai bungaku* ‘world literature’<sup>14</sup> in Japan and within Japanese Studies in recent years, the key methodological questions still

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<sup>12</sup> It is worth mentioning *Sekai bungaku kai* 世界文学会 [Society of World Literature Japan] that has significantly contributed to expansion of the scope of world literature and demonstrating the interdependences between Japanese literature and foreign literature. See <http://sekaibungaku.org/>.

<sup>13</sup> For more details see Tsujihara Noboru’s study (2010) *Tōkyō daigaku de sekai bungaku o manabu* 『東京大学で世界文学を学ぶ』 [studying world literature at Tokyo University].

<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, despite the proclaimed crisis of humanities in Japan, a number of higher educational institutions offer courses in world literature/global literature (Tokyo University; Hōsei University). It is also worth mentioning that 2018 Summer Session in World Literature (organized by the Institute for World Literature, Harvard University) was held at Tokyo University.

appear to be: How to locate Japanese literature on the literary map of the world? What are the criteria or cognitive tools that lead towards establishing Japan's interconnections with literatures of the world? What should be the point of reference? As Kōno Shion observes in *Sekai no dokusha ni tsutaeru to iu koto*, to adequately understand Japan's interconnection with world literatures, it is necessary to acknowledge the interdependencies between two perspectives that dominate in academia but not necessarily complement each other: *hikaku bungaku* 比較文学 'comparative literature' and *chiiki kenkyū* 地域研究 'area studies' (Kōno 2014:22-23).

Ikezawa Natsuki, the author of *Ikezawa Natsuki sekai bungaku rimikkusu*, indicates that the point of departure remains the Japanese language. The distinction between *hon'yaku no nihongo* 翻訳の日本語 'translated Japanese' and *sōsaku no nihongo* 創作の日本語 'creative Japanese' proposed by Ikezawa expands the scope of the existing scholarship and treats *West* and *Asia* as a common and equal area of impact on Japanese literature. Nonetheless, the specificity of Japanese language (in particular, the writing system) results in the 'sense of isolation in/of Japanese literature' 孤絶感の残る日本文学 *kozetsukan no nokoru Nihon bungaku*, which, in Ikezawa's view, needs to be appreciated by the readers and translators. (Ikezawa 2017: 58)<sup>15</sup>.

On the other hand, building on Franco Moretti's work *Distant Reading*, Suzuki Akiyoshi reminds us that '(...) Japanese literature and concepts of literature have been developed as a compromise between the local styles of peripheral countries and the metropolitan culture of core countries in Europe'. Suzuki remains vigilant in his approach to world literature and maintains that scholars must note that 'literary theory was mainly born in Western countries. Whether Japanese use literary theory or not, the study of literature in Japan has been based on western concepts of literature' (Suzuki 2014: 6-7).

This, in turn, addresses the question of translatability. How to read diverse literary genres and to appropriately use culture-specific literary terms: for example, are the classical genres of Japanese literature like *monogatari* or

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<sup>15</sup> This remark (which appears to be untranslatable and not fully addressing the Japanese meaning when translated into English) was made during the conversation with Numano Mitsuyoshi and Kōnosu Yukiko 鴻巣友季, a translator of British and American literature, and was published in *Ikezawa Natsuki, Bungaku Zenshū wo Amu* 『池澤夏樹、文学全集を編む』 (2017).

*nikki* compatible with tale/story or diary in the Western context? Does the Japanese *shōsetsu* represent the same parameters as the *novel* (in English) or *le roman* in French? I am strongly convinced that we cannot simply apply the principles of world literature without taking into consideration how these issues are tackled or discussed in Japan. The objective of such an approach is to find compatibility between various methods in grouping literary texts in accordance with topics, motifs, styles, historical periods, literary schools etc.

As Atsuko Hayakawa points out, ‘along with world literature, translation studies have received much more attention due to the powerful investigation of the nation ‘s history in which language inevitably affects people’s minds’, and she goes on to note that world literature calls for a re-evaluation of national canon but also notion of mother tongue. (Hayakawa 2015: 647).

At the same time, to read Japanese literature translationally (by which I mean taking into consideration methodology, as well as treating translation as the ‘initiating’ factor behind the literary work<sup>16</sup>) is to appreciate what remains ‘untranslatable’. Emily Apter emphasises the fact that the notion of ‘untranslatability’ has been overlooked in existing scholarship whereas it should be recognized as a cognitive tool that could potentially enrich the way we read literary texts. Exploring “untranslatability” means, as Apter points out, to appraise ‘the importance of non-translation, mistranslation, incomparability and untranslatability’. (Apter 2013: 4).

### **Reading across Languages, Cultures and Genres: Teaching Japanese Literature as World Literature**

As mentioned earlier, designing world literature course for Japanese Studies raises a number of theoretical questions and demonstrates, to certain degree, terminological and conceptual incompatibilities that occur when comparative perspective (Japan versus the West) is applied. However, an equally thought-provoking subject matter is Japan’s interaction with East Asia, and whether there exists a common literary canon of Oriental texts that could contain a shared reading list for world literature students. Most Japanese literature curricula do not include Chinese or Korean literature, and cross-referencing serves as background for illustrating

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<sup>16</sup> This comment refers to works in Meiji/Taishō period that were (re)created as translation of Western texts, e.g. Edogawa Rampo’s detective stories where the boundaries between ‘translation’ (*hon’yaku*), adaptation (*hon’an*) and the original were often blurred. I also apply Rebecca Walkowitz’s notion of ‘born-translated’, where she considers translation as ‘not secondary or incidental but a condition of literary works’ production’. See Walkowitz, *Born Translated: Contemporary Novel in an Age of World Literature*.

historical or political conditions behind literary texts or cultural movements.

The approach that could potentially expand the existing learning patterns and help students to encompass multidimensional facets of world literature, is the evaluation of Western literary tradition as translated, received and circulated in East Asian countries. As Simon Estok's comments in *Western Canons in a Changing East Asia*, the evaluation of the impact Western reveals how "the essentializing notions of both of the West and Asia [and] the changes within the region, combined with an economic slowing down and belt-tightening in the West, have resulted both in a radical decline of the importance of Western literary canons within East Asia and in a more sincere appreciation of domestic work" (Estok 2014: 1). Similarly, Sowon Park states that "[s]o whether one sees world literature as transnational or hypernational, the underlying issue keeps returning to the question of what or whose measure of evaluation authorizes the process of stratification. To this question there are no satisfactory "literary" answers, only more political questions: who or what produces the function of world literature? What power or authority ensures the currency of its criteria across changing historical and cultural contexts? On what grounds? And for what purpose?" (Park 2013: 2).

What does it mean to read Japanese literature as world literature? It is simply going beyond conventional, predictable and unadventurous – from the students' perspective – methods of teaching. World literature not only enhances the visibility of Japanese literature on the literary world map, it also invites a much wider audience to participate in literary and non-literary discourse as the outcome of transnational, translanguaging and crossdisciplinary approach. In other words, it allows to depart from the traditional, historic-descriptive exploration of literary phenomena for the benefit of revealing their inner dynamicity<sup>17</sup>. Karen Thornber sees pedagogical benefits of world literature since it combines 'global, the local, and everything in-between.' (Thornber 2016: 115).

Reading comparatively enables setting in motion an additional level of understanding of highly politicised, controversial topics: one of these is gender, equality, feminism, which could be discussed with the reference to Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*, Han Kang *The Vegetarian*, Elif Shafak's *The Black Milk*,

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<sup>17</sup> Academic institutions that offer teaching Japanese literature as world literature are (to name just a few): Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University; Institute of Comparative Culture (Sophia Universities, Tokyo); Department of Comparative Literatures at Penn State University, Comparative Literary Studies at Northwestern University, Centre for World Literature (University of Leeds, UK).

Tsushima Yūko's *The Child of Fortune* and Takahashi Takako's *Lonely Woman*.

While discussing narrative techniques and the notion of authorship (as expressed in Japanese by *sakka* and *sakusha*), I introduce students to Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's story *In the Groove*, which we read alongside Ian McEwan's *Nutshell* and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. When we assess the validity of Roland Barthes's 'death of the author', we may refer to Dazai Osamu's *The Setting Sun*, Witold Gombrowicz's *Trans-Atlantic* or Michel Houellebecq's *Map and Territory*. Endō Shūsaku's last major work of fiction, *Deep River*, and Victor Pilevkin's *Buddha's Little Finger* could be analysed from the angle of intertextuality and according to how the borders of 'literateness' shift in the post-modern fiction.

Another simultaneous reading that groups texts from diverse cultural backgrounds, could, for instance, consist in the exploration of 'time', as in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, Orhan Pamuk's *The Museum of Innocence* and Mishima Yukio's *The Sea of Fertility*.

It must be noted that detective fiction (*kaiki* or *tantei shōsetsu*), a genre slightly neglected by most curricula, is popular with students. Just to avoid cliché, I need to add that I do not encourage students to read Edogawa Rampo with Edgar Allan Poe. Instead, it is Higashino Keigo, Hideo Yokoyama, alongside with novels classified as *Scandinavian noir*, or a French bestselling writer, Pierre Lemaitre.

Apart from a conventional approach to literary texts, it is paramount to teach students how to interpret culture and society with the use of cross-media studies: arts, *manga*, *anime*, fashion, songs. One of the most suggestive topics that can be explored in a classroom is narratives of disasters, where the distortions of language make it impossible to express the totality of human experience. Ineffability of the unimaginable can be explored by the comparison of literary testimonies as depicted in the book on Tōhoku disaster in 2011 (usually referred to as *Higashi nihon daishin sai*), *March Was Made by Yarn* with Sono Shion's film *Kibō no kuni* (Land of hope) and the recent rise of post-Fukushima protest songs<sup>18</sup>.

Finally, teaching Japanese literature as world literature is to examine literary bilingualism and translanguaging, literature written in foreign languages (English/French/German) or by non-Japanese writers (in Japanese), to redefine the notion of 'literary canon' in a predominantly homogenous and monolingual society. By making Japanese literature the case study, we may be able to evaluate how the frameworks of literary

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<sup>18</sup> Manabe Noriko. 2016. *The Revolution will not be televised: Protest Music after Fukushima*. London: Oxford University Press.



canon shift and change in a global age. The reading consists of internationally recognized writers: Murakami Haruki, Tawada Yōko, Mizumura Minae, Hideo Levy, Furukawa Hideo, Ruth Ozeki, but also other works that address the issue of bilingualism, including Japanese *manga* and *anime*. The changing boundaries of the Japanese language were highlighted by Faye Yuan Kleeman, who observes that the designation of *Nihongo bungaku* ‘still highlights its ambiguous status. Only when all writers using the Japanese language are understood to be contributing to *Nihon bungaku* and granted their rightful place within its canon we may say that Japanese literature has really entered the postcolonial era.’ (Kleeman 2000: 387)

As previously stated, one of the key pedagogical challenges we face when designing a curriculum is the course reading list. I have already identified a number of issues concerning this matter, among which the following remains decisive: what is and what is not world literature? How about the canon of Western literature in Japan? Is the canon limited to one territory? Or can it be *transterritorial*? In other words, what about the foreign authors like Amélie Nothomb, Éric Faye, David Mitchell, Philippe Forest, Dany Laferrière, whose literary texts clearly touch upon the themes related to Japanese culture, history, not infrequently with references to the language? It is as Teresa Ciapparoni La Rocca identified as “The European Border of Japanese Literature”:

“Are these writers then Japanese? [...] they are, but, borrowing Amélie Nothomb’s expression, on the condition that they be equally considered European writers. This of course does not mean that they are half-European and half-Japanese, but something else again: border-crossing writers [...] expatriate writers who have a greater right than others to be identified as writers of »world literature«” (La Rocca 2008: 99)<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Emmerich identifies these tendencies as 日本語では読めない「世界文学」としての「日本文学」*Nihongo de wa yomenai sekai bungaku toshite no Nihon bungaku* [literal translation: ‘The Japanese literature as world literature that cannot be read in Japanese’]. He discusses the topic in the chapter グローバル化する現代日本文学—日本語では読めない日本文学 *Gurōbaru suru gendai Nihon Bungaku – Nihongo de wa yomenai Nihon bungaku* [Contemporary Japanese Literature Towards Globalization – Japanese Literature Unreadable in Japanese] in 『世界文学への招待』*Sekai bungaku e no shōtai* [Invitations to World Literature], and points to the changing patterns of national literature (*kokugo*) as a result of diverse forms of translation involved in creative process, for instance Murakami Haruki’s use of English or Tawada Yōko’s bilingualism. (Emmerich 2016: 239-255). Emmerich examines the “broken” relations between language and literature; whereby national language no longer conditions national

### **Concluding Remarks: Reimagining a Universal Culture**

This paper has discussed the cognitive functions of world literature, and in accordance with its definition, its premise could be summarized as “reading across time, cultures, languages and genres”; that is cross-cultural communication through world literature. Moving beyond literary studies, we might, or rather should, acknowledge its contribution to Oriental Studies.

To teach Japanese literature as world literature is to constantly re-establish literary canon, thus shifting the borders that define, to use the Japanese terms, *uchi* and *soto*.

World literature unveils the phenomenological dimension of literature: our being in the world. Covering a hermeneutic way of the circulation of texts, their translation, adaptation, transformations, and finally interpretations, world literature is about creating values. Zhang Longxi terms world literature a “global view of human creativity in various forms of literary manifestation” and argues for the absolute necessity of comparison, as he claims, “integration of different literary and cultural perspectives, a truly global and cosmopolitan vision that helps making cross-cultural understanding possible among the world’s different people and their communities” (Zhang 2015: 1 and 7). From a more practical point of view, it provides students with not just factual information but also skills that are applicable to other disciplines: close reading, critical analysis, translation skills. World literature, with all its faults and inner inconsistencies, reminds us that we are the citizens of the world. It is the world that changes but at the same time it is the world – as Borges envisioned it in *The Total Library* – that requires to be (re)interpreted, (re)read and (re)discovered.

Concluding my discussion on teaching Japanese literature as world literature, I would like to give a final say to Mizumura Minae, a Japanese writer brought up in America, who discovered treasures of national literature while living abroad. Her fictional and non-fictional works, including an experimental bilingual novel *Shishōsetsu from left to right* (1995) 『私小説 from left to right』, followed by *Honkaku shōsetsu* (‘A True Novel’) 『本格小説』 and most recently, *Haha no isan* (‘Inheritance of My Mother’) 『母の遺産—新聞小説』, constitute personal (though often fictionalized) accounts of how one’s experience of reading constantly oscillates between the native and the foreign. Since the publication of her seminal study *Nihongo ga horobiru toki. Eigo no seiki* 『日本語が亡びる

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literature (日本語原文の存在しない日本文学) (ibid: 246).

ときー英語の世紀の中で』 (‘The fall of the language in the age of English’) in 2008, she has demonstrated that whilst endorsing the concept of world literature, in a globalized world it is vital to maintain culture-specific features that define each of us. In the 2009 interview she clarified her viewpoint by saying: “It’s also important to offer a non-English, local perspective as an alternative to the reality presented by English-language writing (...) my point is that it’s important to use the Japanese language to portray the reality that is specific to Japan (...) In any case, the important thing is not to be blinded by globalization but to use the Japanese language to capture the reality of Japanese life through the Japanese language” (Mizumura 2009). To a certain degree, she shares experiences of previous generations of Japanese writers, split between the East and the West, like Nagai Kafū, Natsume Sōseki, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Endō Shūsaku, Suga Atsuko, but these experiences, as we know, are not unfamiliar to present day writers, for example Tawada Yōko, Shiraiishi Kazufumi, Murakami Haruki, Furukawa Hideo, and probably most notably articulated by Ishiguro Kazuo.

“Distant reading” – one of the key premises of world literature – consists in a search for the common ground of human experience as expressed in diverse literary traditions. In one of her most personal essays “Bungaku no rekishisei o yomu” [The historicity of literature], Mizumura – a “distant reader” of Japanese literature – uses the metaphor of *solitary island* (*kotō*) to reveal her endeavours to bridge what seemed for her, as reader and writer, unbridgeable.

“It became clear for me that the world of Japanese language and the world of English symbolise two different worlds – almost like day and night – and they remain incompatible with each other. At the same time, I looked at novels written in Japanese and those in English language, as if they were like solitary and remote islands that appear here and there on the surface of the earth, the islands that do not know the existence of each other, without any connections. But literature is never a solitary island. [...]” (Mizumura 2009: 75-76; quotation slightly modified).

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Justyna Weronika Kasza**

Associate Professor in the Department of Foreign Language Studies, Seinan Gakuin University (Fukuoka, Japan). She earned her PhD in Japanese Studies from University of Leeds (UK) in 2013 and was a Visiting Researcher at the Institute of Comparative Cultures at Sophia University in Tokyo, from 2008-2009. Between 2011-2015 she was an Associate Lecturer in Japanese at University of Central Lancashire (Preston, UK). She is a recipient of Japan Foundation Fellowship (2008-2009) and research grant from The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation (2015). In 2016, her PhD thesis was published as the monograph *Hermeneutics of Evil in the Works of Endō Shūsaku: Between Reading and Writing* (Peter Lang, Oxford). She attended The Sixth Seminars in World Literature at the Institute for World Literature (Harvard University) in 2016. She is currently working on a new book project *The "I" in the Making: Rethinking Japanese Shishōsetsu in a Global Age*, for which she was awarded the Japan Foundation Fellowship (2018-2019) and conducted her research at Sophia University in Tokyo.



Matthew Königsberg  
ORCID: 0000-0003-2998-3664

## The Novel *Haha no isan* by Mizumura Minae and the Meiji Writer Ozaki Kōyō

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.10

### ABSTRACT

This paper deals with Mizumura Minae's 2012 novel *Haha no isan* (*Inheritance from Mother*), the story of a middle-aged, middle-class woman named Mitsuki faced with two crises: the demise of her ill and aging mother and the repeated infidelity of her husband. Both problems come to a head when the mother is admitted to a hospital. At the same time, Mitsuki's husband and his current lover are plotting to confront Mitsuki with a divorce once the husband returns from a sabbatical in Vietnam, where he is living together with the other woman. At the end of the novel, both conflicts are resolved. The mother dies and leaves Mitsuki an inheritance with which to begin a new life on her own.

*Haha no isan* is based on a number of subtexts, most prominently on Ozaki Kōyō's *Konjiki yasha* (*The Demon Gold*). In order to point out parallels, the paper places Ozaki Kōyō in perspective as a writer of literary realism. This aspect of Kōyō's oeuvre is often overlooked, as *The Demon Gold*, for instance, is written in classical Japanese. *Madame Bovary* also provides a subtext for the novel, such that in consequence *Haha no isan* incorporates the vitae of female protagonists both in Japan and Europe going back for more than a century.

**KEYWORDS:** literary realism, Mizumura Minae, Ozaki Kōyō, women in literature, Madame Bovary

### Introduction

The writer Mizumura Minae has an unusual biography: At the age of twelve, she went with her parents to the United States, to a suburb of New York City. She eventually returned to Japan as a young adult to become a writer. In what is perhaps her most famous work, *Shishōsetsu from left to right* (Mizumura 1995)<sup>1</sup> there is a telling scene in which the young Japanese girl, homesick for Japan, is caught by her schoolmates secretly reading a Japanese book under her desk during class. "Minae is reading a love

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Japanese genre of the *shishōsetsu* or 'I-novel', cf. Hijiya-Kirschner 1996 and Fowler 1992.

story!” (Mizumura 1995, 97) The work in question is Higuchi Ichiyō’s *Nigorie*. “Minae” is reading the famous passage where Oriki, revolted by her life as a prostitute, runs away from a party at the Kikunoi. The quote from Higuchi Ichiyō’s story is directly inserted into the text of the novel. The text is set in cursive, is in Classical Japanese, and maintains the older forms of the Chinese characters (Mizumura 1995: 96-97)<sup>2</sup>. *Troubled Waters* is a canonical text from before the establishment of the canonical genre of the *shishōsetsu*, written in 1895 in a style which pre-dates the canonical modern style *gembun itchi* (“the unity of spoken and written language”)<sup>3</sup>. It seems significant that even at this early stage, the young “Minae” is seen reading works by a Meiji writer. If “Minae” really wants to become a great Japanese writer, one would suggest, she should at least read the somewhat later *shishōsetsu* writer Shiga Naoya under her desk, and then go on to write a *shishōsetsu* deserving of the name.

Instead, Mizumura Minae goes against the grain of modern Japanese literature. She leaves the hermetic, airless world of the *shishōsetsu* and the fanciful realm of the postmodernist to construct realistic novels. It can be argued that the period of realism, at least in the West, has been over for more than a century. In the case of Japan, on the other hand, it can be argued that the period of literary realism not only has been over for more than a century, but was also over virtually as soon as it started. This paper will argue that the long novels of Ozaki Kōyō (1868 – 1903) are indeed realistic novels in the Western sense, and that it is therefore no coincidence that authors of the Meiji period and more specifically Ozaki Kōyō form a subtext for the works of Mizumura Minae, who views herself as an heir to Meiji realism. In an interview with the journalist Ozaki Mariko about *Haha no isan*, Mizumura has this to say: “I always have the feeling that I am writing novels with the ambitious intention of wanting to grasp Japan as a nation-state. In English you would perhaps say *chronicler*.” Mizumura goes on to mention Natsume Sōseki and Higuchi Ichiyō as her models. (Mizumura: 2012, 138)

This paper will first discuss Ozaki Kōyō before moving on to Mizumura’s novel *Haha no isan*, which bears an intertextual relationship to Ozaki Kōyō’s *The Demon Gold*.<sup>4</sup>

Having grown up in New York and studied French literature at Yale University, Mizumura Minae is of course versed and fluent both in

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<sup>2</sup> For an English translation cf. Danly 1981: 218-240. For the original, cf. Higuchi Ichiyō: 1972, 46.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the establishment of *gembun itchi* (= ‘the unity of spoken and written’), cf. Königsberg 2008b.

<sup>4</sup> The English titles of Kōyō’s works follow Keene 1987.

(American) English and French. Her novels – whether it be *Shishōsetsu from left to right* or *Haha no isan* – contain direct inserts from these languages. For instance, the very first chapter of *Haha no isan* depicts the night when the “mother” of the title dies. Her daughter Mitsuki muses – in the original French – “Aujourd’hui, maman est morte.” (Mizumura: 2012a, 13) This is the opening line of Albert Camus’ famous novel *L’Étranger*. Given her polylinguistic background, Mizumura has written essays about languages, collected in her three volume work *Nihongo de kaku to iu koto*, *Nihongo de yomu to iu koto* and *Nihongo ga horobiru toki* (Mizumura: 2008, 2009a, 2009b). The last mentioned volume of this trilogy has been translated into English. (Mizumura: 2014) Accordingly, a number of articles and reviews deal with the way that Mizumura’s œuvre is interwoven with Western languages<sup>5</sup>. This subject would appear to be appealing to those heralding such authors as Mizumura (under the term *ekkyō bungaku*, or *border-crossing literature*)<sup>6</sup> as representatives of a global, world literature. Mizumura’s indebtedness to her Meiji predecessors, has, on the other hand, evidently not received as much attention, since this aspect of her work roots her not only in a native tradition, but also – in the case of Ozaki Kōyō – in a largely forgotten native tradition. This paper would like to shed some light on this dimension of Mizumura’s work. Thematically as well, *Haha no isan* is indebted to Ozaki Kōyō: As the author of this paper has shown elsewhere (Königsberg, 2008b), the Meiji writer developed in the course of his short life from a Saikaku-esque depicter of the pleasure quarters to an early champion of fulfilling marital life for women. As will be shown below, Mitsuki in the course of the novel also comes to terms with her unhappy marriage and lives her own life.

### **Ozaki Kōyō as a Realist Novelist**

As was stated above, the author of this paper is of the opinion that Mizumura Minae stands in the tradition of literary realism in Meiji Japan. This section will deal with Ozaki Kōyō as a realist novelist. In their comparative study of literary modernization across Asia, Oldřich Král and his colleagues state that: “In Japan, the novel is even equated with literature in general.” (Král: 1986, 85) It is for his novels that Ozaki Kōyō is known, and although this is not the light in which he is currently viewed,

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. among others: Nakai 2005 and Odagiri 1995. In this article, when authors with Japanese names write in English, the Western convention (first name before family name) is followed.

<sup>6</sup> On the term *ekkyō bungaku* cf. Sakamoto 2006.

his contemporary, the German Japanologist Karl Florenz, regarded his works as virtually perfect copies of contemporary Western novels: “The first works of Kōyō and his youthful contemporaries followed European models so closely that they looked almost like translations.” (Florenz: 1909, 615)<sup>7</sup> Florenz is speaking here about Kōyō’s early works, but it was in his middle and late periods that Kōyō wrote his realist masterpieces. Tanizaki Jun’ichirō, for instance, was a great admirer of *Sannin zuma* (*Three Mistresses*, 1892). Tanizaki discusses the aspect of plot construction, which he calls *kōzōteki bikan* or ‘the aesthetics of structure’, throughout Japanese literary history. He writes: “When we reach the Meiji Period, then Kōyō’s *Three Mistresses* is the greatest work. Since times of old there have been few examples of works in Japanese literature that are so beautifully and consummately constructed.” (Tanizaki: 1968, 108) Kōyō’s greatest realistic novels were arguably *Three Mistresses* and *The Demon Gold*. *Three Mistresses* is written entirely in *gazoku setchū tai* (i.e. in classical Japanese), while *The Demon Gold* is an experiment: The dialogues are in natural, contemporary spoken Japanese, while the narrative portions remain in classical Japanese. Both works offer complex plots, with a broad range of characters from different walks of life, and it is this, presumably, that Tanizaki finds so admirable. In contrast, Kōyō’s few works in *gembun itchi* have almost no plot and a very narrow focus. The writer Enchi Fumiko has this to say about *Tajō takon* (*Passions and Grievances* 1895), the story of a widower, Ryūnosuke, who mourns so deeply after the death of his wife and suffers so from loneliness that his best friends, a married couple, take him into their home: “If one reads *Passions and Grievances* today, it is a rather boring novel, which has – strangely enough for Kōyō – no plot to speak of.” (Enchi: 1978, 445)

Kōyō’s most famous novel, *The Demon Gold*, is the story of an ill-fated love. The novel was written in installments over the course of six years and follows the story of two young lovers, Hazama Kan’ichi and Shigisawa Miya, throughout the same six years (Ozaki Kōyō: 1993a)<sup>8</sup>. After the death of his parents, Kan’ichi is adopted by the Shigisawa family, goes to university, and is engaged to their daughter Miya. At the beginning of the novel, Miya sees the rich banker’s son Tomiyama Tadatsugu at a New Year’s card party. Tomiyama is wearing a large diamond ring, and Miya soon breaks off her engagement to Kan’ichi in order to marry him. Kan’ichi attempts to convince Miya of the importance of love in a

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<sup>7</sup> Here and in all other cases own translation from German.

<sup>8</sup> Synopsis – in German - in Königsberg 2008a, 733-739. *Miya* is also sometimes referred to with an honorific prefix as *Omiya*.

marriage; when she does not listen, he kicks her to the ground and runs off. Since he has lost his love to money, he decides to live only for money. He leaves the family Shigisawa and school to become a usurer. The further course of the novel with its diverse sub-plots brings together characters from many walks of life. Miya's marriage is an unhappy one, she longs for Kan'ichi and writes him letters, none of which he answers. Kan'ichi in the meantime works for the money-lender Wanibuchi and wards off the advances of a beautiful female colleague. In depicting the craft of the money lender, Kōyō introduces many tragic characters, for instance the lovers Aiko and Sayama. Aiko works as a geisha to pay off her mother's debts, and Sayama has embezzled money from his company to pay off gambling debts. At the end of the unfinished novel, Kan'ichi decides to pay Aiko's and Sayama's debts, and out of gratitude they move in with him as servants and help him to bear the loneliness that the loss of Miya has caused.

At this point, after having introduced two of Ozaki Kōyō's realist novels, an attempt will be made to place them in a larger context. The Prague scholars in Oldřich Král's research group preface their discussion of individual literatures with a broad historical overview of the changes involved in modernization through Western influence in the four Asian countries (Iran, Bengal, China, and Japan) on which they concentrate. They state: "a revision of old values and the import of new precipitate especially social reforms or, at least, vigorous attempts to have such reforms carried through, to which literature makes a substantial contribution. Common to all the countries under consideration is, above all, the reformatory activity aimed at removing social discrimination against women." (Král 1986: 25) It is no exaggeration to state that this was the most important theme for Ozaki Kōyō, and *Three Mistresses* marks a turning point. The plot of the novel revolves around a rich man, Yōgorō, who after the age of sixty begins to collect concubines in addition to his wife. The construction of the novel – with the three concubines and the wife Asako – offers Kōyō the chance to contrast the status of wives with that of concubines. After having installed his first mistress and while he is hunting the second, Yōgorō decides to spend an evening at home with Asako. Kōyō describes the scene, in which he contrasts the devotion of a good wife with the infantile and wanton behavior of a bad husband, only to finish: "If you consider all of this, then a wife is like an unpaid prostitute. And even if you were to pay her, is there a woman who would let herself be treated like this and not leave the house in a rage?" (Ozaki Kōyō 1993b: 66-67) Thereafter, Kōyō refrains from depicting geishas and prostitutes at all, although they had up

until this point often been the heroines – tragic or not – of his works<sup>9</sup>. That the Meiji woman had few other options than to seek a wealthy husband is the other side of the picture, which will be treated at the close of this paper. Kōyō's last novel *The Demon Gold* is admittedly melodramatic, and the few critics who have dealt with it have not tended to praise it. (McClellan 1971: 361) On the other hand, some energy has gone into tracing the work upon which it could have been based<sup>10</sup>. No similar attempts have been made to trace a Western model for *Three Mistresses*, of course, presumably for the reason that modern Western novels about wealthy gentlemen who maintain a harem are few and far between. Common to both *Three Mistresses* and *The Demon Gold* is a tendency that Harald Weinrich describes for the West: “From the 19th century onward and starting with Balzac, the novel becomes realistic, and that means: sociological. The novel no longer merely tells a story which is to a greater or lesser degree beautiful and exciting; instead, it has the ambition to at the same time present reliable, and – in the case of the Naturalists – scientifically reliable information about the social relationships of the period.” (Weinrich 1971: 98-99) Therefore, rather than search for models for *Three Mistresses* and *The Demon Gold*, it makes sense to assume that both novels deal with consumption and with the commodification of the female body, because this is a reflection of the state of capitalist Japanese society at the time. This point will be discussed in the following comparison of *The Demon Gold* and Mizumura Minae's *Inheritance from Mother*.

### **The Realistic Depiction of Three Generations of Women in *Inheritance from Mother***

*Inheritance from Mother* is a long novel; it runs to some 524 pages in the Chūō kōron edition (as opposed to “only” 390 pages for *Shishōsetsu from left to right*). With its great length, the large number of subplots, the many characters, and the complexity, the novel is structurally reminiscent of *The Demon Gold*. The plot – summarized briefly – is as follows: The protagonist is a middle-aged married woman named Mitsuki. Her husband, Tetsuo, is a university professor. Mitsuki herself earns money as an adjunct lecturer and also takes on part-time translations from French. The couple

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<sup>9</sup> Examples are, for instance, *Kyara makura* (1890, *Pillow of Aloewood*), the biography of a geisha who has, as an old woman, become a nun, or *Oboro bune* (1890, *Floating Ship*), the story of a young girl from an impoverished samurai family sold into prostitution.

<sup>10</sup> Yoko Matsui suggests *Dora Thorne*, a melodramatic story of love across class lines, cf. Matsui 1988: 144, while Peter Kornicki mentions the little-known novel *White Lilies* by Alice King Hamilton, cf. Kornicki 1978: 199-202.

has no children. Mitsuki's older sister Natsuki has married into a wealthy family and does not need to work. Chapter I of the novel is entitled: "A long telephone call on the night of the wake." Their mother has just died, and the two sisters immediately discuss how much money they can expect, for instance once the deposit from the nursing home is returned. At the end of the chapter, Mitsuki goes to bed (alone, her husband is on sabbatical in Vietnam). In the next chapter, the narrative time of the story is turned back to the year before: "It was last year on December 28 at around two o'clock." (Mizumura 2012: 20) Mitsuki gets the house ready for New Year, and she writes two condolence letters. When she opens her husband's desk drawer to look for postage stamps of a suitable subdued hue, she sees a brightly flowered tissue paper holder that can only be a present from a woman. She is immediately certain that her husband is having (another) affair. While she is standing there, the telephone rings. It is the hospital: Her aging mother has been admitted with fractures. (ibid 23)

In chapter 11, Tetsuo sends a short email from Vietnam and tells her that he will only infrequently be able to send emails from the apartment he has rented. Mitsuki answers briefly, turns off her computer, thinks for a second, and then turns the computer on again. (ibid 90-91) Many years ago, when he was often away doing "research," Tetsuo told Mitsuki his email password and asked her to check his mails occasionally. Mitsuki enters the password, and – to her surprise – Tetsuo has never changed it. She immediately sees a long correspondence between her husband and his new lover (ibid. 92)<sup>11</sup>. Mitsuki begins to read. "Mitsuki had thought that she would wait until her mother was settled in [= at the nursing home, M.K.] to think about Tetsuo, but without Mitsuki having to think, the woman had kindly thought over the future for her. The woman had not just gone to Vietnam with Tetsuo. By going for a year, they would establish the fact of a one-year separation, and if Mitsuki were to suggest coming to visit, they would evade the issue. Immediately before returning to Japan, Tetsuo would submit divorce papers to Mitsuki; he would come back to Japan but not return to the apartment. At least, that is what Tetsuo had been caused to promise the woman." (Ibid, 93)

Thus, by the end of this chapter, a number of plots and sub-plots have already been introduced. There is no suspense regarding the demise of the mother, since the reader already knows she will die. In contrast, after chapter 11 the second story line takes on great urgency. Once Mitsuki has read the emails from Tetsuo's lover, she must organize her life so that she

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<sup>11</sup> The word *research* (*kenkyū*) is in quotation marks in the original.

can live without Tetsuo, and this means first of all that she must have sufficient funds. After roughly one hundred pages, in chapter 25, the narrative returns to the story of Mitsuki's mother's demise. She has only just moved into the old people's home, and now she is in the hospital with pneumonia. She dies at the end of chapter 32, roughly halfway through the novel and shortly before the New Year. Mitsuki goes off to a hotel on Lake Ashi in Hakone for a short time to think things over. The sequence in Hakone, which goes on for almost the entire remainder of the novel, consists mostly of flashbacks. At the end of the novel, Mitsuki divorces Tetsuo. She goes back to Tōkyō and – with her mother's inheritance – takes her own apartment.

The most explicit subtext for the novel is Ozaki Kōyō's *The Demon Gold*. Mitsuki's grandmother, her mother's mother, is referred to exclusively as *Omiya*. This is, of course, the name of the main female character in Kōyō's novel. The first allusion is made in the very first chapter, when Mitsuki goes to bed on the night her mother dies. She finds it strange that she does not cry for her mother, and then remembers that her mother had also not cried for her own mother, Mitsuki's grandmother. Then she remembers: "It must have been more than ten years ago that she had had a very different insight into Mother. They were walking along the beach at Atami. Her mother scoffed, »And there wasn't even a Kan'ichi for her!« Then she said, »Ridiculous! To call herself Omiya!« Mitsuki could tell by her voice that she was trying not to cry, perhaps because she had suddenly remembered her own mother. Her mother tried desperately to keep up with her daughter, stabbing her cane into the sandy beach" (ibid. 16)<sup>12</sup>. Another important subtext for *Haha no isan* is Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. In the hotel in Hakone, Mitsuki makes the acquaintance of the elderly lady Kaoru, who mentions that she has seen Mitsuki reading *Madame Bovary* in the hotel lobby. Mitsuki is reading the novel in French, and Kaoru pronounces the title correctly. Mitsuki tells her that she studied for one year in Paris, whereupon Kaoru explains that she had also lived there for almost thirty years. (Mizumura 2012, 305) In one flashback, Mitsuki recalls that she once had had the offer to do a new translation of *Madame Bovary*, which she refused because she at the time not only had to care for both of her aging and sick parents, but also because it would have meant giving up her job as an adjunct teacher and thus earning less money. (ibid, 340-343)

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<sup>12</sup> One of the most dramatic and famous scenes in *The Demon Gold*, the scene in which Kan'ichi tries to persuade Miya to marry him and then runs out of her life forever, takes place in Atami, cf. Ozaki Kōyō 1993a, 60-73.



One could ask what these two novels have to do with *Inheritance from Mother*. To begin with, Emma Bovary has been called “a character in search of a novel.” (Culler 1977, 208) This is the synopsis given in *Inheritance from Mother*: “It is the story of a nineteenth-century French woman from the countryside who has read too many love stories. The sentimental, dreamy young Emma is the daughter of moderately prosperous farmers; while she is in a convent school receiving an education above her station in life, she voraciously reads novels about »love and lovers,« and she comes to expect life to be more glamorous than it is. But the man she marries is the most average country doctor imaginable. ... To fill up the void inside her, she has one affair after the next, buys expensive clothes from Paris, and goes heavily into debt. Finally she takes poison and dies in agony.” (Mizumura 2012, 360) In a similar fashion, Mitsuki’s grandmother – and scores of other women of her generation – attempted to “live” the novel *The Demon Gold*. Chapter 48 of *Inheritance from Mother* – which is entitled “Konjiki yasha” – describes the novel and its impact, using the term “Bovarysme made in Japan” (ibid. 375)<sup>13</sup>.

In attempting to answer the question why Ozaki Kōyō’s *The Demon Gold* is such an important subtext for Mizumura’s *Inheritance from Mother*, it is worth remembering that the subtitle of the novel is *shinbun shōsetsu*, or ‘newspaper novel.’ In December 1889, Ozaki Kōyō joined the staff of the *Yomiuri shinbun* as an author of fiction. (Tosa 1973: 1) Roughly from this time onward, almost all of his works – including *The Demon Gold* – were newspaper novels. At one point in *Inheritance from Mother* Mitsuki even describes herself as the child of a newspaper novel:

"So why did her mother become that sort of a person?

Why is some person that sort of person? There cannot be anything like an answer to that question. However much neurological science advances, however much is understood about the function of brain cells, there can be no answer. And yet, thinking about her mother, Mitsuki could not stop asking that question.” (Mizumura 2012: 371)

“That was simply the character that her mother was born with. Given that character, wherever she had been born, she would have

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<sup>13</sup> The Japanese original is 和製「ボヴァリスム」.

caused havoc all of her life. But it was also the life that her mother had led which turned her into the person she was.

Yes, that was it. If her grandmother had not identified herself with *Omiya-san*, her mother would not have been born either. If her grandmother had not read the newspaper novel, she would not have run off with her son's private teacher. If that had not happened, not only would Mother not have been born, neither would her two daughters have been born. If there had not been such a thing as a newspaper novel in Japan, Mitsuki would not exist, she would not now be in a hotel deep in the mountains, ordering wine, even though she usually did not drink, and mumbling »I was never loved« to herself.

When you thought about it, Mitsuki was the child of a newspaper novel.” (Mizumura 2012: 373)<sup>14</sup>

Mitsuki may be the child of a newspaper novel, yet *Inheritance from Mother* is not a newspaper novel in the same sense as Kōyō's *The Demon Gold*. The question that Mitsuki asks - why her mother had become the sort of a person she was - is, after all, a basic question of literary naturalism, and this question can only be answered by going back for generations in the life of a literary character. Thus *Inheritance from Mother* has a much broader historical scope than the traditional newspaper novel. Yet the traditional newspaper novel, embedded as it is in the newspaper - “the paradigmatic realist text” (Michaels 1987: 46) - played an important role in the development of realism. At the turn of the twentieth century, the relationship between newspaper and literature worked both ways, as Kōyō made clear in an interview about his inspiration for *Three Mistresses*. He had read an article in the *Yomiuri shimbun* about the funeral of a rich man with three mistresses, each of whom had cropped her hair and put it the coffin:

“I thought it would be interesting to show how these three completely different women with their different characters would try to win over their master. There would be jealousy and fighting, and besides, their master would have a different relationship with

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<sup>14</sup> Interestingly enough, *Haha no isan* was also published in installments in the *Yomiuri shimbun* (Jan. 16, 2010-Apr. 2, 2011), over a hundred years after *The Demon Gold* (Jan. 1, 1897-May 11, 1902). Dates for the publication of *Haha no isan*, cf. final pages, no page number. Dates for *Konjiki yasha*, cf. *Kaidai* in *Ozaki Kōyō* 1993a: 478.

each of them. I decided to pick up my brush. I got the gist of the story from the newspaper, the rest I made up.” (Ihara Seiseien 1906: 36)

The question of the motivation and actions of the three mistresses is, once again, the basic question of literary naturalism, the question, to put it simply, of what makes people tick.

Kōyō has a simple answer to the question of what makes people tick: It is the title of his novel, it is the demon gold. Money makes people tick. Paradoxically, this is the message sent by all of his novels once he begins to champion the cause of the wife and to call for fidelity from both partners in a marriage. As shown above, Kōyō idealizes marriage with his authorial voice in *Three Mistresses*, and in *Passions and Grievances*, he has the mourning widower Ryūnosuke voice the same opinion in a figural voice. Ryūnosuke is horrified when he finds out that his married friend Hayama has been to the pleasure quarters: “How terrible, to go to the pleasure quarters! You have a wife, don’t you? What do you think about your wife?” (Ozaki Kōyō 1993b, 184) Yet given the mores of the time, Kōyō’s female characters - even in the “ideal” marriages he is attempting to propagate - do not marry for love. The marriages are arranged, and - logically enough, one is tempted to say - the women marry money, while the men marry beauty. Kōyō makes this especially clear in his construction of the novel *Two Wives* (*Ninin nyōbo*, 1891-1892), in which the two daughters of a low ranking samurai marry. The pretty older sister is named *Ogin* (‘silver’), the homely younger sister is named *Otetsu* (‘iron’). At a party given by their parents Ogin sees a public official who is expensively dressed in a frock coat and wears a golden chain and a golden stickpin with a ruby. (Ozaki Kōyō 1993b, 231) A marriage is arranged, and now the younger sister is to marry. She is offered three candidates and chooses a blacksmith. (ibid, 327) Under these historical circumstances, it begins to appear only logical that the beautiful Omiya in *The Demon Gold* should marry the rich Tomiyama and not the poor Kan’ichi.

It is perhaps no coincidence that nineteenth-century literature produces, at three different corners of the globe, three heroines driven by desire, whether it is Omiya lured off by Tomiyama’s diamond ring, Theodore Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* in the novel by the same name (Michaels 1987, 29-48)<sup>15</sup> or Emma Bovary. In all three countries, capitalism gave rise to

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<sup>15</sup> In his chapter “Sister Carrie’s Popular Economy,” Michaels discusses desire as the motor driving the female protagonist.

consumer culture, driven largely by a new class of women customers, who gathered in cities and in new department stores. The stores were geared to women consumers and offered “under one roof all kinds of goods - clothing, millinery, groceries, furniture.” (El-Rayess 2014: 3) Mitsuki’s mother falls squarely into this pattern when she spends money like water at her favorite department store, Isetan. In one scene, Mother buys new flowered sheets for ¥ 30,000 and pays with her “I-card.” On the way out, she spots even more luxurious flowered sheets for more than ¥ 70,000. Mother explains that she will be spending most of her time in bed from now on, returns the less expensive sheets, and buys the expensive ones, although Mitsuki is almost in tears: “Mother, you don’t have money. You shouldn’t be buying luxury items.” (Mizumura 2012, 37-38) When cleaning out the house in Chitose funabashi, Mitsuki finds many items her mother had bought at Isetan and never used. (ibid. 83) Yet her mother is depicted as never having worked for an income: She had supplemented the family income by knitting woolen kimono jackets. (ibid. 47) Her own father, Mitsuki’s grandfather, had initially tried to have her educated at the teachers’ seminary, but she did not pass the entrance exam. (ibid. 390) The money for the nursing home (and, later, for the inheritance) comes from the sale of the family home. The piece of land it is built upon has become valuable. (ibid. 47-48)

In paradoxical contrast, the grandmother, Omiya, had a profession (a profession with which Ozaki Kōyō was well acquainted). She was a geisha, and the daughter of a geisha. As a young girl she had lived with foster parents under one roof with a young man, a student of samurai background like Kan’ichi. The two young people fell in love, but the foster parents had set their hopes on the young man having a career in the bureaucracy and did not want him marrying the daughter of a geisha. She gave the young man up - whereupon, like Kan’ichi, he ran away and dropped out of university. Given her youth and beauty, Omiya was installed as a concubine by a wealthy patron in Kōbe. Almost as soon as this happened, the rich man’s wife died. Omiya thereupon became the official wife of the wealthy patron. When Mitsuki’s grandmother married the rich man, her foster parents were relieved, only to be aghast when she ran off with Mitsuki’s grandfather, the tutor of her children, leaving not only her husband, but also her two sons. Mitsuki’s grandfather did not marry Omiya, but at least acknowledged Mitsuki’s mother Noriko as his daughter. She grew up in a tenement in Ōsaka. (ibid. 374-395)

For the society of the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, Charlotte Perkins Stetson has this to say about “women and economics”:

“The girl who marries the rich old man or the titled profligate is condemned by the popular voice; and the girl who marries the poor young man, and helps him live his best, is still approved by the same arbiter. And yet why should we blame the woman for pursuing her vocation? Since marriage is her only way to get money, why should she not try to get money in that way? ... On the other hand, note the effect of this dependence upon men ... In simpler relations, in the country, wherever women have a personal value in economic relation as well as a feminine value in sex-relation, an early marriage is an advantage. The young farmer gets a profitable servant when he marries. The young business man gets nothing of the kind – a pretty girl, a charming girl, ready for »wifehood and motherhood« – so far as her health holds out, - but having no economic value whatever. She is merely a consumer, and he must wait until he can »afford to marry.«” (Stetson 1898: 93-94)<sup>16</sup>

Mitsuki’s grandmother Omiya would thus be the “girl who marries the rich old man,” while Mitsuki’s mother is the “pretty and charming girl ... of no economic value whatever.”

And Mitsuki herself? She has managed to find a niche as a teacher at a university, although she is described as having no particular aptitude for studying. It is evidently enough that she has spent a year in France and enjoys reading. Her translation work brings good money, even if it does not interest her particularly. (Mizumura 2012: 329-330) Most important, and unlike her mother, she has the capacity to be content with herself, with what she has, and – at least for a time – with Tetsuo. This becomes clear when the novel describes how Mitsuki occasionally helps out at Natsuki’s house when her older sister has company. The guests are mostly rich and connected in some way to the arts or music (Natsuki’s husband is a cellist), but Mitsuki cannot ever imagine them reading a book. She comes home, goes to bed, and leans her head on Tetsuo’s shoulder. “»Our home is the best.« »You don’t want anything, Mitsuki.« »Like I say, this is all I need.«” (Mizumura 2012: 331) Tetsuo is the unsatisfied one; he longs for a bigger and better apartment downtown. (ibid. 333) Soon he begins to have

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<sup>16</sup> As far as “a woman’s health holding out” is concerned, the depiction of “women and illness” is also an important theme in *Inheritance from Mother*. It unfortunately not possible to also treat this theme within the framework of this paper.

affairs. (ibid. 342-350) After shaking off the unsatisfied people in her life – her demanding mother and her philandering husband – Mitsuki moves into her new apartment, on March 10, 2011. (ibid. 521) The next day, while she is unpacking, the floor of the house shakes so violently she cannot stand. For two weeks, she is so numbed that she cannot continue to unpack. Finally it is April second:

“It was the second morning in April.

When she woke up and went into the living room, she could see through the golden colored organdy that a white cloud surrounded the pond. She held her breath and pulled the sheer curtain aside, and the white cloud was a cloud of cherry blossoms.

I am alive ... I am alive, like this.

I am happy – At that instant, Mitsuki felt that it would be a crime if she were not to feel that way.” (ibid. 532)<sup>17</sup>

Mitsuki’s modest proclamation, “I am happy” is the echo, and at the same time the resolution of her self-diagnosis at the beginning of the novel, “I am unhappy.” (ibid. 20) In between comes not only the chronicle of her mother’s death, but a description of the varying fortunes of the Katsura family, and more specifically of the lives of three women: grandmother, mother, and Mitsuki herself. In this detailed and careful description of Japanese women throughout the twentieth century, Mizumura Minae places herself squarely in the tradition of the short-lived school of Japanese realism and its doyen, Ozaki Kōyō.

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<sup>17</sup> Ellipsis (dots) and dash in the original.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Matthew Königsberg**

Matthew Königsberg studied Japanese Studies at the University of Virginia (USA) and the University of Hamburg in Germany. He took his Ph.D. at the University of Tübingen and has held academic positions at the University of Hamburg, Washington University (St. Louis) and Free University of Berlin, where he is currently employed. Academic research on teaching Japanese language and modern and pre-modern Japanese literature. Publications (in German) on the literature of the Korean minority in Japan and on literary realism in the works of Ozaki Kōyō.

Bérénice Leman  
ORCID: 0000-0002-3452-2646

## Supplementary Education in Japan: Issues and Prospects in a Growing Unequal Society

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.11

### ABSTRACT

The increasing spread of shadow education worldwide shows an evolution of school systems integrating more and more a commercial dimension of education. In Japan, this tendency is very strong especially since the several neoliberal reforms undertaken at the different levels of the education system since the 2000s.

The rapid expand of shadow education - that is *gakushū juku* and *yobikō* - did not use to be questioned in the context of rapid growth and mass-education of post-war Japan; however, in the new context of growing social inequalities that characterizes today's Japanese society, the stakes of private tutoring are changing.

Alongside the trend to invest into education at an early stage of schooling through using the services of private tutoring companies in order to access prestigious private lower secondary schools or even primary schools or kindergartens, an opposite tendency may be also observed – a growing number of young people compelled to refrain from entering higher education for economic reasons.

Recent studies have showed the impact of economic resources of families on children's academic performances as well as inequalities in academic results depending on whether children frequented private tutoring companies or not.

However, these facts run counter to the fundamental principles of equality of access in education, on which Japan was based on after World War II.

In this article, we will focus on the stakes and prospects of private tutoring in the context of growing inequalities, as well as on the impact of such a tendency towards merchandising education on the perceptions of education and society as a whole that Japanese youth develop - through their experiences.

**KEYWORDS:** Japan, supplementary education, inequalities, *gakushū juku*, *yobikō*

### Introduction

Japan's shadow education, taking place mainly at *gakushū juku* and *yobikō* (Figure 1) – that is educational businesses outside formal school where are taught academic subjects are taught – started to expand from the late 1960s

onward, along with the increasing proportion of students going to high school and university. At that time, attending a *gakushū juku* and *yobikō* was not put into question in the context of rapid economic growth. However, in the context of economic crisis and growing inequalities that has characterized Japan since the 1990s, the role and stakes of private tutoring have changed.

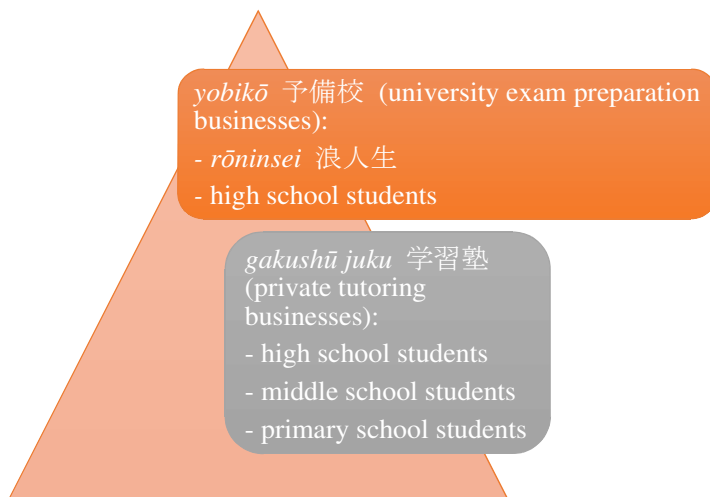


Figure 1: *Yobikō* and *gakushū juku*

In the first place, we will present the development of shadow education in the context of post-war Japan’s mass education and meritocratic educational system, characterized by a high social mobility. Then we will show how the role of Japanese education system as a meritocratic “social elevator” started to decline since the 1990s, as a consequence of the economic recession.

Finally, we will present the new role and stakes of shadow education in the context of a growing unequal society.

### 1. Mass-Education and Meritocracy in Post-War Japan

Japan’s shadow education developed rapidly from the late 1960s onwards. Along with the postwar educational expansion, the number of young Japanese attending a *gakushū juku* or a *yobikō* also increased.

An official national survey on shadow education was first conducted in 1976 by the Ministry of Education in order to monitor the growth of the phenomenon. It was in response to several media reports focusing on the

downsides of excessive shadow education in the 1970s. Actually, as a result of the rapid expansion of enrollment rates at high school between 1960 and 1980 which increased from 57.7% to 94.2%, almost all of young people became eligible for tertiary education. As a consequence, the competition for university places, whose access continued to be limited, became fiercer, and shadow education, until then was mostly used by elite students, expanded rapidly through the 1970s and 1980s. During this time, taking lessons at a *gakushū juku* or a *yūbikō* became a “normal” activity that not only involved high school students or high school graduates retaking exams (i.e. *rōnin*), but also spread to include middle school students and to a lesser extent – elementary school students.

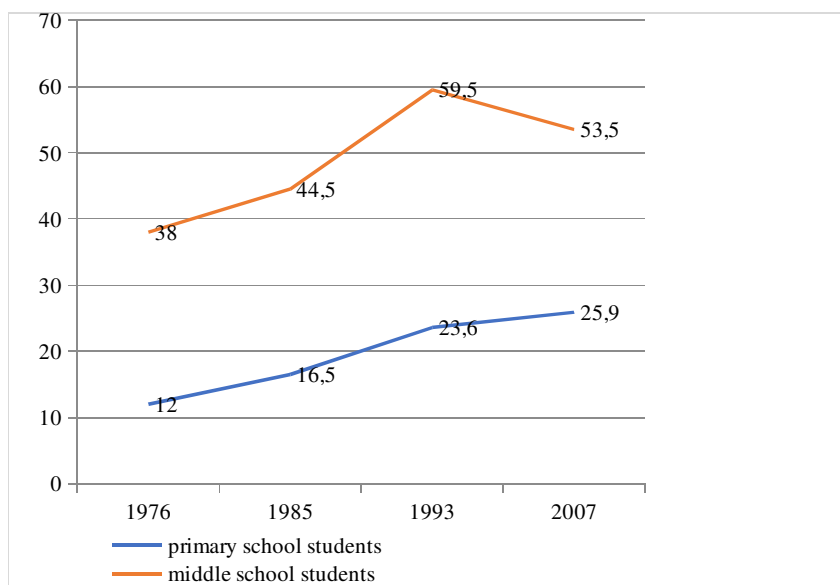


Figure 2: Evolution of *gakushū* attendance rates by primary school and middle school students (MEXT 2008)

In addition, the institution of a widely known hierarchy of universities with tight links to status levels in the white-collar labour market contributed to the competition among high school students in order to be accepted at the “best university possible” (Galan 2018).

At that time, shadow education was not questioned in terms of “equity” since the majority of people – belonging to what most believed to be the “new middle class” – could afford it. Furthermore, the Japanese conception

of the child, which assumes that all children have identical capacities and that results are determined by their efforts (Galan 2005), has probably encouraged many families to embark in good faith on the path of academic competition and to have recourse to private tutoring as an education strategy. Moreover, the education system was considered egalitarian and meritocratic, and social promotion through education was guaranteed. As Kariya Takehiko explained, Japan’s late industrialization progressed at a rapid pace and a large-scale occupational transformation accompanying this process occurred over a very short time period of thirty years, from 1950 to 1980. The rapid speed of educational expansion in secondary education took place more or less in parallel so that “structural mobility” was large both in the realm of employment and in the realm of education (Kariya 2013). A strong symbiotic relationship between systems of secondary and higher education and economic structures developed so that schools increasingly became more and more feeders for the economic institutions. Therefore, a kind of educational/economic pipeline (Figure 2) emerged, at least in the popular imagination.

図表 9 - 1 パイプライン・システムの概念図

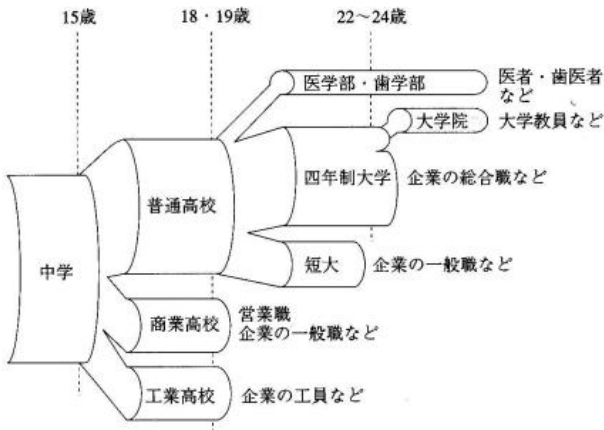


Figure 3: Educational/economic pipeline system (Yamada 2009)

This system is represented by an offshoot of pipelines through which students are carried and automatically find a job corresponding to the level of their diploma. For instance, after graduating from an industrial high school (*kōgyō kōkō* 工業高校) one could become a regular employee in a

factory; after graduating a commercial high school (*shōgyō kōkō* 商業高校) one could work in the commercial service of a medium-sized company; graduating from a junior college (*tandai* 短大) allowed one to get an ordinary job in a big company; a graduate from university (*yonensei daigaku* 四年生大学) could be employed as a white-collar worker in a big company (Yamada 2009).

Social selection by education rapidly expanded into a mass phenomenon so that most young people belonging to the generation that went to high school in the 1970s could experience for the first time meritocratic selection through schooling. As a matter of fact, the affluence brought by high growth removed, albeit not completely, the obstacle of limited household means as a barrier advancement to high school. Having experienced such a high social fluidity in a short period had a considerable impact on the popular perception of education as a means of climbing up the social ladder.

## 2. Transition Towards an Unequal Society

However, the bursting of the financial bubble in the early 1990s and the ensuing recession have profoundly changed Japanese society and its job market. Consequently, the role of Japanese education system as a meritocratic “social elevator” started to decline. Young graduates had more and more difficulty in finding a job adequate to their level of qualification. A university degree did not guarantee any more a white-collar job in a well-known company. For instance, between 1991 and 2000, the graduate rate employment fell from 81.3% to 55.8% (MEXT 2017). The excessive cost of university education and the very few “real scholarships” (that do not need to be repaid), have compelled increasing numbers of students to quit university. Moreover, a growing number of graduates are driven into debts because they are unable to repay the great financial burden of the “scholarships”, or shall we say “student loan”, that they have received in order to study at university. Therefore, we may say that Japanese society has been caught in what Louis Chauvel, a French sociologist, calls the “spiral of decline”, that is the emergence of intergenerational poverty (a cycle of poverty of poor families who become impoverished for several generations) (Chauvel 2016).

The pipeline has, in the minds of many, broken (Figure 3). Although the end of the pipeline is getting smaller in terms of employment opportunities, the size of the pipeline does not change. In some case, it also gets bigger (for instance graduate schools accept more students). Consequently, pipelines start breaking up and leaking. Therefore, graduating from a given

school does not guarantee anymore getting a job corresponding to the level of qualification.

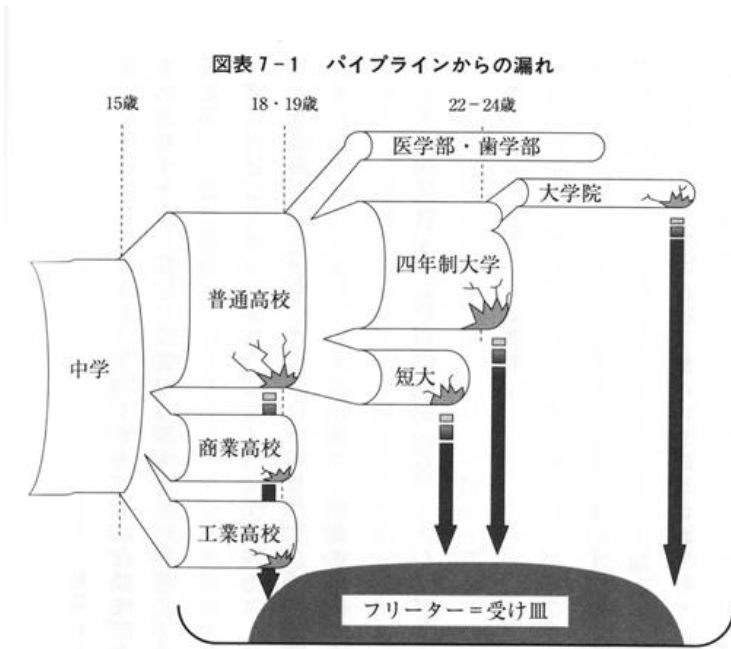


Figure 4: Broken pipeline system (Yamada 2009)

According to Yamada, this reality has profoundly transformed the relationship between families and universities and, more widely, the entire education system, which degenerated into a breach of trust.

Therefore, a feeling of despair has started to spread among young people who began questioning the pertinence of such sacrifices in terms of financial as well as personal investment: “Is it worth studying so hard and spending so much money if there is no reward in the end?” (Yamada 2009). The declining faith in the education system was reflected in the last decades among young Japanese people as a decline in the motivation to study. Nonetheless, this group is not homogeneous with respect to motivation. As Kariya Takehiko’s statistical analysis demonstrated, class disparities in study effort (measured by the amount of learning time outside school) expanded in the years 1980-2000. In other words, there is an increasing polarization occurring on a social basis between students who are highly motivated or make continued effort, and those who merely try to



get by or disengage from study altogether. That is what Kariya calls the “incentive divide” (Kariya 2013).

In a recent study, Mimizuka Hiroaki has demonstrated a strong impact of attending a *shingaku juku* (*gōkōshū juku* specialized in preparation for entrance exams) on academic performance among sixth year’s primary school students in the Kanto area. In order to measure only the impact of *gōkōshū juku*, he isolated the variables related to the children’s family background such as “family’s wealth” and “family’s cultural background”. The grades (in arithmetics) of students who attended a *shingaku juku* were considerably higher than those of students who did not (Mimizuka 2014). As the distribution of grades shows, whereas the non-attenders’ grades reach a peak around 30-39 points (21%), for those of the attenders’ a peak can be seen at 90 points and more (21.9%).

Score	< 10	10 ≤ 19	20 ≤ 29	30 ≤ 39	40 ≤ 49	50 ≤ 59	60 ≤ 69	70 ≤ 79	80 ≤ 89	≥ 90
Not attending (%)	3,6	9,9	17	21	19	15,9	7,4	3,1	1,8	0,8
Attending (%)	1,2	1,2	7	6,4	12,2	14,1	12,2	10,3	12,9	21,9

Figure 5: Distribution of grades of 6<sup>th</sup> year primary school students in arithmetics depending on they went to a *shingaku juku* or not (Kanto area) (2003) (Mimizuka 2014)

In his report, Mimizuka has also highlighted the different variables that have an influence on the school results in descending order: (1) out-of-school investment, (2) parents’ educational aspirations, (3) income, (4) mothers’ diploma. This suggests that school’s grades of children living in large urban zones tend to be highly determined by their families’ socioeconomic background and families’ educational practices. Mimizuka identifies therefore a rise of what he calls “parentocracy”: nowadays, the parents’ wealth and aspirations determine their children’s school achievements, instead of the children’s ability and efforts as it used to be in the late meritocracy.

On one hand, there is fierce competition to get into the few pipelines that still work properly (i.e. guarantee a good job upon graduation, a case in point being medical studies which apply a strict quota). For those whose

family has chosen such an elitist path, the competition is fierce and starts at an early age, as shows by the constantly rising rate of children taking entrance exams at private and national middle schools, especially in Tōkyō metropolitan area in the last decades. For instance, in this area, the percentage of children enrolled in the last year of primary school that were registered for an entrance exam in a middle school (private, national or public combining middle and high schools) has more than doubled between 1986 and 2008 from 8% to 20.6% (Nichinōken shingaku jōhō shitsu, 2008). In Tōkyō, 25.4% of children are enrolled in a private or national middle school as opposed to the Japanese average of 7.9% (Nikkei 2014). Needless to say that in order to be accepted by a private middle school, preparation in a *shingaku juku* is necessary. Given the expense of the preparation for entrance examinations of private schools at a *shingaku juku*, not to mention the tuition and fees charged by the private schools themselves, differences in economic resources are bound to matter (Kariya 2013).

On the other hand, money has become a barrier to education, especially tertiary education as the recent rise in university dropout rates suggests (*chūto taigakusha* 中途退学者) of recent years: from 2.41% in 2007 to 2.65% in 2012, according to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Education (MEXT, 2014). According to the same survey, in 2012 the percentage of students who left college temporarily (*kyūgakusha* 休学者) was 2.3% as opposed to 1.7% in 2007. The lack of money was the top reason given by students who quit (20,4%) or took leave from university (15,5%). By contrast, only 14% and 15,4% respectively did so in 2007. Therefore, as we can see, there is on one side a tendency among privileged families to choose elitist educational paths, whereas on the other hand, students have to drop out for economic reasons.

### 3. Stakes and Prospects of Shadow Education

In such an unequal society, it appears that going to a *gōkōshū juku* heavily influences children's future educational path, and consequently their future professional life. More than a “simple individual choice”, going to a *gōkōshū juku* also has, on a larger scale, a decisive impact on society as a whole since it tends to make competition even more unfair.

This situation has led to what Yamada Masahiro calls a “society with unequal hopes” (*kibō kakusa shakai* 希望格差社会), that is a society in which there emerges a bipolarization between those whose efforts are rewarded (i.e. the “winners”, *kachigumi* 勝ち組) and those whose efforts are useless (i.e. the “losers”, *makegumi* 負け組). Yamada thus compares

this situation of limited access to employment to the one depicted in the book (and film) *Battle Royale*<sup>1</sup>, that is a metaphor of Japanese society in which only the winners' group survives:

勝ち組（期待通りの職に就け、当該の学校に行くという努力が報われた人）は、「敗者は自己責任」と無関心にならざるをえない。逆に、教育負け組（学校に入っても、期待する職に就けない人）は、努力が無駄になると絶望を感じ、かつ、努力が無駄になった責任を自分で追わなければならない。（Yamada 2009）

“The winners’ group, that is those who managed to find the job that they expected and thus had their educational efforts rewarded, is bound to feel indifferent to the losers. The former consider that the latter are entirely responsible for their failure. Conversely, the losers’ group, that is those who, despite they graduated, did not manage to find the job that they expected, are driven to despair by the discovery that their efforts were useless and they have to bear full responsibility for this uselessness.”

This reality makes academic competition even more unequal and contributes to increase a feeling of despair among young people, influencing the students’ motivation to study, especially of those from underprivileged backgrounds, and has led to what Kariya has called the “incentive divide”.

In this context, the role of *gakushū juku* and *yobikō* has changed. One of the main results that came out of our doctoral fieldwork<sup>2</sup> was that they tended to be considered by students as “hope and motivation providers”: They do more than just transmitting knowledge, they try hard to motivate students by convincing them that their efforts will be useful and rewarded. In that sense, one of their new functions in this context of “collective disillusionment” (Galan 2018), is to provide hope and motivation for

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<sup>1</sup> *Battle Royale* is a movie directed by Kinji Fukasaku and based on the eponymous book written by Kōshun Takami.

<sup>2</sup> Our fieldwork took place in 2012-2013 in a well-known and private university of Tōkyō among a hundred students. We used both questionnaires and interviews, asking students about their admission to university. The aim was to identify the different factors (social, economic and cultural background), previous education (high school) and *gakushū juku* and/or *yobikō* attendance that had influenced their educational career.

students. Thus, many students explained that they went to *gakushū juku* or *yobikō* in order to get motivation to study:

家で自主的に勉強するのが大変で、周りの子も通っていたから。

“It was hard to study alone at home and other students around me also went there.”

私は課題をだされたり、見はる人がいないと勉強が進まない性格だったから。

“If there is no one behind me to give me homework and keep an eye on me, I don’t study.”

英語の授業に関してのみですが、やる気がでない時でも、一定の量の問題が出るので勉強をつづけられたため。

“I took only English lessons but since we regularly had exercises to do, I could keep on studying even when I didn’t feel motivated.”

自習ができない人間だったので家でない所強制的に勉強させようと思った

“Since I can’t study alone, I wanted to force myself to study outside home.”

This tendency was confirmed also by a *juku* director we interviewed. He explained that the main problem they had to deal with nowadays was children’s lack of desire to study:

日本では90年ぐらいから学力低下ということ随分言われているのですが、我々はその学力低下の手前にもっと大きな問題があると思ったんです。それはつまり学習意欲の低下です。[...] さらに今度は学習そのものの崩壊が始まったんです。つまり生徒からの質問で多いのが「先生勉強の仕方がわからない」今の子供はすぐそれを言います。

“Since the 1990s, the problem of the decline of academic level has been pointed out in Japan, but comparatively we think that the main problem is the decline of the desire to study.

In addition, there is a new problem emerging: »the collapse in learning«. In other words, students often say: »I don’t know how to study.« Today’s children say that right away.”

In the context of “collective disillusionment” that applies to the current reality of young Japanese people, who experience higher difficulties to find a job corresponding to their level of diplomas, *gōkōshū juku* and *yōbikō*’s new role consists in providing motivation and hope to students in order to legitimize their own existence. Furthermore, given the growing financial difficulties faced by families struggling to pay university fees, the issue of the burden of educational expenses can no longer be neglected. New measures such as the introduction of new, non-repayable scholarships, which do not need to be refunded, have been undertaken by the government. Moreover, in order to provide to poor families, in April 2015 the government introduced a new “Law of assistance for the autonomy of destitute people” (*seikatsu konkyūsha shien seido* 生活困窮者支援制度). It aims at preventing as a preventive measure against intergenerational poverty through education (Koseirōdōshō 2013 : 9). In order to do so, it finances a new kind of “free *juku*” (*mōryō juku* 無料塾). These *mōryō juku* 無料塾 are meant to provide more equal educational opportunities to young people who cannot afford to pay for a *gōkōshū juku* or a *yōbikō*.

## Conclusion

In the new context of growing social inequalities that characterizes contemporary Japanese society, the stakes of private tutoring are changing. Since the 1990s, it has no longer been accessible to a majority of the population. On the one hand, the economic background of families (that materializes through *gōkōshū juku* or *yōbikō* investment) has more impact on the educational destiny of children. On the other hand, we observe a growing number of young people compelled to drop out of higher education for economic reasons.

However, it should be recognized that the government’s position is still ambiguous since public money is invested at the periphery of the education system, that is in free supplementary education or “free *juku*”, instead of inside the public education system. Acting this way, the government contributes to reinforcing the dependance of schools and families on

supplementary education, and therefore encourages families to feel even more responsible for their children's education.

Furthermore, it is also paradoxical to notice that among the providers of free supplementary education activities within the legal framework of the "Law of assistance for the autonomy of destitute people", there are also private supplementary education companies.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Bérénice Leman**

Bérénice Leman is a contractual teacher at the university Jean Jaurès in Toulouse.

She obtained a Ph.D. in Japanese studies at INALCO in 2016. Her researches are about supplementary education in Japan, that is *gakushū juku* and *yobikō*, and its impact on the schooling of children and teenagers and on their life after “regular” school.



Sylva Martinásková  
ORCID: 0000-0001-7727-3750

## “New Nature” in Modern Japanese Tanka and Haiku Poetry<sup>1</sup>

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.12

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to present and demonstrate various concepts of *new nature* as portrayed in modern Japanese tanka and haiku poetry. I attempt to demonstrate that even man-made objects surrounding humanity in modern times can play a role very similar to traditional natural elements in poetry. They can help express the feelings of poets, reflect perceptions of today’s world and enable readers to comprehend various aspects of life.

**KEYWORDS:** tanka, haiku, new nature, urban poetry, modernization of Japan

### Introduction

What is nature? How are poets affected by the environment that surrounds them? What does nature look like in present-day towns and cities, and how successful are modern Japanese poets in *reading* it and *writing about* it? These are just a few questions that come to mind when thinking about the gradual transformation that Japanese traditional poetry has undergone for approximately the last 130 years. The purpose of this paper is to examine various possible forms and meanings of *new nature* representation in modern Japanese tanka and haiku poetry.

There is first a need to define the term *nature*. When attempting to grasp this term, a variety of definitions arise. Webster’s dictionary defines it, for example, as “the material world, esp. as surrounding man and existing independently of his activities”, “the natural world as it exists without man or his civilization”, or “the elements of the natural world, as mountains, trees, animals, rivers, etc.” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language 1996), while the online dictionary by

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented on 8th December 2017 at the international conference “Problems and Perspectives for Japan in a Changing World: Thirty Years of Japanese Studies in Poznan” organized by the Department of Japanese Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. Writing and publication of this article was possible due to the financial support of Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc, Fund for the support of scientific activities FPVC2015/08.

Merriam-Webster, among other possible definitions, provides an interpretation as “the external world in its entirety”, or simply “natural scenery” (Merriam-Webster, online). *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, in comparison, views *nature* as “all the plants, animals and things that exist in the universe that are not made by people” (OALD, online).

The main reason why I think it essential to revise the term *nature* in modern times is the fact that the majority of people in developed countries spend most of their time in towns and cities, surrounded by objects which have very little in common with the traditional concept of *nature*. Understanding the concept of *nature* in the traditional way (as *OALD* puts it) would make us realize the grim fact that nowadays, in many modern cities, there is actually *hardly any nature* at all. Given such conditions, *nature in the city* would almost be an oxymoron. However, as nature in the old, traditional concept has always been a great, inexhaustible source of inspiration for artists all over the world, including, of course, Japanese poetry, I believe that the current look and shape of towns and cities might have a very similar impact on present-day poets as nature used to have in the past. I believe that even a city, seemingly unpoetic and unlyrical, can be acceptable as a nature-like source of inspiration provided that it is treated as such: including the reflection of the seasons, cyclical rhythms, the stimulating urban environment, objects and phenomena awakening emotions, etc. This realization has led me to re-define the key term, which is why I have decided to introduce the term *new nature* in a broader meaning.

People of the modern era live and exist inside cities full of buildings and roads, cars and heavy machinery in the streets, etc. For many of them, however, these elements of the city are nothing but objects surrounding them, a kind of setting, and not necessarily the core of their lives (unless they are, for example, construction workers or bus drivers). This is why I decided to also include in the revised definition these originally man-made objects (which of course do not exist “naturally”), creating a background or a setting to our lives. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, I understand the term *nature*, or more precisely *new nature*, in a slightly broader sense, as follows: “the external world, consisting of plants, animals, things and phenomena, surrounding human beings in their everyday lives, including objects both existing on their own, and those made by people, either within or outside towns and cities.” Simply put, everything that surrounds us.

One might want to ask: What then does nature mean to a poet? What does nature in poetry mean to a reader? Nature is the fundamental characteristic and the most obvious tie between both Japanese old and modern poetry. Nature plays a key role in Japanese poetry, as it very often means much more than merely the scenery itself. Nature serves as an inspiration for poets, helping them awaken and stimulate their emotions. Nature helps them cope with and express their feelings and their thoughts on life and nature reflects the world in which they live.

The concept of nature captured in Japanese poetry of the traditional genres *tanka* and *haiku* was more or less in accordance with the *OALD* definition cited above up until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, the situation in Japanese poetry of the modern period (dating from Meiji era, 1868–1912) is not completely the same as it used to be in the pre-modern era, or even earlier. If one compares *haiku* poetry by Matsuo Bashō, Kobayashi Issa and Yosa Busson with poems in the same form by Masaoka Shiki, Takahama Kyoshi and Kawahigashi Hekigotō, it is apparent that they differ a great deal in objects and the image of *nature* captured in them, but are very similar in terms of poetic attitude toward their surroundings. One might also conclude this in the case of *tanka* poetry: from Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, Ariwara no Narihira and Ono no Komachi, to Yosano Akiko to Kaneko Tōta and Tawara Machi—one sees, reads and senses emotions and feelings of the same intensity and sincerity, just wrapped in slightly different scenes and vocabulary. This leads me to believe that the poetry composed by the great old masters and that by modern poets actually has much in common. The main link between them is the interest in depicting and reflecting the beauty of nature, and use of various natural motifs as symbols to express the poet’s emotions and feelings.

What *is* quite different is the shape or look of nature in the modern period. Many people composing and publishing *tanka* and *haiku* these days, unlike those of previous centuries, spend most of their lives in crowded towns and cities full of technological devices. Due to massive urbanization, which in the case of Japan began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, people moved to cities, leaving behind the countryside with all its so praised, beautiful nature. Gradually, a number of people have, unfortunately, become slightly less sensitive and perceptive to various natural phenomena. Over the course of time, however, poets living in cities have learned to recognize a new kind of nature surrounding them. Although the urban setting is not what one usually understands as poetical or lyrical, one might be surprised at how much poetic inspiration the city provides. And owing to poets, it is also possible for readers to sense the poetic character of the city.

In the lines that follow, the main focus is on various kinds of *new nature* representation. A classification of the analysed poems into four categories is also introduced, based on the ways I read or decode the possible message of the selected poems: a) a clash between elements of *old* and *new nature*, b) a city represented as a living organism, c) an account of today's world, and finally d) order in chaos. I will support my ideas by quoting example poems to illustrate each category.

### ***Old Nature Meets New Nature***

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to general modernization and industrialization, the Japanese countryside was crossed by railroads, bridges and tunnels. It was not only the countryside which was affected by major changes. Due to massive urbanization, typical Japanese towns were gradually transformed from a backward pre-modern area into developed cities with Western-style brick buildings, factories, steel structures, and progressive means of transport; this soon began to be reflected in literature, including poetry. There are consequently a large number of poems in Japanese poetry combining objects from the traditional countryside (*old nature*) and items of the modern world (*new nature*) that have appeared in Japan since the Meiji period. A case in point may be the following poem by Masaoka Shiki:

瀛車道の一すぢ長し冬木立 (Masaoka 2002: 31)

‘A single long track  
Of the railroad,  
A winter’s grove’

This combination of an old image of Japan (here represented by “grove”) and a new one (here “railroad”) is very frequent in Meiji-period poetry, when the appearance of innovations was quite frequent. The decades when railways were being introduced in Japan witnessed a huge increase in poetry depicting railroads, steam locomotives, and trains, among other things. These, together with bridges, tunnels, and railway stations, are definitely the most common examples of the role of *new nature* outside towns and cities.

Gradual changes in Japan’s appearance were much more apparent, however, in cities. Leaving behind the previous setting, and at the same time following the leading idea of Shiki’s term *shasei*, or sketches from

life<sup>2</sup>, poets began to focus more often on what they could see *in* towns. Thus *urban poetry* emerged, which is now an integral part of Japanese poetry. Even within urban poetry several subcategories of poems, according to their specific thematic orientation, can be identified. Moving to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, poems reflecting the industrialization of Japan are increasingly frequent, therefore suggesting a subcategory of *industrial poetry*. A good example of this sub-genre can be found in the poetry of Nishimura Yōkichi:

夕おそく、佇みてをれど  
 対岸の、  
 工場の音はやまざりしかも。(Gendai kashū, 50)

‘Late in the evening, I am standing still,  
 But on the opposite bank  
 The sound of the factory will not cease’

The author captures the pulsating industrial zone, which helps push the country’s economy forward. The upper and lower parts of this tanka (*kami no ku* and *shimo no ku*) provide a remarkable contrast between a seemingly peaceful night and the undying rhythm of the factory. What is more, to present an even more impressive image of the scenery in front of his eyes, Nishimura also emphasized the scene by a very specific, noteworthy and rather untraditional line arrangement, accentuating the idea of two river banks alongside a river.

In Meiji- and Taishō-period (1912–1926) poetry, the combination of *old nature* and *new nature* is quite frequent in cases when the author is trying to draw the reader’s attention to a surprising, new, somewhat rare and still unusual object or phenomenon in the countryside that catches the viewer’s eye. Poetry at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, in contrast, provides many more examples of poems in which neither the poet nor the reader are surprised by what they can see. Much more often we receive the first impression that the image captured in the poem is nothing but a description of *present-day nature*, as in the poems below:

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<sup>2</sup> That is the aim to depict what the poet can see and feel, in the most realistic way (see Beichman 2002).

Muramatsu Toshiko:

常ならば早苗のゆるる田の面にソーラーパネル音なく光る  
(*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2015, 150)

'On the surface of a paddy field,  
Where sprouts of rice shake,  
Solar panels shine,  
Without making any noise'

Gotō Yōko:

黒ぐるとソーラーパネルの並ぶ屋根雹の白粒跳びはねており  
(*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2014, 126)

'Roofs covered  
With black solar panels,  
White hailstones hop up and down'

Sometimes, *old nature* disappears, and the scenery is completely taken over by *new nature*, as in the following example by Ariga Chieko:

ソーラーパネル空港際に並び立つ大きな電力集めんとして  
(*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2015, 320)

'Solar panels situated  
Next to the airport,  
Gathering a large amount of energy'

Some of these poems may, and very likely do, carry a much deeper message. Some can be taken as pure descriptions of scenery, while others can undoubtedly be read in a slightly more critical way. While it is definitely beneficial to use solar energy, not all of these poets seem happy about the current shape of the countryside, although one very rarely finds poems explicitly expressing harsh criticism and dislike of this state or situation. As Zdenka Švarcová (2012) points out, haiku (and I believe that this is valid for tanka as well) is poetry which almost lacks any negative emotions. If one, however, reads between the lines, a certain displeasure might be decoded in some of these poems. A seemingly neutral utterance may suggest, for example, regret about the evanescence and loss of the world as we used to know it in the past.

Occasionally, one finds poems reflecting *new nature* in a way which expresses the author's disagreement with the gradual development and transformation of scenery. This is evident, for example, in the 1916 poem by Nishimura Yōkichi:

はてもなき、家家の海、  
 春の日の、  
 この東京のなんといふ汚なさ！ (*Gendai kashū*, 51)

‘Endless sea of houses,  
 On a spring day,  
 This Tokyo dirt!’

The upper verse (*kami no ku*) with the metaphor “sea of houses” (*ieie no umi*) gives an impression of an almost lyrical scenery. In the lower verse (*shimo no ku*), however, the author expresses how disgusted he feels (which is stressed even by the exclamation mark) about the current shape and look of Japan's metropolis caused by the ongoing modernization. This creates a dramatic and surprising twist in the message of the poem, which is so typical of *tanka* poetry.

One might also notice additional similarities with the original concept of nature, among other things, the cyclicity of nature—traditionally the changing of the seasons, the rotation of dawn-daylight-dusk-night, or the circle of life. In the city poems I have analysed, I have found examples expressing the cyclicity on a 24-hour basis. They mostly show the rhythm of the day copying office hours, or the beginning of nightlife, as in the following example poem by Takei Yasuko:

東京の街の午後五時林立のビルうつりみる川より暮るる  
 (*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2015, 313)

‘Tokyo at five o'clock in the afternoon  
 It grows dark from the river,  
 Reflecting the bristle of the buildings’

Generally speaking, it is not unusual to see day cycles which are *not* determined by the sunset or sunrise, but rather by the neon lights shining in the night streets. A different type of cycle (year cycles) can be traced, for example, by the changing fashion of clothes in shop-windows. Needless to say, the latter version is more common in the case of poems by women.

Tawara Machi, in contrast, offers an example of a poem set in spring, but completely denying the natural cyclicity of seasons:

咲くことも	‘The winds of spring
散ることもなく	Blow at the telephone pole
天に向く	They bear no blossoms,
電信柱に吹く	Have no petals to scatter,
春の風	And point up to heaven.’ <sup>3</sup> (Tawara 1988, 52)

This, I believe, is another suitable example of expressing the reality of *new nature*. Whereas several hundred years ago the wind would very likely be blowing through the blossoms of a beautiful sakura or plum tree, reminding the observer of the spring season, here it is the *absence* of a key element of the traditionally spring scene that makes us recall what the real spring used to look like.

### The City as a Living Organism

Apart from describing the city, Japanese poets also tend to reflect upon the ongoing massive and perhaps unstoppable development of cities. In urban poetry, a great deal of attention is paid to buildings, construction works, roads and bridges, cars and various other machinery, traffic lights and pedestrian crossings, etc. All of these items together form a “body” or an “organism”, which *is* the city. One receives an image of a personified city and personified objects in it as if the poet described a living creature. The “bodies” of cities are literally “growing”, as they keep spreading to further areas, “swallowing” smaller towns and villages, and “growing up” with numerous newly-built skyscrapers. In these cases, poems reflecting modern cities, without mentioning any people, are not rare at all. The following poem by Tawara Machi is an apposite example of such a city personification:

タクシーの河の流れの	‘Pedestrian-crossing
午前二時	Sleeping undisturbed in
眠り続ける	An endless river
横断歩道	Of rushing taxicabs
	At two in the morning... <sup>4</sup> (Tawara 1988, 46)

<sup>3</sup> English translation by Jack Stamm.

<sup>4</sup> English translation by Jack Stamm.



The city, fairly lively and full of people and cars rushing through the streets by day, is quite different late at night: there are no pedestrians in sight (thus the pedestrian-crossings can be “sleeping undisturbed”), while the only movement is provided by taxis probably transporting passengers from place to place (perhaps from and to clubs and bars, and back home)—i.e. people enjoying the nightlife that is not evident outside. The only apparent activity is the one of the “river of taxicabs” in streets—just like blood flowing through the veins of a body sleeping quietly.

Further developments are also quite often captured by the presence of a crane in poems. This huge device, which helps the city spread to areas farther away, is also very frequently included in personification, as if the city were stretching its arms, trying to reach high up to the skies, or pointing to a remote place—as in the following example by Asahi Toshiko:

休日の埠頭にクレーンは腕高く伸ばして冬の空を指しをり  
(*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2001, 414)

‘A wharf on a day off,  
A crane is stretching its arm high,  
Pointing to the winter skies’

Nonetheless, it should be emphasized here that personification is by no means a new thing in Japanese poetry. Traditional haiku poems provide a number of examples when e.g. a mountain “sleeps”, “gets dressed”, etc. Examples from modern poetry, such as the one cited above, once again show the transformation of the objects captured in them. Mountains might be substituted by skyscrapers, rivers by streets, trees by telephone poles, while all of these could seem to become “alive” at a certain moment.

### **An Account of Today’s World and Society**

Poetic reflections on the daily use objects surrounding us offers, apart from other findings, a surprising and seemingly unpoetic view of contemporary society, because the place *where* we live influences the *way* we live. Things that we mostly perceive as absolutely common, ordinary, unexceptional, and almost take for granted, might not necessarily draw our attention. A poet, in contrast, is endowed with a much more observant and attentive eye, and notices things that we are very likely to overlook and ignore.

When one moves further on to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the remarks on the current way of life may serve to make us realize how

much our lives differ from those that people lived not just centuries, but only decades ago. This change has been aptly expressed in poems by the two following women poets.

Harada Natsuko:

エレベーター・エスカレーター・動く歩道歩け歩けは昔となりて

(*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2015, 141)

‘Elevators, escalators, moving pavements

“Walk! Walk!”

Seems to be a thing of the past’

Takahashi Michiko:

あれこれの機器のボタンを押すくらしこの簡便の母になかりし

(*Gendai Man'yōshū* 2001, 314)

‘Push the button

On a machine here and there,

My mother never had such an easy life’

Instead of admiring the pathos of an old tea kettle, for example, the poets notice other ordinary objects that are a common part of their lives. These items catch their eye, the poets pause for a while, and observing them, they realize something deeper about the life they (or we) are living. And the message delivered to the reader is often startling. This is again, however, a very traditional approach to Japanese poetry. A haiku should, among other things, contain a certain surprising element, which should arise from a sudden new realization, surprise, emotion (Tanayama 1996, 30), and should provide a fresh and original perspective. There is also a similar rule in tanka poetry— the *shimo no ku* usually offers a twisted meaning to the *kami no ku*, or develops it in a way that was not really expected.

### Order in Chaos

A fresh new look at modern cities is provided by poems in which poets observe their surroundings from a distance, from a remote vantage point or from above. The poet draws our attention to the lines of streets (sometimes resembling rivers), the green areas of city parks and flowerbeds,

skyscrapers towering up in the distance like mountains, etc. Looking at the city from a distance and becoming aware of how complicated, diverse and tangled the modern habitat of humans is, can help or make us comprehend what tiny creatures in this huge universe we actually are. This enables us to find beauty (the beauty of nature) even in places unexpected. A remarkable view of a modernizing urban area (again highlighted by a special verse arrangement) has been captured in this 1934 poem by Watanabe Junzō:

近代的工場地帯は区劃整然と  
運河あり  
鉄道あり  
クレーンは高く。(Gendai kashū, 242)

‘Modern factory zone systematically divided,  
There is a canal,  
There is a railroad,  
A crane reaching high.’

Observing the industrial zone from a slightly remote place enables us to perceive it as a systematically arranged complex. Passing through this area, crossing a canal, or walking beneath a crane would probably not give us the same impression of the place.

The following two examples bring us back to the compulsion to seek and find nature even inside a city. One would not normally expect that a person spending long hours working in an office of a high-rise building would all of sudden be tempted to express their nature-inspired feelings, as in the next two poems.

Hashimoto Miyoko:  
ファクシミリ紫雲英田一枚送りましたし (Gendai shikashū, 71)

‘A field of lotus flowers,  
I’d love to send  
A sheet of them by fax’

Motoda Tetsuyo:  
四十階に見おろしをれば街中の鶴見川おだし秋深みつつ  
(Gendai Man’yōshū 2001, 49)

‘I look down from the 40<sup>th</sup> floor,  
Tsurumi-gawa flowing through the city centre,  
Deep autumn’

Watching the rush of the streets from an upper floor of a high-rise building enables us to ignore the rush, noise, or pollution—i.e. the *chaos of the city*, which disappears in this perspective. These higher and larger units seem to bring peace and order into the chaos of everyday life. It is, thus, a curious paradox that getting *further away* from the city surrounding us can actually bring us *closer* to the nature *inside* the city. The distance helps us see what normally remains unseen, if we are absorbed *by* and *in* the city. From above, the chaos of the hectic city can finally seem to have settled and have a certain order.

### Conclusion

This paper has presented the concept of *new nature*, as defined above, in modern Japanese poetry, and has shown that *new nature* has a very similar (if not the same) validity as *old nature* traditionally captured and included in Japanese poetry of the classical to pre-modern periods. In my opinion, there is a special “added value“ in *new nature* poetry. Not only does it enable us to admire and enjoy the look of charming scenery inside modern cities, it can also contain and deliver additional information and impressions of what is “behind” the captured items and images. Thus, even the modern city with various modern technological objects and buildings can provide poets with a great deal of nature-like inspiration.

To quote Brower and Miner, “the scene described is usually nature, but a nature which is symbolic of man—a human experience of beauty, transience, loss, salvation, and so on.” (Brower and Miner 1957, 526) From my point of view, extending the definition of nature onto the objects of the modern, man-made world can help us realize a great deal not only about the current look of nature, but also—and even more—about ourselves. In the same way the old, great masters did not merely describe what literally surrounded them but also reflected in their poems the transience of being, human fate, emotions toward another person, or the cyclicity of the world and the universe. Modern poets, on the other hand, are able to notice the rush of life in contemporary society, the unbelievably rapid changes in lifestyles, a gradual loss of *old nature*, or even the tininess of a human being within the huge, pulsating body of a modern city and of the modern world.

No matter how much *new nature* differs from what used to inspire the great masters of the past, the city contains and offers a great deal of poetic potential, and all the poet has to do is: *Stop – look – feel it*. If and when this is done, we realize that not only do we have a city in poetry, we can also find poetry in a city.

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## **AUTHOR’S PROFILE**

### **Sylva Martinášková**

In 2014 received her Ph.D. degree in the field of Theory of Literature, at Palacký University in Olomouc. An assistant professor at the Department of Asian Studies at Faculty of Arts, Palacký University Olomouc. Her current research is focused on traditional Japanese poetry in the modern period. Other academic interests include Ueda Akinari, and Japanese history.

中山称子

ORCID: 0000-0002-3000-9300

字幕翻訳授業を通して得ることができるもの

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.13

## ABSTRACT

For these 3 years students of master course have had an activity to add Polish subtitles to Japanese movies. In these classes students are divided into a few groups. At first, each group dictates a dialog, and then translates the part they are responsible for. Ultimately, all students get together and adjust translation in a discussion. In this paper I would like to present the experience through the process of students' trial and error, how to reflect differences in cultural background and nuances of language in translation. Furthermore, I would like to show the meaning and possibility of this activity as a collaborative learning.

**KEYWORDS:** film, Japanese-language education, collaborative learning

## 1. はじめに

ニコラウス・コペルニクス大学では2015年10月から修士課程が始動したが、その1年目から実用会話授業の一コマを使って字幕翻訳授業を行っている。この授業を行おうと思ったきっかけは、2015年3月に行われたポーランド日本語教師会勉強会でワルシャワ大学の藤井カルポルク陽子先生の発表を聞いたことだ。藤井先生は、ワルシャワの在ポーランド日本大使館広報文化センターの担当者から「国際交流基金から提供され、日本大使館で上映権を所有している日本映画がいくつかあるが、上映するために学生たちにポーランド語に翻訳してもらえないだろうか」と打診され、この活動を始めたそうだ。そこで、ニコラウス・コペルニクス大学でも新しく始まる修士課程でぜひ同じ活動をやってみたいと思い、大使館の担当者の方と連絡を取りさっそく1年目から実践することにした。これまで2年間行ってきた中で見えてきた字幕翻訳授業の意義、可能性について、特に「協働学習」という観点から報告したい。



## 2. 授業の概要

この授業は、1学期間（90分授業×15回）を通して行っている。まず初めに、字幕翻訳をする映画を決定する。1年目に関しては「大使館が上映権を所有しているもの」というところから出発したので、扱う映画は教師の側で選んだ。この時点で、大使館に上映権のある5つの映画の中の2つの短編がすでにワルシャワ大学の学生たちによって翻訳されていたので、残り3つの長編映画の中から、言葉の難易度（方言の有無など）や内容などを考慮して、『Always 三丁目の夕日 ‘64』<sup>1</sup>を選んだ。2年目に関しては、大学や個人でDVDを所有しているものの中から、内容、言葉の難易度など授業で扱うのによさそうなものをいくつかピックアップし、内容を簡単に説明した後で、学生たちの方でやりたい作品を選んでもらった。この時点で大使館には後2つ上映権を所有する映画が残っていたが、内容、言葉の難易度などを考えるとあまり適切ではないと考えたのと、授業で練習のために使うのであれば、上映権の有無を気にすることはないだろうという判断から「学生が興味を持って取りかかれるもの」という点を重視することにした。最終的に日本アカデミー賞など数々の賞を受賞した『舟を編む』<sup>2</sup>という作品を扱うことになった。

作品が決まったら、全員でまず映画全体を鑑賞し、ざっとした内容を把握してもらった。そして、実際に翻訳作業を始める前に、字幕翻訳の際に留意する点について考えてもらった。まず翻訳全般において当たり前のことだが、文字通りの翻訳、直訳はせず、言葉の奥の意味や文脈を考えて、ポーランド語として自然な訳にしていくこと。そして字幕翻訳の場合、字幕の文字数に制限<sup>3</sup>があるので、その点も考慮しなければならないこと。また、映画を翻訳する際の重要なことの一つとして、日本語を学んでいる学生だけではなく、一般のポーランド人が見て分かる表現にしなければならない、という点も確認した。日本特有のもの、文化的背景をどのように訳していくかということも、字幕翻訳においては非常に大切な点だ。この点に関しては、後で具体的な例を挙げたいと思う。また、この授業ではまず映画をいくつかの部分に分け、小グループで作業を行った

<sup>1</sup> 山崎貴監督の『ALWAYS』シリーズの3作目（2012年1月公開）

<sup>2</sup> 石井裕也監督作品（2013年4月公開）

<sup>3</sup> 調べてみるといろいろな数字が出てくるが、授業では1行42字以内、1秒15字～17字程度、一枚の字幕に最大2行までとして確認している。

ものを最終的に一つにまとめるので、具体的な固有名詞や文体などを最終的に調整してそろえる必要がある。以上のような点を字幕翻訳作業の前に確認しておいた。

映画全体を鑑賞した後は2～3人の小グループに分かれ、それぞれの担当を決めてまずは台詞のディクテーションを行った。完成したディクテーションを教師がチェックして直した上で、各グループで翻訳作業を行った。この小グループ活動の意義は、まずはディクテーションで聴解力を試し、何度も聞き直すことによってより深く内容理解ができることだ。また、まず初めに小さなグループで訳すことは、一人一人の翻訳練習にもなるし、グループメンバーとの話し合いの中で、他の人の感性や表現方法を知り模索していく第一段階になる。

最後に、各グループが翻訳したものをもとに、クラス全体で話し合いながら添削し、全体を調整していく。実はこの全体調整作業が、字幕翻訳作業の中で一番重要な意味を持っていると言えるだろう。その点についてさらに具体的に見ていきたい。

### 3. 全体調整作業について

全体調整作業では、プロジェクターで日本語、ポーランド語の対照表を映し出し、それを見ながらクラスで意見を出し合い、より適切な表現、よりこなれた表現に直していく。この際、ガイダンスで確認した「翻訳の際に留意する点」を特に考える。何度も推敲を重ね、翻訳だけではなくコンマやかっこの使い方など表記法なども細かくチェックしていき、各グループでそれぞれ分担して訳したものを、全体としてスタイルを整えていく。

	第一案	最終案
(1) 「ら」抜き言葉をどう思いますか。	Co myślisz o (2) <u>słowach bez głoski „ra”?</u>	Co myślisz o (3) <u>formach potocznych czasowników?</u>
あ…、僕は使いません	Hm, nie używam ich.	Ja ich nie używam.
私も使いません、し	Ja również. Jednak	Ja również. Jednak gdy

かしこここで若者の間に (4) 「 <u>見れる</u> 」、「 <u>出れる</u> 」、が浸透しているのを見ると	zauważa się, że do języka młodych przenikają słowa (5) „ <u>mireru</u> ”(*a nie <u>mirareru</u> ), „ <u>dereru</u> ”.	widzę, że do języka młodych przenikają słowa takie jak (6) <u>poszłem</u> , <u>wyszłem</u> ,
誤った使い方という但し書きをつけてでも載せたいのです	Błędne użycie z prawidłową pisownią również chcę umieścić w słowniku.	chcę umieścić adnotacje, że to błędne użycie.

(表 1)

表 1 は、去年扱った「舟を編む」の中の一部だ。「ら抜き言葉をどう思いますか。」<sup>(1)</sup>と、日本語学習者になら分かる「ら」抜き言葉を、一般的なポーランド人がぱっと字幕を見るだけで意味が分かるようにするためにどうすればいいか、何度も推敲が重ねられた。最初の訳では、直訳的に「ら」の音を抜いた言葉<sup>(2)</sup>という訳がされている。しかし、話し合いの結果 —ここに至るまでには、何度も修正があり、すぐに簡単に決まったわけではないが—、具体的にポーランド語でも動詞の形がくだけた言い方になっている例を挙げようということになった。最終案では、この部分は「動詞のくだけた言い方についてどう思いますか？」<sup>(3)</sup>という訳になっている。また、具体的に「ら」抜き言葉「見れる」「出れる」を挙げている部分<sup>(4)</sup>の訳は、最初の訳では「ら」抜き言葉をそのまま説明したものだったが<sup>(5)</sup>、最終案では具体的なポーランド語の動詞のくだけた表現で、正しいポーランド語として認められていないものの現在若者の間で使われるようになってきている *poszłem* (行った), *wyszłem* (出た) という動詞で代用されている。

	第一案	最終案
だから私たちは (7) <u>今を生きている人たち</u> に向けて辞	Dlatego słownik musi być ukierunkowany na (8) <u>teraz żyjących ludzi</u> .	Dlatego adresatem słownika musi być (9) <u>współczesny człowiek</u> .

書を作らなければなら ない		
大渡海は (10) <u>今 を生きる辞書</u> を 目指すのです	Naszym celem jest słownik (11) „ <u>teraz żyjący</u> ”.	Naszym celem jest słownik (12) <u>na miarę naszych czasów.</u>
言葉の海 それは果 てしなく広い	Słowa są morzem, tak nieograniczenie rozległe.	Morze słów jest bezkresne.
辞書とはその大海に 浮かぶ一艘の船	Słownik jest pojedynczym okrętem w nim zanurzonym	Słownik jest przemierzającym je samotnym okrętem.
(13) <u>人は辞書と いう船で海を渡り</u>	Dla ludzi słownik jest jak okręt przekraczający morze	(15) <u>Poszukując słów odpowiednich do wyrażenia siebie.</u>
(14) <u>自分の気持 を的確に表す言葉を 探します</u>	Poszukują słów odpowiednich do wyrażenia siebie.	(16) <u>ludzie przemierzają to morze okrętem, którym jest słownik.</u>

(表2)

表2も、「舟を編む」からの例だ。この映画のキーワードのひとつでもある「今を生きる辞書」の「今を生きる」という部分が、初めの訳ではやはり直訳的に「今を生きている」(8)(11)というポーランド語訳になっている。しかしこれも話し合いを重ねた結果、最終的に「今を生きている人たち」(7)は「現代人」という訳に、そして「今を生きる辞書」(10)の部分は、「現在の我々の時代に合った、我々の時代の基準で」(12)と言った意味の訳に変わっている。これはいずれも、よりポーランド語らしい自然な表現を模索していった結果だ。また、「人は辞書という船で海を渡り(13)自分の気持を的確に表す言葉を探します(14)」の部分は、最初の訳ではこの順番通りになっていたが、最終的に日本語とポーランド語で順番が入り替わっている。(15)(16)これも、前後の流れからこの方が自然だろうという判断でこのようになった。

これまで字幕翻訳の授業をやってみて特に感じるのは、この全体調整作業に大きな意味があるということだ。まず、学生たちは翻訳の難しさ、おもしろさというものをこの時間に体感する。もちろんこれはグループ活動で最初に翻訳案を作る段階でも経験していることだが、グループ全体でさらに翻訳を適切なものに直していく過程で様々な問題に直面し、お互い意見を出し合い、他の学生の感性や表現方法を知り、受け入れたり歩み寄ったりする中で得るものはかなり大きいと言える。初めに「文字通りの翻訳、直訳はしない。言葉の奥の意味や文脈を考えて、ポーランド語として自然な訳にしてい」く」ということを確認してはいるものの、上で挙げた例のように、どうしても最初の小グループでの第一翻訳では、元の日本語に引きずられてしまう例が多く見られる。そのような直訳的な訳が、全体調整作業でのディスカッションを通して徐々に変わっていくのを体感するのは、この活動の醍醐味だと言えるだろう。また、この作業で必要なのは決して日本語力だけではない。日本語力ではちょっと弱い面があっても、ポーランド語の表記法に強かったり、言葉のセンスがあったりする学生もいる。せっかくやるからには、いい翻訳を作りたいというのはクラス全員の共通の願いなので、お互いに得意な分野を生かしながら字幕完成のための協力が見られる。またディスカッション時における学生の発言量だが、これも決して日本語力と比例するわけではない。日本語力があっても、中には性格的にあまり意見を出せないという学生もいる。他の学生の意見を聞いて頷いているだけで、あまり積極的に自分から発言しない学生も見られるが、しかしそのような場合でもディスカッションの際には人の意見を聞きながら、ずっと頭を使って考えている。発言がなくても、頭を使って考え、模索する時間そのものにこの活動の意味があるのではないだろうか。

#### 4. 字幕翻訳授業に伴う問題点

字幕翻訳授業に伴う問題点も挙げておく。字幕翻訳を授業で扱う際に、著作権の問題と技術的な問題、またどのような映画を扱えばいいか、といった問題が考えられる。まず著作権の問題だが、これは著作権法35条（教育目的の使用における著作権保護の例外規定）というものに従って使用している。また完成した作品の上映に関して、1年目で扱った『Always 三丁目の夕日 ‘64』は在ポーランド日本大使館が上映権を所有していたので、完成後は日本大使館

で実際に上映することができた。しかし2年目に扱った『舟を編む』や、今年度以降扱おうと考えている映画については、上映権はないので上映という形まで持って行くことはできず、あくまでも授業の中での翻訳練習として著作権法に基づいた使い方に限られる。次に技術的な問題だが、作成した字幕を実際に上映できるような形にするためには、字幕作成ソフトなどに精通している必要がある。幸いこの2年間、機械やソフトに詳しい学生がいたので、この点に関して完全に学生たちに頼ることができた。しかし教師である私自身もこれから学んでいかなければならないことだと痛切に感じている。また、どのような映画を授業で扱うかだが、これまで考慮してきたのは、(1) まだポーランド語に訳されていないもの、(2) 共通語、あるいは比較的分かりやすい方言を用いていること、(3) 暴力・性行為などのシーンが含まれていないもの、(4) 分野・テーマが平易かつ分かりやすいもの、(5) クラス全員が興味を持って取り組めるような内容であることなどだ。ただこの点に関しては特に学生が興味を持って取りかかれるもの、という点に最も重点を置くべきだと考えているので、今後扱う映画のタイプも変わっていくかもしれない。

## 5. 「協働学習」としての字幕翻訳授業

以上の点を踏まえて、最後に字幕翻訳授業を「協働学習」の観点から考えてみたいと思う。協働学習というのは最近日本語教育でもよく聞くようになった言葉だが、次のように定義されている。

「学習者同士が課題に向き合う過程で相互に協力し、教え合いながら学び合う学習形態 (studyhacker.net)  
異なる背景を持つ複数の主体が、ある共通の目標を実現するために、それぞれが個々の能力を発揮しながら、対等な立場で対話をおこない、相互に学びあいながら、一人では実現できないことを創造していくこと」 (池田 2007)

協働学習としての字幕翻訳授業の役割は、まず全体で一つの作品を完成させるという目的があり、その目標を実現するために協力するという点だ。そのためには、お互いに意見を出し合い、その話し

合いの過程には新たな発見や気づきなど、必ず個人個人の学びがある。また、学習者はこの活動を通して、日本語力の高さに限らずそれぞれが自分の得意な分野を生かすことができる。また、通常「協働学習」ということを考えた時このような観点はほとんど出て来ないが、この授業においては学生と教師の協働学習が見られる。日本語ネイティブである教師は、学生たちの作成した翻訳をチェックする中で日本語話者として様々な疑問点が出てくる。例えば、どうしてこの場合このような訳はできないのか、どうしてここは直訳的に訳さない方がいいのか、この部分は順番が変わっているがそれはどうしてか、などといったことだ。そのような時には学生に確認し説明してもらうことで、教師も日本語とポーランド語の表現の違いを学ぶことができる。また、学生たちの作ったポーランド語訳をチェックしていくと、日本語の元のテキストの本質的な意味を間違えて理解している場合もある。その場合は日本語話者の立場からさらに詳しく違う言葉を使って説明をし、それによってまた字幕も変わっていく。このように、ネイティブ教師がいるから学習者は学べるし、学習者の活動を通して教師自身も学べる、という教師と学習者間での協働学習も見られるのが、海外の日本語教育現場でのこの活動の特徴でもあると言えるだろう。

## 6. おわりに

まだ今年で3年目になる活動だが、これまでこの授業を受けた学生たちの評価アンケートによると、「グループでの活動を通して学ぶことが多く、翻訳の知識が深まった。とてもいい経験になった。」「字幕翻訳を授業で扱うのはとてもいいアイデアだと思う。」と学生の満足度は非常に高く、手ごたえを感じている。毎年扱う映画が違うので、その都度違う問題にぶつかり、新しい発見もあり、教師として学べることも多い。今後も「協働学習」として字幕翻訳授業を位置づけ、学生たちと共によりよい活動を目指していきたいらと考えている。

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Shōko Nakayama**

Shōko Nakayama majored in Japanese linguistics and attended the basic course in teaching Japanese as a foreign language as a minor at Yokohama National University. She has obtained MA in linguistic at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń.

Since 1999 she has been teaching Japanese at Nicolaus Copernicus University.

Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska  
ORCID: 0000-0002-5819-7032

## **On the Opposite Sides of the Iron Curtain? Bilateral Political Activity of Poland and Japan after 1957<sup>1</sup>**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.14

### **ABSTRACT**

After World War II Japan and Poland found themselves on the opposite sides of the Iron Curtain. Japan became an ally to the West and Poland to the East. How did the bilateral diplomatic relations of our two states form after reestablishing them in 1957?

The authoress has decided to tackle in more detail problems connected to organization, personal, propaganda and ideology issues which took place in the first years after the normalization of the relations, since she has arrived at the conclusion that focusing on this period of few years will enable to understand how difficult the beginning of Polish-Japanese bilateral relations were and what matters and to what extent were most important and attainable to both governments.

**KEYWORDS:** Poland, Japan, bilateral relations, Cold War, The Embassy of Polish People's Republic in Tokyo, The Embassy of Japan in Warsaw

### **Introduction**

For years, I have been conducting research on the history of Polish-Japanese contacts, mostly in relation to the prewar period. However, a few years ago, because the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the official relations was approaching – they started on 6 March 1919, when the government of Japan recognized independent Poland after World War I (Pałasz-Rutkowska, Romer 2009a: 75-8; Pałasz-Rutkowska, Romer 2009b: 65-69) – I started research concerning our bilateral contacts after the World War II. Besides, in the year 2017 we celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of re-establishing official Polish-Japanese relations. So, because of these two important reasons I have decided to present the main problems in our bilateral political and diplomatic activity after 1957.

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<sup>1</sup> This text is based on research granted by National Science Center (Narodowe Centrum Nauki, Poland), on the basis of the decision no. DEC-2015/19/B/HS3/02072.

I have decided to tackle in more detail the organization, personal, propaganda and ideology issues in the first years after the normalization of the relations, since I am convinced that focusing on this period of just a few years shall enable understanding of how difficult the beginnings of our bilateral relations were and what matters and to what extent were most important and attainable to both governments.

Our bilateral relations were officially broken off on 11 December 1941, three days after Japan engaged in the Asia-Pacific War. Poland, just as its allies Great Britain and the United States of America, declared war on Japan (Pałasz-Rutkowska, Romer 2009a: 214-218). Finally, in August 1945 Japan lost the war and had to accept the terms of unconditional surrender, specified in the Potsdam Declaration (Pałasz-Rutkowska, Starecka 2004: 180-218). The occupation by Allied Forces, (practically by American forces) under General Douglas MacArthur (1880–1964), Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, began in September 1945. But as the division between the two factions – capitalist and communist/socialist – was becoming more and more visible and deeper in Europe and Asia, and the “Iron Curtain” was setting deeper between the East and the West, Japan and Poland found themselves on the opposite sides of the Iron Curtain. Japan became an ally of the West, mainly of the USA, while Poland – of the East and the USSR.

As a result of the war and the Red Army entering Central and Eastern Europe, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria found themselves in the Soviet sphere of influence. In 1949 the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Rada Wzajemnej Pomocy Gospodarczej) was established, enabling the USSR to utilize the economies of the Eastern Bloc. The Red Army stationed in all countries of the Eastern Bloc. All areas of life, including culture (cf. Socialist realism), were subjected to the process of Stalinization. In 1947 Bolesław Bierut (1892–1956), who was sent from Moscow, became the President of Poland. A year later the Polish United Workers’ Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza) was formed and Moscow’s political indoctrination and influence became stronger (Łaptos, Mania 2010: 279-430).

In 1948, in order to limit the escalation of the Soviet influence in Europe, the United States of America gave millions of dollars in economic support to European states as part of the so-called Marshall Plan (the European Recovery Program). This aid was also to be targeted at the Eastern Bloc countries, including Poland, but Moscow declined the aid. In 1949, two German states were created - the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). Their

area corresponded to the previous occupation zones - American, English and French zone and Soviet zone. Soon, the West established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), whose main goal was military defense against the threat of the USSR and its satellite states. The East-West division also pertained to Asia, with China divided into the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan) in 1949, pro-American Republic of Korea and pro-Soviet People's Republic of Korea in the Korean Peninsula and a similar situation in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Burma and Indonesia.

Therefore, Washington decided to change policies towards Tokyo. After the first years of deep reforms dealing with democratization, demilitarization and decentralization introduced intensely since the beginning of the occupation, in 1949, the so-called Reverse Course was introduced. Japan was supposed to gradually assume the role of American ally and due to its geographical location become the anti-communist beachhead during the intensifying Cold War. The US decided to end the occupation (Hatano 2013: 19-44; Pałasz-Rutkowska, Starecka 2004: 208-228). On 8 September 1951, 49 countries signed the *Treaty of Peace with Japan* in San Francisco<sup>2</sup>. USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia did not sign the treaty (Pałasz-Rutkowska 2016: 152-154).

In an interview for the Polish Press Agency, a Polish representative to the conference, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stefan Wierbłowski (1904–1977) explained that the treaty had gone far towards creating new sources of tension in Asia and contributed towards “rebuilding a defeated militarism in the service of American imperialism” (Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych [ed.] 1951: 1972-1979).

The Treaty of San Francisco went into effect on 28 April 1952 – Japan regained sovereignty but was still tightly connected with the USA. At the same time, Eastern and Central Europe were subject to increasing Stalinization and the influence of Moscow. The center of power in Poland was the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and its Politburo. The name “Republic of Poland” (Rzeczpospolita Polska) was changed to “Polish People's Republic” (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa). The Stalinization process in Eastern and Central Europe started to weaken slightly after the death of Joseph Stalin (1887–1953); however, this did not mean any significant changes in politics or in the division of the world. The Iron Curtain still divided the NATO-controlled West from the East,

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<sup>2</sup> *Treaty of Peace with Japan* in: <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/docs/19510908.T1J.html>. Accessed 2017.12.12.

which was bound since 1955 by political and military Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (Układ o Przyjaźni, Współpracy i Pomocy Wzajemnej), known as the Warsaw Pact (Układ Warszawski). Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971), Stalin’s successor as the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, executed a policy of mitigation in accordance with the principle of peaceful coexistence and also decided to restore bilateral relations with Japan. Official negotiations began in 1955, though the conclusion of the peace treaty was stifled by the controversies surrounding territorial claims to four islands (Shikotan, Habomai, Etorofu or Iturup, and Kunashiri or Kunashir), which according to Russia are part of the Kuril Islands and as such since the end of WW II have belonged to Russia, while Japan claims that they are an integral part of its territory – the Northern Territories (Shimotomai 2013: 97-116). Finally, Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichirō (1883–1959) agreed to adopt the so-called “Adenauer formula” and to separate the normalization of bilateral relations from the treaty (and territorial disputes). On 19 October 1956, in Moscow, a *Joint Declaration between Japan and the USSR* was signed. It provided for the end of the state of war, and for the restoration of diplomatic relations (in Japanese *Nihonkoku to Soviето shakai shugi kyōwakoku renpō to no kyōdō sengen* and in Russian *Совместная Декларация СССР и Японии*)<sup>3</sup>.

At the same time, in Poland, the de-Stalinization process started. The forerunner to the changes was the Fifth World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship (held in Warsaw from 31 July to 15 August 1955), with nearly 30 000 guests from 114 countries, including 86 from Japan and 150 000 Polish participants (Krzywicki 2009: 304, 305). The Festival influenced the changes in the awareness of Polish people, which were also affected by the death of President Bierut and the army and militsiya’s bloody repression of the protests of workers in Poznań in 1956 (known as “Poznań June”, or the Poznań protests of 1956). Władysław Gomułka (1905-1982), a moderate, gained power (this marked the so-called “Polish October” or “Polish Thaw”) and managed to avoid the intervention of the Red Army forces in Poland. A short period of “thaw” began in Poland, which meant changes in the apparatus of government, rehabilitation of political prisoners and clergy, and strengthening the position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, despite the fact that the Politburo and the Foreign Department of the Central Committee of the

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<sup>3</sup> *Joint Declaration* in Japanese:

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/1957/s32-shiryō-001.htm>. Accessed 2017.08.10; in Russian: [http://www.hrono.ru/dokum/195\\_dok/19561019jap.php](http://www.hrono.ru/dokum/195_dok/19561019jap.php). Accessed 2017.08.10.

Polish United Workers' Party, dependent on Moscow, still had a major influence on Poland's relationships with other states. The situation also contributed to the negotiations between Poland and Japan to re-establish official relations (Pałasz-Rutkowska 2015: 65-69; Pałasz-Rutkowska 2016: 147-164).

Finally, on 8 February 1957, in New York, the Japanese Ambassador to the UN, Kase Toshikazu (1903-2004), and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Polish delegation to the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, Józef Winiewicz (1905-1984), having authorization from their superiors, Minister of Foreign Affairs Kishi Nobusuke (1896-1987) and Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz (1911-1989), signed the *Agreement between Japan and the Polish People's Republic concerning the re-establishment of normal relations* (in Japanese *Nihonkoku to Pōrando Jinmin Kyōwakoku to no aida no kokkō kaifuku ni kansuru kyōtei* and in Polish *Układ o przywróceniu normalnych stosunków między Polską Rzeczpospolitą Ludową a Japonią*)<sup>4</sup>. The exchange of ratification documents took place on 18 May 1957 in Warsaw (Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan, 2: 17-66). The Polish side was represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Adam Rapacki (1909–1970), and the Japanese side by the Ambassador Extraordinary at Large, Sonoda Sunao (1913–1984) (AMFA 1954-1957: 23). Minister Rapacki expressed the belief that the Agreement marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Poland-Japan relations, in which the political, economic and cultural relations would prosper. Ambassador Sonoda made a statement saying that:

“Our countries were connected in the past by ties of cordial friendship that were broken during World War II, bringing great harm to both nations /.../ Our nation and government /.../ are convinced that our friendship will tighten in the best interests of Japan and Poland.”

### **Establishment of Diplomatic Posts and First Diplomatic Representatives**

Soon after the Agreement was signed, both parties embarked on the preparations necessary to open their diplomatic posts in Tokyo and Warsaw as well as on the selection of candidates for their ambassadors.

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<sup>4</sup> Original in French and Polish version in: Internetowa baza traktatowa MSZ, Warszawa, <https://traktaty.msz.gov.pl/bap.php> no. 6. Accessed 2017.06.10. Japanese version in: Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan, 2: 19-22, English version in: Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan, 2: 79-81.

### **The Embassy of Polish People's Republic in Tokyo**

The groundwork started in Warsaw in February 1957. However, the assembly of personnel and preparation of the post proved difficult (AMFA 1957 a: 1-9). Edward Śluczański, Director of the 5<sup>th</sup> Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (East Asia, the Middle East and Africa), submitted to his superiors a very ambitious project of the organization of the Embassy in Tokyo, which was not attainable at the time. The staff were to include: the Ambassador, First Counsellor, Culture Counsellor, Press Attaché, First Secretary of Economic Affairs, Second Secretary, Embassy's Attaché, five Referendaries, employees of the Commerce Counsellor Bureau, administrative and technical personnel. He proposed Tadeusz Żebrowski (1902–1986) for the post of the Ambassador, but since Żebrowski had not been working in diplomatic service for a while then, Śluczański thought that a more experienced Józef Góra, a former worker at the Embassy of Polish People's Republic in Beijing and Pyongyang, should be appointed Deputy Ambassador. Góra, however, had already been appointed as Consul General in Stockholm.

In May, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marian Naszkowski (1912–1996) asked Jerzy Michałowski (1909–1993), Permanent Representative of Polish People's Republic to the UN in New York to inquire the Japanese side for an *agrément* for Żebrowski, a leftist activist, member of the Polish United Workers' Party (AMFA 1957, 1963: 4). His short biography mentioned that he was a Doctor of Philosophy, after studies in France and the USA (1931–1933) became a geography lecturer at the University of Warsaw (1933–1939); during World War II he was held in a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany, and after the war, until 1955, he worked for the MFA, i.a. as a Department Director. He also participated in sections of the United Nations General Assembly, and later worked as lecturer at the Warsaw School of Foreign Service, the Institute of Geography at the University of Warsaw, and the Polish Academy of Sciences. The Council of State (Rada Państwa) of Poland nominated Żebrowski as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary on August 17. This nomination was announced in an official document to Emperor Hirohito (1901-1989) on August 25 (AMFA 1957, 1963: 10).

Approximately at this time, a working group tasked with establishing a diplomatic post flew to Tokyo. It was headed by Lieutenant Colonel Jerzy Bryn (born Izrael Alter Bryn, 1916–1978) as First Secretary. On 21 August, he presented introductory letters to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fujiyama Aiichirō (1897–1985)<sup>5</sup>. This date is recognized as the day of the

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<sup>5</sup> *Asahi Shinbun*, 15.08.1957, p. 2 and 22.08.1957, p. 2; *Trybuna Ludu*, 2.09.1957, p. 2.

official opening of the Embassy of the Polish People's Republic in Tokyo after bilateral relations were restored and of the beginning of the activities of the Head of the Mission. Until the Ambassador's arrival, Bryn represented Poland as *chargé d'affaires ad interim*.

On 24 August, daily newspapers *Yomiuri Shinbun* (p. 1) and *Asahi Shinbun* (p. 1) published notes about Tadeusz Żebrowski's appointment as the first Ambassador to the Polish People's Republic in Japan. Included, there was also information about commerce treaty talks that were started in Tokyo by the Commercial Counsellor Stanisław Gall, previously the Chair of the Polish Foreign Trade Chamber. The talks were concluded in Tokyo on 26 April 1958 with the signing of the *Treaty on Commerce between the Polish People's Republic and Japan*<sup>6</sup>. It was the first post-war commerce treaty between the two countries.

Bryn took charge of both organizing and heading the post and Jerzy Starecki, who on October 2 informed the MFA that the Embassy is located in a rented building at 39 Yakuojichō, Ichigaya, in Shinjuku Ward (AMFA 1957 a: 9; The Gaimusho 1957: 73), headed the administrative department. According to what Ambassador Żebrowski wrote to the Deputy Minister Naszkowski (AMFA 1957 b: 7), Bryn maintained continuous contact with the Japanese MFA, which helped him in finding a suitable place for the embassy. He established contacts with diplomatic representatives of other states, mostly those belonging to the Socialist bloc. He held a party for Polish writers who attended PEN International 29<sup>th</sup> International Congress (with Antoni Słonimski among the guests), and also in October organized a visit to Poland for a group of MPs from the Japan Socialist Party (Nihon Shakaitō) – the former Prime Minister, Katayama Tetsu (1887-1987), was supposed to be the leader of the group. The visit came to fruition, and talks with Polish Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz, Deputy Minister Naszkowski, Polish MPs were held. Peaceful use of nuclear power, collective security in both Asia and Europe, and the extension of cultural and economic relations between Poland and Japan were among the main topic of the talks.

Żebrowski arrived in Tokyo on November 13 and officially assumed his post on November 25 after he submitted letters of credence to Emperor Hirohito (1901-1989) (AMFA 1957, 1963: 11; Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych 1984: 102). In February 1958, the Embassy employed Aleksander Leyfell (1911–2006) as First Secretary. Żebrowski wrote via diplomatic cable to Director Słuczański about the working conditions:

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<sup>6</sup> *Dziennik Ustaw* 1959, no. 19/120, <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19590190120>. Accessed 2017.08.20.



“I arrived in a country on which, as you know, no information could be gained in Warsaw. Neither did I receive any introductory information pertaining to both persons and the situation after arrival. Even at first glance, it is clear that the political relations in Japan are very complicated and contacts which could bring instant advantage difficult.

One of the factors contributing to this situation is the complex structure of the political life in Japan, the vast number of competing factions and cabals not only in all political parties but also in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (...). This specific nature of political life in Japan calls for our caution both in talks with political activists and in assessing the information gained. Even the classical left-right divide is blurred due to personal connections and group interests. (...) Language difficulties and specific customs are also issues that hinder and delay the establishing and maintaining of ordinary relations.” (2.04.1958) (AMFA 1958 a: 1)

Żebrowski complained about the lack of an apartment, which inhibited closer relations both with the Japanese and with other diplomats. Based on further correspondence, the MFA finally agreed to rent a place in a residential area in Den'en Chōfu (Ōta Ward). Because of low safety conditions, the residence was burgled two times in September and October 1958, clearly with the purpose of robbery (AMFA 1958 a: 2, 5, 9-11).

The work of the Embassy was described as insufficient in a letter of 14 June 1958 to Naszkowski, written by Witold Rodziński (1918–1997), the next Director of the 5<sup>th</sup> Department (AMFA 1958 a: 5, 6). The superiors in Warsaw above all expected the Ambassador to provide information on and analysis of the current political situation in Japan.

In the middle of 1958 Żebrowski came to Poland, where he reported about his activities but also received the *Guidelines for the Embassy of Polish People's Republic in Tokyo*, specially prepared by the MFA (AMFA 1958 b: 6-10). It was advised that the Embassy's activities should be conducted in accordance with Poland's national interests and should develop bilateral relations (Item 1). This required a thorough understanding of the situation in Japan and of both domestic and foreign policy of the Polish People's Republic (Item 2). Both countries' concurrence of opinions was also emphasized regarding current political problems, e.g.: the ban on the use of weapons of mass destruction and thermonuclear bomb tests, the

question of peaceful coexistence of states with different systems, respecting the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Item 3). It was also advised that gaining knowledge about the true balance of power in Japan is essential (Item 4) together with informing about the domestic situation in connection with the pro-American policy (Item 5). The recommendations also included the following: issuing an information bulletin about Poland, establishing and maintaining contacts with different communities, as well as inspiring articles in the Japanese press. The importance of economic relations described as “strongly prospective” was also underlined (Item 6). Item 7 pertained to cultural relations, i.e. the necessity to organize mass events (e.g. motion picture exchange), the need for more translations of Polish literature, scientific cooperation, and sports exchange. Not surprisingly, the Head of the Embassy was to be responsible for reaching all these aims. His role was to create circumstances which would enhance the creativity and initiative of the Embassy’s staff (Item 8). The study of foreign languages, including Japanese, was encouraged as well.

The Head of the Embassy was also obliged to send two political reports and one organizational report annually. The MFA was to be promptly informed about the situation in Japan but also about “responses to the situation in Poland and on the international arena”. Since MFA was aware that the Embassy in Tokyo had only lately started its activities, the following areas of MFA’s interest were suggested:

“1. Japan’s internal situation:

- a. The balance of political power/the course and development of class struggle, (...) the Japanese Communist Party; opposition activities, especially the Japan Socialist Party, labor movement (...).
- b. Economic development issues,
- c. Agrarian issues,
- d. Educational, cultural and scientific issues,
- e. The issue of the remilitarization of Japan,
- f. Developing profiles of members of the Japanese government and of other important persons.

2. Japanese foreign policy:

- a. Japanese position in the balance of powers in the Far East,
- b. Political and economic relations between Japan and the USA,
- c. Japanese political and economic expansion in neutralist countries in Southeast Asia,

- d. The attitude of official circles in Japan towards the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and issues connected with commodity exchange between these countries and Japan." (AMFA 1958 b: 9, 10)

The first extensive political report (48 pages), prepared together with Leyfell, was sent by Żebrowski to the next Director of the 5<sup>th</sup> Department, Marian Stradowski, on 18 October 1958 (AMFA 1958 b: 4-53). The report contained information about Japanese internal situation (e.g. May 1958 election results; political parties; Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke and his government; trade unions; the issues connected to amendments to the constitution and the armed forces) and international affairs (e.g. Japan and the USA, China, the USSR, and the countries of Southeast Asia). Unfortunately, there was no detailed account of the relations between Poland and Japan, though in the conclusion to the report Żebrowski wrote:

"(...) I believe that Polish diplomacy has a limited scope of possible action in this country. However, we can, with some due mistrust, try to take advantage of some aspects of Japanese foreign policy, e.g.: the fear of armed conflict and the need to maneuver with respect to the Asian nations. (...)

Of course, there is also a fairly wide range of activities in the area of economic and cultural relations, although also limited because of the geographical distance and cultural differences. There are also significant possibilities, hitherto untapped, of deepening relations with the democratic portion of the Japanese society, which has a favorable attitude towards Poland and especially towards the Polish People's Republic. However, despite this attitude, the distance often hinders interest in Polish political issues (e.g. the issue of the western border). There is support for general activities for peace." (AMFA 1958 b: 52, 53)

It can be inferred that the Embassy did not initiate any specific activities in order to establish closer relations with Japanese people and to promote Poland in Japan. Director Stradowski criticized Żebrowski's report for its size and the unnecessary amount of "historical material which did not benefit the issues of current affairs", and for analysis and opinions which were too short (AMFA 1958 b: 56-58). He also mentioned that MFA still lacks information about Japan.

The first organizational report (for 1958) was sent by Żebrowski on 21 February 1959 (AMFA 1958 a: 6-11). This document is analysis-worthy because it provides important information on the situation of the Embassy of the Polish People's Republic in Tokyo after the bilateral relations were restored and on the characteristics of the Embassy. The Ambassador devoted a large portion of the text to the premises of the Embassy. The building in Shinjuku had been rented before his arrival in November 1957 for the duration of four years, with a possible extension for two more years. The building was sufficient for current personnel but should there be more people hired, for instance for security, it would not be enough. According to Żebrowski, the building was also ill-equipped, too modest, and located in an "unsuitable neighborhood". The search for a new residence lasted until June 1958, and until that moment the Ambassador had been living at the Matsudaira Hotel in Shinjuku Ward (4 Minami Motomachi, Yotsuya). Because of the financial situation and the delay in shipment from Poland the residence was not fully equipped until December. Żebrowski complained about the location of the residence in Den'en Chōfu, far from the Embassy and other facilities, from the city center which made communication difficult and increased transportation costs. The residence was rented only until May 1960 and the extension of this period seemed impossible, also because of the increasing costs. The Ambassador warned the MFA that the real estate costs in Tokyo would be growing and suggested dealing with the problem of the Embassy building and of the residence as soon as it was possible. He also mentioned that the Czechs and the Yugoslavs, just as e.g. the Swedes or the Belgians, are considering building embassies. Such enterprise, although costly, would provide a solution to the problem of quarters for staff, all of whom (except for the cryptographer and the janitor) were renting apartments in the city. This would also improve the security, which was very poor. Żebrowski warned that the Embassy was not safe from potential "penetration of foreign intelligence and different types of provocations", as well as from burglary and natural disasters.

In the further part of the report, the Ambassador discussed the organization of work and staff. Aleksander Leyfell, the First Secretary, was responsible for diplomatic issues (e.g. applications to MFA), political reporting, maintaining relations with middle-rank political activists, and for taking care of cultural issues and contacts connected to art and culture. Attaché Stanisław Pawlak (born 1933) was in charge of consular and press matters (e.g. Polonica in Japanese press), establishing contacts with Japanese journalists, and of taking care of the documentation and the protocol.

Referendary Roman Glanowski was responsible for both the classified and non-classified office, register and handling of propaganda materials (radio, television, film, sports columns in the papers), as well as for Japanese foreign policy-related calendar of events. Referendary Jerzy Starecki took care of Embassy's administration and bookkeeping. Translator-correspondent Ewelina Adamowska<sup>7</sup> was responsible for mail in English and Japanese, translation of conversations, typing Polish and English texts, and also for creating a file of personalities. Cryptographer Marian Rodek was responsible for the register and the library, and also operated the teleprinter. Zygmunt Staniszewski, who had arrived in Japan as a driver, because of the Tokyo's terrain, was tasked with janitorial duties and security. Also, six Japanese were hired: the Ambassador's secretary Taguchi R., a translator for talks Hijikata Y., who was responsible for reviewing the press and other publications in Japanese, two drivers, a driver-messenger, and a telephone operator who was also a cleaning lady. Żebrowski mentioned in the report, that Jerzy Bryn had left Tokyo, but he did not write any explanation. Other sources state that Bryn was removed, after the Ambassador's intervention at the end of August 1958, as he was unable to cooperate with the Ambassador and Leyfell (Pawlikowicz 2004: 116-150). This issue is worth a longer mention as it is connected to the intelligence, which is usually present in diplomatic relations, and it was especially so when the world was divided between the East and West. Bryn was born in Poland, to a Jewish craftsman family. In his youth, he was a supporter of the left wing of the Zionist movement. In 1935, he left for Palestine and two years later took part in the Spanish Civil War in the International Brigades. During World War II he resided in France and Palestine. In 1947, he returned to Poland and quickly began working in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Department (Oddział II; from 1951 2<sup>nd</sup> Directorate/Zarząd II) of General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, i.e. the military intelligence: he was i.a. the Head of the French Section in the Operational Department, an illegal resident spy, a lecturer in the Staff Academy (Akademia Sztabu Generalnego) in Rembertów, a military adviser to a Representative of Polish Delegation in the International Control Commission in Vietnam. In 1957, he started work in the MFA and was quickly sent to the diplomatic post in Tokyo, despite the fact that his previous superiors in the General Staff did not agree to this assignment, as with his past and a reputation stemming from it, Bryn could not take an official position in foreign missions.

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<sup>7</sup> She in 1968, as Ewelina Tchórzewska-Adamowska graduated from the Japanology at the University of Warsaw. She translated into Polish novels of Abe Tomoji.

Bryn left Tokyo on 30 August 1958 but never reached Warsaw. Intelligence services conducted a search but it was fruitless. Suddenly, in April of the next year, he appeared in Tokyo at the house of Commercial Counsellor Gall, claiming that he had been kidnapped by the American intelligence and held in Okinawa for almost half a year. He was sent back to the country and subsequently arrested. By the sentence of the Warsaw Military Circle Court of 30 July 1962, he was found guilty of committing espionage and sentenced to death. This fact was mentioned in *Asahi Shinbun* (8.08.1962, p. 11). After an appeal, the sentence was changed to life imprisonment, and after changes in the Criminal Code (1970), which eliminated life sentence from Polish law, he was sentenced to a 25-year imprisonment. He was proven to have cooperated with the American intelligence and to have divulged information classified as state and military secrets and pertaining to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Directorate and the network of spies in France he was responsible for (Pawlikowicz 2004: 147). This story is a definite proof that there are many temptations waiting for those who have access to state secrets, and that past connections, relations and political games are important, and were especially important during the Cold War, when countries on one side wanted to gain whatever information possible from the other side.

In the last part of the report for 1958, in which he discussed the basis of the functioning of the Embassy, Żebrowski also provided his opinion about the fact that the Tokyo Embassy was qualified by MFA as “small”. The function of the Embassy was technically limited to “the observation of the main trends in politics” without “a wider cultural and political expansion”. However, he believed that the fulfillment of these goals was not easy, especially because of the differences between the two cultures. He also aptly described the differences in responsibilities of a “small” diplomatic post in small and large countries:

“It is clear that a small post in a smaller country after a short while is able to “understand” such a country in a relatively exhaustive and accurate manner, however, in a larger country, a “small” post will have more difficulties with such a task.” (AMFA 1958 a: 10, 11)

This situation was further complicated by the lack of any “back up”, such as the Polish Diaspora living for a longer time in Japan or the press correspondents. There was also no tourist traffic from Poland and no Japanese who would have any connections with Poland over a significant

period. According to Żebrowski, cultural and scientific propaganda was also important, and many countries, such as the USSR and Czechoslovakia, but not Poland, were using it to their advantage.

“In conclusion, I am forced to state that even after improving our work methods and gaining more experience, the Tokyo Embassy with its current staff will not be able to significantly increase the scope of its activity and to utilize all its possibilities.” (AMFA 1958 a: 10, 11)

These were bitter words, but they were true, and Żebrowski was well aware of the “limitations” of the Embassy, knowing that in these circumstances it is not possible to fulfill what he was tasked with. Poland was a relatively poor country and, despite the “thaw”, could not have a fully independent foreign policy. MFA did carefully look into what Żebrowski had written and even though the question of delegating a Counsellor was postponed, it was decided that an Attaché shall be delegated in the place of Referendary Glanowski. On 29 June 1959, Andrzej Jedynek was chosen for this position (AMFA 1958 a: 13, 15, 16). Judging by the number of notes sent from Tokyo to the MFA in 1959 it can be inferred that with time, the Embassy staff, especially Żebrowski and Leyfell, were increasingly active, they established new contacts, more frequently met with the Japanese and foreigners in Tokyo (AMFA 1959 b: 1-65). As early as on January 22, at the MFA, Żebrowski visited the Director General of the Europe and Asia Bureau (Ōakyoku) at the Foreign Office, Kanayama Masahide (1909–1997). Among other topics, they discussed the Rapacki Plan, which was at that time crucial for Poland. The Rapacki Plan, named so after Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki (1909-1970), was an initiative whose aim was to create a nuclear-free zone in Eastern and Central Europe (Tebinka 2010: 468-480). Kanayama thought the plan had limited chances of success because of “the great mistrust between the two blocks”. He avoided providing a straightforward answer, despite the fact that Żebrowski explained that Poland does not want “the Federal Republic of Germany to be armed with nuclear missiles”. They also discussed Japan’s potential neutrality, which was also deliberated on internationally. Kanayama, however, repeated the words of the Prime Minister and stated that it would not be possible, especially because of Japan’s two neighbors: the USSR, which had nuclear weapons, and the People’s Republic of China, which had a vast army.

A few days later, Żebrowski discusses the Rapacki Plan with Suzuki Mosaburō (1893–1970), the Chairman of the Japan Socialist Party (AMFA 1959 b: 10-12)<sup>8</sup>. Żebrowski also asked about the current situation in Japan, which, just as the neutrality issue, was a recurring topic in his conversations with different party leaders. Similar issues were also tackled by the other members of the Embassy staff, who mostly met with representatives of the Left and the opposition; however, they would also meet with the members of the Liberal Democratic Party (Jiyū Minshutō; LDP). In February, Leyfell informed the MFA about the meeting with the Treaty Bureau (Jōyakukyoku) Chief Takahashi Michitoshi, on which he discussed the progress on the new security treaty between the USA and Japan and also asked about the US-controlled islands of Okinawa and Ogasawara (AMFA 1959: 5, 6). In other notes, he wrote about meetings with journalists interested in Central and Eastern Europe. On February 9, Pawlak and Glanowski informed the MFA about a conversation with Watanabe Zen'ichirō, Head of the Foreign Affairs Department in *Mainichi Shinbun* (AMFA 1959: 7). The journalist was not at all interested in the Embassy materials on politics and economy, finding the information on science, culture and sports (e.g. about Polish gliding) more interesting.

In March, the Ambassador took part in a rally on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American hydrogen bomb testing at Bikini Atoll. The nuclear fallout from the test contaminated Japanese fishermen who had not been warned about the test (*Trybuna Ludu*, 03.03.1959). In his speech during the rally, Żebrowski mentioned the Rapacki Plan again and also spoke about Poland's involvement in efforts to ban the use of nuclear weapons. On October 24, the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was opened in Tokyo. Polish delegation, headed by Deputy Minister of International Trade Franciszek Modrzewski (1902-1985), participated in the session (*Trybuna Ludu*, 25.10.1959). The year before, Żebrowski met with Minister Fujiyama in the MFA and asked him for Japan's support, so that Poland would be admitted into GATT. The Minister promised to look into that issue (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 9.10.1958).

It is noteworthy that at this time, approximately until the end of 1958, the Embassy also took care of the development of research on Poland and of teaching Polish in Japan. In connection with these activities, Leyfell met several times with representatives from the University of Tokyo and Hokkaido University, Slavic studies researchers, mostly representing Russian studies. It turned out that the libraries of both universities have a

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<sup>8</sup> See also *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 3.02.1959.



very small collection of Polish literature and that there are no educational materials either. Soon the National Diet Library in Tokyo and the National Library of Poland in Warsaw began to exchange publications. Wiesław Kotański (1915-2005) (Pałasz-Rutkowska 2007: 21-24), who from 1 December 1957 to 31 August 1958 stayed in Japan as the first Japanese Studies scholarship holder from Poland, was chosen as the consultant of the Polish side.

### **The Embassy of Japan in Poland**

The Embassy of Japan in Poland did not start its operation until 15 December 1957, when Dōshō Hisashi (Second Secretary) took the position of *chargé d'affaires* (Gaimushō [ed.] 2007: 295; AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 13; *Shokuinroku* 1939: 31). He was a MFA intern in the Embassy of Japan in Poland in 1939, spoke Polish, and so did Hashizume Mitsuo, who accompanied him as a Secretary, and Kobayashi Kuniharu, who also came to Warsaw before the war as interns.

First Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary after the war, Ōta Saburō (1905-?) arrived in Warsaw two weeks later. On 10 January 1958, in the Belweder Palace, he submitted letters of credence to Chairman of the Polish Council of State, Aleksander Zawadzki (1899-1964) (AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 7-13)<sup>9</sup>. Ōta became a diplomat after graduating from the University of Tokyo in 1928 (AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 7; AMFA 1957 c: 3, 4; AMFA 1958 b: 4)<sup>10</sup>. He was the Attaché of the Embassy of Japan in London, Vice-consul in Sydney, the Third Secretary to the Embassy in Moscow (1937-1939), he spoke Russian. Until the end of the war, he held various posts in the MFA. At the beginning of the occupation, he headed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Department of the Central Liaison Office in General Headquarters of Allied Powers in Tokyo, after that he worked in the Liaison Office in Yokosuka and in 1947 he became the Mayor of the city. In 1949 he began work in the Ministry of Telecommunications. Five years later he returned to MFA as an Adviser to the Minister and in 1955 he assumed the post of the Ambassador in Burma.

Soon after he assumed the post of the Ambassador, he met with Deputy Minister of International Trade, Czesław Bajer (1900-1979) and with the Chairman of the Presidium of the National Council in Warsaw, Zygmunt Dworakowski (1905-1971) (*Trybuna Ludu*, 14.01.1958), and on January 31, with Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz (*Trybuna Ludu*, 1.02.1958). On

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<sup>9</sup> According to Gaimushō 2007 (p. 295), Ōta submitted letters on 31.12.1957. See also *Trybuna Ludu*, 11.01.1958.

<sup>10</sup> See also: *Asahi Shinbun*, 27.09.1957, p. 1.

February 8, i.e. on the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Poland and Japan resuming their relations, *Trybuna Ludu* also published a statement from the Ambassador on the subject of Polish-Japanese relations. In the statement, he said that both countries had suffered greatly during World War II and because of that, “the effort to eliminate the danger of war” should be their common goal.

The main problem that the Japanese faced was the lack of premises for the Embassy, as written by Władysław Tykociński (1921–1967), the Head of the Polish People’s Republic Military Mission in West Germany in a note to the MFA from May 1958 (AMFA 1958 c: 7, 8). The note was created after the meeting with Ambassador Ōta, which took place during the dinner organized by Hōgen Shinsaku (1910–1999), the Consul General there. Ōta was worried because of no perspectives to find a suitable place soon. He also complained about the staff in the Polonia Hotel and the Bristol Hotel in Warsaw and common problems with the supply of hot water. He said that his main mission was to intensify the trade between Poland and Japan, but he saw little chance of success because due to the lack of suitable goods in Poland. He praised Gall’s activities, but he suspected that his superiors in Warsaw rejected his idea of trilateral cooperation of Poland, Japan and the People’s Republic of China. He also spoke very well of Minister Rapacki and Ambassador Żebrowski, referring to the latter a man of “high intellectual level”.

In his letter to Deputy Minister Naszkowski (22.05.1958), Director Rodziński complained that the matter of the building had still not been solved (AMFA 1958 d: 1-3). Unfortunately, the Zug Place (named after Szymon Bogumił Zug, a classicist architect) near Dzierżyński Square (now Bankowy Square), offered to the Japanese and renovated by the state, became a subject of dispute, as Evangelical Reformed Church laid claims to its ownership. In July, a new possibility appeared and the Embassy and Ambassador’s residence were to be located at number 7, Willowa Street. In September, however, the building was still not handed over to the Embassy. From the note of October 14 from the meeting with the Third Secretary of Embassy of Japan, Hashizume Mitsuo and Attaché Shunaga Genshirō, written by Attaché Stanisław Pawlak, it can be inferred that the building at Willowa Street was supposed to be handed over to the Japanese side in six months at the earliest and that their offices had already been located at the Grand Hotel for a year (AMFA 1958 c: 11, 12). The Ambassador was still living at the Bristol Hotel.

Moreover, Pawlak confirmed that both men knew Polish and had begun their work in diplomacy before the war as interns at the Embassy of Japan

in Warsaw. During the conversation, they stressed the fact that in Japan news about Poland were rare, and that it was necessary to publish information about the country. They also talked about the plans to send the “Mazowsze” folk group to Japan and about inviting a classical Japanese theater to Poland. Hashizume left Poland in September 1959. Kawade Ryō, Third Secretary, was delegated in his stead. Before leaving Tokyo, Kawade met with Pawlak at the Embassy of the Polish People’s Republic (AMFA 1958 c: 59). Kawade graduated from the Faculty of Economics at the University of Tokyo, and he also studied at the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. He spoke English and Russian and was studying Polish. The documents indicate that in June 1959, First Secretary Okada Akira arrived in Poland. He had been employed as an expert on China in the MFA before that and he wanted to establish contacts with the Chinese in Poland; he also underlined that he was a supporter of normalizing relations with the People’s Republic of China (AMFA 1958 c: 60, 61).

In line with what Ambassador Ōta told Tykociński in Berlin about developing economic relations, a delegation headed by Nagano Shigeo (1900-1984), Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and General Manager of a steel manufacturer Fuji Seitetsu (Fuji Iron & Steel Co., Ltd.) visited Poland on October 5-9, 1958 (AMFA 1958: 1-3; AMFA 1958 e: 1-5). Nagano Shigeo was accompanied by three employees from the company and a representative from the Eastern Europe Department at the MFA. The delegation met with the Head of the Planning Commission Stefan Jędrychowski (1910–1996), Trade Minister Witold Trąpczyński (1909–1982) and Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Przemysław Ogrodziński (1918-1980). They discussed economic and trade cooperation between the two countries. Apart from Warsaw, the delegation also visited Nowa Huta and Cracow.

In the following months, there were other similar visits. On 23 November 1958, during his brief visit in Warsaw, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Takeuchi Shinkichi met with Deputy Minister Winiewicz (*Trybuna Ludu*, 30.11.1958). In August 1959, while on an inspection of Japanese posts in Europe (which included Moscow), Deputy Minister Yamada Hisanori met with Winiewicz (AMFA 1959: 1, 2). Ambassador Ōta was also present at the meeting, and he announced to the Polish side that he was in the course of negotiations in Warsaw with Romania and Bulgaria with a view to establishing diplomatic relations.

A delegation from Japan took part in the 48<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference in Warsaw, held between 15 August and 4 September 1959.

Koyanagi Makie from the upper house of the National Diet and Waseda Ryuemon from the lower house of the National Diet were among the delegates. On August 26, Ambassador Ōta organized a party and invited the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Giuseppe Codacci-Pisanelli, Vice-Marshal of the Sejm Jerzy Jodłowski and members of the Polish group in the Inter-Parliamentary Union Julian Kadlof, Jan Karol Wende, and others (*Trybuna Ludu*, 27.08.1959). In mid-September 1959 Miki Takeo (1907–1988), future Prime Minister, member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, and a member of the Diet visited Poland with a delegation. In a note from September 11, a staff member (no signature) of the 5<sup>th</sup> Department of the MFA wrote that Miki represented “the most liberal party-line” within LDP and that he had left the government of Kishi in December 1958 because of differences in views (AMFA 1959 a). The author of the note also emphasized the importance of the visit, as it was the first time for a high-ranking official of the LDP to visit Poland. On September 18, Miki Takeo met with Prime Minister Cyrankiewicz and the previous day – with Deputy Minister Naszkowski. Ambassador Ōta organized a party in his honor on the same day (“Trybuna Ludu”, 18.09.1959). From Warsaw Miki went to Budapest, he also visited the USSR and during these visits he talked about establishing closer cooperation.

According to a *note verbale* from 23 May 1959, which was sent by the Embassy of Japan to the Diplomatic Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, at the end of April the Embassy was already located at 7 Willowa Street, where also Ambassador Ōta resided (AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 14-16). The staff included Okada Akira (First Secretary), Dōshō Hisashi (First Secretary), Hashizume Mitsuo (Second Secretary), Shunaga Genshirō (Attaché), and Kobayashi Hideyo (Official). The Polish staff consisted of eight employees. Interestingly, they included Japanese speakers, Czesław Miskiewicz (Polish Secretary), who worked at the Embassy of Japan before the war, and also Karol Antoniewicz (Official), who had been a student-translator at the Embassy of Poland in Tokyo and had worked there until it was closed in October 1941 (Pałasz-Rutkowska, Romer 2009a: 129, 217, 225, 232). There were also cooks, chambermaids, and the personnel hired by the Japanese – in total seven people. The aforementioned Kawade Ryō and Tamaki Kōichi (Attachés) arrived in the second half of 1959 (AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 17-19). Thanks to following *notes verbales* sent by the Embassy of Japan to the Diplomatic Protocol of the MFA about the Embassy staff, it is known who worked there. In October 1960, Shimizu Kuniharu was listed as First Secretary

(AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 25-27). Secretary Dōshō was subsequently removed from the list, as in the spring of 1960 he had been accused of espionage by the MFA and as *persona non grata* thrown out of the country (AMFA 1957, 1959, 1960: 20-24). Both Ōta and Żebrowski met with the officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw and Tokyo to discuss this issue. Both sides agreed that this incident would not have influence on the general Poland-Japan relations. The press also reported on this situation. “Trybuna Ludu” (27.04.1960) wrote that Dōshō “had regular contact with particular Polish citizens, who, in exchange for a remuneration in US dollars, provided him with information and documents which were state secrets”. The Japanese press gave a different account of the story. As *Japan Times* suggested, the authorities were displeased that Dōshō had many friends in Poland from before the war, while *Mainichi Shinbun* wrote that collecting documents was one of a diplomat’s tasks.

### Conclusion

Ambassador Ōta ended his mission on 29 March 1961 and left Warsaw. Until the arrival of the new Ambassador in June 1961, Okada Akira represented Japan as *Chargé d'affaires ad interim* (AMFA 1962-1963: 1-4). Ambassador Żebrowski stayed in Japan for a much longer period, until April 1964. Both Ambassadors, being the first ones after the re-establishment of relations between the two countries, did not have an easy task to fulfill. They were working in countries of adverse political blocks. They were obliged to formulate policies in accordance with those of their allies – the USSR and the USA respectively. Establishing and organizing posts was not an easy task, but also gaining experience in a new situation, which was different from the prewar era, when both countries had friendly relations, was difficult. It was especially challenging for Poland, where the political framework, government, and the diplomatic personnel all changed. There were not enough experts who knew Japan, its culture, and language. Among the first staff members of the Embassy of Japan in Warsaw, three spoke Polish. However, as it turned out, this could also (or maybe first of all) be used as a tool for political intelligence.

Despite the fact that the beginnings were difficult, the relations between Poland and Japan intensified in the 1960s. In 1967, Poland was for the first time visited by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and an official delegation from Poland headed by the Minister of Trade visited Japan. It was the economic cooperation that started to develop rapidly. A similar situation can later be observed in the field of culture, where despite the East-West division, ruling ideologies became less important. Economy and culture

became two areas where the cooperation between the two countries developed better than in other fields. This was compliant with the policies of both countries from the time they resumed relations, as seen in the statements issued by Adam Rapacki and Kishi Nobusuke, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Poland and Japan respectively, for the Polish Press Agency and Kyodo News (Kyōdō Tsūshin) after signing the *Agreement between Japan and the Polish People's Republic concerning the re-establishment of normal relations* on 8 February 1957. The next day the reprinted statement could be found in *Trybuna Ludu* (p. 2) in an article entitled *The perspective on the beneficial cooperation between Poland and Japan – the contribution to the work of world peace (Perspektywy korzystnej współpracy polsko-japońskiej – wkład do dzieła pokoju światowego)*. In different words both ministers expressed the same idea. Therefore I quote only Rapacki's words:

“I am convinced that the development of relations between the Polish People's Republic and Japan shall enable both countries to come closer, deepen understanding and create perspective for a mutually beneficial economic and cultural cooperation, this in turn, without a doubt shall contribute to a peaceful stabilization of international relations.”

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## AUTHOR'S PROFILE

### **Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska**

Professor at the University of Warsaw, the Chair of Japanese Studies, the Faculty of Oriental Studies; Ph. D and doctor habilitatus in humanities – the University of Warsaw. She lectures also at Collegium Civitas, Polish-Japanese Academy of Information Technology, etc. She spent many tours of duty in Japan, mainly at the University of Tokyo (also as a visiting professor and the Japan Foundation fellow), and at Rikkyō University, the Tokyo International University, the National Institute of Defense Studies, etc.

She specializes in the history and culture of Japan, the history of Polish-Japanese relations, the history and tradition of Imperial Household in Japan, cross-cultural studies.

#### Significant publications:

1. (Author and editor) *Spotkania międzykulturowe. Cudzoziemcy w Japonii (XVI-XX wiek)* (Cross-cultural encounters. Foreigners in Japan, 16th – 20th cent.); Warszawa: Japonica, 2017 and *Spotkania międzykulturowe. Japończycy w świecie (do XX wieku)* (Cross-cultural encounters. Japanese in the world till 20th cent.); Warszawa: Japonica, 2016.
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Isabelle Prochaska-Meyer  
ORCID: 0000-0002-9708-7979

## **Rural Communities at Risk: How ‘Perishing Municipalities’ in the Japanese Alps Are Actively Seeking Ways to Revitalise Their Populations**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.15

### **ABSTRACT**

As current discourses on “perishing municipalities” predict a dark future, especially for municipalities with a population of less than 10,000, this paper looks at three case-study sites (with populations of less than 1,500) in Nagano and Yamanashi prefectures and how they deal with demographic change. The main objective of revitalization is to attract newcomers, either for short-term urban-rural exchange or ideally for residents. Consequently, rural municipalities advertise those assets that cities cannot compete with: their natural resources. Agriculture is fostered in the communities in various aspects. For the aged population, farm work is a way to stay physically active and socially engage with others. For those retired locals, newcomers and visitors who are not involved in agriculture, there are groups involved in hobby farming and food processing as new leisure (or educational) activities. Lastly, for newcomers who are expected to contribute to the revitalization of the municipality, agriculture is an important driver and represents a precious asset of rural communities. Referring to Baltes & Baltes’ SOC-model, which is usually linked to successful ageing, I investigate how the elements of selection, optimization and compensation can be seen in the municipalities’ strategies to overcome demographic challenges.

**KEYWORDS:** rural Japan, depopulation, Masuda Reports, revitalization programs, case study, Nagano, Yamanashi

### **Introduction**

Over the past several decades, Japan’s rural regions have seen major transformations. More than ever, rural municipalities are struggling with ageing populations and their consequences: young people out-migrating, local shops closing, schools that have to be closed due to the shortage of children, with vacant houses left to decay, their ruins becoming a burden for the environment, and with abandoned fields which cause nature to intrude into the villages. This is not an unusual, but rather a typical scenario in many parts of the Japanese countryside, and “villages at the

edge of existence” (*genkai shūroku*) or “perishing municipalities” (*shōmetsu suru jichitai*) are repeatedly discussed in the media as well as in academia.

Japan’s population ranks very high in terms of the proportion of the elderly. Currently, more than a quarter of the population is aged 65 or older, and a decrease in the total population has been observed since 2008 (Statistics Japan 2014), because more people are dying than are born yearly. The government of Japan has been unwilling to compensate the population shrinkage with an increase of immigrants (the proportion of foreigners in Japan is less than 2% of the total population; Akashi 2014: 178). Therefore, the ticking of the “imploding” time bomb is audible not only in Japan as a whole (cf. Coulmas and Lützel 2011), but more alarmingly in all rural regions, where depopulation harshly affects the social community structure, the agriculture and forestry sectors, and the ecological situation of farm- and forestland as important resources of biodiversity.

This paper examines recent discussions of “rural depopulation and ageing”, and analyzes revitalization initiatives by various agencies (government, municipal administration, NPOs and interest groups) in three rural municipalities. It argues that rural communities make use of their own assets of their environment and agriculture in order to compensate for the inconveniences of rural life. The article first introduces current discourses on rural depopulation, especially on “perishing municipalities”, triggered by the so-called “Masuda Reports”. It then examines the ways in which depopulation has been dealt with in three rural case study sites in Nagano and Yamanashi prefectures, where fieldwork was conducted<sup>1</sup>. Drawing also on primary material of municipal documents and on interviews with senior informants and experts from the administration, the health sector and NPOs, I give examples of revitalization projects, which try to counteract depopulation and land abandonment. The various strategies will be analyzed by making use of Baltes’ theory of “successful ageing”, which describes aspects of selection, optimization and compensation<sup>2</sup>. The psychologists Paul B. and Margret M. Baltes identified tactics that are used by the elderly to overcome their deficiencies in terms of physical and

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<sup>1</sup> The research project was conducted with support by the OeNB’s Anniversary Fund (project members and fieldwork conductors: Pia Kieninger and the author; project head: Sepp Linhart) at the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Vienna in 2013/14. Two fieldwork stays were realized with funding by the German Institute of Japanese Studies (DIJ), the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), and the Austrian Research Association (ÖFG).

<sup>2</sup> Selection, optimization and compensation are not regarded as consecutive steps, but all three elements are interlinked in the process of adaptation to the conditions of old age. Therefore, the model is also called “selective optimization with compensation” (Baltes & Baltes 1989: 5).

psychological fitness. An individual therefore selects fields of activities which have higher priorities, and tries to optimize their abilities in certain areas. In this way, strategies are used to improve certain skills, while compensating for weaknesses in other areas (Baltes and Baltes 1989). This model of adaptation is not limited to the ageing process, but is used in most areas of life. However, in old age, it becomes more important, as biological, mental and social capacity reserves decline (Baltes and Baltes 1989: 9). While Baltes' SOC-concept of "successful ageing" usually deals with individuals (elderly people), in this paper it is used for the ageing community as a whole. The main interest deals with the following questions: (i) how can depopulated municipalities "age successfully"?; and (ii) which tactics do they use to strengthen their resilience to either counteract or adapt to demographic changes?

### **Rural Japan – Its Historical Context and Current Problems**

Odagiri Tokumi describes four phases of degradation in rural Japan, which are especially drastic in mountainous areas (Odagiri 2009: 3-7, 2014: 15-43): First, the degradation of population, which started from the 1960s onwards when many young people migrated from rural to urban areas. The present population shrinkage in rural areas, however, is less caused by out-migration, but by natural decrease as the death rate is higher than the birth rate. The second phase is the degradation of land-use, which started in the mid-1980s. With a decrease of labour force in agriculture and forestry, farm- and woodland became abandoned and devastated, causing the next phase, the degradation of villages. Along with the problem of ageing and depopulation, the term *genkai shūraku* ("villages at the edge of existence") was created, indicating villages, where more than half of the population is aged 65 and older, and the community functions are weakening. The last phase is the degradation of pride, when locals themselves see a dark future for their village, and therefore wish that their children leave and start better lives outside, in less depopulated areas. To counteract this development, Odagiri stresses the importance of the local residents' participation in developing local industries, which make use of domestic resources, deriving from the distinct climate, natural conditions and geography.

Depopulation in rural areas has intensified since the 1990s, and the farming sector is weakening due to the ageing of farmers, who often do not have successors, thus causing a decline in productivity (Elis 2011: 445-446). Looking at the development in agriculture, commercial farming households decreased from 1985 to 2000 by 10%, and more drastically from 2005 to 2010 by almost 17%. The number of "agricultural

management entities” (*nōgyō keieitai*) also decreased from about 2 million in 2005 to 1.67 million in 2010 (a decrease of 16.4%) (Andō 2013: 2-3). Food self-sufficiency in Japan is weakening and amounted to only 39% in 2016 (MAFF 2017). The average age of people working in agriculture is 65.8 years, and the share of people aged 70 and above increased from 24.7% in 1995 to almost half (47.8%) in 2010 (Andō 2013: 5).

Besides internal changes, such as the ageing of the population, there are also external factors which have contributed to a weakening of living standards in rural areas. Volker Elis analyzes a “process of peripherization”, where the infrastructure has become more and more concentrated in central settlements (e.g. the Great Heisei Merger Wave, when the number of municipalities nearly halved within the period 1999-2006, resulting in large administrative cuts in smaller municipalities), and concludes that “[d]emographic decline is rather the outcome than the initial cause of the many structural problems rural areas are facing today.” (Elis 2011: 459).

The trend of continued out-migration of the younger generation leads to parents and grandparents being left in the countryside. Looking at the proportion of elderly single-person households in 2010, one finds that they constituted 9.2% of the total number of households, while another 10.1% were households with only an elder couple (MIC 2013: 4-5). In 2000, the government introduced a long-term care insurance (LTCI) system to back up institutional healthcare services. Some 5.6 million elderly people were eligible for assistance services through the LTCI system in 2014 (MHLW 2015: 12). In addition to the ageing population in the rural region, there is a high proportion of never-married men around 50 in underpopulated municipalities, and another growing household pattern is that of single men (either never-married or divorced) living together with their fathers or mothers (Tanaka and Iwasawa 2010: 397-400). This new reality in the rural area is challenging many aspects of livelihood, and municipalities are putting much effort into finding ways to counteract the process of population shrinkage, which is not only a quantitative, but also a qualitative phenomenon (cf. Feldhoff 2013: 100). Rural municipalities are promoting their assets, which cities cannot offer, namely their natural resources, thus attracting newcomers to live in small-scale communities, where the water and air are better than in the cities, where children can experience and appreciate nature, and where healthy food can be grown on one’s own.

### **The Perishing Regions – the Masuda Reports**

The problem of population shrinkage has recently gained considerable media attention after the release of the so-called “Masuda Reports” (*Masuda repōto* in Japanese; in English better translated as “Masuda Reports” in plural, since it consists of various papers), named after the author Masuda Hiroya, former governor of Iwate prefecture (1995-2007) and former minister of Internal Affairs and Communication (2007-2008). Together with the Japan Policy Council (*Nihon sōsei kaigi*), Masuda published various papers on the demographic future of Japan, among them two articles in the widely known monthly journal *Chūōkōron*<sup>3</sup>. The first was included in the 2013 December issue on “Perishing regional cities”. Masuda refers to Japan’s current population shrinkage as a “chronic disease”, which should be cured at the earliest stage possible. Japan’s population, amounting to 128 million in 2010, will shrink below 100 million in 2060 if the situation remains unchanged (Masuda 2013: 20). For Masuda, one indicator of a region’s sustainability is the share of the population who belong to the main reproductive force, i.e. women aged 20 to 39 (also referred to as “young women” in this paper). According to current statistics, many municipalities suffer from the out-migration of this population group. Assuming that future population change will further develop as it did in the time period from 2010 to 2015, Masuda predicts that by 2040 the number of young women will have decreased by 50% or more in almost half (49.8%, or 896 municipalities) of the total number of municipalities. Among these municipalities, 523 municipalities will have less than 10,000 people by 2040, and are likely to disappear (Masuda 2013: 26-27). To solve regional population shrinkage, Masuda recommends as a first step that municipalities offer support for marriage, pregnancy, birth and child rearing, in order to sustain their population size. Second, policies are needed to avoid concentration in urban centres, so that the population density will become more equal. Third, the recruitment and training of human resources is important (Masuda 2013: 29-30).

The second article in *Chūōkōron* appeared in its June 2014 issue entitled “523 perishing municipalities”. It is also known as the “Masuda List” since it explicitly registers the names of the municipalities that are likely to disappear by 2040, as already mentioned in the first article (Masuda 2014a: 32-43).

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<sup>3</sup> The publications are authored as “Masuda Hiroya and the Japan Policy Council”, but Masuda is the only explicitly mentioned name. In this paper, only Masuda is indicated as the author in the references.

Masuda and the Japan Policy Council also published a detailed book entitled *Perishing regions* in August 2014, with the main argument that “Tokyo’s extreme population concentration is propelling depopulation” (which is also the subtitle of the book). For Masuda, measures have to be taken quickly so that Japan as a whole can achieve “success” – which, in his understanding means that a fertility rate of 2.1 or more is reached (Masuda 2014b: 41). Since population shrinkage in Japan will spread from peripheral regions to urban areas and finally to Tokyo, he proposes making the regions more attractive so that they can fulfill a “dam function” and act as a “defense line” preventing the depopulation of Tokyo (Masuda 2014b: 47-49). In order to achieve this, Masuda argues for the creation of compact towns, “regional core cities” with a population of more than 200,000 (Masuda 2014b: 51-52).<sup>4</sup>

To summarize, the Masuda Reports call for a de-concentration of population in the Tokyo area. Indeed, the population of this area (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Chiba) amounts to 36.12 million, which is more than a quarter (28.4%) of the total population of Japan (data for 2010-2015; Statistics Japan 2016: 8). Adapting Baltes’ model of selection – optimization – compensation, Masuda recommends to focus on compact cities in the belt area (selection) as a preventive strategy to counteract the concentration in Tokyo, while small municipalities are expected to disappear (compensation). These cities should act as “buffer zones” and offer good living standards, attracting people from both urban and peripheral areas. To counteract the low birth rate, municipalities have to actively offer child-care-friendly environments for young families (optimization). Regarding the gender aspect, it is laudable that Masuda addresses socio-political issues, and speaks also for companies offering child-friendly environments, emphasizing that men must participate more in household matters, including paternity leaves (Masuda 2014b: 81-88). On the other hand, there is a heavy burden laid on women in the age group 20-39, who are regarded as the main drivers for natural population increase. In claiming that more sexual education and knowledge concerning late (i.e. delayed) child birth are needed (Masuda 2014b: 77), Masuda implicitly shifts the causes for low birth rate from socio-economical, socio-political reasons to the alleged lack of knowledge in women of reproductive age. The primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fishery) is rarely mentioned in the reports. The use of local wood is described as a potential business for CLT (cross-laminated timber) and biomass, and the so-called “sixth

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<sup>4</sup> Similarities can be seen with Tanaka Kakuei’s “Theory for Remodeling the Japanese Archipelago” (*Nihon rettō kaizōron*) of 1973.



industry” is expected to have great potential to promote agricultural products, tourism, health food, and to create a brand strategy, making use of the popularity and impact of *washoku* (Japanese cuisine) or the image of “cool Japan” (Masuda 2014b: 65). Masuda also claims that it is essential to create working opportunities for the elderly, for example farming for seniors (Masuda 2014b: 90).

### **Criticism of the Masuda Reports**

The publication of the Masuda Reports soon triggered criticism. Two specialists on regional development, Yamashita Yūsuke and Odagiri Tokumi, each published a book reacting to the reports. Yamashita’s publication *The trap of perishing regions. The true facts on the “Masuda Reports” and depopulating society* and Odagiri’s *The rural villages won’t perish* both appeared in December 2014. The latter scholar also published a record of presentations held at a symposium in July 2014, entitled *The return to the countryside has started. A critique of the ‘discourse on perishing municipalities’* (Odagiri 2015).

Both authors criticize the sensational reaction of the media that followed the release of the Masuda Reports (Yamashita 2014: 14; Odagiri 2015: 9). Odagiri argues that the main points in the reports (low birthrate and population concentration in Tokyo) are not new at all, although the mass media might have created the impression that this situation has suddenly evolved. Speaking about the rhetoric in the reports, he shows that the word “depopulation” (*kaso*) is hardly mentioned. Instead, “population shrinkage” (*jinkō genshō*) or “perishing” (*shōmetsu*) are used. In addition, Odagiri points out that the authors of the reports have close ties to governmental sectors, such as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (Odagiri 2015: 9-10).

The scholars agree with Masuda’s argument that population concentration in Tokyo has to be halted. However, the plan of creating compact cities is regarded with great scepticism. Yamashita argues that the concept of a compact city as a “population dam” would just create a “quasi-Tokyo” (*jun-Tokyo*). Why, Yamashita asks, is it important to create other cities if the problem of depopulation is urbanization (Yamashita 2014: 49)? Odagiri also criticizes Masuda’s compact city model. It is not explained in the reports, he claims, why the population size of 10,000 people is crucial. According to Odagiri, small-scale municipalities are more likely to have a sustainable, stable population size. In addition, the Masuda Reports use data of 2010, but migration back to rural areas has been rising since 2011 (Odagiri 2015: 13).

To summarize, both Odagiri and Yamashita welcome Masuda's advice to reduce the population concentration in the Tokyo area, but they speak against the formation of new urban areas in the periphery. Instead, they call for bottom-up initiatives and for an appreciation of small-scale communities in the rural region.

### **Background Information on the Study Sites**

The fieldwork for the present study was conducted in three rural, mountainous municipalities over a period of four months in the winter of 2013 and the summer of 2014<sup>5</sup>. Apart from participant observation during village events (e.g. sports' day, religious festival) and activities, especially for the elderly (health courses, gateball tournaments etc.), 19 expert interviews (from the municipal administration, health sector, interest groups and academia) and 30 semi-structured narrative interviews with 38 key informants (in the age groups 65-74, 75-84 and 85+) were conducted<sup>6</sup>. The case-study sites were chosen according to the following selection criteria:

1. Minimum proportion of 35% of people aged 65+
2. Population under 1,500 people
3. Mountainous municipalities in the Japanese Alps, reachable within approx. 3 hours from Tokyo by public transport

The three study sites were Minamiaiki and Kitaaiki in Nagano prefecture, and Kosuge in Yamanashi prefecture. All three are included in the Masuda List of 523 municipalities and therefore assessed to be at risk of disappearing by 2040. By that time, the proportion of women aged 20 to 39 is expected to have shrunk by more than half of the present population, and the municipalities' total population size will be well below 10,000, which is of course already the present situation.

### **Demographic Structure of the Study Sites**

The overall demographic trend of the last 30 years is similar in the studied sites (see figure 1): while in general the population size is shrinking, the proportion of the population aged 65+ is steadily increasing.

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<sup>5</sup> The main focus of the research project was the relationship between farm activity and "active ageing", a concept which was promoted by the WHO in the late 1990s to point to the active participation of elderly people in economic, social, cultural, spiritual and civil affairs (WHO 2002: 12).

<sup>6</sup> In addition, the researchers Kieninger and Prochaska-Meyer produced a documentary film "65+. Being old in rural Japan" (2014, 35 min).

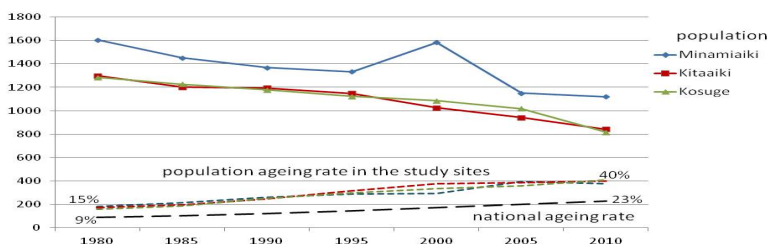


Figure 1. Population development and rate of ageing in the three study sites 1980-2010 (source: Minamiaikimura 2011: 9, Kosugemura 2010: 6; Population Census 1950-2010)

Within the municipalities, the villages differ in population size and proportion of elderly (Minamiaiki has ten villages, Kitaaiiki consists of nine villages, and Kosuge has eight villages). The three municipalities extend with wide distances between the single villages (over 10 km between the villages which are furthest apart) from one end of the municipality to the other. While the villages in the centre of the municipality are less affected by ageing and depopulation (with population sizes from approx. 120 to 200 people), the peripheral villages are becoming smaller and smaller in size (less than 100) and the proportion of their elderly population is rising steadily. To give one example in numbers: in Minamiaiki, the municipal office and post office are in the center of Wada, a village with 130 people and an ageing rate of 38%. The most remote village is Kuryū, with a population size of only 34 and an ageing rate of 67% (as of 31.05.2015, data provided by the municipal office).

### Agriculture in the Studied Sites

All three municipalities have a high proportion of forest (approx. 90% of the municipality area), but forestry is not a major business in any of the sites. Agriculture in Minamiaiki and Kitaaiiki is dominated by the so-called highland vegetables (*kōgen yasai*), such as cabbage and lettuce, mainly cultivated by full-time farmers in a comparatively large-scale manner. These farmers often lease fields from (mostly senior) inactive farmers and recruit seasonal workers, e.g. from China or the Philippines. Apart from vegetables and buckwheat (*soba*), floriculture (mainly chrysanthemum) is

present in both municipalities. Recently, there has been almost no account of forestry and fishery in Minamiaki and Kitaaki. In 2010, the main income of nearly 50 % of the 162 people engaged in agriculture in Minamiaki was farmwork (Minamiakimura 2011: 22).

Kosuge is situated in a narrow valley with steep mountains. Its fields are organized in long, narrow, vertical strips on steep slopes, locally called *kakejiku batake* ('Japanese scroll painting fields'). In the past, due to the existence of a river flowing to Tokyo, forestry was a lucrative source of income, as well as the production of *wasabi*, which grows naturally along the stream beds of the mountain river valleys. The main agricultural crops currently harvested in Kosuge are *wasabi* and the root vegetable *konnyaku* (*Amorphophallus konjac*), whilst trout and char are bred on fish farms. In 2010, the majority (24 people) of the primary sector was involved in forestry, 19 people worked in agriculture, with 7 people in fish breeding (Tokuei 2015a & 2015b). For self-subsistence, different kinds of vegetable and fruits are grown, such as potatoes, tomatoes or melons.

In order to counteract population shrinkage, all the three analyzed sites placed a lot of emphasis on newcomers – so called I- and U-turners ("I-turners" are newcomers from the city, and "U-turners" are former residents who have returned). In all municipalities, newcomers who have started an agricultural business in the village are highly praised as embodiments of best practice, for example in village promotion pamphlets or on the municipalities' websites. Also, for the local villagers farmwork is an important way of life, both in economic and in social terms. Compared to a regular job at a company, which is terminated after retirement, farmwork is an activity which can easily be continued and provides both social networks and life satisfaction, as one local medical doctor explained:

"Usually, company employees have less contact with village residents, so many worry how to spend their retirement time. But in farming, there is agriculture for commercial sale, and then there is agriculture for oneself, just a little bit, as a hobby and for social interaction. (...) You can continue farmwork smoothly after you have reached retirement age. I think this aspect strongly relates to active ageing." (Medical doctor, Kitaaki, 25.10.2013).

Active elderly villagers who are still engaged in farming are also praised by the municipalities in local newsletters or on websites as role models of a healthy lifestyle. In all studied sites, the proportion of the elderly

population still active in farmwork (for their own consumption) is high. Out of our 38 senior informants, 28 were active in growing vegetables and fruit for their own use (23 informants), and some additionally for extra income (5 informants, including floriculture).

### **Revitalization Strategies in the Analyzed Sites**

Depopulation, the deterioration of infrastructure and the increase in abandoned farmland are problems which all three municipalities are facing. The methods to adapt to these changes differ and are initiated on the national and municipal level as well as by private interest groups. In what follows, I will focus on revitalization strategies, which are related to the ecological system of the municipalities, making use of the natural resources and agriculture.

### **National Initiatives: Chiiki okoshi kyōryokutai (Local Community Revitalization Corps)**

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications initiated the revitalization programme of the Local Community Revitalization Corps in 2009. Young people (mostly in their twenties and thirties), engage in activities for local revitalization (such as promoting local goods and tourist attractions), agriculture, forestry, fishery and nature conservation, and help in communal work (such as services for elderly people). The overall assumption of this programme is that after the expiry of three years (the minimum term is one year), the participants will be able to establish their own source of income in the municipality. The volunteers from the Revitalization Corps are employed in the municipal administration (in some cases, the prefectural administrations). Their salaries as well as accommodation allowances and promotion costs for the local governments are covered by the ministry (maximum 4 million ¥ per person). Since this programme started in 2009, the number of participants as well as participating administrations has risen from 89 corps members in 2009 to 3,978 members in more than 800 municipalities in 2016 (MIC n.d.).

Kosuge (programme periods 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015) and Kitaaike (2014) joined this programme. In Kosuge, in particular, the pilot programme was quite successful. In the first period in 2011, the municipality recruited four women and two men in their 20s and 30s. They worked in various institutions, such as the municipal office, hot springs facility, adventure park and at a local NPO involved in nature education and student exchanges. The aim of the programme was not only to support the municipality with human resources, but also to change the awareness of the

local population: “New influences bring good impulses.” (municipal clerk, Kosuge, 08.11.2013).

Indeed, interaction with the local population is central in the activities of the Revitalization Corps. One could say that it is a win-win situation, Odagiri calls it the “mirror effect”, which evolves from urban-rural exchange (Odagiri 2014: 89): For the local (mostly senior) community, the fact that young people deliberately move to their municipality, and moreover appreciate the rural lifestyle, contributes to their own pride, which in Odagiri’s model of degradation is weakening in the final, fourth phase (after the degradation of people, land-use, and villages). For the members of the Revitalization Corps, their work gives them fulfillment, as it contributes to the regeneration of the municipality; moreover, they acquire knowledge and competence through interaction with the local community, which they would not have gained so easily without the programme.

Out of the six Revitalization Corps members of the first recruitment period, four stayed in Kosuge after completing their three-year term at the time of our fieldwork in summer 2014.

### **Municipal Initiatives: Recruitment of Newcomers**

New housing for newcomers was established in Minamiaiki in 1980 and in mid-1990s in the other two municipalities, and has been run ever since. The monthly rent is very cheap, for example 10,000 ¥ for an apartment with dining room-kitchen and 3 rooms.

Kitaaiki’s policy is to establish new housing in those villages where the proportion of elderly residents is highest, to reduce the rate of ageing “so that newcomers can support the community” (municipal clerk, Kitaaiki, 21.10.2013). In the late 1990s, Kitaaiki built for I-turners a complex of around 20 council houses and apartments close to the sports ground in a remote area of Miyanotaira, which is today the biggest village of the community. Not only do young newcomers contribute positively to the age stratification of the community, they also contribute to the revitalization of the municipality, since many also plan to farm, either professionally or for own subsistence.

“There are also people who come here because they want to farm. The number of these people has increased in the recent time. If there is farmland [in the case when someone moves out of the village and owns property], which is still in good condition, then the municipality keeps it [as farmland], so that potential I-turners

can grow something there.” (municipal clerk, Kitaaiiki, 21.10.2013)

In Minimiaiiki, houses for newcomers have only been built in the main villages, to strengthen the population density in the centre of the municipality, while the peripheral villages are accepted (and expected) to disappear in the future:

“We currently focus on I-turners and U-turners. They are partly the reason why the population development is relatively stable. We have about 60 council apartments. I-turners and U-turners either move into vacant houses or apartments. And if there are council apartments with newcomers in a village, then the population can be stable in this village. This is the reason why the villages Mikawa and Kuryū are *genkai shūroku*, because there are no new apartments. From there, you need a longer time to drive to [the cities] Koumi or Saku for shopping. When you consider the distance to the next city, you cannot establish council houses in the peripheral villages of our municipality. That’s why *genkai shūroku* emerge.” (municipal clerk, Minamiaiiki, 08.10.2013)

In Kosuge, the site selection for new housing depended on land availability, i.e. the new houses were built in closed housing estates (as new families were thought to prefer living close to each other) in two villages next to the main village of the municipality, where enough land was available. Besides, the municipal offices also provide information on vacant houses on their homepages. Recently private organizations have increased which inform on rural migration and mediate between potential newcomers and rural municipalities. At the time of the fieldwork, all three municipalities themselves coordinated the transactions.

“We mediate if someone is interested in moving to Kosuge. There is no real estate company here, not like in Tokyo. Therefore, we do all the transactions, we try to find the property owner and we mediate. Or sometimes potential newcomers contact us, and we ask if they are interested in only a house or also some farmland. And we introduce various options.” (municipal clerk, Kosuge, 08.11.2013)

In Kitaaiiki, special 2-day-tours have been provided since 2013 for interested newcomers to interact with the local community and inspect potential houses and farmland. The municipality also offers commuting subsidies for newcomers who still maintain their work outside the municipality (e.g. a maximum of 360,000¥ per year for commuting by shinkansen).

In 2014, both Minamiaiki and Kitaaiiki produced colourful pamphlets to promote the village to potential newcomers. Minamiaiki's 32-page magazine is entitled *Recommending Minamiaiki*, and Kitaaiiki's 24-page version bears the title *Let's create our home here*. In both pamphlets, stories of urban I-turners are highlighted, in addition to information on the municipality's characteristics and activities. Features resulting from depopulation are positively praised in the case of Kitaaiiki: "We do not have a *konbini* [24-hours "convenience store"], and even no traffic lights, but here you can 'chase rabbits on the mountain' and 'fish in the river'". Minamiaiki's promotional magazine introduces six positive "bragging" (*jiman*) sides of the municipality, the first three being:

1. Relations with neighbours are close. (...) The atmosphere of the village is like in a big family.
2. The village is full of nature. (...)
3. We only have one set of traffic lights. (...)

In Kosuge, there is a big sign close to the hot springs facility, which shows pictures of the municipality's culture and nature through the seasons. The slogan on the sign says: "There is nothing, but... it's a nice village."

### **Initiatives by Interest Groups: Fostering Agriculture and Rural-Urban Exchange**

The following examples of NPOs and interest groups also receive financial support from the municipality, but can be seen as bottom-up initiatives as they are driven by the motivation of the locals to create something that improves community life. As one of the founders of the Farmers' Club (which will be explained in more detail) remarked, the formation of the group was rooted in the belief that one cannot passively wait, but has to actively try to improve the situation:

"In the past, the economy in this municipality ran quite well and there were many people. Back then, I was young and I thought that the municipal office and the council would manage the



village, and that the people are sort of passive. But now, the rates of ageing and out-migration are high. Therefore, you cannot leave everything to the administration and the municipal council, but we have to contribute to the regeneration of the village ourselves, because it is our village, this is where we live, and where our children should also stay. If local people don't have such an attitude, then real revitalization cannot happen, and the community will shrink." (Farmers' Club founder member, Kosuge, 14.11.2013)

### **NPO Tama Genryū Kosuge and Tamagawa Genryū Daigaku**

The so-called NPO Tama Genryū Kosuge (founded in 2009) and the education centre Tamagawa Genryū Daigaku ("University", founded in 2006)<sup>7</sup> are very active in Kosuge, together with a local research institute, which was founded in 2001 (Tamagawa Genryū Kenkyūjo n.d.). The organizations share three main tasks: 1) research on the society and culture of Kosuge and the neighbouring municipalities (by the research institute), 2) an exchange between local people and university students from urban areas (by the education centre), and 3) the organization of activities (e.g. wood-cutting and other forestry tasks) for private companies, in which employees can participate five times a year (by the NPO). The "University" is cooperating with different universities in Tokyo and every year around 1,500 students come for short stays in order to learn from locals about agricultural activities or to support local farmers:

"The goal was to revitalize the area through education. This brings students closer to agriculture and helps students of architecture learn how to produce timber for construction. (...) In Kosuge, there are no professional farmers. The inhabitants cultivate land only for themselves, even if they are in their 60s and 70s. (...) At labour-intensive times, many students come to help them, thereby exchange is fostered and students can learn different things about the local culture." (representative of NPO, Kosuge, 11.11.2013)

The students are assisted by local teachers, approximately 70 people – mainly men aged 40-80. The "University" is financed by the municipality, as well as from national subsidies or private and company donations.

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<sup>7</sup> Despite the name *Daigaku*, it is not a real university.

The NPO also organizes tours for tourists to the “best spots” of the village, which last for about one hour and are advertised on the homepage and in the hot springs facility. The destinations are related to local agricultural products, for example *kon'yaku* fields or the local *enoki* mushroom cultivator. The tours are mainly aimed at one-day visitors from outside the prefecture (e.g. Tokyo, Saitama, Kanagawa) who come to the hot springs facility. Recent services of the NPO include “stress release tours”, or the provision of satellite offices for short-term stays for companies (NPO Kosuge 2016).

### **Minamiaiki nōsan kakō kenkyūkai (Minamiaiki Study Group for Agricultural Food Processing)**

The Minamiaiki Study Group for Agricultural Food Processing is another example of an interest group with people mainly from the non-agricultural sector, who engage in farm work and food processing (e.g. *tofu* or *miso*). This group was founded in 2001, and currently has about 20 people (mostly women) in their 60s and 70s, meeting every two weeks. The group cultivates vegetables and also cooperates with the local primary school in organizing food education events. Three senior informants, I-turners themselves, mentioned their involvement in the Study Group. One woman moved to the countryside more than thirty years ago together with her husband and is among the “veteran I-turners” of the village. While her husband started a business in vegetable production and floriculture, she maintained a job in a public office, helping her husband during busy seasons. As a member of the Study Group, she stressed the importance of interaction with the community members, along with learning about local agriculture and food processing. Having learned about the village during multiple vacation stays, another couple moved from an urban area to Minamiaiki after their retirement in 2000. Neither of them had been involved in any farm work while still working, and joined the Study Group after moving in. The wife emphasized the social networks she now has thanks to the group:

“I am in the Study Group for Agricultural Food Processing, we make *tofu* from the local soy beans, or we grow vegetables, which are used for school lunches. My husband was a member first, because he was interested in how to make *tofu*. And thanks to this group, our circle of acquaintances has widened.” (I-turner, Minamiaiki, 14.10.2013)

## **Discussion and Conclusion: How Can Rural Communities Age Successfully?**

Going back to Baltes & Baltes' model of selective optimization with compensation, we can see the three elements of selection – optimization – compensation in the study sites. The municipalities focus on newcomers or U-turners for the stabilization of the population (selection). Geographical selection was also seen in Minamiaiki, as the municipal office plans new apartments in the central villages, and not in the peripheral ones, which are expected to show the harshest population decrease, and thus the shrinkage (or “perishing”, in media parlance) is accepted. For new settlers, municipalities offer special advantages (e.g. low rents, subsidies), and they facilitate migration into the village through information, mediation and coordination (optimization). As much as small-scale standards in a remote village are praised, one weak point in all three municipalities for young I-turners is the absence of high schools. Therefore, newcomers often leave the countryside once their children graduate from middle school. As of June 2015, Minamiaiki had 137 registered I-turners, who had moved to the municipality since 2008. Of these, 77 people (56%) had already left the municipality (data provided by the municipal office). Therefore, the fluctuation of newcomers must also be considered, although – looking at the glass as “half-full” – the fact that 60 people (44%) of the above-mentioned I-turners stayed in Minamiaiki can also be called a success.

Regarding natural resources, about 90% of the municipalities is covered by forest, therefore there is great commercial potential in forestry (Masuda 2014b: 65; Motani 2013: 137), which could create new job opportunities and thus constitute potential compensation. However, forestry is not (yet) a major industry in the study sites.

To conclude, the three case study municipalities – rather than counteracting population decrease – appear to accept their shrinkage problem. They focus on newcomers, ideally young families, and temporal residents, to compensate the out-migration of villagers. New residential areas are created in regions close to the center hamlet rather than in peripheral hamlets, which are most affected by the demographic change. The compensating element can also be seen in the strategy to turn a weakness into a strength (“small is beautiful”), when village life is promoted to outsiders. Municipalities advertise small-scale education, no traffic lights (or just one set), an easygoing lifestyle and hospitality, and natural resources (water, air, good food, nature education). Kosuge's village slogan “We have nothing... but it's a nice village” is spot-on, according to a former Revitalization Corps member who decided to stay in

the village after her recruitment time, to run a local cafe and to help with welfare activities. When asked what she was satisfied with in the village she gave some thought and then answered:

“What would that be... maybe with the fact that there is nothing here? Before I moved here, I lived in an environment where everything was available. This was very convenient in a sense. But now I don’t need all those things. Looking from outside, you might think that’s inconvenient, but... how can I explain it. When I hear stories from local seniors about the past and if I compare the situation with the present, then I think it’s very convenient the way we live today. But at the same time, it’s also very fragile. If you don’t have electricity, you cannot do anything. If the shops are closed, you don’t have anything to eat. If something is wrong, you cannot go further, there is a kind of fragility. But here [in the countryside], people think if you cannot do something, you just have to think about the next step and move on. For example, if your room is small and inconvenient, then I can build you a new one. Or, if you want to eat a certain thing, I will grow it for you in my field. Before I moved here, I thought only special people could do these things, but I have also learned a lot, little by little. And I realize that I can also do various things myself. And this is what I am most satisfied with, that I have learned so much about daily life.” (former Revitalization Corps member, Kosuge, 16.7.2014)

She started expressing her thoughts by mentioning “that there is nothing here”, but she concluded with the insight “I have learned so much about daily life”. Paraphrasing her quote in combination with the village’s slogan, it could be: “We have nothing... but we can create anything”.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Isabelle Prochaska-Meyer**

A lecturer at the Department of East Asian Studies of the University of Vienna, Austria. Within her research project “Aged communities and active ageing: A case study of rural villages in the Japanese Alps” (2013-2014) she conducted fieldwork in three rural municipalities in Nagano and Yamanashi prefecture. Together with Pia Kieninger, she produced a documentary film “65+. Being old in Japan” (AT 2014, 35 min., available on YouTube) featuring the study sites. Her research interests are: religion, Okinawan studies, ageing in rural Japan, and ethnographic film.



Aleksandra Skowron  
ORCID: 0000-0003-3074-4513

## Japan's Role in Interreligious Encounter and Dialogue – Abe Masao (1915-2006) and His Dialogical Work

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.16

### ABSTRACT

Abe Masao, a Zen exponent and a representative of the third generation of the Kyoto School of Philosophy (Jpn. *Kyōto ha*) played a significant role in the field of interreligious dialogue. Trying to understand his own religious identity in a much broader context of other religions and worldviews, simultaneously, he looked for significance in plurality and diversity of the religious views, he encountered. His struggle with the issue of religious pluralism resulted in a unique and subjective approach. Analyzing Abe's reflections, the author considers two meanings of interreligious hermeneutics: the one applied by Abe and the one advocated by him. Abe's stance analyzed in the context of these two hermeneutical dimensions provides an example of an overall picture of a man confronted with other beliefs.

**KEYWORDS:** interreligious dialogue, interreligious hermeneutics, Zen, Christianity

### Introduction

The aim of the paper is to analyze the role played by a Zen exponent Abe Masao, a representative of the third generation of the Kyoto School of Philosophy<sup>1</sup> (Jpn. *Kyōto ha*) founded by Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945), in the field of interreligious dialogue. Abe's literary works express the stance of a man who, from his own subjective perspective (based on Zen<sup>2</sup>), participated in the interreligious dialogue, mainly with Christianity, but also, for example, with Judaism. There are two issues of essential

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<sup>1</sup> The Kyoto School of Philosophy – a group of 20<sup>th</sup> century Japanese philosophers who presented unique considerations concerning both intellectual and spiritual traditions of East Asia and the philosophy and religion of the West. The three leading representatives of this school are: Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945), Tanabe Hajime (1885-1962), Nishitani Keiji (1900-1990).

<sup>2</sup> Zen (Chin. *chan*, Jpn. *zen*) – a school of Mahāyāna Buddhism (Skt. *mahāyāna*, Chin. *dacheng*, Jpn. *daijō*) which refers to enlightenment of historic Buddha (ca. 566 B.C.E. – ca. 486 B.C.E.). Zen also refers to twenty-eight Indian patriarchs of whom the last one was Bodhidharma (Chin. Putidamo, Jpn. Bodaidaruma, 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E.). The first Japanese masters were Kakua (12<sup>th</sup> century C.E.) and Myōan Eisai (1141-1215). In Japan one can distinguish such Zen schools as: *rinzai*, *sōtō*, *ōbaku*. See: Maryniarczyk (ed.) (2004: 257, 258).

importance which relate to his approach. Firstly, his attempt to understand his own religious identity in a much broader context of other religions and worldviews. Secondly, his deep existential need to find some significance in plurality and diversity of the religious views he encountered.

Abe participated eagerly in interreligious dialogue and also presented his own theory on the subject and the concept of reinterpretation of other religions. Thus, he can be regarded as the author of his own, unique interreligious hermeneutics. Therefore, analyzing Abe's reflections, one has to consider two meanings of interreligious hermeneutics: the one applied by Abe<sup>3</sup> and the one advocated by him. Abe's stance analyzed in the context of these two hermeneutical dimensions provides an example of an overall picture of a man confronted with other beliefs.

### **Intrareligious Hermeneutics in Abe's Reflections**

The key to understanding Abe's works is provided by his interpretation of the religiously-existential path of a Zen adept, the last stage of which is 'enlightenment'<sup>4</sup> (Skt. *bodhi*, Chin. *wu*, Jpn. *satori*). The path together with the metaphor of a 'finger pointing to the moon'<sup>5</sup> (Jpn. *tsuki o sasuyubi*) and the concept of 'skillful means'<sup>6</sup> (Skt. *upāya*, Chin. *fangbian*, Jpn. *hōben*) constitute hermeneutical tools derived from his own religious tradition. Using them, Abe develops foundations for a dialogue with other religions and adapts these religions in his own religious context, reinterpreting them in a Zen way.

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<sup>3</sup> Interreligious hermeneutics involves a question to what extent one is able to understand a religion different from one's own. It deals with the issue how one's beliefs influence his or her understanding of other religions. It is concerned with the dynamics and ethics of reinterpretation and appropriation of elements derived from different religions. Cornille distinguishes four different types of interreligious hermeneutic which one can apply in interreligious dialogue: the hermeneutical retrieval of resources for the dialogue within one's own religious tradition; the pursuit of proper understanding of the other; the appropriation and reinterpretation of the other within one's own religious framework; the borrowing of hermeneutical principles of another religion. See: Cornille, Conway (eds.) (2010: ix-xxi).

<sup>4</sup> 'Enlightenment', in other words awakening, means an insight into one's true self, into one's true nature and at the same time the true nature of the universe. The experience is not based on a duality of a subject and an object of cognition. Moreover, it neither means acquiring knowledge in ordinary sense of the word nor a philosophical insight. See: Fischer-Schreiber, Ehrhard, Diener (1991: 65; 189).

<sup>5</sup> The metaphor plays a key role in Zen. It means that the 'enlightenment' should not be confused with words and concepts indicating it. The finger points to the moon (the symbol of 'enlightenment'), but it is not the moon.

<sup>6</sup> The concept constitutes an essential element of Mahāyāna Buddhism. It allows to adjust religious message to the capacities and background of the hearers. See: Fischer-Schreiber, Ehrhard, Diener (1991: 239).

Abe dissociates himself from philosophy, especially metaphysics, just like Zen masters, who did not want to build a metaphysical system, but wished to lead their adepts to 'enlightenment'<sup>7</sup>. Thus, Abe does not present a metaphysical model of reality available in the act of 'enlightenment', but only religiously-existential path understood as a 'finger pointing to the moon', which includes the act as the last stage.

The first stage means individual 'self' based on the duality of 'self' as a subject and 'self' as an 'object' of cognition (as well as e.g. will and feelings). Simultaneously, 'self' treats itself as a point of reference in all relations (Abe 1975/1976: 32, 33). In this stage 'self' as a subject identifies with 'self' as an object. Moreover, it accepts as valid and adequate to reality the description based on defining an object of cognition as opposed to another object of cognition, as well as to the subject of cognition (the description understood as a perspective of looking at reality). (Abe 1989: 5, 6).

The second stage is realized by a religiously-existential breakthrough, i.e. a negation of 'individual' self, which also means the negation of all notions, concepts and meanings connected with such an approach to reality (ibid.: 7, 8, 9, 12, 13). The categories of 'self' as a subject and 'self' as an 'object' are still present in this stage. Nevertheless, 'self' as a subject is no longer a reference point. The second stage may only involve negation. In such a case this stage means the first breakthrough ('leap') as negation and reflection on this experience. Objectified unattainability and nondescriptiveness constitute the reference point in every relation. However, the second stage may also involve a conceptual affirmation, which follows negation (the first breakthrough) as a response to it (according to Abe, Nishida's philosophy represents such affirmation<sup>8</sup>). In this case objectified ultimate reality becomes the reference point (Abe 1989: 7-16).

The third stage, namely 'enlightenment', is realized by the second breakthrough ('leap') and means 'absolute negation' (freedom from duality and reference points) as well as 'absolute affirmation', in other words

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<sup>7</sup> A Zen master cannot cause an adept's 'enlightenment'. Creating appropriate conditions, he can only help him to become 'enlightened'. See: Kozyra (2004: 97-99).

<sup>8</sup> According to Abe, Nishida's philosophy expresses an affirmation after the first breakthrough and thus it does not express enlightenment, because Nishida solves the problem of different religious stances in a theoretical way. In Abe's opinion Nishida's 'logic of absolutely contradictory self-identity' (Jpn. *zettaimujunteki jikodōitsu no ronri*), according to which A is A and simultaneously A is not A, constitutes a metaphysical Zen philosophy, characteristic of the second phase, and Absolute as 'absolute contradictory self-identity' is an objectified reference point. However, Abe refers to Nishida's views not in a Zen context, but in the context of Nishida's approach to other religions. See: Abe (2003: 98, 99, 106, 107, 110-116); Kozyra (2007: 73-75).

experience of authenticity of everything and real engagement in matters of the world and history, as well as in daily life<sup>9</sup>. The third stage is defined according to the sokuhi *logic* (Chin. *jifei*, Jpn. *sokuhi*) of The Perfection of Wisdom Sutras (Skt. *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, Chin. *Banruoboluomiduojing*, Jpn. *Hannyaharamittakyō*), which Abe applies only in the religiously-existential dimension<sup>10</sup>.

Zen masters criticized all analytical considerations, regarding them as obstacles on the way to ‘liberation’ (Kozyra 2004: 83). Thus, they would refer critically to Abe’s approach. However, he was in a completely different situation than a Zen master, whose aim was to create favorable conditions for attaining ‘enlightenment’ by an adept (*ibid.*: 97). Wishing to tell other participants in interreligious dialogue about the religious experience in Zen, Abe wanted to do it in an intelligible way. Moreover, he wanted them to experience authentic religiousness interpreted by him in a Zen way. In this respect Abe’s approach may be regarded as missionary Zen<sup>11</sup>. He evidently considered his actions as ‘skillful means’ adapted to Western conditions.

Abe claims that ‘not relying on words and letters’ in Zen is often misunderstood, since it does not mean “a mere exclusion of words and letters” (Abe 1989: 23), but “the necessity of not clinging to them” (*ibid.*: 23). Chinese Zen Master Yuwanwu Keqin (Jpn. Engo Kakugon, 1063-1135) introduced a distinction between ‘live words’ (Chin. *huoju*, Jpn. *kakku*) and ‘dead words’ (Chin. *siju*, Jpn. *shiku*) of Zen (Kozyra 2004: 217). Only a true Zen master can turn ‘dead words’ into ‘live’ ones and make them express that which is inexpressible (*ibid.*: 217, 218). Obviously, Abe believed, he used ‘live words’ and thus escaped the trap of conceptualization. Of course we are not able to verify whether Abe was ‘enlightened’ or not, since only a real Zen master can assess this<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> There are aspects of Abe’s considerations which were usually not interesting for Zen masters, namely these concerning political and social issues and history. See: Abe (1989: 4-18); Abe (2003: 34, 35).

<sup>10</sup> According to Abe, ‘enlightenment’ in Zen is and is not ‘absolute negation’, since it is ‘absolute affirmation’. Simultaneously the act is and is not ‘absolute affirmation’, since it is ‘absolute negation’.

<sup>11</sup> About missionary Zen see: Kozyra (2004: 19).

<sup>12</sup> According to Leszek Kołakowski’s statement on Christian mysticism, which is correct also in the Zen context, in one’s analysis one has to stop at the issues, which can be regarded as verbal, intersubjective expressions. All the rest cannot be treated as a subject of academic research. All experiences “constitute the subject of historical research, only when they are verbalized”. See: Kozyra (2004: 10).

### **Abe's Borrowing of Hermeneutical Principles of Another Culture**

According to Abe, an important aspect of 'absolute affirmation', and consequently of 'enlightenment', is expressed by the Buddhist concept of 'suchness',<sup>13</sup> (Skt. *tathāta*, Chin. *ru*, Jpn. *nyo* ), which he defines in the following way: „[for enlightened one – A.S.] all particular things are respectively just as they are and yet they are equal in their suchness” (Abe 1989: 208).

In Abe's opinion 'suchness' means authenticity free from duality, conceptualization and objectification. Moreover, for Abe 'suchness' is and is not oneness (as it means differentiation), 'suchness' is and is not differentiation (as it means oneness). Thus, Abe makes a reference to the Buddhist logic of *sokuhi*, though only in religiously-existential dimension. 'Suchness' is not considered by Abe independently of 'enlightenment'. It is not an attribute of ultimate reality of metaphysical nature. Experience of 'suchness' means authentic experience. In this aspect of 'enlightenment' a man experiences differentiation (i.e. according to Abe uniqueness and individuality) of everything, since he is free from duality and conceptualization. Simultaneously, he experiences equality, in other words according to Abe oneness, of everything, since the experience of authenticity is total, nothing is excluded from it<sup>14</sup>.

In a Buddhist context one usually talks about oneness and differentiation, however Abe does not limit himself to these terms. In his terminology concerning 'suchness', namely a key Buddhist concept, there are also notions of equality (identical with oneness) and notions of uniqueness and individuality (identical with differentiation)<sup>15</sup>.

Participating in interreligious dialogue, not only does Abe refer to his own religious tradition, but also in this case to cultural tradition of his interlocutors, since ideas of equality and individualism are characteristic of Western cultures, especially the American one, in which they play the key hermeneutical role<sup>16</sup>. Abe includes them in his unique definition of 'suchness', which on the one hand due to its paradoxical character refers to Buddhist tradition, and on the other hand to the fundamental values of

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<sup>13</sup> 'Suchness', a key concept of Mahāyāna Buddhism, refers to the true nature of all things, ultimate reality, things as they really are. According to a dictionary 'suchness' is formless, devoid of self-nature and unmade. See: Fischer-Schreiber, Ehrhard, Diener (1991: 221).

<sup>14</sup> For details on the concept of 'suchness' in Abe's considerations see: Abe (1995: 54, 55, 76, 77); Abe (1989: 17, 18, 208, 209, 226, 227); Abe (2003: 8, 9).

<sup>15</sup> For details on different terms used by Abe in the context of 'suchness' see: Abe (1995: 55, 60, 61, 76, 77); Abe (1989: 208, 209, 227); Abe (2003: 8, 9).

<sup>16</sup> For more details on the role of equality and individualism in American culture see: de Tocqueville (1996: 5); Bellah and others (2007: 263-292).

generally understood Western cultures. Thus, discussing a key Buddhist concept, Abe combines two types of interreligious hermeneutics, namely the hermeneutical retrieval of resources for dialogue within one's own religious tradition and the borrowing of hermeneutical principles of another culture. However, principles borrowed from American culture are interpreted by Abe in a unique way.

Definition of 'suchness' presented by Abe differs from the concept of 'suchness' derived from the Flower Garland Sutra<sup>17</sup> (Skt. *Avatamsaka sūtra*, Chin. *Huayanjing*, Jpn. *Kegongyō*), which does not identify notions of oneness and equality, since according to this sutra everything is one and the same, so one cannot evaluate (only then one can conclude that everything is equal)<sup>18</sup>. In the Buddhist tradition the fundamental teaching of the Flower Garland Sutra, namely 'the one is the many, the many are the one' (Chin. *yi ji yiqie, yiqie ji yi*, Jpn. *ichi soku issai, issai soku ichi*), is expressed by a metaphysical concept of 'unimpeded interpenetration of all phenomena' (Jpn. *jijimuge*) (Kozyra 2007: 49). Although Abe sometimes uses the term interpenetration, he does it only in the religiously-existential context, identifying this notion with equality (Abe 1995: 54, 55, 76, 77). Thus, he dissociates himself from the metaphysical legacy of the Kegon school, since metaphysical concepts are treated by him only as a 'finger pointing to the moon'.

### **Interreligious Hermeneutics as the Pursuit of Proper Understanding of the Other**

Abe's essays and statements do not express ignorance towards Christians, with whom he participated in interreligious dialogue, since he prepared earnestly for the dialogue. From 1955 to 1957 he studied Western philosophy at Columbia University, and systematic theology and Christian ethics at Union Theological Seminary (Mitchell ed. 1998: xii, xiii).

Abe endeavored to understand the meaning and validity of Christian teachings, even though he was able to do so only from a Zen perspective. However, his efforts were appreciated by his partners in interreligious dialogue, as they expressed a religious stance of a man who needed to find himself in the dialogical process, and at the same time struggled with the meaning and truth of Christian texts (Cobb 2005: 91).

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<sup>17</sup> Kozyra underlines the fact that "the influence of the sutra is evident in the teachings of many Zen masters". However, it is important to mention that "Zen masters expressed the teachings of the Flower Garland Sutra in a way characteristic of Zen, i.e. essentially avoiding philosophical analyses". Kozyra (2010: 33, 34).

<sup>18</sup> For more details on the teachings of the Flower Garland Sutra see: Kozyra (2004: 49); Kozyra (2007: 49).

In 1963 Abe published two important articles on Buddhism and Christianity in *Japanese Religions*<sup>19</sup>, showing his interest in Christianity and inviting responses from Western thinkers. However, it was his paper entitled “Kenotic God and Dynamic Sunyata”<sup>20</sup> that presented his deepest thoughts on Christianity, reflecting his struggle with the meaning of this religion.

### **Reinterpretation of Other Religions and the Concept of Universal Religiousness as an Adaptation of Other Beliefs in Abe's Religious Context**

The universal religiously-existential path of a man is based on Abe's interpretation of Zen practice, namely on the path of a Zen adept. Thus, Abe (1981: 114, 115) regards as universal the problem of dualism and the dilemma inherent to individual ‘self’, which means that the more one tries to define oneself in an objectified way, the less one is able to do it, because the subject of the question is at the same time the object of the question. The experience of this dilemma is linked with questions about the meaning and value of existence (ibid.: 114). If these concerns are serious enough, they constitute the first glimpses of religiousness and enable the first breakthrough to happen, although they are not its cause (ibid.: 113).

As regards interreligious dialogue, the second stage (of the religiously-existential path), including a metaphysically-religious response to the negation of the first breakthrough, plays an important role. Although the response involves objectification because of its conceptual nature, it expresses deep, but still incomplete religiousness (ibid.: 116). Thus, in the second stage ultimate reality is still conceptualized by a given religious stance. However, it provides a reference point, which gives new meaning and value to human life (ibid.: 116, 117). For this reason, one may speak about conceptually-religious affirmation. However, authentic religiousness, defined as the third stage, including the ultimate breakthrough, is free from conceptualization. In Abe's (1995: 5, 18, 19, 34-36) opinion the experience of authentic religiousness was present in various religions, but the teachings of these religions were not understood by believers. Thus, taking into consideration the main assumptions of Abe's general stance towards religiousness and other religions, one can regard him as the author of his own, subjective interreligious hermeneutics.

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<sup>19</sup> “Buddhism and Christianity as a Problem of Today. A Methodological Consideration”, “Buddhism and Christianity as a Problem of Today. Part II”. For more details see: References.

<sup>20</sup> Abe presented this paper in 1984 at the second conference on East-West Religious Encounters, it is also included in the book *The Emptying God. A Buddhist-Jewish-Christian Conversation* (John B. Cobb Jr., Christopher Ives eds. 1990).

Abe's reflections on Christianity are based on the universal religiously-existential path of man, especially on his concept of the experience of authentic religiousness, which definition he derives from 'enlightenment' in Zen.

In Abe's (2005:14) reinterpretation of Christianity the key role is played by the concept of kenosis<sup>21</sup>, which according to him is essential for Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Jesus Christ symbolizes a realization of 'absolute negation' (namely according to Abe in the Christian context – kenosis) and 'absolute affirmation' in an actual human existence (Abe 2005: 10-12, 167). God's kenosis as an aspect of 'absolute negation' means God not being a conceptual, reference point in this act (ibid.: 14, 16, 17, 167; Abe 1995: 216). Kenosis is inseparable with God's love, which is identified by Abe with the notion of 'suchness', namely with an aspect of 'absolute affirmation' (Abe 2005: 16, 167). Jesus Christ realizes both God's love (corresponding to 'suchness') and Saviour's love for people, corresponding to Buddhist 'great compassion'<sup>22</sup> (Skt. *mahākaruṇā*, Chin. *daibei*, Jpn. *daihi*)<sup>23</sup>. The concept of authentic faith, which means a realization of both God's and Jesus' kenosis by a believer, may be particularly shocking for a Christian<sup>24</sup>. Authentic faith means also a realization of God's love and Saviour's love by a believer. Such religious act deprives Jesus Christ and God of their unique status in Christian tradition.

Reinterpreting Christianity in this way, Abe reduces its message to a 'finger pointing to the moon', namely to the act of authentic religiousness, which for him corresponds to 'enlightenment' in Zen. In this respect Christianity and Buddhism are equal, as there was authentic religiousness in both traditions, but in the Christian one it became distorted by the doctrine, so a reinterpretation is necessary (Abe 1995: 35, 36). Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that Christian teachings gained

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<sup>21</sup> Kenosis (gr. *κένωσις*, *kénōsis*) – the noun *κένωσις* is derived from the verb which means: *to empty, to deprive, to make somebody devoid of something*. The concept of kenosis in Christianity refers to the Bible [Phil. 2:7]. Christ descended to take the form of a man, to live among people and die on the cross. The whole concept of his life and death is interpreted in the categories of renunciation, emptying. See: Gadacz, Milerski (eds.) (2002: 439); Perschbacher (2001: 123, 236).

<sup>22</sup> The key role in Mahāyāna Buddhism is played by the ideal of Bodhisattva (Skt. *bodhisattva*, Chin. *pusa*, Jpn. *bosatsu*), who devotes himself (herself) completely to the liberation of other beings. Thus the concept of 'great compassion' (Skt. *mahākaruṇā*, Chin. *daibei*, Jpn. *daihi*) – a compassion characteristic of Bodhisattva's altruistic desire for all beings to attain enlightenment – is of essential importance. See: Mejer (2001: 192-195, 204).

<sup>23</sup> For more details on this subject see: Abe (1989: 226); Abe, Cook (1985: 71); Abe (1995: 210); Abe (2005: 9, 10, 14, 16).

<sup>24</sup> For more details on the concept of authentic faith see: Abe (2005: 10-12, 17).



their equal status, being reinterpreted in a Buddhist way, especially a Zen one. Thus one cannot speak about real equality between these religions.

### **Conclusion**

Applying mixed hermeneutical strategies, Abe as a follower of Zen defines interreligious dialogue, its assumptions and aims. The definition is inseparably connected with his concept of universal religiously-existential path. According to Abe interreligious dialogue offers a chance to experience authentic religiousness, namely the ultimate breakthrough interpreted in a Zen way. The chance is given both to participants in interreligious dialogue and to other members of religious communities, represented by these participants, who should share their dialogical experience and their religiousness understood in such a broader context. The definition of interreligious dialogue is based on the assumptions of community and mutual transformation, in Abe's opinion essential, as only through the ultimate breakthrough a man stands a chance to face religious pluralism and antireligious ideologies<sup>25</sup>.

Although the universality of Zen in Abe's stance may be shocking, the concept of transforming dialogue, which deepens religiousness, was not only Abe's idea. It was a rule adopted both by Abe and by his main interlocutor, namely John B. Cobb Jr (Rowe 2008: 123).

Moreover, the concept of the universality of Zen is no exception to the ideas of the universality of one's own religion presented in other religious traditions. Kozyra claims that "[t]he concept of universal Zen should be described as 'anonymous Zen'<sup>26</sup> by analogy to Karl Rahner's (1904-1984) 'anonymous Christianity'" (Kozyra 2004: 40). Anonymous universality of one's own religion means reinterpretation and thus adaptation of other beliefs seen from within one's own religious context. Thus it functions as a type of interreligious hermeneutics.

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<sup>25</sup> For more details on this subject see: Abe (1989: 268-271); Abe (1995: 35); Abe (2003:3).

<sup>26</sup> Rahner's concept of 'anonymous Christianity' means that everyone can be saved in the Christian sense, even the one who does not recognize the historical revelation of the word of God. This salvation is not determined by belonging to a church, it does not even require baptism. God's redemptive will embraces everyone regardless of original sin. This does not mean, however, that all humankind will be saved. However, everyone (irrespective of his or her worldviews and beliefs) is graced with God's offer. Salvation means acceptance of God's offering Himself to a human. It is a kind of revelation understood as an absolute and direct contact with God, unrelated to philosophical reflections and intellectual speculations. According to Rahner, in every religion there are traces of revelation. See: Kozyra (1995: 137, 138); Rahner (1987: 138, 146).

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Aleksandra Skowron**

Aleksandra Skowron (PJATK) received her Ph.D. from the Faculty of Oriental Studies at University of Warsaw in 2017 for the thesis *Interreligious and cross-cultural dialogue in Masao Abe's (1915-2006) literary works*. Her research interests focus on Japanese philosophy and religions, interreligious and cross-cultural dialogue, interreligious and cross-cultural hermeneutics, homeomorphic models concerning individual religious approaches, theories of argumentation, and cognitive science.

Dmitry Streltsov  
ORCID: 0000-0001-7177-2831

## Reasons behind the Stability of Abe Administration

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.17

### ABSTRACT

The paper is devoted to the reasons of stability of the LDP power system that evolved in Japan after 2012. The author attempted to examine the factors of paradoxical popularity of Abe cabinets against the background of the split in the public opinion towards the key issues of state policy. Special attention is paid to the effectiveness of the political technologies used by the ruling Liberal Democratic party to retain its dominance in the Diet. However, in the author's view, LDP faces a serious management crisis rooted in the autocratic style of its management under Abe's leadership. LDP has yet to find a formula for transferring power to the next generation of political leaders.

**KEYWORDS:** Abe, Liberal Democratic Party, slogan style of communication, two-party system, management crisis

### Introduction

After returning to power in late 2012, Abe occupied the post of Prime-Minister for more than 6 years. He won three national elections, including two general elections to the lower House and two elections to the upper House.

Traditionally every new cabinet starts with high ratings against certain public expectations for a better political commitment, but in a year or so there usually occurs a noticeable decline in popularity (we should recall practically all cabinets since the retirement of Koizumi in 2006). But after 2012, with the 'revived' leadership of Abe, this did not happen (Naikaku shijiritsu 2017).

In 2017-2018, Abe's popularity substantially declined in the face of resonant political scandals in which high-ranked representatives of the ruling party were involved, like the *Moritomo gakuen* and *Kake gakuen* scandals. According to public opinion surveys held in July 2018, on the verge of the LDP leadership elections, 75% of respondents voiced their dissatisfaction with the explanations by Abe himself and his administration officials over the *Moritomo gakuen* and *Kake gakuen* issues, while only 14% were 'satisfied' (Kuraoka 2018). The support ratings of Abe

government in March and April 2018 declined under the 40% line (the worst result since his revival as Prime Minister in 2012), while disapproval rate stood at 52.6 percent (Cabinet's support 2018). Yet, this did not lead to a collapse of Abe administration.

The stability of Abe's cabinets is especially paradoxical given that the Japanese public opinion, judging by the polls, does not unambiguously support the 'patriotic' views of the Prime Minister. Specific surveys on the Constitution, security policy, historical past, etc. have shown a variegated and contradictory picture, demonstrating a deep split in the public opinion (Abe naikaku 2015).

The aim of this paper is to analyze the reasons for the unusually long life of Abe's reign against the background of the split in the public opinion.

### **Resources of Abe's Popularity**

High ratings of Abe are to a large extent associated with the fatigue from a lengthy 'mosaic' period of political instability when the premiers of the 'revolving doors cabinets' changed almost every year. One should recall that Abe's return to the political Olympus was preceded by a 'disastrous', in the eyes of most Japanese, period of the DPJ rule in the years 2009-2012. In the circumstances of the late 2010s, none of the opposition parties, including the Constitutional Democratic Party, the People's Democratic Party or Japan Innovation Party, was capable of building a serious rivalry to the LDP. One of the reasons for that is the majority-based electoral system, under which the election mechanisms unequivocally provide considerable advantages to larger parties possessing nation-wide organizational and financial networks. At present, LDP turns to be the unconditional and sole beneficiary of the majority system, obtaining a significantly larger number of seats in the lower house than it would have received proportionally to the percentage of votes in its favour. In the 2017 general elections, the LDP received the bulk of its mandates in the 218 majority constituencies, where the vote is not for the party, but for the candidate. Out of 208 electoral districts, where the candidate of the ruling party was opposed by several opposition candidates, the LDP won in 173 (83% of the districts) (Ota 2017). As for the proportional representation districts, where the vote is for political parties, the LDP won only 66 seats out of 176, or 38% of the total.

Another reason for an advantageous position of the ruling party lies in the chronic schism in the opposition camp. Opposition parties compete with one another for the same electoral strata and lack bright and charismatic leaders capable of captivating the masses. In reality, the opposition parties

can win in the majoritarian constituencies only after reaching an agreement on avoiding mutual competition or nominating a unified candidate. The first experience of such an agreement, in which the Communist Party of Japan participated for the first time in postwar history, was acquired only in the mid-2010s. For example, in the 2017 general elections in the districts where the LDP candidate was opposed by a candidate of the united opposition, the LDP was lucky only in 55% of cases (in 18 out of 33 districts) (Ota 2017). Yet, the prospects for this practice arouse a great deal of skepticism, given the prejudiced attitude to radicals even in the protest segments of Japanese electorate.

The prolongation of one-party rule of the LDP is facilitated by a relative economic homogeneity of the Japanese society. It is based on a strong middle class, and the ideologically "omnivorous" Liberal Democratic Party in this sense meets public expectations better than other political parties focused on much narrower electoral segments. In addition, the general vector of public sentiment is shifting towards the traditional 'Japanese values', which are associated in mass consciousness, due to a strong influence of the media on the political views of ordinary citizens, with the LDP leader. Most of the Japanese electors (according to polls, more than 60%) (Seiken kōtai 2017) show a stable psychological distaste for any radical reforms and do not want any 'overthrow of foundations', which in turn certainly plays into the hands of the Abe administration. Moreover, conservative ideology is paradoxically popular in the low income electoral segments, which, under the rational logic, should form the electoral basis of the left opposition. In addition, Japanese voters are pragmatic and tend to support parties with the real prospect of coming to power. In many ways, such sentiments are associated with the widely-spread attitude towards the MPs from the ruling party as a 'source of patronage' (Stockwin 2008: 193). Another factor working for Abe is the growth of populism in the Japanese political sphere. (It should be noted that this is not a unique Japanese phenomenon but a world-wide trend). The image of Abe responds to the public demand for 'appropriate' political leaders who know how to speak in plain language to the masses and who are consistent in implementing their political program, even if this program is not to everybody's liking. Abe managed to revive the one-and-a-half centuries old techniques of the mobilization of masses used by Meiji leaders for implementing national tasks. Among these technologies, one should highlight the skillful use of slogans as a technique of Abe's personal image-making. His arsenal includes concise and succinct slogans that became the hallmark of his office. As a matter of fact, Japanese political culture has been enriched by



the apt use of slogans as a method of communication between political leaders and society (one can recall the slogans of the Meiji era *fukoku kyohei* ("Rich country – a strong army"), *datsua nyuo* ("Leave Asia and enter Europe") etc. After coming to power, Abe consistently introduced such slogans as *chiho sosei* ('reviving regions'), *josei katsuyaku* ('public activity of women'), *ichioku katsuyaku* ('activity one hundred million', an allusion to the entire adult population of Japan), *hatarakikata kaikaku* ('reform of employment') etc. Even though these slogans were substantively abstract and allowed for various interpretations, they created an impression of government activism in the social sphere and of its regular updating of the political agenda. This tactic was especially effective in the face of growing public disappointment over the actual results of the economic and social policies of Abe administrations.

The most famous and popular slogan, which has become a meme in global networks and, in fact, a hallmark of Abe's reign, was *abonomics* – the economic policy aimed at stimulating economy through large-scale infrastructure investment, reservation of excess cash resources in the banking sector (the so-called policy of quantitative easing), and structural reforms. Many experts are very ambivalent about the results of this policy. On the one hand, national economy gained a lot from the growth of corporate profits, improvement in employment, increase of wages, etc. On the other hand, profits were obtained mostly by large enterprises, better employment was registered mainly among non-permanent workers, the problem of poverty has become more serious, and the growth of wages was halted by increasing food prices. However, hopes for the best, associated with not yet implemented expectations of *abonomics*, remained with the significant part of Japanese voters throughout the whole period of Abe's tenure. It is not by chance that Abe successfully positioned *abonomics* in the center of his electoral manifestos at the elections to the House of Councilors in the summer of 2016.

Owing to the influence of the media, Abe also succeeded in creating an image of the 'savior' of Japan, whose personal efforts enabled it to avoid the unpleasant consequences of globalization. Indeed, Japan has not experienced any turmoil associated with mass immigration, ethnic or religious problems. In the 2010s the situation in the sphere of public order in Japan was much better than in any of the G7 countries. Neither does Japan face the full-fledged problem of terrorism. In comparison with Europe, the unemployment rate in Japan is significantly lower, and the overall situation in the socio-economic sphere is not so depressing. As a result of the advocacy efforts of the Japanese government, most Japanese,

not necessarily Abe's fans, tend to feel 'gratitude' to the leader, based on the false idea that under any other prime minister, 'it would only get worse'. Besides, Abe was helped by the sense of external threat, associated with DPRK nuclear program and the PRC's assertive policy in the East China Sea, that prevails in the masses.

### **Crisis of the LDP-C Model of Power**

In spite of its formidable positions in the Diet of late 2010s, the LDP faces a serious management crisis. One of the reasons is the autocratic style of Abe's management of party affairs. Many observers point out that the authoritarian style of Abe, who takes many important political decisions single-handedly, without consulting his colleagues, causes damage to both the LDP and the government.

Especially noteworthy is the absence of the in-party discussions that were characteristic of the model of '1955 system'. At that time the representatives of different factions were engaged in electoral competition in medium-sized electoral districts, and that competition *per se* created the conditions for an inter-party democracy (Richardson 1997: 56-58). During the cold war period the pluralism of opinions and the freedom of debate, negotiation-based methods and the search of consensus in the process of decision-making obviously compensated for the negative costs of the long-term LDP rule, which clearly contradicted the basic democratic principle of a regular change of power.

The party factions possessed sufficient financial and organizational resources for nominating their representatives in most electoral districts and for their career advancement in the party (Masumi 1995: 206). The actual autonomy of factions guaranteed their members immunity from prosecution for criticizing leaders of the opposing factions. All faction leaders enjoyed guaranteed access to the top posts in the party hierarchy in accordance with the rules of *jun'okuri* ('rotation of power'). This provided even the 'anti-mainstream factions' with a political niche, allowing them to exert effective influence on the process of decision-making (Kono 1997:109-115).

The mechanisms of political representation within the framework of the '1955 system' guaranteed to the party minorities proper consideration of their opinion on the highest party level. This highly conditional intra-party democracy created safeguards against subjectivity and excessive radicalism at all levels of the party and government decision-making. Such a model of democracy created in the eyes of ordinary citizens the image of a

revitalized LDP – the party retained its public authority simply by ousting disgraced politicians or the discredited cabinet.

After the political reform of 1994 only one party candidate in each electoral district was allowed for nomination, and the prerogative of selection was extended to the formal party structures. As a result, factions lost their original *raison d'être* as self-help organizations of MPs used for conducting their election campaigns, and were reborn as 'research organizations'. Their voice in the party decision-making has inevitably weakened (Stockwin 2008: 191-192). In contrast to the Japanese traditions of consensus democracy, ready-made decisions started to be taken top-to-bottom, without using any intraparty coordination mechanisms.

It can be assumed that Abe's intransigence to the opposition in the party ranks is fueled by the fear that open criticism of the party leaders from inside the party ranks, inspired by the intra-party debates, would damage the LDP's public image and trigger a split of the party - the situation reminiscent of the 1993 disaster, when LDP was brought into opposition after the defection of the Ozawa faction. Some experts associate the crushing defeat of the LDP in the 2009 general elections with the absence of unity in the party ranks and the sharp criticism of the LDP leader Taro Aso from the members of his own party.

Lack of self-criticism inside the LDP leads to a situation when many MPs, according to the Japanese political commentator Soichiro Tahara, lose motivation for self-education and for political alternatives, preferring to spend more time for mere contact with voters. In other words, ordinary MPs have no interest in the content of policy, and consequently there is no pressure from inside the party over the party top management for a proper response to policy challenges (Tahara 2017).

### **What Next: a Two-Party System or a Patchwork Coalition?**

Currently, the prospect of shaping a Westminster-type two-party system in Japan is obviously unrealistic. This is due to the fundamental problem of the Japanese party system, which does not provide mechanisms for the delimitation of parties along ideological lines.

One of the reasons is that in the past the opposition to the LDP invariably took place within the logic of creating a formal alternative, i.e. the priority of organizational sheath over ideological content. The main opposition party in this sense was no more than an amorphous association of moderate forces of different ideological orientations, consolidated by only one aim, which was to displace the LDP from power. Only radicals like

Communists/ Left socialists or explicit conservative traditionalists were not allowed to join.

Ideology was of minor importance for such a party, which in most cases was a motley and patchwork coalition involving many different, often irreconcilable political forces and groups. Such was the Party of New Frontiers in 1994-1997 and the Democratic Party in 1998 – 2017, both actually the second political force in Japan. The Party of Hope, which in 2017 ceded the palm of the main opposition force to the Constitutional Democratic Party, can probably be categorized as a ‘loser’ (or ‘eternal opposition’) party.

Criticism of the LDP was at a certain stage conducive to these parties, allowing them to collect protest votes and gain widespread public support, which in turn supported their claims for power. In 2009-2012 such claims even led to a change of power and to the transition of the LDP to opposition. However, ideological amorphousness and the lack of a proper organizational core, as shown historically, invariably led those parties to an electoral defeat, and later to a split and collapse.

The fuzziness of a dividing line with the ruling party on the pivotal issues of socio-economic agenda did not allow the main political opposition (except for the CPJ) to form a coherent cohort of voters on the base of their ideological beliefs rather than on the personal loyalty to a particular politician (Streltsov 2015: 35). That is why in the Japanese Diet one can rarely hear a constructive political debate between the ruling and opposition parties on important issues related to the daily lives of voters. The opposition attacks the ruling camp mainly on the issues of personal sins of its individual representatives, and is unable to put forward an attractive alternative to the government policy in the social or economic spheres. A partial reason for this is the fact that the LDP, as it did in the cold war period, pursues a predominantly liberal course in the social and economic fields based on the traditional egalitarian values, the course that in general does not invite wide public discontent.

A niche for a party that could constitute an actual political alternative to the LDP can be assumed basing on the existence of a significant protest mood in the Japanese society. Such a mood grows with unresolved socio-economic problems, which include the crisis of the traditional employment system, the absence of a financially stable and self-sufficient pension and health care system, a critical situation in the sphere of gender equality, etc.

Against this background, the way to a two-party system in Japan seems to be long and difficult. Certain hopes are associated with the center-left Constitutional Democratic Party, which presumably has a more consistent

and coherent program in the socio-economic field than its predecessor, the DPJ. However, at this stage it would be premature to speak of any meaningful success of the CDP.

### **Conclusion**

Abe managed to consolidate his power to the extent that most political observers do not see even a theoretical opportunity for a serious opposition from inside the ruling party. After winning the LDP leadership election in September 2018, Abe actually safeguarded his position as the leader of nation until 2021. This means that he will have the longest prime-ministerial term of office in postwar history, exceeding the 8 years' tenure of Eisaku Sato in 1964-1972.

However, there still remains an element of uncertainty over Abe's prospects for ruling the party after the elections to the House of Councilors in summer 2019. Japanese political history is rich in evidence when even the 'iron' prime ministers infamously ended their political career after political scandals. One can recall the 'bulldozer' Kakuei Tanaka, who resigned in 1974 after accusations of fraud with land and subsequently found himself in prison, or the charismatic Morihiro Hosokawa, who preferred to retire in 1994, only to avoid being subjected to a humiliating investigation of financial abuses. Shinzo Abe himself, quite popular at the beginning of his first premiership, chose unexpectedly to resign in the summer of 2007, citing ill health, and conscious of the political risks after the LDP's defeat in the elections to the House of Councilors.

The lack of open information on intra-party discussions relocates the problem of succession of leaders into the grey zone. It can be assumed that, for the sake of maintaining power, the post-Abe LDP will bet on a leader with personal charisma and powerful populist resource. However, the potential of factional politics is not fully exhausted, and the meeting of faction leaders still holds the function of a body of personnel policy. In this sense, the LDP has yet to find a formula for transferring power to the next generation of political leaders.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Dmitry Streltsov**

Professor Dmitry V. Streltsov is the head of the Afro-Asian Department at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) and the leading research fellow of the Center of Japanese Studies of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences. Since 2008, he has headed the Russian Association of Japanologists. The author of some 200 academic works, including five books. His research interests include the domestic and international politics of contemporary Japan, postwar Japanese history, Japanese energy and social policy, Russo-Japanese relations, economic integration in East Asia, and Russian diplomatic and security strategy in the Asia Pacific region.

Andrzej Świrkowski  
ORCID: 0000-0002-4290-4409

## The Detective Fiction of Oguri Mushitarō. Beyond the Orthodox and the Weird<sup>1</sup>

DOI: 10.12775/sjip.2020.56-59.18

### ABSTRACT

Oguri Mushitarō (1901-1946) was a popular fiction writer whose main period of activity were the 1930s. Renowned for his idiosyncratic and often impenetrable style, labyrinthine plots and otherworldly logic, he never achieved the popularity of his contemporaries Edogawa Rampo or Yokomizo Seishi. In fact the eminent detective literature historian Itō Hideo dismisses one of Oguri's novels as “unfathomable” and “not for the casual reader”. In spite of this, in the last few decades Oguri's works have been reappraised, with his most famous novel *Kokushikan satsujin jiken* [the plague house murder case] (1934) placing 14th in the *Shūkan Bunshun* magazine's recent poll of 100 best Japanese mystery novels.

In this paper I look at the novels that feature the detective Norimizu Rintarō, compare the works of Oguri to those of other mystery writers in Japan and abroad and try to argue that Oguri's originality lies in his unwillingness to adapt either to the *honkaku* (the detective novel ‘proper’) or the *henkaku* (the ‘unorthodox’ mystery) schools that formed the early Showa era mystery fiction literary scene.

**KEYWORDS:** mystery, Japanese literature, detective fiction, popular fiction, 1930s

### Introduction

It can be argued that detective fiction<sup>2</sup>, like no other type of modern fiction, relies on strict adherence to certain established forms and patterns. Thus

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the paper gives away crucial plot details of the following works: Edogawa Ranpo's *Nisen dōka, Injū*; Oguri Mushitarō's *Gokō satsujin jiken, Kokushikan satsujin jiken*; S.S. Van Dine's *The Canary Murder Case, The Greene Murder Case, The Bishop Murder Case*.

<sup>2</sup> By detective fiction (detective story, detective novel) I mean the subgenre of crime fiction that concentrates on the investigation of a criminal mystery by a representative – professional or not – of the forces of law, who by gathering evidence, witness statements etc. and by means of logical reasoning finds out the identity of the perpetrator and reveals it at the climax of the story. Also referred to as whodunit, pure puzzle, or formal detective novel (Grella 1980), detective fiction is traditionally traced back to Poe's 1841 short story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.



the problem of form has long been central to the debate of the genre, be it among the writers, critics or academics (Cegielski 2015). This is evidenced by numerous attempts – characteristic especially of the so-called “Golden Age of Detection”, i.e. the 1920s and 1930s – to strictly define the detective novel, to outline its purest form and to defend it from any deviations. The famous *Twenty Rules for Writing Detective Stories* (1928) by Willard Huntington Wright, better known by his *nom de plume* S.S. Van Dine, is an oft-cited example of a detective novelist proposing a codification of the rules of detective fiction (Symons 1993). Among this set of commandments one would find, for instance, the insistence on “fair play” with the reader, no supernatural phenomena, no professional criminals, no butler-as-the-murderer type clichés and above all no formal experiments (Van Dine 1947)<sup>3</sup>.

The urge to separate “true” detective fiction from the contamination of outside influence was not exclusive to the English language literary scene, and can also be observed among Japanese writers, as shown by the *honkaku-henkaku* debate that took place concurrently to similar ones in Great Britain and the United States. However, this was at its core an altogether distinct disagreement, even though the questions raised seemed quite similar. This is because the development and the social roles of the Japanese variation of the genre, albeit largely influenced by Western – mostly English and French – crime fiction, have taken a different path than in the homelands of Doyle or Leblanc.

This paper is an attempt to present the detective fiction of Oguri Mushitarō, an author whose body of work is one of the most striking examples of the genre that took the name of *tantei shōsetsu*<sup>4</sup>. On the one hand Oguri was praised as an innovator, on the other, he was often criticized for his often confusing and uncompromising style. Often seen as a highly original writer, he nonetheless never shied away from borrowing from others, including the plot of his best-known work. In this paper I shall try to look at the controversial Norimizu series, that is the novels and short stories which

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<sup>3</sup> The tone of Van Dine’s remarks is humorous, but as his own novels show, he was very serious about adhering to the rules.

<sup>4</sup> Although the term *tantei shōsetsu* is a direct translation of “detective novel” and at its core denotes a genre that took European and American detective fiction as its starting point, its scope eventually became much broader than that of its English language counterpart. By the end of the Taishō era, the label *tantei shōsetsu* referred to virtually all kinds of foreign literature concerned with the out-of-the-ordinary i.e. apart from crime and detective fiction, it also denoted adventure novels, humorous literature and even science fiction (Taniguchi 2013: 6-7). In this paper, in order to avoid confusion I shall refer to Japanese detective fiction as *tantei shōsetsu*, denoting all variants of Japanese detective (and crime) fiction, however far from the Western understanding of the term they may be, provided that they possess at least some aspect of mystery or criminality.

feature detective Norimizu Rintarō as a main character, and discuss them in the context of the dispute about the forms of Japanese *tantei shōsetsu* as well as the forms of detective fiction in general.

### The Detectives Invade Japan

Detective fiction – like most other achievements of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century modern society – arrived in Japan in the Meiji era. From a cultural perspective, the whole period can be seen as a process utilizing foreign influence to create, by trial and error, an altogether new expressiveness that would befit a modern nation, ready to compete with the mythicized West. As far as literature was concerned, that goal was reached with the arrival on the literary scene of Natsume Sōseki, arguably the first writer to bring the Japanese novel to a new level, independent from both the slavish following of European literature and the nostalgia for the Japanese classics (it was no coincidence that Sōseki's debut as a novelist was simultaneous with Japan's triumph in the war against Russia, an event that punctuated the emergence of Japan as a modern global state).

Japanese detective fiction developed in much the same way as modern literature in general, that is starting from copious borrowing from foreign sources and gradually transforming these into a new sensitivity. Therefore, the history of the genre in Japan begins with translations and adaptations of English and French language novels. Starting from 1888, newspaper journalist Kuroiwa Ruikō delivered a string of immensely popular retellings of Émile Gaboriau<sup>5</sup>, Anna Katharine Green<sup>6</sup>, Fortuné du Boisgobey<sup>7</sup> and others (Itō 2002: 78-88). Even though there were attempts at original writing – such as Ruikō's own 1889 novel *Muzan* [cruelty] – the reading public associated the genre mainly with localized versions of foreign works. Notable original *tantei shōsetsu* had been written in the years after the first surge of the genre's popularity in the 1890s; however, none of them captured the reading public's imagination as much as the adventures of Sherlock Holmes<sup>8</sup>, Arsene Lupin<sup>9</sup>, or Dr. Kureta (the name given in Japanese translations to R. Austin Freeman's<sup>10</sup> Dr. Thorndyke).

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<sup>5</sup> French popular fiction writer, creator of detective Lecoq, author of *L'Affaire Lerouge* (*The Widow Lerouge*, 1866), *Le Crime d'Orcival* (*The Mystery of Orcival*, 1867), considered one of the most important writers in the history of detective fiction.

<sup>6</sup> Pioneering author of detective fiction in America, best remembered for the 1878 novel *The Leavenworth Case*.

<sup>7</sup> French author of popular fiction, follower of Gaboriau.

<sup>8</sup> Although introduced as early as 1894 (*Kojiki dōraku* [begging for pleasure] an anonymous translation of *The Man With the Twisted Lip* (1891) that somehow manages to give away the final reveal in the title), Doyle's Holmes stories didn't grab the reading public's attention before 1899 and the publication of an anonymous translation of *A Study in Scarlet* (as *Chizome no kabe*

The popularity of detective fiction ignited, however, the ire of certain literary critics. As early as 1894 Shimamura Hōgetsu argued that detective fiction is devoid of serious esthetic merit, being nothing more than an intellectual pastime. Furthermore, it is improper to consider such books as novels due to the fact that they fail to create a realistic representation of contemporary society<sup>11</sup> (ibid.: 130-131). Many similarly critical views emerged in later years, and detective fiction, despite attracting in its early period the attention of such important literary figures as Tsubouchi Shōyō or Kōda Rohan<sup>12</sup>, began to be ostracized or treated as immature. Sometime later, however, young but already critically acclaimed writers of the Taishō era (Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, Satō Haruo among others) displayed an interest in detective fiction and started incorporating its elements into their works. Even though their interest in the genre was on the whole short-lived (only Satō continued to write fiction of this kind well into the Shōwa era), it proved to be an impulse significant enough for a new generation of authors, who arrived in the 1920s. Edogawa Ranpo was the first of them, but others followed in his wake, after the success of his debut story *Nisen dōka* [the two sen copper coin] (1923), published in the *Shinseinen*<sup>13</sup> magazine, the flagship of this second *tantei shōsetsu* boom. If Kuroiwa Ruiko was the Tsubouchi Shōyō of *tantei shōsetsu*, then Ranpo has to be considered the genre's Sōseki. Whether it was the *kanji*-based cipher from the *The Two Sen Copper Coin* or *D-zaka satsujin jiken* [the

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[bloodstained wall]) in *Mainichi Shinbun*, and especially the twelve stories translated for *Chūō Shinbun* by Nan'yō Gaishi under the collective title *Fushigi no tantei* [the amazing detective] (Itō 2002: 192).

<sup>9</sup> Introduced in 1909 in the short story *Pari tantei kitan: Dorobō no dorobō* [a Paris detective story: the thief among thieves] (original title: *La Perle noire*) adapted probably by Yasunari Sadao. More translations followed three years later (by Yasunari and Mitsugi Shun'ei) (Itō 1991: 22-25).

<sup>10</sup> An important figure in British detective fiction, Freeman created the character of forensic examiner Dr. Thorndyke introduced in the 1907 novel *The Red Thumb Mark*. He was first translated to Japanese in 1909 by Mitsugi Shun'ei (*Joyū satsugai jiken: Kagakuteki tantei kitan* [murder of an actress: a scientific detective story] (originally titled *The Blue Sequin*) (ibid.: 25).

<sup>11</sup> Hōgetsu adheres to Tsubouchi Shōyō's definition of the novel, put forward in the latter's essay *Shōsetsu shinzui* [the essence of the novel] (1885).

<sup>12</sup> In 1887 Shōyō wrote *Ganka tsukai* (The Counterfeiter) an adaptation of A.K. Greene's novella XYZ (Itō 2002: 144), while Rohan penned a few original stories (ibid.: 268).

<sup>13</sup> Established in 1920 (Morishita Uson was the first editor-in-chief), originally intended as an educational magazine for provincial youth with didactic stories of self-improvement, it also carried foreign detective novels from the start (the first one being Freeman's *The Eye of Osiris*). These rapidly became the main attraction and already in 1921 the first extra issue devoted solely to detective fiction was published, with many more to follow. Encouraging original work from Japanese writers, the magazine ran the debut stories of Yokomizo Seishi (1921), Mizutani Jun (1922) and Ranpo. After the success of *The Two Sen Copper Coin*, works from Japanese authors became a regular feature until 1936, when a visibly military propaganda streak started (Nakajima 1998: 209) (Gonda, Shinpo 2000: 163).

D...zaka murder case] (1925) and its locked-room mystery situated not in a library of an English manor house, but in a rather frail Japanese building – Ranpo was the first to believably adapt detective fiction to the specific background of his country. What is more, as Gōhara (2010: 203) observes, he successfully managed to distance himself from the introspective, self-conscious approach to writing that dominated in modern Japanese fiction for the previous three decades.

### **The Elusive “True” Detective Novel**

The formal rigidity of Western detective fiction bespoke its origins as the literature by which the middle classes could confirm their newly attained social status and be reassured of the society’s stability. The detective, often deified for his superhuman powers of reasoning, together with the policeman, the law enforcer etc. could now become a literary hero, functioning as a guarantee that the chaos brought about by the crime would be inevitably followed by the return of order (Symons 1993). Another factor contributing to the development of detective fiction was the modern man’s desire for reason and therefore peace of mind in the ever-changing world (Haycraft 1947: 164).

When Ruikō’s wrote his translations of foreign novels, he had a similar aim: they were meant to serve as an introduction of sorts to the functioning of the Western justice system (Silver 2003). However, after the emergence of Doyle and the overwhelming popularity of his Sherlock Holmes stories and novels in the 1890s, European and American detective fiction largely evolved in the direction of the “pure puzzle” form, deliberately distancing itself from any pretense of “art” or attempts at socially conscious discourse, taking on a role of a “find the murderer” parlour game instead, with the promise of a thrill at the final unmasking of the culprit. On the other hand, the *tantei shōsetsu* of the Taishō and early Shōwa eras were – for various reasons – largely unaffected by this, gradually progressing in a direction different from their Western counterpart. That is not to say that stories of the more formulaic type were completely absent<sup>14</sup>. All the same, an inclination towards the bizarre, the weird and the unexplained was obvious. In other words, the late Taishō and early Shōwa era *tantei shōsetsu* possessed a distinctly romantic flavour, and, what is more, they often ignored principles of logic, so valued by detective fiction authors overseas. Already in the first Ranpo story the motif of pursuit of truth with the aid of logical reasoning is put to the test. The impressive feat of solving a

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<sup>14</sup> Authors of original *tantei shōsetsu* of the “regular” type at the time include Emi Suiin or Matsumoto Tai.

complicated cipher by the protagonist Matsumura is rendered meaningless when the whole thing is exposed as a prank set up by his friend who narrates the story. This is just one of the instances of what Matsuda (2015) calls the “breaking away from the great detective trope” “*»meitantei« kara no itsudatsu*” 「〈名探偵〉からの逸脱」<sup>15</sup>. And then there are stories like *Yaneura no sanposha* [walker in the attic] (1925), where the author’s interest in exploring perversities of the human mind, in this case voyeurism, overwhelms the criminal plot; *Kagami jigoku* [mirror hell] (1926), a story of a young man obsessed with mirrors and lenses, where there is no crime or puzzle element at all; or Ranpo’s first novel, *Yami ni ugomeku* [squirms in the darkness] (1926, finished in 1928), which begins as a mystery, but eventually turns into a horror tale with a subplot of cannibalism, one of the author’s many ventures into the realm of the macabre. One is therefore not surprised that Ranpo wholeheartedly embraced the following definition of detective fiction, proposed by Satō Haruo in 1924 (quoted by Ranpo in 1931):

「探偵小説なるものは、やはり豊富なロマンチズムという樹の一枝で、猟奇耽異（キューリオステイハンティング）の果実で、多面な詩という宝石の一断面の怪しい光芒で、それは人間に共通な悪に対する妙な讃美、怖いもの見たさの奇異な心理の上に根ざして、一面また明快を愛するという健全な精神にも相い結びついて成り立っている。」

“Detective novel is ultimately a branch from the plentiful tree of romanticism, the fruit of curiosity-hunting, the mysterious gleam of one of the many faces of the jewel called poetry; it is formed when the root that is the inexplicable inkling towards evil common to every man, and the singular state of mind of the desire to witness terror, is on the other hand intertwined with the sensible mentality that favours lucidity.” (Ranpo 2015b: 48)

The term “curiosity-hunting” is worth noting as – usually in the Japanese spelling *ryōki* 猟奇 – it would soon become no less than an esthetical category of the pre-war *tantei shōsetsu*<sup>16</sup>, a very fitting description of where the interests of authors like Ranpo or Yumeno Kyūsaku lay. As far

<sup>15</sup> On a similar note, Ranpo ends his best regarded and most analyzed work *Injū* [beast in the shadows] (1929) with an epilogue, in which the detective doubts whether the person he denounced to the police is the real murderer.

<sup>16</sup> In fact, a magazine of this title was published in the 1930s.

as Ranpo's ideas on the scope of *tantei shōsetsu* are concerned, it is necessary to take note of his numerous critical essays. While often admitting the importance of the formal detective novel (ibid.: 40), he never fails to advocate the broader meaning. The article *Honmono no tantei shōsetsu* [the real detective novel] (1927) is a case in point. The titular distinction is bestowed upon the writings of Kosakai Fuboku (the article is a review of his latest collection of short stories *Keu no hanzai* [an unusual crime]), an author and doctor of medicine, who in his often bizarre and macabre works, written in a style mixing callousness and black humour, would repeatedly employ his medical knowledge<sup>17</sup>. In his review Ranpo stresses that Kosakai's tales are never vague, always on point and, most of all, original in their ideas, without resorting to a parade of weirdness for its own sake (one can detect a hint of self-criticism), which makes him the only author of “real” *tantei shōsetsu* (Ranpo 2015a: 575-576). As Ranpo's evaluation proves, what many of the writers of the genre rated highest were not minutely constructed criminal plots, but originality in the quest for the bizarre, in hunting for curiosities.

As we see, most of *tantei shōsetsu* written during this period resembled the works of Ranpo in that they often ignored or downplayed the criminal or logical puzzle element, so the appearance of advocates of a more “orthodox” approach in line with the formal detective novel of the English type was only a matter of time. As early as 1924, Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke, a critic belonging to the proletarian literature movement, and eventually a detective fiction writer and translator, observed that Japanese detective fiction was biased towards what he called *fukenzen tantei shōsetsu* (‘morbid, unhealthy detective fiction’), which he defined as “overly pursuing worlds that are too artificial, weird and unnatural”<sup>18</sup> and made a plea for the emergence of its opposite *kenzen tantei shōsetsu* (healthy detective novel). Two years later the writer Kōga Saburō proposed to distinguish between the *honkaku tantei shōsetsu* (proper detective fiction), a variant akin to Western detective fiction, concerned with solving a criminal riddle, and the *henkaku tantei shōsetsu* (irregular, improper detective fiction) “which is called detective fiction, but at the same time deals with abnormal mentality and morbid [themes]”<sup>19</sup>. As we can see,

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<sup>17</sup> For example, the eponymous short story of the collection deals with an attempt of two jewel thieves to obtain from a dissection room the stomach and bowels of their former companion who, before being killed by the police, managed to swallow the trio's latest acquisition – a priceless diamond.

<sup>18</sup> 「余りに人工的な、奇怪な、不自然な世界を追いすぎている」

<sup>19</sup> 「異常心理や病的なことを扱いながら探偵小説と呼ばれているもの」

Hirabayashi stresses “believability” not necessarily meant as an ultra-realistic methodical approach, but rather as the creation of an acceptable illusion of reality. Kōga, on the other hand, proposes a topical classification, but it is safe to say that both the *kenzen/fukenzen* and *honkaku/henkaku* divisions cover roughly the same area, and, what is more important, they single out the whodunit as “pure” detective fiction, at the same time putting aside all that does not match this label, which of course means virtually all *tantei shōsetsu* written up till then. However, even though Kōga’s terminology was widely accepted and used during the course of the next decade<sup>20</sup>, the appeal for a “real” detective novel was to remain unanswered, as proved by the 1932 essay *Tantei shōsetsu wa korekara da* [detective novel is just beginning], in which Kōga laments that this “«pure» detective novel that would appeal to the intellect of the reader”, the type advocated by Van Dine, has yet to appear.

For Kōga there was no greater writer than Arthur Conan Doyle, whose stories gave him the first impulse to take up writing, and whose spiritual heir he considered himself to be (Kōga 1987: 1). Edogawa Ranpo, on the other hand, while never denying Doyle’s greatness, stressed – and one only needs to look at his pen name for proof – that it was Edgar Allan Poe who taught him the true meaning of the detective story (Ranpo 2015a: 585). This was the fundamental difference between the two camps. We must not forget that Poe is not only the creator of the modern detective story, later perfected by Doyle, but also the author of *The Black Cat*, *The Masque of the Red Death* and *The Fall of the House of Usher* and these both sides of Poe combined formed the Japanese understanding of *tantei shōsetsu* as “a branch from the plentiful tree of romanticism”.

### Enter Mushitarō

In the spring of 1933 Kōga Saburō received a letter containing a manuscript of a short story titled *Kanzen hanzai* [a perfect crime] sent by Oguri Mushitarō, an aspiring writer, whom he had never met before, asking for a recommendation to have it published. Showing none of the undecidedness of a newcomer, it was a tour-de-force locked-room mystery with an intriguing trick. What is more, the unusual exotic setting of *A Perfect Crime* – set in contemporary China during the civil war, in a Red Army battalion led by a commander from Soviet Russia, a former Cheka and GPU investigator Zarov – distinguished it from other works of Japanese literature of that period. For Kōga this seemingly out-of-nowhere appearance of a fully-formed author must have seemed like a fulfilment of

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<sup>20</sup> The term *honkaku* is still used today when referring to the “classic style” detective fiction.

the prophecy contained in the title of the aforementioned 1932 essay. He promptly wrote a letter of recommendation to Mizutani Jun, the editor of “Shinseinen” at the time, and thus the story appeared in the July issue of the magazine. (Oguri 1987)

Said to have taken up writing on a whim after reading Ranpo’s early work and deciding he could create something similar (Matsuda 2015: 68)<sup>•</sup>, Mushitarō wrote regularly since the first half of the 1920s, but – apart from one short story in 1927 – did not publish anything until his proper debut. After *A Perfect Crime* he quickly became an important presence in the *tantei shōsetsu* world, a position maintained on the strength of the stories and novels published in quick succession in the following months. Around 1935 he started to drift away from the genre that brought him recognition into fantasy-tinged adventure fiction territory, best represented by the *Jingai makyō* [terra incognita] (1939-41) series (Gonda, Shinpo 2000: 78)<sup>•</sup>. Although these led to Mushitarō being counted among the pioneers of science fiction in Japanese literature, his best remembered writings are stories and novels describing the exploits of Norimizu Rintarō, an eccentric criminal lawyer (later a private detective) who appears in the following works (Tanemura 1997: 340):

1. *Gokō satsujin jiken* [the halo murder case] *Shinseinen* (Oct. 1933);
2. *Sento Arekisei jūin no sangeki* [the St. Alexey Church tragedy] *Shinseinen* (Nov. 1933);
3. *Yumedono satsujin jiken* [the Yumedono Temple murder case] *Kaizō* (Jan. 1934);
4. *Shitsurakuen satsujin jiken* [the paradise lost murder case] *Shūkan Asahi* (March 18<sup>th</sup> 1934);
5. *Kokushikan satsujin jiken* [the plague house murder case] *Shinseinen* (Apr.-Dec. 1934);
6. *Oferia goroshi* [the murder of Ophelia] *Kaizō* (Feb. 1935);
7. *Tekkamen no shita* [the tongue of the iron mask] *Shinseinen* (Apr.-May 1935)<sup>21</sup>;
8. *Ningyo nazo Oiwa goroshi* [the mermaid’s mystery – the murder of Oiwa] *Chūō Kōron* (Aug. 1935);
9. *Nijisseiki tekkamen* [the twentieth century man in the iron mask] *Shinseinen* (Jun.-Sep. 1936);

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<sup>21</sup> In 1938 enlarged and retitled *Senkōtei “Habihitsuburku”* [the *Habichstburg* midget submarine].



10. *Kuni naki hitobito* [the people without a country] *Ōru Yomimono* (Aug. 1937).

Each of the works, almost all of them short stories – apart from *The Plague House Murder Case* and *The Twentieth Century Man in the Iron Mask* – describes a separate case tackled by Norimizu, an investigator seemingly unparalleled in the art of logical detection. All of the instalments – with one exception, *Twentieth Century...* being a fantasy-adventure – are murder mysteries with most of the formal requirements of the whodunit firmly observed, as can be surmised from the fact that it was Kōga who was chosen by Mushitarō as the addressee of his manuscript. However, on closer scrutiny one cannot fail to notice how the author’s idiosyncrasies weaved into the fabric of the formal murder mystery create an original manifestation of *tantei shōsetsu*.

A closer look at the more remarkable traits of Norimizu’s fiction is therefore in order. Even though the whole of the Norimizu series contain noteworthy aspects, the one work from Oguri’s oeuvre that has always been the centre of attention of readers and academics alike is undoubtedly *The Plague House Murder Case*, the most ambitious and longest of Mushitarō’s novels, “the book that he lived to write” (Oguri 1987). However, as Matsuda (2015: 67) observes, a tendency to overlook the seemingly less significant writings in favour of *The Plague House Murder Case*<sup>22</sup> can result in disturbing the unity of a body of work clearly meant to form an organic whole, as shown, for example, by the frequent referencing of past cases, especially in the opening of every story. The novels from the series are directly intertwined, no matter how long the shadow of the ominous titular mansion that looms over the rest. What follows is therefore a short overview of the Norimizu series, which, while concentrating on *The Plague House Murder Case*, does not neglect to mention the other, smaller works.

### A “Difficult” Writer

One characteristic trait that unites most of the series and has shaped the reception of Mushitarō’s prose ever since his debut in *Shinseinen* is the dense and often esoteric turn of phrase. The author’s reputation as a “difficult” or simply “bad” (Gonda 1975: 190) writer stems from this idiosyncratic style, based on winding, often disorienting multiple clause

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<sup>22</sup> The author himself, in the foreword to the first edition of the novel (1935) speaks disparagingly of his earlier, more unassuming stories.

sentences. It is already evident in the introductory sentences of *The Halo Murder Case*, the first of the Norimizu adventures:

「前捜査局長で目下一流の刑事弁護士である法水麟太郎（のりみずりんたろう）は、招かれた精霊の去る日に、新しい精霊が何故去ったか——を突き究めねばならなかった。と云うのは、七月十六日の朝、普賢山劫楽寺（ふけんざんこうらくじ）の住職——と云うよりも、絵筆を捨てた普賢（けんざん）画伯と呼ぶ方が著名（ポピュラー）であろうが——その鴻巣胎龍（このすたいりゅう）氏が奇怪な変死を遂げたと云う旨を、支倉（はぜくら）検事が電話で伝えたからである。」

“On the day on which the invited spirits have to leave this world<sup>23</sup>, the former chief of the Investigation Bureau, now a top-class criminal lawyer, Norimizu Rintarō had to find out why a new spirit had departed. That was because on the morning of July 16<sup>th</sup> he received a telephone call from prosecutor Hazeкура, who informed him that the head priest of Fukenzan Kōraku temple, one Kōnosu Tairyū – or rather, to use his more popular name, the erstwhile famous painter Kenzan – had met with a mysterious and unnatural death.”

The same style is employed in the similarly composed opening passage of *The Plague House*:

「聖（セント）アレキセイ寺院の殺人事件に法水（のりみず）が解決を公表しなかったのも、そろそろ迷宮入りの噂が立ち始めた十日目のこと、その日から捜査関係の主脳部は、ラザレフ殺害者の追求を放棄しなければならなくなつた。と云うのは、四百年の昔から纏綿（てんめん）としていて、臼杵耶蘇会神学校（うすきジェスイットセミナリオ）以来の神聖家族と云われる降矢木（ふりやぎ）の館に、突如真黒い風みたいな毒殺者の彷徨（ほうこう）が始まったからであった。」

“It was on the tenth day after the murder at St. Alexey church when – with Norimizu not announcing the solution, and rumours

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<sup>23</sup> A reference to the *obon* festival.

about the case going unsolved beginning to spread – those in charge of the investigation were forced to drop the pursuit of Lazarev’s killer. That was because suddenly a murderous poisoner’s wanderings like a pitch black wind commenced at the house of the Furiyagi clan, whose complicated history reached four hundred years back and who had been known as a holy family since the days of the Usuki Jesuit seminary.”

The complex sentences are always adorned with seldom used *kanji*, often with irregular readings. It is obvious that the arrival of Mushitarō on the *tantei shōsetsu* scene could not pass unnoticed. His prose was a deliberate sidestepping of the matter-of-fact wording of his peers and as such transgressed the often stigmatizing tag of *taishū bungaku* (popular literature). Compare the previous fragments with the straightforward, journalistic styles of the openings in the works of Kōga and Ranpo.

「私は今でもあの夜の思い出すとゾットする。それは東京に大地震があつて間もない頃であつた。」（甲賀三郎『琥珀のパイプ』）

“Even now I shudder when I recall the scene. It was not long after the great earthquake in Tōkyō.” (Kōga Saburō *Kohaku no paipu* [the amber pipe]) (Kōga 1987)

「それは九月初旬のある蒸し暑い晩のことであつた。私は、D坂の大通りの中程にある、白梅軒（はくばいけん）という、行きつけのカフェで、冷しコーヒーをっていた。」（江戸川乱歩『D坂の殺人事件』）

“It happened on a sweltering evening at the beginning of September. I was sipping iced coffee at Hakubaiken, my usual café situated in the middle of the main street of D...zaka.” (Edogawa Ranpo *D-zaka satsujin jiken* [the D...zaka murder case]) (Ranpo 2004: 179)

In contrast, Oguri’s prose seemed to negate the unwritten law of popular literature as easy-to-digest entertainment. Ever since the novel was published, *The Plague House* has been mentioned in the context of failed attempts to read it in its entirety (e.g. Shinpo 2017)\*. Indeed, just as in the case of Yumeno Kyūsaku’s *Dogura Magura* (1935), a similarly influential

and monumental *tantei shōsetsu*, the reputation of incomprehensibility of Mushitarō's *chef-d'œuvre* has reached somewhat mythical proportions. Furthermore, running through the whole series are pedantic displays of encyclopaedic knowledge on a plethora of subjects on the part of the protagonist as well as of the narrator. In fact the word pedantry (*gengaku* 銜学) has for years dominated the discussion of Mushitarō's work. In the following fragment of *The St. Alexey Church Tragedy* Norimizu responds to one of the character's claim that she has heard the footsteps of her deceased stepfather:

「成程。然し、ハインリッヒ・ゾイゼ（十三世紀独逸の有  
名な神学者）が屢（しばしば）見た耶蘇（イエス）の幻像  
と云うのは、その源が親しく凝視（みつ）めていた聖画に  
あったと云いますがね。それに、誰やら斯う云う言葉を云  
ったじゃありませんか。——自分の心霊を一つの花園と考  
え、そこに主が歩み給うと想像するこそ楽しからずや——  
とね。」

“I see. But, you know, that vision of Christ that Henry Suso  
(famous 13<sup>th</sup> century German theologian) had seen repeatedly –  
they say its source was a sacred picture at which he would often  
gaze. What's more, didn't somebody say: *Consider your soul a  
flower garden, isn't it pleasant to imagine the Lord strolling  
around it?*”

This is a typical Norimizu response – making a reference to an esoteric subject, adorning it with an obscure quote, here aided by the narrator's further explanation in brackets. Already present in the first short stories, the tendency reaches its peak in *The Plague House*, where the brilliant sleuth can hardly make an utterance without starting a digression on the life of Gustavus Adolphus, the theories of Swedenborg, or the persecution of Jews. Is this strategy merely an ornamentation, or does it play part in a larger scheme? To answer this question we need to look into the role the act of reading plays in detective fiction.

### Reading the Crime

From the point of view of readership such presentation of the narrative has twofold implications. First of all, on the most obvious level, it serves as a blatant challenge to the idea of detective fiction as armchair entertainment, an exercise in logic, while preserving the guise of a model mystery of the

*honkaku* type. Structurally speaking, the early Norimizu stories all adhere to the classical discovery-investigation-solution model that was already present in *The Murders at the Rue Morgue*. Furthermore, the characters that populate Mushitarō's works are merely one-dimensional marionettes, chess pieces secondary to the grander scheme of the puzzle. The reader does not know what they think or feel, as such information is redundant in the context of the mystery. At the same time, interjected into this classical structure is the dense storytelling style that distorts the familiarity one would expect when approaching a typical whodunit.

On the other hand, Mushitarō's characteristic style can paradoxically be interpreted as an ultimate fulfillment of Van Dine's postulate of fair play as a necessary element of "true" detective fiction, i.e. that the reader should possess the same information as the detective in the story in order to be able to try and arrive at the correct solution of the mystery, which will enable him to participate in the puzzle-solving game. This is, however, fair play in a sense different from Van Dine's interpretation.

Hühn, developing remarks made by Todorov (1977), shows that detective fiction is primarily concerned with the act of reading: the text on the exploits of the detective being read by the reader is in turn mirrored by the detective's reading of the crime. Thus crime constitutes a "text" that the detective has to decipher from various clues such as those left at the scene by the culprit (Hühn 1987: 454). There is, however, a serious discrepancy: in a typical whodunit the text presented to the reader will never match – in terms of difficulty – the crime being solved by the detective. This final text is filtered through the point of view of the narrator (very often a Dr. Watson-type archivist) and is as such inserted into familiar frames, "ready-made" for the reader to be enjoyed as an entertaining puzzle. Any "fair-play" is therefore only illusory, as the sleuth analyzes traces "imprinted »on the world«" (ibid.), a spectrum that is much wider than the reader's part of the puzzle. In the Norimizu series, due to the way in which the stories are presented, the difficulty of the problem faced by the detective is matched by the difficulty of the text presented to the reader. The text is often confusing, just as a complicated criminal case would be.

Mushitarō would adhere to this style until around 1935. In later parts of the series the writing becomes gradually less ornamental, more in line with orthodox detective fiction, as evidenced by the opening passage of *The "Habichstburg" Midget Submarine*:

「それは、夜明けまでに幾ばくもない頃であった。  
既に雨は止み、波頭も低まって、そのひびきが幾分衰えた

ように思われたが、闇はその頃になると一しおの濃さを加えた。」

“It was a little before dawn.

The rain had already stopped, the waves subsided, and their roar seemed to fade away; the darkness, however, deepened even more with the passing hours.” (Oguri 1997: 250)

The gradual simplification of language is accompanied by a visible shift in genre and tone – by the time of the second Norimizu novel, *The Twentieth Century Man in the Iron Mask*, the murder mystery aspect was all but completely replaced by fast pacing and exoticism of an adventure yarn with Norimizu Rintarō transformed into an action hero. The opening of the first chapter suggests at once how different this work it will be:

「その夜は、楽堂の灯をじつとりと包んで、細かい茶色の雨が降っていた。」

“That evening a brown coloured drizzle was falling, enveloping the lights of the hall” (Oguri 1997: 12)

It is not only the language and theme that changes. In the place of the strictly confined spaces of previous works (such as a Buddhist monastery in *Halo*, an intimidating mansion in *The Plague House*, or the claustrophobic “Habichtsburg”), from which the characters are hardly ever allowed to venture outside, we are now moved all over southeast Asia. The deliberate pacing is replaced by kaleidoscopic action. Mushitarō made the change deliberately, as evidenced by the remarks cited by Shinpo (2017: 470). It is necessary to remember that by 1936, when *The Twentieth Century Man in the Iron Mask* came out, a departure from *tantei shōsetsu* was a wider tendency, influenced by the strengthening of censorship, which made it increasingly difficult to create works in the “Western” and therefore unpatriotic genre. Furthermore, writing in the style he had been using until then proved too exhaustive, and the completion of *The Plague House*, a work for which “he burned up the flame of his life” (Oguri 1987: 7), marked the end of the early period of his career. It was the end of Oguri Mushitarō as a detective fiction writer. Krutch said that “Poe invented the detective story that he might not go mad” (Haycraft 1947: 164). Mushitarō stopped writing detective stories for the same reason.

## A Mass of Texts

If detective fiction is centred upon the act of reading, then the Norimizu series can be considered a striking realisation of this phenomenon. In fact the series presents a world constructed from all manner of texts, one where intertextuality is pushed to the very front. Quotes from and references to other works are a vital element of Mushitarō's style, but rather than being mere displays of pedantry, or, even worse, a cover-up for the lack of original ideas, they play important roles in the plots, as well as in the overall structure on both the diegetic and extra-diegetic levels.

The most obvious example, one often brought up by critics and researchers, is frequent references to the works of S.S. Van Dine. Since the second half of the 1920s and continuing into the next decade, Van Dine's novels featuring the detective Philo Vance were among the most widely read mysteries in the world. The first of these works to appear in Japan was *The Greene Murder Case*, the third novel in the Vance series, originally published in 1928, serialized in "Shinseinen" as early as 1929, and translated by none other than Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke. The novel was received very warmly<sup>24</sup>, other translations followed in quick succession and soon Van Dine's name became virtually synonymous with the formal detective novel, influencing the growth of the hitherto underrepresented *honkaku tantei shōsetsu*. Many writers not only professed their admiration for the American writer but also created works inspired by the Philo Vance series, one early example being Hamao Shirō's *Satsujinki* [serial killer] (1931), the first long form novel in the *honkaku* style. Mushitarō's fascination with the Philo Vance series went much further. In fact, cursorily read the Norimizu series may seem a thinly veiled homage to the work of Van Dine.

For example, the series' three main characters: Norimizu, the prosecutor Hazekura and police detective Kumashiro are by and large copies of Van Dine's protagonists: Vance, District Attorney Markham and police detective Heath. The same can be applied to the plot construction and dynamics between the characters. The brilliant but often snobbish and vain Vance (Norimizu<sup>25</sup>), is asked by his friend District Attorney Markham (Hazekura) to help with the investigation of a murder that proves too difficult for the police, represented by the dynamic yet unimaginative Sgt.

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<sup>24</sup> One notable exception was Edogawa Ranpo, who criticized Van Dine for predictability. Later, however, he changed his opinion and included *The Bishop Murder Case* in a list of his favourite detective novels.

<sup>25</sup> It should also be noted that the detective's last name is spelled 法水, which can be read as *hōmizu*. This is a pun on *hōmuzu* the Japanese reading of *Holme*, making the character doubly referential.

Heath (Kumashiro), often scornful of the great detective's eccentric psychoanalytical methods. The similarity of the titles is evident too: four of the works in the Norimizu series follow the pattern of "... satsujin jiken" ("... murder case") which, while hardly a never before used word combination, evidently mirrors the iteration of Van Dine's ... *Murder Case* titles<sup>26</sup>. Detailed maps of the crime scene, a constant in Van Dine's novels, are likewise employed by Oguri in each of his works. The same goes for the use of footnotes giving explanations on topics brought about by the erudite detective. All these points of reference are quite clear to anyone familiar with the Vance series (and we have to remember that with the American author at the peak of his popularity at the time, this accounted for most of the readers of *tantei shōsetsu* in Japan), however, Mushitarō further acknowledges all the connections as his characters frequently mention Van Dine's novels in their conversations, on some occasions giving away the murderer (Oguri 2017: 347)• .

Finally, the construction of plots also owes much to the creator of Philo Vance. On the most basic level, one can see similarities in certain details, such as the criminal using a record player as a means of gaining an alibi (Van Dine's *The Canary Murder Case* 1927 and Mushitarō's *The Halo Murder Case*) or an arrow as a murderous weapon (*The Bishop Murder Case* 1928 and *The Plague House Murder Case*). Furthermore, as Tsuge and Yokoi and later Matsuda have shown (Matsuda 2014), the plot of the monumental *The Plague House Murder Case* is deeply influenced by both *The Bishop Murder Case* – in both novels the murders are committed according to the words of poems – and especially *The Greene Murder Case*. In the latter work the members of the Greene family, forced to live together in a gloomy New York mansion due to the provisions of the late Mr. Greene's will, are killed off one by one by Ada Greene, an adopted daughter whose real father, as it turns out, was a professional criminal and murderer. The basic plot of Mushitarō's *The Plague House* concerns a series of murders committed on members of the Furiyagi family residing in the titular mansion, explicitly forbidden to ever leave by the late Mr. Furiyagi's will. In what constitutes a mirror image of *The Greene Murder Case* the killer, Kamitani Nobuko, Furiyagi's secretary, is in reality his real daughter, while all the other family members are adopted – all of them children of criminal parents. Another common point is that in both novels

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<sup>26</sup> *Sento Arekisei jūin no sangeki* is a notable exception from this rule among the early Norimizu works, however, it also repeats a Van Dine title, as *Greene Murder Case* was first published as *Guriin-ke no sangeki*.



the murderess attempts to divert suspicions from herself by staging attempts on her life.

With *The Plague House Murder Case* clearly being a pastiche of Van Dine's novel, and with other stories from the Norimizu series containing more or less obvious references to the works of the author of *The Bishop Murder Case*<sup>27</sup>, it would be tempting to view Oguri's oeuvre in the context of the adaptation (*hon'an*) and its presence in the history of detective fiction in Japan. Whether Ruikō's adaptations of Western novels in the early years of the genre, or Ranpo's evident inspirations – for example one can see traces of E.A. Poe's *The Gold-Bug* (1843) in *The Two Sen Copper Coin* or H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) in *Kotō no oni* [the demon of the lonely island] (1929) – *tantei shōsetsu* relied on borrowing from foreign writers<sup>28</sup>, which of course was unavoidable considering the foreign origins of the genre. In Mushitarō's case that is only partially true, however, because the Van Dine references need to be seen as a layer of the intertextual fabric that forms the Norimizu series.

The importance of the act of reading as an equivalent of investigating is further stressed by the fact that the plots of many of the Norimizu adventures are connected to those of various literary works. In case of *The Murder of Ophelia* it is *Hamlet*, the tragic events of *The Tongue of the Iron Mask* are an echo of the story of Siegfried from *The Song of the Nibelungs*, while *The Murder of Oiwa* is related to the famous ghost story *Yotsuya kaidan*. In *The Plague House* the killings are related to the spell of the four elements from Goethe's *Faust*: “Salamander soll glühen, / Undene sich winden, / Sylphe verschwinden, / Kobold sich mühen.”<sup>29</sup> After a piece of paper with the second line<sup>30</sup> written on it is found around the time the first murder is committed, Norimizu deduces that it serves as a warning that three more people will be killed. The detective arrives at his conclusion through the literal act of reading. Moreover, his wide knowledge of literature allows him to read the intentions of the murderer.

The textual landscape of the Norimizu stories is not limited to fiction. In solving the cases Norimizu Rintarō makes use of his impressive knowledge of criminal science, which he always does by referencing a specialist work. This is yet another callback to Philo Vance who has a similar habit. In the Norimizu series, however, this idea is pushed to extreme lengths,

<sup>27</sup> At one point Hazekura says to Norimizu “Dear oh dear, and when did you become Philo Vance?” (「オヤオヤ、君はいつファイロ・ヴァンスになったのだね。」).

<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting that Ranpo also wrote modern retellings of some of Ruikō's adaptations.

<sup>29</sup> “Salamander, glow hot, / Undine, wind about, / Sylph, vanish quick, / Kobold, to work.” (Goethe, Greenberg 2014: 46).

<sup>30</sup> The form is changed to “Undinus sich winden”.

especially in *The Plague House*, where the detective constantly bases his reasoning on the findings of modern psychology, forensic medicine, or criminology. What is more, the whole novel can be viewed as a literary interpretation of the criminal anthropology of Cesare Lombroso, as one of the links in the chain of events that lead to the murders at the Plague House is a bizarre experiment started forty years earlier by Furiyagi Santetsu (Murakami 2017). In order to debunk a theory of heredity of criminal character in people with a certain cranial deformity put forward by a Lombroso proponent Dr. Yagisawa, Santetsu – himself possessing the said abnormality of the skull – brings into his newly built mansion four children of similarly afflicted criminals from the New York Elmira prison. By raising them in a culturally refined atmosphere, separated from the outside world, he intends to prove that whether one becomes a criminal or not is merely circumstantial. This ends in ultimate failure as years later his own daughter becomes a murderer, killing also her father.

The texts in question are not necessarily referenced or quoted verbatim. They are often misquoted, changed intentionally to suit the plot, and, as the recent critical annotated edition of *The Plague House Murder Case* has shown, sometimes invented entirely. For example, when Norimizu explains his methods, he refers to the “fourth Viennese school” of psychoanalysis, when in reality there were only three existing at the time (that of Freud, Adler and Frankl) and, what is more, the classification applies rather to psychotherapy. Furthermore, all the texts are given the same weight, and as such a medieval treatise on alchemy has for Norimizu the same value in providing hints to the solution of the crime as a modern scientific work. Thus the encyclopedic pedantry is reduced to a hoax and one wonders if Mushitarō was aware that before finding success as a detective fiction writer, Van Dine gained the most popularity from a lengthy essay *Misinforming a Nation* (1917), attacking the inaccuracies found in the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

### **Norimizu Rintarō’s School of Detection**

Norimizu’s cross-examination methods are a combination of his penchant for literature and science. Just like Vance, he firmly believes in psychoanalysis. His approach is, however, highly unorthodox. In *The Plague House Murder Case* he has a tendency to recite a line of poetry containing an allusion to a development of the case and wait for the person he interviews to continue. By the subtle changes in the rhythm or wording of their response Norimizu can read their thoughts. In the following fragment the detective talks to Tagō Shinsai, the wheelchair-bound steward

of the mansion, about the relationship between Santetsu and his four adopted children.

「『(...)とにかく、あの四人の方々が、一番親愛の情を感じていた人物と云えば、やはり算哲様でしょうか。』

『そうですか、博士に・・・』一端法水は意外らしい面持（おももち）をしたが、烟をリボンのように吐いて、ボードレールを引用した。

『それでは、吾が懐かしき魔王よ（オー・モン・シェル・ベルゼビュート）——でしょうか。』

『そうです。まさに吾なんじを称えん（ジュ・タドル）——じゃ。』真斎は微かに動揺したが、劣らず対句で相槌（あいづち）を打った。

『然し、ある場合は、』と法水は鳥渡（ちよつと）思案気な顔になり、『洒落者や阿諛者はひしめき合って（エ・ポー・エンド・ウイットリングペリシュト・イン・ゼ・スロング）——』と云いかけたが、急にポープの「髪盗み（レープ・オヴ・ゼ・ロック）」を止めて「ゴンザーゴ殺し」（ハムレット中の劇中劇）の独白（セリフ）を引き出した。『結局（どのみち）、汝真夜中の暗きに摘みし茶の臭き夜よ（ザウ・ミクスチュア・ランクオヴ・ミドナイト・ウイーズ・コレクテッド）——でしょうかからね』

『どうして』と真斎は頸を振って、『三たび魔神の呪咀に萎れ、毒気に染みぬる（ウイズ・ヒケイツ・バン・スライス・ブラステッド・スライス・インフェクテッド）——とは、決して、』と次句で答えたが、異様な抑揚で、殆ど韻律を失っていた。」

“»(...) Anyway, If I were to name the person to whom the four of them felt the strongest affection, it would probably be Mr. Santetsu.«

»Really? The doctor...« For a moment Norimizu's face took on a surprised look. He then blew out a ribbon of smoke and quoted Baudelaire.

»So, *O mon cher Belzébuth*, was it?«

»That's right. Truly, *je t'adore*<sup>31</sup>« Shinsai seemed slightly agitated, but he didn't yield and appropriately finished the couplet.

<sup>31</sup> The last line of Baudelaire's *Le Possédé*.

»But there are cases where—« Norimizu’s countenance became a bit contemplative. »A *Beau and Whittling perish’d in the Throng*«<sup>32</sup> He started to recite Pope’s *Rape of the Lock*, suddenly stopped and switched into *The Murder of Gonzago* (the play within a play in *Hamlet*). »In any case, *thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected* – right?«

»Why?« Shinsai shook his head. »Surely not with *Hecate’s ban thrice blasted, thrice infected*«<sup>33</sup> He answered with the next line, but with an odd modulation and the rhythm all off.” (Oguri 2017: 154)

Later, after a short lecture on Shakespeare’s meter, Norimizu explains his chain of reasoning:

「(...)ですから、一語でもその朗誦法を誤ると、韻律が全部の節にわたって混乱してしまいます。然し貴方が三たび (スライス) で逼 (つか) えて、それ以後の韻律を失ってしまったのは、決して偶然の事故ではないのですよ。その一語には、少なくとも七首 (あいくち) 位の心理的効果があるからなんです。ですから貴方は、それが僕を刺戟する事に気がついたので、すぐに周章 (あわ) てふためいて云い直したのでしょうか。けれども、その復誦には、今も云った韻律法を無視しなければなりません。それが僕の思う壺だったので、却って収拾のつかない混乱を招いてしまったのです。と云うのは、*thrice* (スライス) を避けて、前節の *Ban* (バン) と続けた *Banthrice* (バンスライス) が、*Banshee* (バンシイ) (ケルト伝説にある告死婆) が変死の門辺に立つとき化けると云う老人——即ち *Banshrice* (バンシュライス) のように響くからなんですよ。ねえ田郷さん、僕が持ち出した汝真夜中の (ザウ・ミクスチュア・ランク) .....の一句には、斯う云う具合に、二重にも三重にも陥穽 (かんせい) が設けられてあったのです。勿論僕は、貴方がこの事件で、告死老人 (バンシュライス) の役割をつとめていたとは思いませんが、然しその、魔女 (ヘカテ) が呪い毒に染 (そ) んだという三たび (スライス) は、

<sup>32</sup> *Rape of the Lock*, canto V, l. 55.

<sup>33</sup> *Hamlet*, act III, sc. II, l. 272-274.

一体何事を意味しているのでしょうか。ダンネベルグ夫人  
.....易介.....そうして三度目は？」

“That’s why, when you make a mistake in the rules of recitation even in just one word, the whole phrase becomes disorganized. However, it was no accident that you got stuck on the word »thrice« and lost the rhythm afterwards. That word possessed the psychological effect comparable to a dagger at least. When you noticed my reaction, you panicked and corrected yourself, but in your repetition you couldn’t ignore the rules of the meter that I have just mentioned. Thus, you fell into my trap, and you weren’t able to regain control of the resulting chaos. The reason for that was that, by avoiding »thrice«, the preceding »ban« and the following »ban thrice« – banshee (an old woman heralding death in the Celtic legends) being an old person said to appear when one is to meet with an accidental death – sounded like »Banshrice«. In this way, Mr. Tagō, the *thou mixture rank* line that I brought up contained a double or even a triple pitfall. Naturally, I don’t suspect you of playing the role of a banshee in this case, but I wonder whatever can this »thrice«, soaked in the cursed poison by Hecate, mean? Miss Dannenberg... Ekisuke<sup>34</sup> ... and the third one?” (ibid.: 194)

As we see, Norimizu uses *The Murder of Gonzago* to recreate the effect that the play produced, when originally staged at Elsinore: the exposure of the murderer. Of course, the detective’s method hinges upon a vision of a world where it is taken for granted that every character knows the works of Shakespeare, Pope or Goethe by heart and can recite them at any given time.

In this manner Norimizu analyzes slips of the tongue and articulation mistakes of the other party. For him even the minutest gesture, the smallest movement out of the ordinary is a message containing hidden meanings. On one occasion – using Francis Galton’s theory of mental imagery – he deduces from the movements made by a character’s eyes that the person thought of the word “Kobold”, the last of the spirits from Faust’s spell. Here we reach the essence of Mushitarō’s style and his attitude to *tantei shōsetsu*. Norimizu is not a detective who looks for and reads material clues such as cigarette ash or traces of mud like Sherlock Holmes would. Instead, by basing his reasoning on a peculiar mixture of an idiosyncratic

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<sup>34</sup> The names of the first two victims.

reading of a nonexistent school of psychoanalysis, often outdated 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century criminology and the knowledge of cryptology and symbolism, he creates his own school of detection unlike that of any literary sleuth before or after him. The uniqueness of this method can also be seen as its greatest failure, since it is often unable to produce evidence sustainable in a court of law – a complaint frequently voiced by Hazekura and Kumashiro. In most of the Norimizu series' installments, however, the criminal conveniently commits suicide before any trial is even mentioned.

If measured by the standards of any written or unwritten rules of detective fiction, Norimizu Rintarō has to be seen as a failed detective, and as Matsuda · · (2015) observes, it is not unusual for him to fail even in the context of the stories. In spite of his undeniable brilliance and frequent successes, he does sometimes pin the crime on the wrong person, doing so twice in *The Plague House Murder Case* (while at the same time believing in the innocence of Nobuko, who turns out to be the real killer). In fact, by formal detective fiction standards, Nobuko would surely be the prime suspect – with much of the evidence pointing against her, including the lack of alibi.

To paraphrase *Hamlet's* Polonius: “Though this be method, yet there is madness in ‘t”, for truly Norimizu's detection borders on madness. Many authors (e.g. Takayama 2002: 31) note the fascination of detective fiction with the detail, itself a mirror of the interior culture of the Victorian age and its inherent obsession to collect and catalogue and therefore possess the whole world. Thus, in classical detective fiction, every little detail can be a clue or a lead. Mushitarō sees this trait and explores it to the point of absurdity – the shape of a rainbow created by releasing water from a fountain in a certain sequence, the effect produced by light passing through a bubble of air in a glass chandelier<sup>35</sup>, or the mysterious overtone made by the mansion's carillon: all these phenomena are for Norimizu clues of the utmost importance, the likes of which he notices everywhere. His method is obsession, madness itself and nowhere is it more visible than in the denouements. In classic detective fiction they usually serve as the catharsis of the work, the final reveal which leads to the restoration of the order disturbed by the crime. However, for Mushitarō they become the ultimate act of disrupting the form, as he makes Norimizu's explanations concerning the identity of the criminal, their motive or modus operandi as complicated as possible. The reader is therefore virtually unable to grasp the details of the solution and is thus robbed of the expected satisfaction or

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<sup>35</sup> Mushitarō shares Ranpo's fascination with optics.

the feeling of clarity. “No matter how many times you read you don’t understand – and yet it’s fascinating.” (in Shinpo 2017: 470) – popular fiction author Kuki Shirō’s summary of the reception of *The Plague House Murder Case* is also valid as far as other works in the series are concerned.

## Conclusion

Oguri Mushitarō’s Norimizu series arrived at a time when the *tantei shōsetsu* scene was torn between the romantic attitude of the *henkaku* school, the dominating force, and the rationalist ideas of the *honkaku* group, smaller, but encouraged by the popularity of S.S. Van Dine, the strictest formalist of Western detective fiction. As can be glimpsed from the fact that both Edogawa Ranpo and Kōga Saburō, the most important representatives of each camp, wrote enthusiastic reviews of the first episode of *The Plague House Murder Case* in the same issue of “Shinseinen”, each side wanted to consider Oguri one of their own. On one hand, clear allusions to Van Dine, the characters, setting, plot construction, which recall the most formal version of the detective genre, all lead to the association of these works with the orthodox sensibility. Still, too many characteristics of Mushitarō’s prose speak against such affiliation. The dense style, as well as the absurd logic, disallow the classification of the Norimizu series as *honkaku tantei shōsetsu*. The skillful employment of the rules of the genre coupled with their deliberate subversion (the denial of reader participation, complicated explanations, the absurd abundance of meaningful detail) show that what Oguri was looking for was an unprecedented attempt to break away from the detective fiction form, while retaining the illusion of playing by the rules. Some, for example Sakaguchi Ango (Gonda 1975: 190), saw this as simple incompetence of the author of the series. Read as detective fiction in the strict sense, the works of Mushitarō may be considered failures. They are, however, something else entirely – a new kind of anti-mystery, a success of experimental prose, playing on the notions of genre and on established literary hierarchies. The mad logic of the universe of *The Plague House* was forgotten in the post war years of rebuilding Japan as a democratic state, when the rational, socially aware detective novels<sup>36</sup> of Matsumoto Seichō seemed more fitting. Then, growing social unrest of the later decades contributed to the rediscovery of the pre-war *tantei shōsetsu* authors, with their esthetics of decadence, macabre and a sense of absurd. The esoteric textual labyrinth of the series is one of the best representatives of the age of curiosity hunters.

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<sup>36</sup> The term *tantei shōsetsu* fell out of use after the war replaced by *suiiri shōsetsu* (detection fiction).

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Andrzej Świrkowski**

PhD candidate (dissertation title: *Japanese Crime Fiction from 1923 to 1937*, written under the supervision of Professor Estera Żeromska) and lecturer at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, which he graduated in 2014. In 2012-2013 on MEXT Government Scholarship at Waseda University. Current research field is modern Japanese literature with emphasis on popular fiction.

山之内晴夏

ORCID: 0000-0001-7712-9564

## 文末表現「ましょう」のやわらげた命令用法とその学習の必要性

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.19

### ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the necessity of teaching sentences ending in *-mashō* as an imperative in Japanese language education. Nitta (1991) states that *-mashō* is used as やわらげた命令 ('an euphemistic imperative').

This paper reviews the frequency of sentences ending in *-mashō* appearing in Japanese textbooks and in Japanese written by native Japanese speakers. An investigation of Japanese textbooks showed that, while they rarely include the imperative use of *-mashō* as a learning item, *-mashō* is frequently used as an imperative in the test instructions of these textbooks.

The examination of a corpus of Japanese written by native Japanese speakers shows that *-mashō* as an imperative appears frequently when a person is giving advice or answering a question. This use of *-mashō* can thus be attributed to two types of persons: the provider of information who is considered superior to the receiver and the receiver who is considered inferior to the provider. Considering the high frequency of *-mashō* in Japanese textbooks and in Japanese written by native Japanese speakers, it is deemed essential to teach Japanese learners the use of *-mashō* as an imperative.

**KEYWORDS:** *-mashō*, euphemistic imperative, Japanese textbooks, text instruction, corpus

### 1. はじめに

文末表現の「ましょう」は複数の用法を持つが、その一つとして、命令用法があげられる。命令用法の「ましょう」とは次のようなものである。

- (1) (教師が学生に) 教科書の問題に答えましょう。(作例)
- (2) 食事の前には手を洗いましょう。(グループ・ジャマシイ,1998 『教師と学習者のための日本語文型辞典』くろしお出版)

仁田（1991: 213）は、「ましよう」の命令用法を「やわらげた命令」と呼んでいる。また、やわらげた命令について「動作主体に話し手を含まないことによって、〈誘いかけ〉を表すシヨウ形の用法から派生したものである」と仁田（1991: 223）では述べられている。グループジャマシイ（1998: 610）では、「ましよう」の命令用法を「呼びかけ」という言葉で示し、「複数の人々に「．．．する／しないようにしよう」とある行動をとる（とらない）ように呼びかけるのに用いる。（中略）人々にそれに従うように呼びかける言い方。」と述べている。

この命令用法の「ましよう」は、日本語教育でどのように扱われているのであろうか。また、日本語母語話者の言語活動において、どの程度の頻度で使用されているのであろうか。さらに、日本語教育における学習項目としての扱われ方と、日本語母語話者の使用実態は妥当な関係となっているのであろうか。

命令用法の「ましよう」について、日本語教育における実態と日本語母語話者の言語活動における実態を明らかにするために、本稿では日本語教育の面から日本語教科書の調査、日本語母語話者の言語活動の面から書き言葉と話し言葉のコーパス調査を行う。

これらの調査をもとに考察を行い、今後の日本語教育における命令用法「ましよう」のありかたについて私見を述べる。

## 2. 本稿における文末表現「ましよう」の扱い

はじめに、本稿における「ましよう」の扱いについて述べる。

第一に、本稿での代表形としての「ましよう」である。文末表現「ましよう」の形式は、以下のような例があげられる。

(3) 問題に答えましよう。（作例）

(4) 自分の荷物は自分で管理しましよう。（作例）

上に示すような例の場合、「ましよう」の前にいかなる動詞をとっても、「ましよう」部分は変化しない。本稿ではこの変化のない部分を代表形として扱う。

第二に、普通体「よう」と対応する丁寧体としての「ましよう」についてである。

ここでは丁寧体「ましょう」と対応する普通体の形として、本稿では「よう」という形をとる。普通体の場合、以下のような例があげられる。

- (3) 問題に答えよう。
- (4) 自分の荷物は自分で管理しよう。
- (5) 一日一冊本を読もう。(作例)

上に示した3例のうち、(3)(4)は文末の形が「よう」となるが、同じ「ましょう」の普通体の形をとる(5)では「もう」となる。(5)に示すように五段活用(日本語教育における1グループ)の場合、他の種類の活用と異なる形をとるが、本稿では上一段活用と下一段活用(日本語教育における2グループ)、またサ行変格活用及びカ行変格活用(日本語教育における3グループ)がとる「よう」から、普通体の場合の代表形を「よう」とする。

次に、本稿では普通体「よう」を扱わず、丁寧体「ましょう」のみを扱っているが、これにかかわる要因を以下に述べる。

本稿では、日本語教育における文末表現「ましょう」、また強い関連のある「よう」の指導に関する実態を明らかにするために日本語教科書を対象にして教科書調査を行った。調査対象とした教科書については後の第4章に述べる。この教科書調査で得られた用例は、普通体「よう」に比べて丁寧体「ましょう」の用例が多く見られた。このことから、本稿では用例数の多い丁寧体「ましょう」に限定して調査結果、考察を述べる。今後、普通体「よう」についても調査・研究を進めるべきであると考えている。

### 3. 先行研究

本稿では、丁寧体「ましょう」を扱うが、仁田は、丁寧体「ましょう」に対応する普通体「よう」を「シヨウ形」とし、仁田(1991: 212)で「動詞の意志性・無意志性、ガ格のあり方、聞き手への利益付与の有無など」によって「シヨウ形の用法」として5つの用法を示している。

- [I] 話し手の推し量りを表すもの。  
明日は全国的に晴天に恵まれましょう。
- [II] 話し手の意志を表すもの。

「今日はひとつ入ってみてやろう。」

[Ⅲ] 聞き手への話し手の行為提供を申し出るもの。

「お送りしましょう。」

[Ⅳ] 誘いかけを表すもの。

「お待ち遠さま。さあ、すぐに出かけましょう。」

[Ⅴ] **やわらげた命令**

「こどもにいたずらしないように しましょう。 茨木市立中津小学校」

(各用法の例文及び下線部分は仁田 (1991) pp. 212-213 による。)

仁田はやわらげた命令について、「動作主体に話し手を含まないことによる[V]やわらげた命令,と言った用法も存する。」(1991: 213)、「動作主体に話し手を含まないことによって、〈誘いかけ〉を表すシヨウ形の用法から派生したものである。」(p. 223)と述べている。

仁田 (1991) が示す「シヨウ形」という言葉は、本稿における普通体「よう」にあたると思われる。また、「シヨウ形の用法」という言葉に示されるように、サ行変格活用 (日本語教育における 3 グループ) の「する」からなる「しよう」を代表形として述べている。しかし、仁田が示す用例にあるように、「しよう」のみではなく、動詞「行く、飲む」などの五段活用 (日本語教育における 1 グループ)、「見る、食べる」などの上一段・下一段活用 (日本語教育における 2 グループ) の語も対象としている。また、仁田 (1991) では普通体「シヨウ」を代表として述べ、仁田が述べる「シヨウ形の用法」に示される例文に「ましょう」が見られるため、「シヨウ形の用法」に示される 5 つの用法は丁寧体「ましょう」にも共通するものであると考える。

また、グループ・ジャマシイ (1998: 610) は、仁田 (1991) が「やわらげた命令」として示す命令用法を、「人々に従うように呼びかける言い方」という用法説明から「呼びかけ」という名前で示している。以下はグループ・ジャマシイ (1998: 610) に示される例文である。

(6)横断する時は左右の車に注意しよう。



- (7)飲酒運転は絶対に避けよう。  
 (8)食事の前には手を洗いましょう。  
 (9)動物にいたずらしないようにしましょう。

(例文(6), (7), (8), (9)はグループ・ジャマシイ (1998) p. 610による。)

このように、普通体「よう」とその丁寧体「ましょう」の命令用法の存在については明らかになっているが、その使用実態や日本語教科書での扱われ方に関しての先行研究や調査は、今回筆者が調べた限りでは見られなかった。

この現状をふまえ、本稿では次に示す3点に注目し、調査を行った。第一に、日本語教科書において、命令用法で使われる「ましょう」は学習項目として扱われているかどうか、という点に注目した教科書調査である。第二に、命令用法として使われる「ましょう」は日本語教科書において学習項目以外ではどのような場合に現れるのかという点に注目した教科書調査である。以上の2点は、日本語教育における命令用法の「ましょう」の現状を把握するためである。第三に、日本語母語話者の言語活動における命令用法の「ましょう」の出現頻度についてコーパス調査である。これは、命令用法の「ましょう」の学習の必要性を検討する上で、学習者が耳にしたり、学習者自身が学習後に使用したりすると予想される頻度を見るためである。

## 4. 日本語教科書における「ましょう」の扱われ方

### 4.1. 学習項目における「ましょう」の調査と結果

本稿では、日本語教科書における「ましょう」の実態について調査を行った。日本語教科書を対象とする調査で採用した教科書は4種、合計8冊である。教科書のレベルは、日本語能力試験のN3レベルまでの文法・句型を学習する教科書に限定した。調査対象とした教科書の詳細を以下に示す。

『みんなの日本語初級Ⅰ第2版本冊』（スリーエーネットワーク編著,2012）

『みんなの日本語初級Ⅱ第2版本冊』（スリーエーネットワーク編著,2012）

- 『学ぼう！にほんご初級1』（日本語教育教材開発委員会編著,2005）  
 『学ぼう！にほんご初級2』（日本語教育教材開発委員会編著,2005）  
 『学ぼう！にほんご初中級』（日本語教育教材開発委員会編著,2006）  
 『できる日本語初級』（田中美帆他編,2011）  
 『できる日本語初中級』（にほんご編集チーム編,2012）  
 『日本語初級1大地』（山崎佳子他,2008）

まず、命令用法に限らず仁田（1991）が「シヨウ形の用法」で示す全ての用法を対象にして、日本語教科書における文末表現「ましょう」の学習項目としての扱われ方を調査した。本稿において「学習項目」と呼ぶものは、文法や文型の導入のための文型提示、文型を含んだ例文、文型の定着を狙った練習問題などである。

日本語教科書における文末表現「ましょう」の学習項目としての扱われ方を調査した結果を表1に示す。表1は、仁田（1991）の「シヨウ形の用法」で示される各用法の、日本語教科書における初出ページをまとめたものである。

	対象日本語教科書	推し毎日	意志	申し出	誘いかけ	やわらげた命令
A	みんなの日本語初級I			p.118～	p.48～	
	みんなの日本語初級II		p.44～			
B	学ぼう！にほんご初級1				p.49～	
	学ぼう！にほんご初級2		p.27～			
	学ぼう！にほんご初中級					
C	できる日本語初級			p.130～	p.104～	
	できる日本語初中級		p.46～			
D	日本語初級1大地			p.82～	p.48～	

表1 本稿調査対象日本語教科書で扱われる「ましょう」の用法（ページ数は初出ページを表す。）

今回対象とした4種の日本語教科書において、『みんなの日本語』と『できる日本語』の2種の教科書で意志、申し出、誘いかけの3用法が学習項目として提示されている。『学ぼう！にほんご』では意志と誘いかけの用法、『日本語初級1大地』では、申し出と誘いかけの2用法が提示される。また初出順は、誘いかけの用法が初級

の早い段階で提示され、後に申し出、意志の用法が続く。この傾向はいずれの教科書でも共通していることがわかった。

本稿で調査対象とした教科書においては5つの用法「推し量り、意志、申し出、誘いかけ、やわらげた命令」のうち、「意志、申し出、誘いかけ」の3つが学習項目として日本語教科書に提示されていることが明らかになった。一方でこれは同時に、推し量りの用法、そして本稿で注目するやわらげた命令の「ましょう」は調査対象とした教科書においては学習項目に含まれていないということを意味する。

## 4.2. 学習項目以外における「ましょう」の調査と結果

本稿では、4.1. で示した4種8冊の日本語教科書を対象にして学習項目以外に見られる文末表現の「ましょう」についても調査を行った。本稿の、学習項目以外に見られる文末表現「ましょう」の調査で扱ったのは、教室用語と問題指示文である。

第一に、教室用語に誘いかけの用法の「ましょう」が見られる。教室用語とは、学習項目とは別に示されるものであり、教師からの指示など、授業を円滑に進めるための言葉である。

図1に示す『みんなの日本語初級I第2版』（2012）では「教室のことば」と題された部分で「始めましょう」「終わりましょう」「休みましょう」を提示している。これは、教師から教室内の学習者に向けて、「（授業を）始めましょう。」「（授業を）終わりましょう」「（休み時間なので）休みましょう」という指示として用いられるものと考えられる。また、これらの主体は教師と学習者であると考えられることから、誘いかけの用法と判断した。他の教科書においても教室用語で「ましょう」が文末に見られる例があり、いずれの場合についても誘いかけの用法であると判断した。

II. 教室の ことば

1. 始めましょう。
2. 終わりましょう。
3. 休みましょう。
4. わかりますか。 ……はい、わかります。/ いいえ、わかりません。
5. もう 一度 [お願いします]。
6. いいです。
7. 違います。
8. 名前
9. 試験、宿題
10. 質問、答え、例

図1 『みんなの日本語初級 I 第2版』 (2012), p.5, II. 教室のことば

第二に、問題指示文でやわらげた命令の用法の「ましょう」が見られる。問題指示文とは、練習問題等で主に問題の答え方を指示するための文である。図2に示す「\_\_\_\_\_のところを考えて文を作りましょう」(『学ぼう! にほんご初中級』, p.14) は筆者が読者である学習者に問題の取り組み方を指示する文であり、「ましょう」はやわらげた命令であると考えられる。

練習 \_\_\_\_\_のところを考えて文を作りましょう。

- (1) A: レポートを書きましたか。  
 B: 今から書きます。 → \_\_\_\_\_ ところです。  
 今、書いています。 → \_\_\_\_\_ ところです。  
 今、書き終わりました。 → \_\_\_\_\_ ところです。
- (2) ワンさんに電話をかけると、  
 今、起きました。 → \_\_\_\_\_ ところだった。  
 まだご飯を食べています。 → \_\_\_\_\_ ところだった。  
 今からうちを出ます。 → \_\_\_\_\_ ところだった。

図2 『学ぼう! にほんご初中級』 (2005), p.14 問題指示文

『学ぼう! にほんご初中級』(2006)では、教科書の問題指示文314例のうち196例の文末にやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が見られた。また、その他の教科書においても問題指示文においてやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が見られた。各教科書の問題指示文の総数と、文末にやわらげた命令の「ましょう」を含む用例数を調査した結果を表2に示す。『学ぼう! にほんご初級1』において、問題

指示文全45例のうち9例、『学ぼう！にほんご初級2』では全27例のうち5例、『学ぼう！にほんご初中級』で全314例のうち196例、『できる日本語初級』において全323例のうち118例、『できる日本語初中級』において全231例のうち99例という結果になった。なお、『みんなの日本語初級Ⅰ』、『みんなの日本語初級Ⅱ』、『日本語初級1大地』には教科書中に問題指示文が現れないため、問題指示文の総数とやわらげた命令「ましょう」を含む用例数は0となっている。

	対象日本語教科書	問題指示文総数	命令「ましょう」を含む用例数	命令用法「ましょう」を含む用例が総数に占める割合
A	みんなの日本語初級Ⅰ	0	0	0%
	みんなの日本語初級Ⅱ	0	0	0%
B	学ぼう！にほんご初級1	45	9	20.00%
	学ぼう！にほんご初級2	27	5	18.51%
C	学ぼう！にほんご初中級	314	196	62.42%
	できる日本語初級	323	118	36.53%
	できる日本語初中級	231	99	42.86%
D	日本語初級1大地	0	0	0%

表2 各教科書の問題指示文の総数と文末にやわらげた命令の「ましょう」を含む用例数

### 4.3. 教科書調査の結果に関する考察

ここで、日本語教科書を対象に行った学習項目と学習項目以外の2つの調査の結果を個別に述べ、結果に関して考察を行う。

日本語教科書の学習項目の調査の結果、仁田(1991)の「シヨウ形の用法」全5用法のうち学習項目として意志、申し出、誘いかけの3用法が扱われ、押し量りとやわらげた命令の2用法は扱われていないことがわかった。

次に学習項目以外では、教室用語で誘いかけ、問題指示文でやわらげた命令の用法が見られることが明らかになった。ここで注目すべき点は、学習項目としてのやわらげた命令の扱われ方と、学習項目以外として述べた、問題指示文におけるやわらげた命令の扱われ方である。

本稿の調査対象教科書において、やわらげた命令は学習項目として扱われていないことがわかった。しかし、問題指示文の調査において、問題指示文でやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が多く見られることが明らかになった。この調査からは、学習項目として扱われてい

ないやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が教科書の問題指示文で多用されているという現状が明らかになった。

教科書で学習者が目にする機会があるのであれば、教科書でその用法を学習項目として示すべきであると考え。しかし、教科書に現れることのみを理由として学習項目にするべきであると言えるわけではなく、日本語を使用して生活する上で、使用頻度が高いのかどうかという点も考慮する必要がある。

## 5. 日本語母語話者の言語活動における「ましょう」の出現頻度調査

### 5.1. 目的

第4章では、日本語教科書におけるやわらげた命令の「ましょう」についての調査結果を見てきた。日本語教科書において、学習項目として提示されないやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が問題指示文において高い頻度で現れるという実態について明らかになったが、一方で日本語母語話者のやわらげた命令「ましょう」の使用実態はどのようなものであろうか。母語話者の言語活動における出現頻度が高ければ、教科書で学習者にやわらげた命令を提示する必要性がより高くなると考える。このような理由から、やわらげた命令の「ましょう」を日本語母語話者の言語活動における出現頻度の観点から調査した。母語話者の言語活動におけるやわらげた命令の「ましょう」の出現頻度を明らかにするために、日本語母語話者の書き言葉と話し言葉を対象にしてコーパス調査を行った。以下5.2.より、本稿における書き言葉のコーパス調査の概要とその結果、また5.3.より話し言葉のコーパス調査の概要とその結果について述べる。

## 5.2. 書き言葉

### 5.2.1. 出現頻度の調査

書き言葉の調査では、国立国語研究所の「現代日本語書き言葉均衡コーパス (Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese、以下BCCWJと呼ぶ。)」を使用した。BCCWJを、国立国語研究所のコーパス検索アプリケーション「中納言」を用いて文末表現「ましょう」の文字列検索を行った。検索対象とするレジスターはコアに含まれる「出版・新聞」、「出版・雑誌」、「出版・書籍」、「特定目的・白書」、「特定目的・知恵袋」、「特定目的・ブログ」の6つとした。コーパス調査では、本稿で注目するやわらげた命令の用法に限らず、「ましょう」の全ての用法を対象に文字列検索を行い、

用例を得た。また、得られた用例を仁田（1991）の「シヨウ形の用法」に示される 5 つの用法に分類した。これは、やわらげた命令用法とその他の用法を比較し、出現頻度を比較するためである。

### 5.2.2. 出現頻度調査の結果

日本語母語話者の書き言葉におけるやわらげた命令の「ましょう」の出現頻度について BCCWJ を使用して調査した結果、得られた用例は 157 例であった。得られた 157 例を、動作主体、前文脈、後文脈等から判断し、仁田（1991）の「シヨウ形の用法」の 5 つに分類した。

分類の結果、押し量りの用例が 6 例、意志の用例が 45 例、申し出の用例が 3 例、誘いかけの用例が 17 例、やわらげた命令の用例が 81 例、その他に分類された用例は 5 例であった。その他には、動作主体、前文脈、後文脈等から用法を判断することが難しい例が含まれる。分類の結果を図 3 に示す。

BCCWJ を用いた調査の結果、得られた用例 157 例のうち最も多く見られた用例はやわらげた命令の用法であった。やわらげた命令の用法として分類した用例は 81 例であり、総数のうち約 51.5% を占める。

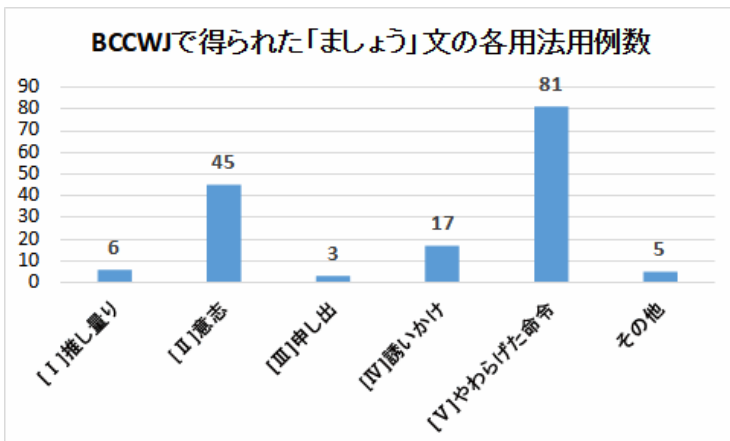


図 3 BCCWJ で得られた「ましょう」文の各用法用例数

### 5.3. 話し言葉

#### 5.3.1. 出現頻度の調査

話し言葉の調査では、国立国語研究所の「日本語話し言葉コーパス (Corpus of Spontaneous Japanese、以下 CSJ と呼ぶ。)」を使用した。CSJ を、国立国語研究所のコーパス検索アプリケーション「中納言」を用いて文末表現「ましょう」の文字列検索を行った。検索対象とするレジスターはコアに含まれる「独話・学会」、「独話・模擬」、「独話・朗読」、「独話・再朗読」、「対話・学会」、「対話・模擬」、「対話・課題」、「対話・自由」の8つとした。本稿で注目するやわらげた命令に限らず全ての用法を対象に文字列検索を行い、用例を得た。また、得られた用例を仁田 (1991) の「シヨウ形の用法」で示される5つの用法に分類した。これは、やわらげた命令とその他の用法を比較し、出現頻度を比較するためである。

#### 5.3.2. 出現頻度調査の結果

母語話者の話し言葉におけるやわらげた命令用法の「ましょう」の出現頻度について CSJ を用いて調査した結果、得られた用例は86例であった。得られた86例を動作主体、前文脈、後文脈等から判断し、仁田 (1991) の「シヨウ形の用法」の5つに分類した。分類の結果、推し量りの用例が6例、意志の用例が63例、申し出の用例は0例、誘いかけの用例が13例、やわらげた命令の用例は0例、その他に分類した例は4例であった。その他には、動作主体、前文脈、後文脈等から用法を判断することが難しい例が含まれる。分類の結果を図4に示す。



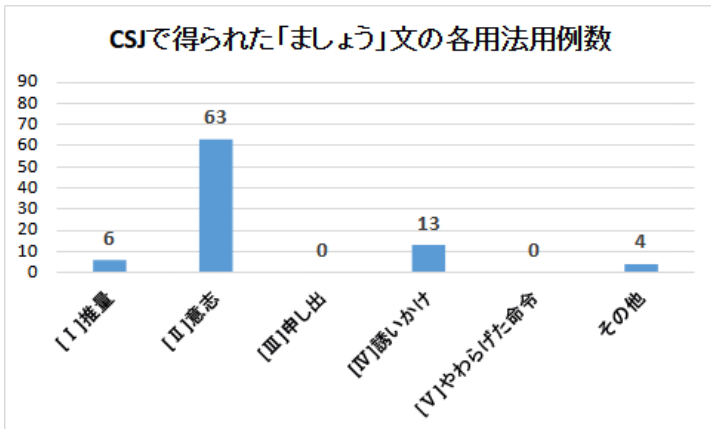


図4 CSJで得られた「ましょう」文の各用法用例数

CSJ を使用した調査の結果、得られた用例86例のうち最も多く見られた用例は意志の用法であった。本稿で注目するやわらげた命令の用例は見られなかった。

#### 5.4. 考察

日本語母語話者の言語活動を対象に「5.2.」では書き言葉、「5.3.」では話し言葉における「ましょう」の出現頻度について、調査を行った。図3、4から「ましょう」の用法全体について見ると、コーパスごとに得られた全用例数は BCCWJ で157例、CSJ で86例と異なるものの、やわらげた命令以外の用法の推し量り、意志、申し出、誘いかけについては書き言葉の BCCWJ と話し言葉の CSJ の間で、用例数の割合には似た傾向がみられる。

本稿で注目するやわらげた命令の「ましょう」に限定して述べると、図3が示すように BCCWJ においては全用例157例のうちやわらげた命令の用例が81例現れ、全体の半数以上現れることがわかった。一方、図4に示すように CSJ においては用例が見られず、書き言葉と話し言葉の調査結果に差が見られる。このように、日本語母語話者の書き言葉と話し言葉を対象にしたコーパス調査から、書き言葉のデータであるか、話し言葉のデータであるかによってやわらげた命令のみに大きな違いが見られることがわかる。しかしこの違いは、書き言葉であるか話し言葉であるかという点が要因となっているのではないと考える。この考えは、BCCWJ から得られたやわ

らげた命令のレジスター別用例数によっている。以下表 3 にレジスター別用例数を示す。

	レジスター	やわらげた命令「ましょう」の用例数	調整頻度(10万語あたり)
1	「出版・新聞」	2	0.65
2	「出版・雑誌」	19	9.39
3	「出版・書籍」	8	3.92
4	「特定目的・白書」	0	0.00
5	「特定目的・知恵袋」	48	51.10
6	「特定目的・ブログ」	4	4.31

表 3 BCCWJ で得られたやわらげた命令のレジスター別用例比

表 3 見ると、BCCWJ で得られたやわらげた命令の用例全 81 例のうち、レジスターの「特定目的・知恵袋」において用例が 48 例現れている。これは全体数の半分以上を占めているということであり、他のレジスターと比較しても用例数が著しく多いことがわかる。この「特定目的・知恵袋」が BCCWJ のレジスターに含まれることが要因となり、BCCWJ の調査でやわらげた命令の用例が多く見られたのであると考える。

書き言葉と話し言葉の違いが要因であるとすれば、表 3 の「やわらげた命令「ましょう」の用例数」は各レジスターの総語数に比例するであろう。そして、出現頻度はいずれのレジスターにおいても同程度となるはずである。しかし、表 3 の 10 万語あたりの調整頻度を見ると、「特定目的・知恵袋」は 51.10 語と、他のレジスターに比べて著しく高い。このようなことから、書き言葉であるか話し言葉であるかが要因ではないと言えるであろう。

次に、なぜ 6 つあるレジスターの中でも「特定目的・知恵袋」にやわらげた命令の用例が多く見られたのかという点について考察する。

「特定目的・知恵袋」は、Yahoo!知恵袋という「参加者同士で教えあうことを目的とした Q&A 形式のナレッジコミュニティサービス」(丸山他,2011, p.40)である。「教えあう」という言語活動の中には、回答者として回答・助言を与える者と、質問者として回答・助言を受ける者が存在する。回答・助言は、受ける者にとって有益な情報であり、利益と見なすことができる。つまり、Yahoo!知

恵袋では、回答・助言を与える者、すなわち利益を与えることができる優位な立場にある者と、回答・助言を受ける者、すなわち利益を受ける下位の立場にある者が存在する。情報の授受による優位・下位の関係が生じることによって、以下のような例が多く見られるようになる。

(10) (質問者) ハサミなど機内に持ち込めないものはやはり現地調達ですよな？

(回答者) スーツケースの中に入れてしまましょう。  
機内に持ち込むことは出来ないの。

(11) (質問者) 仕事で、大変怒られました。しかし、こちらに否はなく、相手の単なる思いこみでした。

(いわゆる逆ギレ) 偉い方なのですが、どのように対処したら良いのでしょうか？

(回答者) マジ、腹が立ちますね。でも真実は必ず分かるから、ここは耐えましょう。

((10), (11)は BCCWJ の Yahoo!知恵袋から得られた用例である。)

上に示した(10)、(11)のように、優位な立場にある回答者が下位の者にある行動をするように促す状況が生じやすくなる。このような特徴から Yahoo!知恵袋でやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が多く現れたのではないかと考える。今回コーパス調査で用いた BCCWJ、CSJ に含まれるデータの中でも Yahoo!知恵袋のみに見られる特徴である。

以上に述べた特徴が、Yahoo!知恵袋のデータを含む BCCWJ でやわらげた命令の「ましょう」が多く現れたで要因あると考える。

また、Yahoo!知恵袋に見られる「ある行動をするように促す」という特徴は、仁田 (1991: 229) で述べられている「〈働きかけ〉」の定義とも類似している。

仁田の言う〈働きかけ〉とは、モダリティの中でも命令や依頼などとして機能するものを指し、やわらげた命令については、〈働きかけ〉には含まれないとしながらも「一定の条件の元で、(中略)〈誘いかけ〉を表す文(中略)などが、〈働きかけ〉の文に近い機能を果すようになる」(p. 261) と述べている。

仁田の言う「一定の条件」を満たす状態とは、「主格（動作の主体）は、原則的に二人称名詞のみであり、テンス形式の分化は存せず、言表の成立時は発話以後である」、といった〈働きかけ〉の文の有している制約を果し、それらの文がこの制約を充たすこと」（p. 261）であると述べられている。

一定の条件を満たした文末の「ましょう」が果たす〈働きかけ〉について、以下のように定義されている。

「〈働きかけ〉とは、話し手が相手たる聞き手に自らの要求に沿った動きの実現を訴えかけ・働きかけるといった〈発話・伝達モダリティ〉である。」

（仁田(1991), p. 229 から引用）

この「話し手が相手たる聞き手に自らの要求に沿った動きの実現を訴えかけ・働きかける」という定義は「ある行動を促す」という Yahoo!知恵袋で生じる状況と重なるものである。

#### 5.5. Yahoo!知恵袋と日本語教科書の問題指示文との共通点

5.4. では BCCWJ のレジスターの中でも、「特定目的・知恵袋」の Yahoo!知恵袋のデータの特徴が要因となり、やわらげた命令の「ましょう」の用例が多く見られるのでであると述べた。「利益の授受における優位な立場から下位の立場への発話」という特徴は、「4.2. 学習項目以外における「ましょう」の調査」に述べた問題指示文にも共通するものであると考える。問題指示文も、問題についての知識を持つ優位な立場にある問題指示文の筆者と、問題についての知識がより少ない下位の立場にある学習者へ向けられた言葉である。これは Yahoo!知恵袋に見られた特徴と共通する。

### 6. 本稿の結論

本稿では主に以下に述べる点を中心に、やわらげた命令の「ましょう」について調査及び考察を行った。

「4.1. 学習項目における「ましょう」の調査」において、本稿の調査で対象とした教科書においてやわらげた命令の「ましょう」は学習項目として提示されていないことがわかった。

「4.2. 学習項目以外における「ましよう」の調査」において、教科書の問題指示文でやわらげた命令の「ましよう」が多く見られることがわかった。

以上のことから、日本語教科書において学習項目として学習する機会が設けられていないものの、学習者が教科書で頻繁に目にするという状況が明らかになった。

また、「5.4.日本語母語話者の言語活動における「ましよう」の出現

頻度に関する考察」において、BCCWJのレジスターの一つである「特定目的・知恵袋」に含まれるYahoo!知恵袋の特徴がBCCWJで得た用例にやわらげた命令が多く見られた要因であると述べた。これをふまえ、本稿の結論を次のように述べる。

日本語教科書の問題指示文に現れるやわらげた命令の「ましよう」の出現頻度の高さから、何らかの形でやわらげた命令を学習者に提示し、説明・導入をすることが理想的であると考ええる。

また、母語話者の「ましよう」の使用頻度の調査から、教科書のみには現れるものではなく、日本語母語話者の言語活動の中でも、Yahoo!知恵袋のような特定の場面で用例が見られることがわかった。このことから、日本語学習者がやわらげた命令の「ましよう」を学習する必要性が高まったと思われる。

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Haruka Yamanouchi**

In March 2017, received a B.A. degree in Japanese Language from Senshu University. She is currently studying Japanese grammar as part of the Japanese and Literature Master's Program.

Karol Żakowski  
ORCID: 0000-0003-2715-570X

## **Revision of the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation in 2015: Determinants and Decision-Making Processes**

DOI: 10.12775/sijp.2020.56-59.20

### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the article is to examine decision-making process on the revision of Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation in April 2015. The analysis is conducted from the perspective of neoclassical realism both at domestic and international levels. It is argued that while international determinants, such as policy of the US and situation in the Asia-Pacific region, played a significant role in prompting the Japanese government to initiate the dialogue on guidelines' revision, it is the ideological leaning and institutional strength of the Abe administration that heavily influenced the efficiency of decision-making processes and the final contents of the guidelines. Particular emphasis is placed on Kantei's leadership vis-à-vis the National Security Council, Cabinet Legislation Bureau, and ruling party decision-making bodies.

**KEYWORDS:** Japan-US Defence Cooperation, decision-making process, US policy, Asia-Pacific region

### **Introduction**

The New Guidelines for Japan–US Defense Cooperation were announced in April 2015. The aim of this article is to examine the decision-making process on the revision of the guidelines, both at domestic and international levels. At the domestic level, the analysis will focus on institutional aspects (Kantei's leadership vis-à-vis the National Security Council, Cabinet Legislation Bureau, and ruling party decision-making bodies), Prime Minister Abe's political convictions, as well societal factors (e.g. the evolution of cabinet support rate and public opinion on security issues). At the international level, in turn, the policy of Washington, the situation in the Asia-Pacific region, and role of Japan–US Security Consultative Committee (2+2) will be examined. It is argued that while international determinants played a significant role in prompting the Japanese government to initiate the dialogue on guidelines' revision, it is the ideological leaning and institutional strength of the Abe administration that



heavily influenced the efficiency of decision-making processes and the final contents of the guidelines.

Analysis is conducted from the perspective of neoclassical realism. This relatively new theory of international relations is positioned between the realist and liberal views on salience of domestic determinants in foreign policy making. As pointed out by Gideon Rose (1998: 158), while the structure of the international system delineates the limits of decisions that statespersons are capable to implement, “the translation of capabilities into national behavior is often rough and capricious over the short and medium term.” If domestic conditions, such as political interests of the ruling parties, institutional structure of the government, or societal moods, are in line with external stimuli, it is easier for decision makers to adhere strictly to realistic point of view. If, on the other hand, internal factors run counter to international situation, it may take more time and more effort to conform with external pressures.

The first section briefly describes the evolution of the US–Japan alliance until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The second and third sections examine external and domestic factors behind the revision of the guidelines under the second Abe administration. In light of these determinants, the fourth section focuses on the analysis of negotiations between Japan and the US as well as on the decision-making process that led to the revision of the guidelines.

### **Evolution of the Japan–US Alliance**

The Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan was signed together with the peace treaty in San Francisco in September 1951 and entered into force in April 1952. The agreement was unequal, as it unilaterally granted to the US the right to maintain military bases in Japan, did not explicitly stipulate US obligation to protect Japan from an armed attack by a third country, and even mentioned that US forces could be used “at the express request of the Japanese Government to put down large-scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan, caused through instigation or intervention by an outside power or powers” (Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations 1951). For these reasons, Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke invested extensive political resources in negotiating and ratifying a revised alliance agreement in 1960. The Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America did not contain the controversial clause on the possibility of US interference in Japan’s domestic affairs and it finally confirmed US obligation to defend Japan, but Tokyo was still treated as an unequal

partner. In Article 5 each side recognized “that an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety” as well as declared “that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional provisions and processes” (MOFA 1960). In other words, in exchange for unilateral provision of land for US military bases, Japan gained US’s unilateral guarantee of assistance in case of an armed attack.

While both the 1951 and 1960 treaties recognized Japan’s right to individual and collective self-defense, due to constitutional restraints Tokyo could take advantage only of the former. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution that came into effect in May 1947 clearly prohibited Japan from waging wars, using “force as means of settling international disputes,” or maintaining any “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential” (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 1947). If interpreted literally, Japan would be deprived of the right to possess its own army, but Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) were established in 1954. Based on the official constitutional interpretation from the 1950s, Article 9 allowed Japan to defend itself in case of foreign invasion, but it prohibited Tokyo from participating in collective self-defense pacts. In this light, reference to “constitutional provisions and processes” in the 1960 treaty suggested that Japan would be unable to provide direct military assistance to the US, even if American forces in East Asia were attacked.

Ever since the US changed its policy towards Japan from the one of disarming to the one of remilitarization after the outbreak of Korean War in 1950, Tokyo has been under constant pressure from Washington to increase Japan’s contribution to the alliance. In the 1951 treaty the American side expressed its expectation “that Japan will itself increasingly assume responsibility for its own defense against direct and indirect aggression” (Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations 1951). In Article 3 of the 1960 treaty, in turn, both parties declared their obligation to “maintain and develop, subject to their constitutional provisions, their capacities to resist armed attack” (MOFA 1960). The main aim of the US, obviously, was to enmesh Japan more strongly into the system of American alliances in East Asia. American pressure increased particularly at the end of the 1960s, when Japan became an economic power whose GDP surpassed that of Western Germany.

Nevertheless, domestic-level intervening variables heavily distorted Tokyo’s response to external stimuli. The so-called “Yoshida Doctrine,” named after Yoshida Shigeru, Japanese prime minister in 1946-1947 and 1948-1954, came to constrain Japan’s foreign policy throughout the whole

Cold War. Yoshida was convinced that Japan should shelve the plans of remilitarization, base its security on the American forces, and instead focus on post-war reconstruction. While Yoshida treated his policy as a temporary means of rebuilding the country, his concept was interpreted more dogmatically by the members of his faction who dominated the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) (Zakowski 2011: 182-188). Despite several attempts at revising the pacifist Constitution, which were undertaken by non-mainstream LDP politicians such as Kishi Nobusuke, Article 9 kept hindering the plans of elevating Japan's position in the alliance with the US to a more equal footing.

Domestic determinants explain why Japan only to a limited degree responded to American demands for greater contribution to the alliance. Instead of increasing deterrence capabilities, in 1967 the Satō administration announced three non-nuclear principles (not to produce, manufacture, nor allow introduction into Japanese territory of nuclear weapons), and in 1976 the Miki government decided to prohibit export of military technology as well as limit military expenses to 1% of GNP. In 1978 Tokyo established so-called “budget of sympathy” (*omoiyari yosan*) to cover a large part of costs of maintaining US military facilities in Japan, but it was an insufficient measure to please Washington.

Meanwhile, the 1960 treaty was supplemented with more detailed regulations. The first Guidelines for Japan–US Defense Cooperation were announced in November 1978. Their main aim was to clarify the responsibilities of both sides in 1) deterring aggression; 2) responding to an armed attack against Japan; as well as 3) cooperating “in the case of situations in the Far East outside of Japan which will have an important influence on the security of Japan” (MOD 1978). Regarding the first point, it was specified that Tokyo's obligation was to possess defense capability appropriate for self-defense and assure stable usage of the facilities in US military bases. Washington, in turn, promised to “maintain a nuclear deterrent capability and the forward deployments of combat-ready forces and other forces capable of reinforcing them” (MOD 1978). In addition, both sides declared their intention to establish cooperation in the fields of intelligence, logistics, and operations such as joint defense planning, exercises, or training. Regarding the second point, it was clarified that aggression on a limited scale would be repelled by Japan alone, while larger attacks would be countered together with US forces. Both sides also decided to jointly protect sea lines of communication in the waters surrounding Japan. Regarding the third point, Tokyo and Washington only agreed to “consult together from time to time whenever changes in the

circumstances so require,” and that any assistance by Japan to the US would have to conform with relevant agreements, laws, and regulations (MOD 1978). The document maintained the asymmetric character of the alliance as focused purely on the protection of Japan’s territory.

Evolution of international situation in the 1990s clearly showed that the 1978 guidelines did not fit the post-Cold War reality. Focused on repelling potential invasion from the north, the old regulations proved insufficient to address security problems that appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Outside of their framework, in 1992 Tokyo allowed SDF to participate in the United Nations peacekeeping operations. However, the greatest operational gaps in the old guidelines were revealed during the North Korean nuclear crisis of 1993-1994. To exert pressure on Pyongyang after its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Washington planned to transfer additional forces to South Korea through Japanese airfields and ports, but encountered opposition from Tokyo. As argued by Japan, such action was beyond the legal framework of the alliance. To prevent similar problems in the future, both sides started negotiations on the revision of the 1978 guidelines (Przystup 2015: 6-10).

The second guidelines were announced in September 1997. They stipulated three variants of cooperation: 1) “under normal circumstances;” 2) “in response to an armed attack against Japan;” as well as 3) “in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan’s peace and security” (MOD 1997). Regarding the first point, both governments admitted that their aim was not only to defend Japan, but also to strive for creating “a more stable international security environment” (MOD 1997). To achieve this goal, they agreed to enhance cooperation in such areas as information sharing, policy consultations, international arms control, United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations, defense planning, or bilateral training and exercises. Regarding the second point, Tokyo and Washington reconfirmed their respective obligations in case of attack against Japan and established bilateral coordination mechanism to synchronize logistic support and intelligence activities. The most controversial was the third point that was stipulated in Article 5 of the agreement. Both governments stressed that the concept of “situations in areas surrounding Japan” was “not geographic but situational” (MOD 1997). Among the types of cooperation in such situations the document enumerated “relief activities and measures to deal with refugees,” “search and rescue,” “noncombatant evacuation operations,” “activities for ensuring the effectiveness of economic sanctions for the maintenance of international peace and stability,” the usage of Japanese facilities by US

Army, rear area support in Japan and “on the high seas and international airspace around Japan which are distinguished from areas where combat operations are being conducted,” as well as operational cooperation such as “intelligence gathering, surveillance and minesweeping” (MOD 1997).

As outlined above, the Japan–US alliance evolved in conformity with major shifts in international situation. While the 1978 guidelines had purely defensive character, their 1997 version broadened the scope of potential joint activities to the “areas surrounding Japan,” which enabled Japan to provide rear support to US forces even on high seas. Nevertheless, while vague, this area was still limited to Japan’s immediate proximity and excluded combat zones. For that reason, the revised guidelines did not exceed the domestic hurdles of the pacifist Constitution.

### **External Stimuli for the Revision of the Guidelines**

While the revision of security guidelines in 1997 to some extent adapted Japan–US alliance to new international situation after the end of Cold War, it did not respond to all external pressures. The partnership between both countries was still unequal, as Tokyo maintained its official interpretation of the Constitution that denied Japan the right to collective self-defense. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century new threats for global and regional security appeared. They included the development of international terrorism, the construction of nuclear weapons by North Korea, as well as a further rise in China’s military power and Beijing’s assertiveness vis-à-vis other countries. These external factors constituted powerful stimuli for Tokyo to seek the strengthening of an alliance with Washington.

Despite the limitations of the 1960 treaty and 1997 guidelines, the Koizumi administration felt obliged to respond decisively to terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001. While the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) swiftly admitted that the attacks fell within the scope of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty that stipulates “that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all” (NATO 1949), Tokyo could not do the same due to the unequal nature of the Japan–US alliance. Instead, the Koizumi cabinet had to prepare a separate Anti-Terrorism Law and have it passed by the Diet. The bill authorized the provision of rear-area support to the American forces during their operation against Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. As the Indian Ocean, to which Maritime SDF was dispatched, could be hardly considered as part of “areas surrounding Japan,” the decision clearly exceeded the legal framework of the 1997

guidelines. Similarly, in 2003 the Diet passed the Iraq Special Measures Law that approved dispatch of SDF personnel to an even more remote place – the Samawah region in the US-occupied Iraq. The mission in Samawah, which lasted from 2004 to 2006, was Japan's first peacekeeping operation outside of the United Nations system. The fact that Japan's contribution to the war against international terrorism could not be conducted within the legal framework of the US–Japan alliance revealed gaps in the 1997 guidelines only four years after their announcement.

Moreover, it quickly turned out that the agreement from 1994, under which North Korea renounced its nuclear armaments program in exchange for the construction of two light-water reactor power plants, would not last long. In January 2003 Pyongyang once more withdrew from the NPT regime, and in October 2006 North Korea conducted its first atomic bomb test, followed by tests in May 2009 and February 2013. In parallel, Pyongyang provoked Tokyo by launching ballistic missiles in Japan's direction in 1998, 2006, 2009, 2012-2014, or 2016-2017. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula peaked in March 2013, when North Korea withdrew from the Panmunjeom agreement that ended the Korean War in 1953. Responding to these provocations, Japan consistently advocated strict economic sanctions against Pyongyang. It is also worth mentioning that in December 2001 Japanese Coast Guard sank a North Korean spy vessel in an encounter in the East China Sea that became the first "battle" of Japanese armed forces since the Second World War. Though the exchange of fire was on a limited scale, the incident made many ordinary Japanese aware of new dangers in the post-Cold War era.

Growing assertiveness of China on the international scene constituted yet another threat for Japan's security. Japan had two territorial disputes with the PRC – over sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands (Chinese name: Diaoyu), as well as over delimitation of the waters of the East China Sea. Both disputes started after discovery of large deposits of energy resources under the seabed of the East China Sea at the end of the 1960s, but they remained suspended until late 1990s. The announcement of the 1997 guidelines almost coincided with increased presence in the disputed waters of Chinese maritime survey ships. Bilateral tensions became more severe in 2003, when the PRC started constructing an oil rig situated very close to the line that Japan considers a border between exclusive economic zones of both countries. Japan protested, as it suspected that the rig would suck up oil from the Japanese side. In 2005 China not only sent a fleet of navy ships to protect the rig, but also one of Chinese destroyers trained its guns at the nearby Japanese Maritime SDF P-3C patrol aircraft (Manicom 2008:

462-463). Even greater diplomatic crises were caused by the dispute over the Senkaku Islands. In September 2010, a Chinese fishing vessel rammed a Japanese Coast Guard ship near this uninhabited archipelago. In order to force Tokyo to release the Chinese captain, Beijing employed a range of controversial measures such as halting the export of rare earth metals to Japan. Two years later, the Noda administration nationalized three of the Senkaku Islands, which met with protests from Beijing. Both diplomatic clashes were accompanied by violent anti-Japanese demonstrations in major Chinese cities, which raised questions about the security of Japanese citizens abroad (Zakowski 2015: 134-193). What is important, in the autumn of 2012 Chinese military ships started regularly advancing into Japanese waters, and in November 2013 Beijing established the Air Defense Identification Zone that extended over the disputed areas.

Tensions over the North Korean nuclear armaments and the territorial dispute with China showed that Japan should more effectively respond to emergency situations unlikely to escalate into full wars. In the National Defense Program Guidelines of December 2010, Tokyo recognized the growing number of such “gray-zone” disputes and introduced the concept of the “dynamic defense force” to cope with them. The new strategy relied on the notions of “readiness, mobility, flexibility, sustainability, and versatility (...) reinforced by advanced technology based on the trends of levels of military technology and intelligence capabilities” (MOD 2010: 7). All the abovementioned external factors propelled Tokyo towards revising once more the guidelines of alliance with the US. Most importantly, Japan–US security cooperation already exceeded its legal framework after the dispatch of SDF to the Indian Ocean and Iraq, so there was necessity for creating a more stable institutional foundation for the new dimensions of cooperation. In addition, the provocative actions by North Korea and China created the need to supplement the description of “situations in areas surrounding Japan” with the concept of “gray-zone” disputes. As such, further strengthening of the alliance seemed instrumental in deterring Pyongyang and Beijing from displaying even more assertive posture in the region.

### **Domestic Factors Behind the Guidelines’ Revision**

While international situation favored a revision of Japan–US security guidelines, as proved by the evolution of the alliance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, external pressures never easily translated into foreign policy decisions in Japan due to the strength of domestic-level intervening variables. This article argues, however, that the second Abe administration was more fit

than most of previous governments to strictly adhere to a realistic approach to foreign policy making. The strength of the Abe cabinet resulted from its ideological cohesion and relatively high popularity among the public, as well as from institutional reforms and weakening of opposition parties.

Abe Shinzō had been an eager supporter of Japan's participation in collective self-defense pacts and revision of the pacifist Constitution long before returning to the post of prime minister in December 2012. He inherited his political convictions from his grandfather, Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke. In the bestseller *Towards a Beautiful Country*, published in 2006, Abe expressed his respect towards Kishi who thanks to revision of the security treaty changed Japan's position in the alliance from one of "vassalage" to partnership. As stressed by Abe, however, the unilateral dumping of responsibility for protecting Japan on US forces still constituted a grave obstacle in building a bilateral relationship based on mutual trust. He reminded that Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations clearly treated both individual and collective self-defense as an inherent right of all independent states. According to Abe, due to the fact that the Japanese Constitution was promulgated after the Charter, Japan in a natural way was entitled to participate in collective self-defense pacts. He claimed that the official interpretation of Article 9, based on the assumption that Japan possessed the right of self-defense but could not exercise it, was unprecedented on the international arena and should be changed (Abe 2006: 23-24, 130-134). During his first term in office in 2006-2007, Abe managed to pass a bill that clarified procedures for holding a referendum on constitutional revision, upgraded the Japan Defense Agency to the Ministry of Defense, and started research on the legalization of collective self-defense. Nevertheless, Abe's hastiness in implementing right-wing policies exposed him to criticism from the opposition parties, which contributed to LDP's defeat in the House of Councilors election in July 2007 and Abe's resignation two months later.

The initial failure to some extent explains why, when Abe returned to the office, he first strengthened his institutional backing before proceeding to realize his bold agenda. In order to change the *status quo*, the prime minister had to cope with resistance by two kinds of veto players characteristic of the Japanese political system: influential LDP backbenchers who called for prudence in planning a revision of the Constitution, and bureaucrats from the Cabinet Legislation Bureau who were *de facto* in charge of interpreting the Constitution. The former group was pacified thanks to the fact that the government remained highly popular, while the latter was weakened from within by the use of Ministry



of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) bureaucrats. Similar strategies had been employed by Prime Minister Koizumi to dispatch the SDF to the Indian Ocean and Iraq (Shinoda 2007).

Abe exploited the fact that the liberal camp in the LDP had lost in influence by the December 2012 election. Main senior LDP politicians of moderate orientation, such as a former LDP leader Kōno Yōhei, a former Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō Kōichi, a former LDP Secretary-General Koga Makoto, or a former Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo, had already retired. The lawmakers of the younger generation, in turn, felt less attached to the pacifist Constitution. By putting emphasis on economic policy (the so-called Abenomics – Abe’s economics) aimed at overcoming deflation, Abe managed to maintain a high rate of popular support that enhanced his position in the ruling party even further. In addition, due to a series of defections in 2012, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), LDP’s main contender for power, became severely weakened. As a result, after the election in July 2013 the LDP together with its coalition partner Kōmeitō regained control over the House of Councilors, which greatly facilitated decision-making processes. Nevertheless, the amendment of Article 9 of the Constitution still posed a grave problem. Constitutional revision required not only the passage in the Diet by two-thirds of members of both houses, but also an approval in a national referendum. Taking into account the fact that Kōmeitō was strongly attached to pacifist ideals, it was unlikely that LDP’s coalition partner would easily concede to Abe’s plans. Instead of resolving the problem, Abe decided to bypass it. It is the Cabinet Legislation Bureau that enjoys a considerable autonomy in judging whether bill proposals or cabinet decisions conform with the Constitution or not (Iio 2008: 61-62). Once the official interpretation of Article 9 had been formulated in the 1950s, the bureaucrats from this organ consistently claimed that exercise of the right to collective self-defense would violate the Constitution. On the other hand, at least since the Operation Desert Storm shock in 1991, MOFA bureaucrats have generally been eager to allow collective self-defense in order to strengthen Japan’s position in the United Nations and in the alliance with the US<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, they were unable to influence Cabinet Legislation Bureau as it was an unwritten rule that the director-general of this organ was recruited from one of the ministries related to internal affairs. During his first term in 2006-2007 and the first months of his second term at the beginning of 2013, Prime

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<sup>1</sup> Instead of dispatching the military, Japan provided 13 billion USD to the coalition forces that liberated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, but this financial contribution was not sufficiently appreciated on the international scene.

Minister Abe's political base of support was too weak to challenge the *status quo*, but he increased his political capital after the ruling coalition regained a majority in both houses of the Diet. Only several days following the House of Councilors election, in August 2013, he announced his decision to nominate a former MOFA bureaucrat, Komatsu Ichirō, for this prestigious post. As expected, the new Cabinet Legislation Bureau director-general was much more willing to overhaul the official interpretation of Article 9 than his predecessors (Asahi Shinbun Seijibu Shuzai Han 2015: 42-49).

Meanwhile, the public opinion was divided over the need for acknowledging Japan's right to collective self-defense. According to *Asahi Shinbun's* opinion poll from June 2014, 56% of respondents were opposed to the change of interpretation of the Constitution, while 28% supported the prime minister's decision. Moreover, 67% claimed that it was improper to amend the interpretation instead of the Constitution itself, 76% felt that the debate on the policy change was insufficient, and 65% disagreed with the need for Japan to use force within the United Nations collective security system. As a result, the cabinet support rate fell to 43% from 49% recorded one month earlier (*Asahi Shinbun* 2014: 3). On the other hand, thanks to the economic credentials the Abe administration was popular enough to trade a few points of support in exchange for the shift in the interpretation of the Constitution.

Additionally, the government exploited the fact that the concept of collective self-defense did not seem to be clearly understood by a large part of the society. According to the opinion poll published by *Yomiuri Shinbun* at the beginning of June 2014, as many as 60% of respondents were willing to accept a "limited" collective self-defense, while 11% supported "full" collective self-defense, and only 24% did not feel the need for exercising any form of collective self-defense. Asked in more detail, 75% of respondents acknowledged the necessity for protection by Maritime SDF of US ships transporting Japanese refugees, 74% approved of Maritime SDF's participation in minesweeping operations, but only 44% would authorize shooting down missiles launched against American Guam or Hawaii (*Yomiuri Shinbun* 2014: 1). It was obvious that the public would support only a fraction of the types of operations envisaged by Abe, but due to the complexity of the problem, people were confused over the nature of the promoted change. Once the new Japan-US security guidelines were announced, their evaluation turned rather positive. According to *Asahi Shinbun's* opinion poll from May 2015, 45% of respondents appreciated the new guidelines (32% did not), and 61%

welcomed (20% did not) the fact that Washington reconfirmed it would protect all Japanese islands, including the Senkaku archipelago. However, 53% of respondents still opposed, and only 29% approved of, broadening the scope of logistic support for the US forces from the territories in Japan's nearest vicinity to other regions (*Asahi Shinbun* 2015: 4).

The abovementioned domestic factors facilitated the decision making process on the revision of the interpretation of the Constitution. As early as February 2013, the prime minister resumed the meetings of the Advisory Panel on Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security, chaired by former administrative Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Yanai Shunji, that had been established under the first Abe cabinet in 2007. Since the end of 2013, the government has been promoting the concept of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" (*sekkyokuteki heiwashugi*) as Japan's new basic stance in the security field. In order to streamline the decision-making process concerning long-term policies and in case of sudden international crises, the National Security Council, composed of the prime minister, chief cabinet secretary, and the ministers of foreign affairs and defense, was established at the turn of 2013 and 2014. All these new institutions prepared the ground for the change of the interpretation of the Constitution. Eventually, in July 2014 the cabinet issued a revolutionary decision that became the first step towards the legalization of collective self-defense. Based on the report of the Advisory Panel on Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security, it was announced that due to the changes in international security environment, Tokyo no longer considered a direct armed attack against Japan as a necessary prerequisite for the use of force. Instead, the Abe administration declared that "an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan" which "threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness," would permit Japan to use force, if only "there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protect its people" (Cabinet Secretariat 2014: 7-8). This new interpretation of the Constitution paved the way to permit SDF to provide direct military assistance to US forces if they were assaulted in Japan's vicinity or to the soldiers of other countries participating together with Japan in peacekeeping operations. The American factor played a crucial role in issuing the cabinet decision. As explained by Prime Minister Abe:

"For example, suppose a conflict suddenly arose overseas. And suppose that in the conflict, the United States, which is

our ally and has capability, came under attack in the sea near Japan when rescuing and transporting Japanese nationals trying to escape from where the conflict had occurred. Although this would not be an attack on Japan itself, the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) would protect the U.S. vessel in order to protect the lives of the Japanese nationals. What makes this possible is the Cabinet Decision made today.” (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet 2014)

While the new interpretation of the Constitution had to be confirmed by the passage of security bills in the parliament (which happened in the summer of 2015), it enabled pushing forward negotiations on amending Japan–US security guidelines.

### **Japan–US Negotiations on New Guidelines**

As domestic factors under the second Abe administration favored swift response to external pressures, the revision of Japan–US guidelines in 2015 went further than those from 1978 and 1997. Using his extensive power resources in the government and ruling party, the prime minister was able to achieve what had been unthinkable for his predecessors – change the official interpretation of the Constitution and legalize Japan’s participation in collective self-defense pacts. This revolutionary move, in turn, enabled profound amendments of the security guidelines.

While American pressure for the remilitarization of Japan never really eased since 1950, a growing convergence between security policies of both countries has been noticeable since the beginning of the 2010s. In October 2011, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced her “Pivot to Asia” strategy, which became a cornerstone of the Obama administration’s approach to the region. As stressed by Clinton, the new vision encompassed such elements as “strengthening bilateral security alliances,” ensuring that “alliances are nimble and adaptive so that they can successfully address new challenges and seize new opportunities,” guaranteeing “that the defense capabilities and communications infrastructure of our alliances are operationally and materially capable of deterring provocation from the full spectrum of state and nonstate actors,” or “ensuring freedom of navigation” (Clinton 2011). Similarly, the US Department of Defense’s Quadrennial Defense Review from March 2014 called for an upgrade and modernization of alliances with Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand. In addition, it drew attention to new threats arising from the rapidity and lack of transparency of the

Chinese military growth or the unpredictability of the North Korean regime (US Department of State 2014). All these points were fully consistent with the perception of international reality by Prime Minister Abe.

Negotiations on new guidelines were conducted on the forum of the US–Japan Security Consultative Committee (the so-called 2+2), a crucial decision-making body of the alliance, composed of US secretaries of state and defense, as well as of Japanese ministers of foreign affairs and defense. At the 2+2 meeting in October 2013, which was held for the first time in Tokyo, John Kerry, Chuck Hagel, Kishida Fumio, and Onodera Itsunori issued a joint statement “Toward a More Robust Alliance and Greater Shared Responsibilities.” In the document the American side welcomed Japan’s intention to increase contribution to regional and world peace. Tokyo and Washington expressed their determination to upgrade the alliance and adapt its capabilities to new international circumstances. For that end, the four decision-makers agreed to expand “the scope of cooperation, to reflect the global nature of the U.S.–Japan Alliance, encompassing such areas as counter-terrorism, counter-piracy, peacekeeping, capacity building, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief, and equipment and technology enhancement;” to promote “deeper security cooperation with other regional partners to advance shared objectives and values;” to enhance “Alliance mechanisms for consultation and coordination to make them more flexible, timely, and responsive and to enable seamless bilateral cooperation in all situations” as well as to specify “appropriate role-sharing of bilateral defense cooperation based on the enhancement of mutual capabilities” (MOD 2013).

The new Guidelines for Japan–US Defense Cooperation were issued at the end of April 2015. The document enumerated several fields of cooperation: 1) “strengthened alliance coordination;” 2) “seamlessly ensuring Japan’s peace and security;” 3) “cooperation for regional and global peace and security;” 4) “space and cyberspace cooperation;” as well as 5) “bilateral enterprise” (MOD 2015). Regarding the first point, it was decided that a new alliance coordination mechanism and an upgraded bilateral planning mechanism would be established to enhance communication between the relevant agencies of both countries (MOD 2015). While it was not specified explicitly, this passage reflected Tokyo’s intention to facilitate coordination between the US National Security Council and its newly established Japanese counterpart.

The second point answered the need for introducing the concept of “gray-zone” disputes and “dynamic defense force” into the guidelines. Both sides admitted that in the “increasingly complex security environment” there

was a need to “take measures to ensure Japan’s peace and security in all phases, seamlessly, from peacetime to contingencies, including situations when an armed attack against Japan is not involved” (MOD 2015). Tokyo and Washington reconfirmed their determination to cooperate in a wide array of fields during peacetime, such as “intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance;” “air and missile defense;” “maritime security;” “asset protection;” “training and exercises;” “logistic support;” or the “use of facilities” (MOD 2015). As for the “responses to emerging threats to Japan’s peace and security,” they omitted the notion of “situations in areas surrounding Japan” from the 1997 guidelines and simply stated that “such situations cannot be defined geographically” (MOD 2015). The most controversial regulations concerned “actions in response to an armed attack against a country other than Japan.” In the spirit of the new interpretation of the Constitution, Tokyo authorized the SDF to “conduct appropriate operations involving the use of force” in case “an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result, threatens Japan’s survival and poses a clear danger to overturn fundamentally its people’s right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, to ensure Japan’s survival, and to protect its people” (MOD 2015). Among the examples of such cooperation, the document enumerated “asset protection;” “search and rescue;” “maritime cooperation;” “operations to counter ballistic missile attacks;” as well as “logistic support” (MOD 2015). In addition, both sides agreed to coordinate their activities “in response to a large-scale disaster in Japan” (MOD 2015).

Regarding the third point, Tokyo and Washington expressed their determination to cooperate bilaterally and with other partners in the United Nations peacekeeping operations, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance activities, counterterrorism, minesweeping and counter-piracy, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, partner capacity building, evacuation of noncombatants, surveillance, intelligence and reconnaissance, logistic support, or exercises and training. Addition of the fourth point, in turn, reflected the technological development made since announcement of the 1997 guidelines. Both sides decided to “maintain and strengthen their partnership to secure the responsible, peaceful, and safe use of space,” as well as to “share information on threats and vulnerabilities in cyberspace in a timely and routine manner” (MOD 2015). The last point described “defense equipment and technology cooperation;” “intelligence cooperation and information security;” as well as “educational and research exchanges” (MOD 2015).

While the alliance was still focused on the protection of Japan, the new guidelines were much less unilateral than their previous two incarnations. For the first time Tokyo considerably overcame its constitutional constraints, which paved the way for the Abe cabinet to fully respond to Washington's expectations and conform with external pressures.

### **Conclusions**

The main aim of the article was to show the salience of internal determinants in Japan's response to external stimuli regarding the evolution of the alliance with the US. As the scope of the alliance was intimately related to the limitations imposed by Article 9 of the Constitution, domestic politics constituted a crucial factor influencing foreign and security policy of Japan. Due to a lack of two thirds of seats in both houses of the Diet, the ruling parties have never seriously tried to initiate the process of constitutional revision. Moreover, the existence of powerful veto players – moderate factions in the LDP and Cabinet Legislation Bureau bureaucrats – stabilized the *status quo* based on the principle that Japan could not exercise its right of collective self-defense. As a result, despite constant pressure from Washington, Tokyo was unable to conform with external stimuli. While the security guidelines from 1978 and 1997 to some extent responded to the evolution of international environment, they failed to transform the alliance into a more equal form. Yet, the revision of the interpretation of the Constitution by the Abe cabinet showed that domestic hurdles were not insurmountable. Thanks to the fragmentation of opposition parties, institutional reforms, and maintenance of high popular support, the prime minister considerably strengthened his position vis-à-vis veto players, which in turn enabled him to go much further in revising Japan–US security guidelines than his predecessors. Responding to new threats from North Korea and China, Japan legalized collective self-defense. Although there are still some constraints on SDF's military assistance to American forces in case of an armed attack against the US, the new regulations redefined the alliance and enabled Japan to play a more active role in maintaining regional and global peace and security.

### **Acknowledgements**

This article is a result of research conducted as a part of project “Evolution of the Core Executive under Prime Minister Abe's Government in Japan” financed by the National Science Centre, Poland (DEC-

2016/23/B/HS5/00059). In 2017 the author received the prize of the University of Lodz Foundation.

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## **AUTHOR'S PROFILE**

### **Karol Żakowski**

Karol Żakowski, Ph.D. (2010) and habilitation (2016) in political science, is an Associate Professor at the Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of International and Political Studies, University of Lodz. His research focuses on decision-making process and foreign policy of Japan

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