UNIQUE OR UNIVERSAL?

Japan and Its Contribution to World Civilization

100

Years of Japanese Studies
at the University of Warsaw

Scientific editors
Beata Kubiak Ho-Chi, Jędrzej Greń

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She has also translated Bernard Faure's *Chan Insights and Oversights – An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (1993), published as "Zenshū-shi no Saikō" ["Reconsideration on the History of Zen"] in *Nihon Shisōshi Kenkyū* (2007; joint translation), as well as the Preface to Susan L. Burns's *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imaging of Community in Early Modern Japan*, published as "Kokka izen – Kinsei Nihon ni okeru Kokugaku to Kyōdōtai no Hyōshō" in *Nihon Shisōshi Kenkyū* (2009).

Jędrzej Greń (PhD) graduated in Japanese Studies and in History from the University of Warsaw, where he also received his PhD in Literature. Employed as an assistant professor at the Chair of Japanese Studies, University of Warsaw, he researches medieval and early modern history of Japan, with a special interest in merchant-warrior relations and the earliest contacts between Japan and Europe. He is the author of books and articles on the subject, e.g.: *Japońskie miasto przyzamkowe – rozwój, struktura i rola w urbanizacji Japonii (1576–1700)* [*Japanese Castle-Town – Development, Structure, and Role in the Urbanization of Japan (1576–1700)*] (2013); *Anglicy w Japonii (1600–1623)* [*The English in Japan (1600–1623)*] (2014); *Srebro i herbata. Japońskie elity kupieckie Hakaty i Sakai w relacjach z wojownikami w drugiej połowie XVI w.* [*Silver and Tea. Japanese Merchant Elites of Hakata and Sakai and Their Relations with Warriors in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*] (2020); "Letters of Japanese Merchants (1550–1600)" (in: *Distant Symbols and Close Signs. Japanese Studies in Central Europe 2013*, ed. M. Tirala, M. Morita, Prague 2013) and "Relations with Warriors and Their Meaning as Depicted in Sources Related to Shimai Sōshitsu (1539–1615)" (in: *Hikaku Nihongaku Kyōiku Kenkyū Sentā Kenkyū Nenpō*, Tokyo 2020).

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Aleksandra Görlich is an art historian, she graduated in Art History from Jagiellonian University. In the years 2005–2016, she was a curator at the Manggha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology and a founding member of the Polish Society of Oriental Art which became part of the Polish Institute of World Art Studies. Her area of research is Japanese woodblock prints iconography and foreign–Japanese relations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

dr hab. Beata Kubiak Ho-Chi is a professor at the Chair of Japanese Studies, University of Warsaw. She has published extensively on Japanese literature, aesthetics, art, performing arts, the works of Mishima Yukio, and *bunraku* puppet theater, as well as human–animal relations in Japan. The list of books she has authored includes: *Mishima Yukio. Estetyka klasyczna w prozie i dramacie 1941–1960* [*Mishima Yukio. Classical Aesthetics in Prose and Drama 1941–1960*] (2004), *Estetyka i sztuka japońska* [*Japanese Aesthetics and Arts*] (2009), *Tragizm w japońskim teatrze lalkowym bunraku* [*Tragedy in Japanese Bunraku Puppet Theater*] (2011). She has also edited and co-edited books on Japanese culture, such as: *Japonia okresu Meiji. Od tradycji ku nowoczesności* [*Japan of the Meiji Period. From Tradition to Modernity*] (2006), *Dwa filary japońskiej kultury. Literatura i sztuki performatywne* [*Two Pillars of Japanese Culture. Literature and Performing Arts*] (2014), *Zwierzęta w kulturze japońskiej* [*Animals in Japanese Culture*] (2018).

Introduction

Beata Kubiak Ho-Chi, Jędrzej Greń

This two-volume publication brings together texts from the international conference organized by the Chair of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw on October 23–25, 2019. The event was held to commemorate the 100 years of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw (Fig. 1) and was part of the celebration of the centenary of establishing diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan. The Embassy of Japan in Poland and the Polish Association for Japanese Studies (PAJS) granted honorary patronage to this event.

The conference opened with inaugural speeches by the Vice-Rector for Scientific Affairs of the University of Warsaw, Prof. Maciej Duszczyk, His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan to Poland, Mr. Kawada Tsukasa, a representative of the Japan Foundation, Ms. Tada Sanae, Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Prof. Piotr Taracha, a former Polish Honorary Consul in Japan, Mrs. Takashima Kazuko, and the Head of the Chair of Japanese Studies, Prof. Agnieszka Kozyra. Afterwards, Prof. Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska, Prof. Mikołaj Melanowicz, and Okazaki Tsuneo-sensei gave talks delineating the history of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw, additionally illustrated by a special exhibition dedicated to this theme. Those were followed by lectures from four special guests – people regarded as the most outstanding researchers of Japanese and Polish culture. For many years, they have been cooperating with the University of Warsaw and the Chair of Japanese Studies and have been awarded various distinctions for their scientific activities and translations, as well as for their work in strengthening cultural ties between Poland and Japan. The guests, in order of their appearance on stage, were: Prof. Numano Mitsuyoshi from the University of Tokyo, Prof. Sekiguchi Tokimasa from

the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Prof. Watanabe Hideo from Shinshū University, and Prof. Inaga Shigemi from the International Research Center for Japanese Studies in Kyoto.

The focal point of the celebrations was the international conference *Unique or Universal? Japan and Its Contribution to World Civilization* (October 24), during which more than fifty researchers in Japanese studies coming from various countries around the world (Japan, USA, Romania, Germany, Ukraine, Turkey, the Netherlands, Poland) and representing almost thirty academic centers and scientific institutions presented papers in three main parallel sections: (1) History, Sociology, and Education; (2) Visual Arts, Performing Arts, and Aesthetics; (3) Literary and Linguistic Studies. Their aim was to consider and discuss Japan's contributions to world cultural heritage.

The conference also included many accompanying events that highlighted the role of humanities and culture in promoting knowledge and in building lasting interpersonal bonds that transcend geographical, linguistic, and cultural barriers. One of them was a lecture by the world-famous Japanese writer, Ms. Kawakami Hiromi, entitled *Revival of Classical Literature in Contemporary Literature*. Ms. Kawakami was invited to Poland by our Chair to celebrate the centenary of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw and to emphasize the importance of literature and translation in international relations. She also signed the Polish translation of *Kamisama 2011* (*Niedźwiedzi bóg*) made specifically for this occasion by Prof. Beata Kubiak Ho-Chi with the participation of her students from the Chair of Japanese Studies.

Another important event was the poetry workshop with Mr. Ozawa Minoru, a recognized Japanese *haijin* – a poet of haiku, the shortest Japanese poem form that has captivated the world for many decades. The workshop was attended by students of Japanese Studies, who could consult their poetry with a haiku master. The calm and deeply introspective atmosphere that filled the meeting of the haiku makers was further complemented by a tasting of matcha green tea, served in unique tea bowls by Japanese Studies students under the direction of our resident Urasenke tea master, Urszula Sōu Mach-Bryson. It should be added that preparing green tea in the Kaian Japanese tea pavilion located in the

University of Warsaw Library is an accompanying event organized regularly and offers a unique experience for anyone interested in the Japanese tea ceremony.

The conference also featured two panels which tackled issues of culture, including literature, and Polish–Japanese relations: (1) *What Fascinates Us in Foreign Cultures? Japanese Studies in Poland and Polish Studies in Japan* – a panel hosted by Prof. Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska, and (2) *Literature Without Borders. Polish–Japanese and Japanese–Polish translations of fiction* – a panel hosted by Prof. Beata Kubiak Ho-Chi. The world's foremost Japanese and Polish researchers and translators were present.

The initial idea of the conference was born from the phenomenon of undisputed popularity of Japanese Studies among university candidates in Poland.[1] Where has all this interest in Japan come from and what makes it so strong? Is Japan interesting enough to spur young people's imagination and devotion towards studying it simply due to its uniqueness? Or has its culture perhaps gradually become universally recognized, thus dissolving it into the global sea of ideas, both enriching it and becoming more familiar to us? Maybe today, in the age of globalization and blurred boundaries, Western and Japanese cultures already share the same track? Bruno Latour has pointed out how weak the opposition between culture and nature is.[2] Is this phenomenon, so inherent to the Japanese culture, gradually becoming our own, Western reality? What about borders between image and text?

In his Nobel Lecture given in 1968, titled *Japan, the Beautiful and Myself*, Kawabata Yasunari described the world of Japanese uniqueness through the prism of inaccessible poetry, Zen mysticism, and the aesthetic category of *mono no aware*.[3] On the other hand, in his 1994 speech *Japan, the Ambiguous and Myself*, Ōe Kenzaburō discussed Japan differently

[1] Today, Japanese Studies is the second most popular BA major at the University of Warsaw with 15 times more candidates than our admission quota.
[2] See B. Latour, *Politics of Nature. How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, trans. C. Porter, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA–London 2004.
[3] Cf. Y. Kawabata, *Japan, the Beautiful and Myself*, Nobel Lecture. Nobel Prize.org. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1968/kawabata/lecture/; accessed: 10.04.2023.

– as a culture deeply split between the East and the West, yet culturally isolated in Asia. Still, as he stated in Stockholm, he put his literary efforts into "curing this wound"[4] by promoting European – yet universal – post-war humanism, tolerance, and peace in Japan. Has this wound been healed?

Today, Japan is a leading contributor and inspiration to the world's culture and economy – from *ukiyo-e* to manga, anime and 'Superflat' art, from Nobel Prize winners in literature to world-renowned film directors and video games, from candlestick charts to Nikkei 225. What will happen with Japanese 'uniqueness' as it becomes more and more universal in the contemporary transcultural world, so aptly described by Wolfgang Welsch?[5] Or maybe Motoori Norinaga was right, and still only the Japanese people themselves are able to sense *mono no aware*?[6]

The authors of the selected conference texts, reflecting on Japan's contribution to world civilization and the uniqueness or universality of some areas of its culture, prepared the papers that made up this publication.

The introductory part of the first volume consists of two texts paying homage to the tradition of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw. They have been written by Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska and Okazaki Tsuneo, who focus on the subject of history of the Japanese Studies in Poland. Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska describes the beginnings and developments of the academic program of Japanese Studies with a special focus on Prof. Wiesław Kotański, who should be regarded as the founding father of Japan-related research in Poland. Okazaki Tsuneo, on the other hand, gives an insight into the difficult realities of teaching Japanese, especially in the context of the 1989 political and economic transition to

4 See K. Ōe, *Japan, The Ambiguous and Myself*, Nobel Lecture. Nobel Prize.org. https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1994/oe/lecture/; accessed: 10.04.2023.

5 See W. Welsch, "Transculturality. The Changing Forms of Cultures Today," *Filozofski Vestnik* 2001, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 59–86. https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/filozofski-vestnik/article/view/3602; accessed: 10.04.2023.

6 N. Motoori, "Awareben" ["On *Aware*"], [in:] *Motoori Norinaga zenshū* [*Complete Works of Motoori Norinaga*], vol. 4, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1969.

democracy and subsequent opening of former-communist Poland to the West.

Part I of the first volume, *Philosophy and History*, opens with a chapter by Inaga Shigemi who – in an attempt to measure the extent of Japanese contribution to world civilization – examines three cases of cross-cultural transfers between the West and Japan spanning from the eighteenth to the twentieth century.

On the other hand, the question of uniqueness of Japanese culture is addressed by Agnieszka Kozyra in the context of Nishida Kitarō's philosophical view of reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity. The author interprets this idea in a broader context of distinguishing features of Western and Eastern cultures and the spirit of science in Japanese culture.

Wakui Yōko focuses on the concept of 'binal-relationship,' developed by Mori Arimasa, who regarded it as an important notion of Japanese culture. According to Mori, the incompleteness of 'binal-relationship' results in the formation of the category known as *mono no aware.*

The historical section of Part I consists of a chapter by Jędrzej Greń, who describes early seventeenth-century English–Japanese relations in the context of Japanese gift-giving practices and social etiquette adopted by the English during their stay in Japan.

In Part II: *Aesthetics and Visual Arts*, Yamanashi Makiko introduces the Japanese concept of *ma* as an important aesthetic attitude present in the Japanese society and culture. She examines the concept not only as a tool for inter-cultural dialogue between Japan and Western cultures, but also as a means of communication between the past and the present in Japanese culture itself.

Svitlana Rybalko and Nomura Chieko have devoted their paper to presenting artistic works created in the 1920s by Ukrainian avant-garde artists who visited the Ogasawara Islands. The chapter focuses on cultural differences depicted by the artists as well as addresses selected issues of artistic communication and dialogue of cultures.

In the chapter by Aleksandra Görlich which closes the first volume, the author presents a unique artistic style of Japanese depictions of foreigners produced during the opening of Japan in the nineteenth century. Taking examples of Japanese woodblock prints, the author focuses on the results of mixing Japanese and foreign elements, as well as on the way in which they were used in these illustrations.

The second part of the conference texts, which discuss topics belonging to such fields as literature, language, theater, and film, has been included in the second volume of this publication.

* * *

Through this publication, we would like to express our gratitude to the Japan Foundation, Toshiba International Foundation, Takashima Foundation, Faculty of Oriental Studies of the University of Warsaw, and the University of Warsaw. Without their generous support, this important event could not have taken place. We thank all speakers and guests. Special thanks are due to Ms. Lidia Rozmus for preparing a wonderful Zen-inspired exhibition *In the Search for Lost Silence* which accompanied the conference. We thank the artists from the Ikenobō School who provided conference participants with an unforgettable aesthetic experience, as beautiful ikebana compositions were prepared each day and placed in all the conference rooms and halls; Maria Żelazny, a Japanologist and graphic designer who collaborated with us on conference materials and this anthology; all the students who with great commitment helped us during the conference, as well as those who graced the celebrations with a moving musical performance. We are also extremely grateful to Mr. Ueda Susumu and his choir of more than one hundred singers who touched the hearts of all participants with their performance of *Requiem Project*. *Prayer for Peace*.

Figure 1. Poster promoting the events marking the 100th anniversary of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw. Designed by Maria Żelazny.

100 Years of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw

Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska*

The beginnings of Japanese Studies in Warsaw and Poland date back to 1919, when, after Poland had regained its independence, Bogdan Richter (1891–1980), a graduate of Oriental Studies in Leipzig, started giving Japanese language classes as a part of a language course at the University of Warsaw. In 1922, he established the Department of Far Eastern Culture at the Faculty of Philosophy, where he taught classes on China and Japan.[1] He continued this work until 1932, when he left for the Middle East. In the 1933/34 academic year, his successor, sinologist Jan Jaworski (1903–1945), was appointed head of the Seminar on Chinese Studies – a seminar created thanks to a donation from Baron Mitsui Takaharu (1900–1983), who came to Warsaw with his wife. Later, the position was assumed by sinologist Witold Jabłoński (1901–1957). It was the creation of this seminar that opened an opportunity to conduct lectures on Japanese culture. Over the years, the classes expanded into Japanese Studies proper thanks to Professor Wiesław Kotański (1915–2005). He was the first Japanologist in Poland: a gifted linguist, religious studies scholar, and a translator of Japanese literature. Above all else, however, he was a tireless researcher of the sources of Japanese culture.[2] It is mainly thanks to him that Japanese studies in Poland

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1 More in: E. Pałasz-Rutkowska and A.T. Romer, *Historia stosunków polsko-japońskich* [*History of Polish–Japanese Relations*], vol. 1, *1904–1945*, Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 2019, pp. 174–180; Japanese version in: E. Pałasz-Rutkowska and A.T. Romer, *Nihon Pōrando kankeishi 1904–1945*, 2nd ed., trans. R. Shiba, Sairyūsha, Tokyo 2019, pp. 181–186.

2 See also W. Kotański, "80 shūnen ni omou. Refleksje na 80-lecie" ["Some Reflections on the Eightieth Anniversary"], [in:] *Shopan Pōrando – Nihonten. Nihon Pōrando kokkō juritsu 80 shūnen oyobi kokusai Shopan nen kinen jigyō.*

were established. Since he is the person whose actions resulted in the formation of many generations of Japanese studies scholars in Warsaw (including the author of this article) and in other Polish cities, I shall talk about him in more detail.

Wiesław Kotański

Figure 2. Professor Wiesław Kotański. Source: Chair of Japanese Studies archives.

In 1934, Wiesław Kotański (Fig. 2) was admitted as a student of Polish Studies to the University of Warsaw but, as he told me during our conversation in December 1997, he never ended up studying there, because what he was mainly interested in was the Japanese language and an opportunity to translate it into Polish. As he explained, the knowledge of a foreign language is linked to the ability to understand the reality of a distant culture, hence performing a translation often requires not only an extensive knowledge of the culture of a given society in a wider con-

Chopin – Polska – Japonia. *Wystawa z okazji 80 rocznicy nawiązania stosunków oficjalnych między Polską a Japonią oraz Roku Chopinowskiego* [*Exhibition for the Chopin Year and the 80th Anniversary of Establishment of Official Relations between Poland and Japan*], Tokyo 1999, pp. 18–26; E. Pałasz-Rutkowska, "Professor Wiesław Kotański (1915–2005). Outstanding Scholar in Japanese Studies," [in:] *Beyond Borders. Japanese Studies in the 21st Century*. *In Memoriam Wiesław Kotański*, ed. A. Kozyra, I. Kordzińska-Nawrocka, Department of Japanese and Korean Studies, Nozomi, Warszawa 2007, pp. 21–24; A. Żuławska-Umeda, "Niepokorny myśliciel. Wspomnienie o Profesorze Wiesławie Kotańskim (1915–2005)" ["A Rebellious Thinker. The Memory of Professor Wiesław Kotański"], *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* 2006, no. 1–2, pp. 117–122.

text, but also an ability to represent values of this unfamiliar culture in the language of the nation one has belonged to from birth.

This is why Kotański started his studies at the School of Eastern Studies (Szkoła Wschodoznawcza), which opened on November 6, 1931, at the Eastern Institute (Instytut Wschodni) in Warsaw.[3] From 1926, the Institute had operated as a socio-scientific institution for maintaining scientific and cultural relations between Poland and the East, but it also had certain political goals related to the Promethean movement, the main aim of which was to weaken the Soviet Union and to support independence efforts among the major non-Russian peoples that lived within the borders of the USSR. It was subsidized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education, as well as by the Second Department of Polish General Staff, which showed a particular interest in the East in a broader sense. The School was to organizationally resemble the École Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes in Paris. The studies took three years and were divided into three didactic units (general studies, the Middle East, and the Far East). Kotański chose the Far East – the Third Department. Back then it was headed by Witold Jabłoński, who was succeeded in 1934 by Jan Jaworski. They were both sinologists who went on to become professors, and despite giving lectures focused mostly on China, they also taught about Japan. Among their lectures were classes on Japanese grammar and geography. Umeda Ryōchū (1900–1961), at that time the only native Japanese teacher in Poland, was in charge of teaching Japanese language and writing.[4] Earlier, between the years 1926 and 1928, he had taught Japanese at the University of Warsaw and had also been working as a lecturer for the courses of the Poland–Japan Society.[5] He was a philosopher and

[3] I. Maj, *Działalność Instytutu Wschodniego w Warszawie 1926–1939* [*Activities of the Eastern Institute in Warsaw 1926–1939*], Oficyna Wydawnicza RYTM, Warszawa 2007.

[4] T. Umehara, *Pōrando ni junjita zensō Umeda Ryōchū* [*Umeda Ryōchū – A Zen Monk Who Dedicated His Life to Poland*], Heibonsha, Tokyo 2014; A. Nasiołowska, *Wolny agent Umeda i druga Japonia* [*Free Agent Umeda and the Second Japan*], Wydawnictwo Premium Robert Skrobisz, Warszawa 2013, pp. 11–175; A. Żuławska-Umeda, "Profesor Stanisław Ryōchū Umeda (1900–1961)" ["Professor Stanisław Ryōchū Umeda (1900–1961)"], *Japonica* 2000, no. 12, pp. 107–113.

[5] The Society was established in 1922. Its aim was to strengthen cultural, scientific, and economic relations with Japan and to promote Japanese culture in Poland.

a Zen monk. By pure chance, he found himself in Poland in 1922 and ended up staying there until the outbreak of World War II. During these years, Umeda became better acquainted with Poland, its culture, and its people, which later influenced the direction of his academic research (including his work on translating Polish literary works, on which I shall elaborate later). According to Professor Kotański, it was already during his early studies that Umeda suggested a joint work on creating a Japanese–Polish dictionary – a task that Kotański would try to accomplish many years later. At that time, the language classes were being conducted by Czesław Miszkiewicz, who worked at the Japanese Legation in Warsaw (which in October 1937 became the Japanese Embassy). Both he and his brother Mieczysław knew the language very well, although they had never visited Japan. Czesław also continued working at the Embassy after the war.

Lectures at the Third Department were very popular, but only the most tenacious students managed to finish their studies – only a handful from the initial fifty or so. The lectures were taking place from 5 pm to 9 pm, as most of the students were working. For Kotański, the leading language was Japanese, but he also studied Russian, English, and Malay. He took his final exam in 1939. Professor Kotański remembered this day very well, even after many years. The board of examiners consisted of all the lecturers from the department. The written portion of the exam called for a translation of a Japanese text, and the text he was assigned concerned fishing nets of some sort as well as the Japanese invasion of China. He did quite well but he transcribed Chinese names in Japanese, and this did not go unnoticed by the sinologists. Umeda interceded on his behalf, which only made a bad situation worse. After the exam, Jabłoński explained that Kotański would have received a "very good" mark if it had not been for Umeda's intervention, which resulted in lowering the mark to "good."

After receiving his diploma from the School of Eastern Studies, Kotański decided to further pursue his interest in Japan at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw. As regular Japanese Studies did not yet exist at the time, he started a tailored, individual study at the Seminar on Chinese Studies in the Institute of Oriental Studies, and followed a program created for him by Jaworski and Jabłoński. The plan was for him to lead the Japanese studies specialization in the future

and, most importantly, to eventually become Jaworski's collaborator. Jaworski, who was an expert in the field of Buddhology, was hoping that Kotański would help him with work on Japanese commentaries to the *Tipitaka*, a collection of Buddhist teachings whose 100 volumes in Chinese (the original version being in Pali) had been brought to the University of Warsaw some time earlier. Unfortunately, the war broke out soon afterwards. Most of the time, Kotański studied alone, and during the period between 1940 and 1944, he only occasionally took part in clandestine classes held in private homes.[6] Among his secret teachers were Jaworski and Jabłoński, as well as many other distinguished scholars and scientists, including philosopher Tadeusz Kotarbiński, logician Henryk Hiż, and psychologist Stefan Baley. After the war, in 1946, Kotański obtained a Master's degree in philosophy, which was awarded to him on the basis of a report presented to the Scientific Council of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Warsaw by Witold Jabłoński. This was only logical, as Jabłoński was the person most familiar with Kotański's course of studies in the underground education as well as with his work on the semantics of lemma organization in Chinese and Japanese character (ideogram) dictionaries. Years later, Professor Kotański explained that during his studies he had sought "to acquire a reliable knowledge of the Asian Far East, as well as to acquire a competence of a scientist who would be able to explore the issues relating to distant societies and cultures and interpret them objectively."[7] In 1947, he became an assistant, in the 1948/49 academic year – a senior assistant, and then, in 1950/51, he attained the position of assistant professor at the Seminar (since 1951, the Chair) of Chinese Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies (since 2008, an independent faculty).[8] His duties included conducting Japanese classes. Initially, these were limited to practical lessons on Japanese writing, but later also included Japanese studies seminars as

6 After the invasion in 1939, the Germans started to occupy Poland and soon closed all institutions of higher education, including the University of Warsaw.

7 W. Kotański, "Wspomnienia z początków japonistyki w Polsce i inne refleksje" ["Memories from the Beginnings of Japanese Studies in Poland and Other Reflections"], *Japonica* 2000, no. 12, p. 35.

8 *Skład Uniwersytetu na rok akademicki 1948–1949* [*University Staff for the Academic Year 1948–1949*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1948, p. 76; *Skład Uniwersytetu na rok akademicki 1950–1951* [*University Staff for the Academic Year 1950–1951*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1951, p. 20.

well as introductory classes on Japanese literature and grammar (both colloquial and literary).[9]

Thus, Kotański took the path of a Japanologist and started his professional, scientific, and didactic career at the University of Warsaw. He became an outstanding researcher and an expert in the field of Japanese culture[10] as well as an efficient and assiduous organizer of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw. However, the ultimate choice of a specific field on which he would eventually focus was preceded by a long search. Shortly after the war, he was faced with a serious dilemma: should he specialize, as Jaworski had suggested earlier, in the Buddhist doctrine, or should he find his own path? He decided on the latter, as the originator of the former idea had died during the war, and his collection of Buddhist *Tipitaka* had perished in a fire. Kotański began his independent research in lexicography. He initially intended to bring to life Umeda's past idea, that is to create a Japanese–Polish dictionary, but he soon abandoned this project. Instead, he began studying translation theory, which in turn allowed him to broaden his knowledge of the Japanese language by researching its earlier phases of development. The result was a doctoral dissertation titled *Problematyka językoznawcza w przekładach ze współczesnego języka japońskiego* [*Linguistic Problems in Translations from Contemporary Japanese Language*], based on which he received his doctoral degree in 1951. This led him to become a senior academic staff member (that is, an independent scientist) in 1952. Consequently, the Rector of the University of Warsaw approved the establishment of the Japanese specialization within the Chair of Chinese Studies.[11] From that point on, students interested in the subject could attend classes on Jap-

9 *Spis wykładów na rok akademicki 1949–1950* [*List of Lectures for the Academic Year 1949–1950*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1950, p. 62; *Spis wykładów na rok akademicki 1950–1951* [*List of Lectures for the Academic Year 1950–1951*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1951, pp. 82–83.

10 He is the author of a number of publications, see e.g.: "Bibliography of Publications by Professor Wiesław Kotański," ed. A. Ługowski, [in:] *Księga dla uczczenia 75 rocznicy urodzin Wiesława Kotańskiego* [*Anniversary Volume Dedicated to Wiesław Kotański on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*], *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 1990, no. 46 (2), pp. 13–21; "Wykaz prac Wiesława Kotańskiego za lata 1982–1994 z adnotacjami treściowymi" ["A List of Wiesław Kotański's Works between 1982 and 1994 with Content Annotations"], *Japonica* 1994, no. 2, pp. 171–187.

11 *Skład Uniwersytetu na rok akademicki 1952–1953* [*University Staff for the Academic Year 1952–1953*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1953, p. 19.

anese culture starting from their first year, and after five years they could receive a Master's degree in Japanese Studies. In the academic year of 1954/55, Kotański became a deputy professor of Sinology, and a year later he was appointed assistant professor, which in the academic year 1957/58 allowed for the creation of an independent Japanese Studies program. The Department of Japanese Studies and the Department of Chinese Studies were both part of the Chair of Chinese Studies.[12]

Kotański's knowledge of Japanese culture, religion, and language was further deepened during his thirteen visits to Japan. He took his first trip there between December 1, 1957, and August 31, 1958, thanks to the support of the University of Warsaw. It should be noted that he was the first Polish Japanese studies scholar to visit Japan after the war. This was, as Professor Kotański wrote:

> A scientific reconnaissance. First of all, it made me aware of the possibilities and difficulties faced by the Japanese studies scholars in their scientific activity in this country. […] This trip was planned very extensively, so as to ensure that every area in the Japanese Studies program (i.e., geography, history, literature, language, art) could benefit from a person's own experience in it and could be based […] on direct practice, which, until now, I have lacked. Without this, my knowledge of Japan, which, until then, was based solely on books, was not sufficient. [13]

During this first visit, Kotański collected materials for his research, established contacts with scientific, academic, and cultural institutions, as well as traveled around Japan to broaden his knowledge of the country. He spent some time at the University of Tokyo and Kwansei Gakuin University in the city of Nishinomiya, where his good friend from the prewar era times, Umeda Ryōchū, was working as a professor. It was from

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12 *Skład Uniwersytetu na rok akademicki 1954–1955* [*University Staff for the Academic Year 1954–1955*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1955, p. 25; *Skład Uniwersytetu na rok akademicki 1955–1956* [*University Staff for the Academic Year 1955–1956*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1955, p. 35; and *Skład osobowy uczelni na rok akademicki 1957–1958* [*University Staff for the Academic Year 1957–1958*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1957, p. 7.

13 W. Kotański, "Japonista w Japonii" ["A Japanologist in Japan"], *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* 1959, no. 2, p. 172.

him, and also from Yonekawa Kazuo, a literary scholar working at the University of Tokyo, that Kotański received some particularly valuable books. This first trip to Japan also had an impact on the development of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw, as it was then that Kotański gathered knowledge on how to teach the Japanese language. To this end, he visited schools and talked to teachers, students, and their parents.

As a side note, I would like to add that it took Kotański many years to develop and perfect the method of teaching *kanji*. I had a first-hand experience of his efforts as one of the students in his writing classes. We were lucky that during our studies we had at our disposal two textbooks for learning *kanji*, both authored by Wiesław Kotański.[14]

During that first visit, Professor Kotański also met with experts in the field of language, literature, and history. He discussed with them the methodology of teaching, the development of guidelines for writing Master's theses and doctoral dissertations, as well as his plans for the general development of Japanese studies in Poland. He also asked several of those scholars to compile a list of quintessential books in each of their respective fields within the area of Japanese studies. Later, he admitted that "history was probably the most underrepresented, as I treated it a bit offhandedly."[15] Thanks to the connections made at that time, the Japanese Studies in Warsaw received many books that later proved to be crucial for the development of the program. At that point, professors Umeda and Yonekawa played a particularly significant role. In the 1959/60 academic year, Yonekawa Kazuo, on Umeda's recommendation, became the first postwar Japanese lecturer at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the University of Warsaw.[16] He was a scholar in Russian studies, and above all a translator of Polish literature (he translated works by Andrzejewski,

14 W. Kotański, *Teksty do nauki pisma japońskiego dla I roku* [*Texts for Learning* Kanji *for First-Year Students*], Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1973; *Drugi stopień nauki pisma japońskiego* [*Second Level of* Kanji *Learning*], Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1976.

15 W. Kotański, "Japonista w Japonii," p. 171.

16 *Skład osobowy i spis wykładów w roku akademickim 1959–1960* [*Staff and List of Lectures for the Academic Year 1959–1960*], Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 1959, p. 73.

Gombrowicz, Gałczyński, and Tuwim). He worked at the Japanese Studies for seven years, instilling love for Japan in the students, who, at the time, still constituted a very small group.

At the beginning of the 1960s, inspired by a bibliography of Japan-related publications compiled by Kamil Seyfried (who was also a Japanologist, as well as Umeda's student and friend),[17] Kotański began researching the history of knowledge of Japan in Poland. Several works were created during that time – among others, an article about cultural relations between Poland and Japan[18] which later became an inspiration for my own research on the history of the Poland–Japan contacts. Soon after that, however, the Professor turned his interests towards literary translation. Thanks to that decision of his, Japanese literature enthusiasts today can read precious translations of many pieces of classical literature. Out of the texts he worked on, the translations of the most representative and valuable Japanese works written between the eighth and fourteenth centuries have been published in the anthology *Dziesięć tysięcy liści. Antologia literatury japońskiej* [*Ten Thousand Leaves. Anthology of Japanese Literature*].[19]

In the summer of 1969, Kotański – since 1967 already an associate professor – received a scholarship from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science which allowed him to go to the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo) in Tokyo. It was a difficult period in Japan, especially in the capital, where riots and strikes were continuously breaking out at universities, mainly at the University of Tokyo (since January 1969). In such a turbulent time, new academic connections were difficult to forge, but Professor Kotański managed to meet with several people interested in teaching Japanese at the University of Warsaw – these arrangements would come to frui-

17 A. Żuławska-Umeda, "Kamil Seyfried (1908–1982)," *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* 1984, nos. 1–4, pp. 201–204.

18 W. Kotański, K. Seyfried, "Stosunki kulturalne między Polską a Japonią" ["Cultural Relations between Poland and Japan"], *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* 1961, no. 2, pp. 141–156.

19 W. Kotański, *Dziesięć tysięcy liści. Antologia literatury japońskiej* [*Ten Thousand Leaves. Anthology of Japanese Literature*], PWN, Warszawa 1961 (2nd ed. 2012). Kotański also translated e.g., Kawabata Yasunari's *Yukiguni* (1964) and Ueda Akinari's *Ugetsu monogatari* (1968).

tion in the future. However, the main purpose of his stay, as determined by the Japanese side, was, as Kotański wrote: "establishing closer contacts with the Polish center of Japanese language teaching […], mutual presentation of research goals and teaching methods, and transfer of resources and experience."[20]

At the end of the 1960s, Kotański focused on pursuing research in the field of semiotics. He was also researching Japanese religions, mainly the native Shinto. With time, the *Kojiki* chronicle became the main focus of his research, and he would continue to carry it out until the end of his life. *Kojiki*, a text dating from the early eighth century, is the oldest extant Shinto writing, a priceless work of national literature and a sacred text of the religion. The long-standing collaboration between Kotański and Toda Yoshio, a religious studies scholar and a professor at the Kokugakuin University who visited Poland in 1970, proved to be essential for the research of the text. The Kokugakuin University, a center of studies on the origins of Japanese culture and of Shinto, became the most important research facility for Kotański's own work. This was also thanks to Matsui Yoshikazu, Toda's student, who at his teacher's request came to Poland in 1974 to get acquainted with Kotański's research and to learn Polish. Matsui, a linguist and a religious studies scholar (later associated with Osaka International University), through translating Kotański's works into Japanese, would later become his "champion" in Japan as well as a commentator of his research on *Kojiki*.[21]

Kotański interpreted the collection of myths in *Kojiki* as a perfect plan conceived with the goal of preparing Earth for the gods' descent from the heavens – gods who would later form the imperial dynasty. His research was an attempt to uncover the mystery hidden in *Kojiki* under the impenetrable veil of the ancient Japanese language. Through the years, Kotański developed a unique field of study he named "kojikology." He believed that the names of deities and other characters were the key

[20] W. Kotański, "Notatki z podróży do Japonii" ["Notes from Travel to Japan"], *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* 1970, no. 2, p. 139.

[21] Matsui is also a translator and editor of Kotański's works on *Kojiki – Kojiki no atarashii kaidoku. Kotansuki no Kojiki kenkyū to gaikokugoyaku Kojiki* [*New Approach to the Understanding of* Kojiki*. Kotański's Method of Decoding the Meaning of* Kojiki *and Translations of the Book*], Kinseisha, Tokyo 2004.

to solving the mystery – names indicate the roles the characters play in the mythology and thus are important for the entire chronicle and its narrative. As such, he claimed, the names should be translated.

Kotański based the first stage of the study of *Kojiki* mainly on his own intuition, his knowledge derived from Japanese studies, and his research experience. Nonetheless, he conducted his work in accordance with the Japanese tradition of literary studies. However, after some years he realized that the collection could not be treated as a modern text, and so he tried to view it differently – this time, in a way similar to the chronicle's original compilers. At the beginning of the 1980s, he shifted his approach from pure intuition towards trying to recognize apophony in certain words. He also turned his attention to studying the intonation of the eight vowels of Old Japanese instead of focusing on the five which are present in modern Japanese. The knowledge he gained through these studies became crucial for the later translation of Japanese mythology and influenced a change in Kotański's views.[22] His previous interpretations were thus reviewed and revised, and he later often stated that his first, and widely praised, translation – *Kojiki, czyli Księga dawnych wydarzeń* [*Kojiki, or Records of Ancient Matters*][23] – was not entirely accurate as he had not made use of his knowledge of stress and intonation. Instead, he often referred people to his subsequent work: *Dziedzictwo japońskich bogów – uranokracja* [*The Legacy of Japanese Gods – Uranocracy*].[24]

In 1975, Kotański became a full professor, and the Department of Far East Studies was created. It consisted of the Japanese Studies Section and the Chinese Studies Section, and from 1983, also the newly created Korean Studies Section. A few years later, the Chinese Studies Section was transformed into its own department, and so in 1990 the Department of Japanese and Korean Studies was created. It existed until 2015

22 W. Kotański, "Ukryta warstwa znaczeniowa w japońskiej kronice *Kojiki*" ["The Hidden Layer of Meaning in the Japanese Chronicle *Kojiki*"], *Przegląd Orientalistyczny* 1984, nos. 1–4, pp. 3–12.
23 *Kojiki, czyli Księga dawnych wydarzeń* [*Kojiki, or Records of Ancient Matters*], trans. and ed. W. Kotański, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa 1986.
24 W. Kotański, *Dziedzictwo japońskich bogów – uranokracja* [*The Legacy of Japanese Gods – Uranocracy*], Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich. Wydawnictwo, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1995.

when another division took place, creating the Chair of Japanese Studies and the Department of Korean Studies within the Faculty of Oriental Studies.

On numerous occasions, Kotański stressed the importance and role of Polish Japanese studies by writing articles on the subject.[25] He oversaw the development of the Japanese Studies in Warsaw for more than thirty years and educated a wide circle of pupils. He cared deeply about the local academic community and so he earnestly participated in the activities of the Faculty of Oriental Studies. He also held many functions at the University: Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Philology (1952–1954), Deputy Director (1969–1972, 1972–1973) and Director (1973–1978) of the Institute of Oriental Studies, as well as Dean of the Faculty of Modern Languages (1978–1982).

Professor Kotański received many awards, prizes, and decorations in Japan: for his scientific and didactic achievements, for his great effort in creating and developing Polish Japanese studies, and for the promotion of Japanese culture in Poland. The most important decorations include the Order of the Sacred Treasure Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon (1977) and the Order of the Rising Sun Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon (1986). In 1990, Kotański was presented with the Japan Foundation Award and in 1998, the authorities of the Osaka Metropolitan Area awarded him the Seventeenth Yamagata Bantō Prize for outstanding merit in promoting Japanese culture abroad, in particular for his research on *Kojiki*. Thanks to all those accolades, Professor Kotański was granted an audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan. Another opportunity to meet them was the visit of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress to the University of Warsaw in 2002.

25 See e.g.: "Japanese Studies in Poland," [in:] *Oriental Studies in the Sixty Years of Independent Poland*, ed. W. Tyloch, PWN, Warszawa 1983, pp. 53–58; "Pōrando ni okeru Nihon ninshiki oyobi sono bunka kenkyū e no apurōchi" ["Knowledge of Japan in Poland and the Approach to Researching Japanese Culture"], [in:] *Sekai no Nihon Kenkyū* 1990, no. 1, pp. 5–34.

The employees and the development of Japanese Studies

There are a few other important co-creators of the Japanese Studies in Warsaw that I would like to mention. Professor Jolanta Tubielewicz researched Japanese history with a focus on ancient history. It was thanks to Professor Tubielewicz that I became fascinated by the history of Japan. She was a supervisor of my doctoral dissertation, and, as such, my professional guide to being a Japanologist. Because of that fact, I have decided to write a little more about her. She graduated in 1953 from the Chair of Chinese Studies (but as a specialist in Japanese culture), and in 1958 she started her work as an assistant in the newly established Department of Japanese Studies. Her doctoral dissertation from 1971 focused on the life of the most prominent statesman of the Heian period – Fujiwara Michinaga. Several years later, in 1979, she presented her habilitation (postdoctoral dissertation) on *Superstition, Magic and Mantic Practices in the Heian Period*.[26]

Tubielewicz's research interests were not limited to history, but also encompassed archeology and mythology of Japan. She conveyed her expert knowledge in many publications, including: *Historia Japonii* [*History of Japan*] (1984), *Nara i Kioto* [*Nara and Kyoto*] (1985), *Kultura Japonii. Słownik* [*Culture of Japan. A Dictionary*] (1996), *Wielkie odkrycia i zagadki japońskiej archeologii* [*Great Discoveries and Mysteries of Japanese Archeology*] (1996), *Od mitu do historii* [*From Myth to History*] (2006), and many others.

She visited Japan many times, among others as a fellow of the Japan Foundation and of the Society of Promotion of Science. In a very personal book entitled *Japonia zmienna czy niezmienna* [*Japan – Changing or Unchanging*] (1998), she described her various Japanese experiences and fascinations. Not only was she a tireless researcher unearthing the secrets of ancient Japanese history, but she also found time and energy to actively participate in the administrative life of the University (as Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies, 1985–1986, and as Dean of the Faculty of Modern Languages, 1985–1990). Through all these years, she

[26] J. Tubielewicz, *Superstition, Magic and Mantic Practices in the Heian Period*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1980. The book is also reprinted in: *Analecta Nipponica* 2011, no. 1, pp. 139–202 (Part One) and *Analecta Nipponica* 2012, no. 2, pp. 89–174 (Part Two).

continued to be a wonderful teacher and a mentor for the successive generations of Japanese studies students.

Another scholar that needs to be mentioned here is Prof. Mikołaj Melanowicz, a specialist in the field of Japanese literature (mostly focusing on modern and contemporary authors). Melanowicz is also a tireless translator of Japanese literature. His doctoral thesis focused on the literary work of Hagiwara Sakutarō, and his habilitation thesis dealt with Tanizaki Jun'ichirō and Japanese tradition (1976). Melanowicz is also the author of many non-fiction publications, including the three-volume work *Literatura japońska* [*Japanese Literature*].[27]

An important role in the development of Japanese studies was also played by Krystyna Okazaki, PhD, a Japanese culture expert and a great translator of Japanese literature who introduced Polish readers to many texts, both contemporary and ancient (e.g., *Heike monogatari*). Her doctoral dissertation discussed the political and philosophical ideas of Nakae Chōmin.

Other individuals of great importance for the development of the Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw were teachers of the Japanese language, many of whom were literature studies scholars and translators of Polish literature. In 1967 (when Kotański was still in charge of the Japanese Studies), Yonekawa Kazuo was succeeded by Kudō Yukio – a Romance Studies alumnus, journalist, critic, history of literature scholar, and an outstanding translator of Polish literature (having translated, among others, Schulz, Gombrowicz, Hłasko, Konwicki, Mrożek, and Mickiewicz).[28] Kudō ended up spending seven years in Warsaw and later described his experiences in a book entitled *Warushawa no shichinen* [*Seven Years in Warsaw*].[29] During his stay, he was a correspondent for the Kyōdō Tsūshin news agency. After his return to Japan in 1974, he was employed by the Tama Art University (Tama Bijutsu Daigaku) and continued his translation work.

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[27] M. Melanowicz, *Literatura japońska* [*Japanese Literature*], vols. 1–3, PWN, Warszawa 1994, 1996.
[28] R. Huszcza, "Kudō Yukio – siedem lat w Warszawie" ["Kudō Yukio – Seven Years in Warsaw"], *Japonica* 2000, no. 12, p. 118.
[29] Y. Kudō, *Warushawa no shichinen* [*Seven Years in Warsaw*], Shinchōsha, Tokyo 1977.

A year earlier, that is in 1973, also at the initiative of Professor Kotański (at the time the Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies), Okazaki Tsuneo was employed as a teacher at the Japanese Studies, which meant that the number of native speakers teaching Japanese had risen to two. I am extremely happy that it was us, second-year students, who were the first to attend classes given by Okazaki. And now, thanks to him, I can use the Japanese language not only as an important research tool but also for daily communication while in Japan.

In 1975, Okazaki became a lecturer; since 1986, he has been working as a senior lecturer. Through more than forty years of teaching he has accumulated a vast experience, which is why today he conducts classes for first-year students and helps them tame this difficult language. He is also an author and a co-author of *kanji* textbooks. What is more, he has also established numerous important connections with Japanese scholars and institutions (mainly universities). Thanks to his efforts, we have been able to sign many agreements on cooperation and received many valuable donations.

The second position for a Japanese native speaker opened at the Japanese Studies thanks to a scientific cooperation agreement between the University of Warsaw and the University of Tokyo. The agreement was signed in 1978; however, in practice, the position had already been filled in 1975. It was the first agreement between the University of Warsaw and an academic center in Japan,[30] and with such a prestigious one at that. This opportunity came about thanks to Professor Yoshigami Shōzō of the University of Tokyo – a Russian and Polish studies scholar and translator of Polish literature (among others, he translated Sienkiewicz, Iwaszkiewicz, and Andrzejewski).[31] He came to Poland for the first time in 1964 together with his spouse Uchida Risako, a children's literature translator who was awarded a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture and Art. It was at this time that Yoshigami decided to tie up his life with Poland and the Japanese Studies in Warsaw. He cultivated the development of scientific cooperation between the University of Warsaw and the Univer-

30 It is worth noting that the agreement was limited solely to Japanese Studies.
31 H. Lipszyc et al., "Pamięci Profesora Yoshigami Shōzō" ["In Memory of Professor Yoshigami Shōzō"], *Japonica* 1996, no. 6, pp. 11–20.

sity of Tokyo. On the Polish side, he was aided by Okazaki Tsuneo. The agreement stipulated that Japanese language teachers (most of them employees of the University of Tokyo and of Hokkaido University) would come to Warsaw for a one-year period and conduct research in their own specializations. Apart from this regular agreement, additional grants were awarded to other researchers coming to Poland from Japan and to Japanologists from Warsaw going to Japan. The first scholars to be awarded such grants, even before the agreement had been signed, were Polish Japanologist Henryk Lipszyc (1975–1977) and Russian Studies scholar Hasemi Kazuo (1977–1978). Professor Yoshigami himself gave lectures between 1981 and 1983 – I consider myself lucky that when he was returning to Japan, I was given an opportunity to go with him and embark on my first academic trip to Japan at the University of Tokyo. During my year-and-a-half-long stay, he showed himself to be a strict but caring guardian. He was also my first guide in Japan. Until his very last days, Yoshigami oversaw the cooperation between our institutions and our scientific exchange. These responsibilities were later taken up by Professor Numano Mitsuyoshi, and now are in the hands of Russian Studies scholar Tateoka Kumi.

The first Japanese language lecturer to come to the University of Warsaw under the official agreement was Professor Moriyasu Tatsuya – a Slavic Studies scholar and translator of Polish literature. He also happened to be my teacher. Many other scholars followed in the subsequent years. Here is the full list:

1974–1976 Moriyasu Tatsuya, Slavic studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
1976–1977 Kurihara Shigerō, Russian studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
1977–1978 Naono Atsushi, Russian studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
1978–1979 Shimada Yō, Russian studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
1979–1980 Haiya Keizō, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)
1980–1981 Fujiie Sōichi, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)
1981–1983 Yoshigami Shōzō, Russian and Polish studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
1983–1984 Togawa Tsuguo, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)

1984–1985 Kudō Masahiro, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)
1985–1986 Mizushima Hiromasa, comparative literature scholar (Hiroshima University)
1986–1987 Sekiguchi Tokimasa, Polish studies and cultural studies scholar, translator of Polish literature (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)
1987–1988 Numano Mitsuyoshi, Slavic, Russian, and Polish studies scholar, translator of Polish literature (University of Tokyo)
1988–1989 Nishi Naruhiko, comparative literature and Polish studies scholar (Kumamoto University)
1989–1990 Nakai Kazuo, Ukrainian language scholar (University of Tokyo)
1990–1991 Kowaki Mitsuo, Japanese language scholar (Kumamoto University)
1991–1992 Misawa Masahiro, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)
1992–1993 Tsukamoto Akiko, English studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
1993–1994 Koyama Satoshi, Polish history scholar (Shimane University)
1994–1995 Andō Atsushi, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)
1995–1996 Nishinakamura Hiroshi, Russian studies scholar (Hokkaido University)
1996–1997 Ishii Tetsushirō, Polish studies scholar (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)
1997–1998 Kōchi Shōsuke, Polish history scholar (Hokkaido University)
1998–2000 Kukimoto Shigemasa, Japanese literature scholar (University of Tokyo)
2000–2001 Kanazawa Michiko, Slavic studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
2001–2002 Ogura Hikaru, Slavic studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
2003–2005 Nomachi Motoki, linguist (University of Tokyo)
2005–2006 Kawabata Yoshiaki, Japanese literature scholar (Kyoto University)
2006–2008 Fujiwara Mami, comparative literature scholar
2008–2009 Hirano Emiko, Slavic studies scholar (University of Tokyo)
2009–2011 Sanō Hirano, Japanese language educator (Ochanomizu University)

All the above-mentioned scholars of Polish studies, Russian studies, literature, linguistics, and cultural studies always took great efforts to keep a high standard of Japanese language teaching at the Japanese Studies in Warsaw. However, with time, it became increasingly difficult to find those interested in coming to Poland for a year, and to find means for co-financing the grants in Japan. This is why the Japanese language teaching program started being supported by the University of Warsaw authorities and by the Takashima Foundation. The last lecturer to come to Warsaw under the agreement between the University of Warsaw and the University of Tokyo was Slavic studies scholar Hirano Emiko, and the last teacher to come to Poland from Japan in general was Sanō Hirano (Ochanomizu University). At that time, Shinobu Kaihō-Przybylska, PhD (a literature studies scholar and a Japanese language educator), who lived in Warsaw and had already been working at the University of Warsaw for some time, eventually took over the position of the second native speaker previously reserved to teachers coming from Japan. Not long after, she was joined by language teacher Yōko Fujii-Karpoluk (a literature studies scholar), who also lived in Poland. Okazaki Tsuneo, who was overseeing the lecturers arriving from Japan, is currently in charge of the Japanese language program at the Japanese Studies in Warsaw as a whole.

Naturally, all the employees – both the researchers and the teachers[32] – care deeply about the development of the Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw. The program is concerned with broadly understood Japanese culture and language. At our institution, it is divided into several specializations: literature, history, philosophy and religions, aesthetics, culture, and language. Professor Agnieszka Kozyra researches Japanese philosophy and religions; Associate Professor Beata Kubiak Ho-Chi studies modern literature, aesthetics, and art; Associate Professor Iwona Kordzińska-Nawrocka specializes in classical literature, the culture of everyday life, and pop culture; Katarzyna Starecka, PhD – in post-war and contemporary history; Anna Zalewska, PhD – in classical literature and poetry; Jędrzej Greń, PhD – in medieval and early-modern history; Urszula Mach-Bryson, MA – in traditional culture (the way of tea) and philosophy; Marta Trojanowska, MA – in linguistics and Japanese

[32] See "Staff," *Chair of Japanese Studies*. http://japonistyka.orient.uw.edu.pl/en/chair/staff; accessed: 10.11.2020.

language teaching methodology; Monika Nawrocka, MA – in classical literature and culinary culture; and the author of these words – in Japanese history, the history of Poland–Japan relations, history of the Imperial House, and intercultural relations. Former employees include Agnieszka Żuławska-Umeda, PhD (classic literature and poetry), Iwona Merklejn, PhD (modern history and media), Jadwiga Rodowicz-Czechowska, PhD (classical theater, mainly *nō*), Barbara Słomka (contemporary literature), Wanda Anasz, PhD (sociology), Professor Romuald Huszcza (linguistics), Henryk Lipszyc (classical theater – mainly kabuki, literary translation), Sławomir Szulc (history of medieval Japan), Jarosław A. Pietrow, PhD (linguistics), Bogusław Pindur (history of modern Japan), and many others. Many of the employees, similarly to the members of other Japanese studies centers, also actively translate Japanese literature.

In the past, the Japanese Studies Section was headed by previously mentioned Wiesław Kotański and Mikołaj Melanowicz. They both worked under the subsequent heads of the Department of the Far East, who were sinologists. When in the 1990/91 academic year the Department of Japanese and Korean Studies was created, it was headed by Krystyna Okazaki, who was in office between 1990 and 2000 and then between 2003 and 2006. Melanowicz took the post again during the years 2000–2003, to be succeeded by Okazaki and then me, Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska (2006–2013), and later by Agnieszka Kozyra. In 2015, the independent Chair of Japanese Studies was created.

The employees of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw discuss their research results during many conferences, symposiums, and seminars – both in Poland and abroad. They also publish their findings in numerous Polish and foreign journals. The Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw also used to house the *Japonica* journal. The name was borrowed from the first Japanese studies journal ever published in Poland. *Japonica* was edited by a team of Japanese Studies employees and was published between 1993 and 2003 (sixteen issues in total) by the University of Warsaw in cooperation with the publisher Nozomi and with the support of the Takashima Foundation.[33]

33 "Bibliografia czasopisma *Japonica*" ["Bibliography of the *Japonica* Journal"], *Academia.edu.* http://www.academia.edu/4219465/Bibliografia_czasopisma_Japonica_udostępniona_ anonimowo_za_zgodą_autora; accessed: 12.11.2020.

I shall not present here complete curricula of the programs offered throughout the years, but I would like to mention that from the 1970s onward, the Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw have been steadily gaining popularity. First, the number of students increased from an initial handful to more than a dozen. This also resulted in Japanese studies programs being opened at other universities: Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. In the 1990s, the University of Warsaw started offering annual enrollment for the program. In 1997, because of the ever-increasing popularity, the Japanese Studies in Warsaw also started a part-time studies program.

When it comes to Japanese studies, the basic tool for carrying out substantive research in many disciplines is, of course, the Japanese language, which differentiates these studies from other cultural studies. The best students and alumni can apply for scholarships in Japan under one of the many bilateral agreements the University of Warsaw has with more than a dozen of Japanese universities. There are also numerous other possibilities for international exchange, offered both by Japan and by Poland. The Japanese side has often expressed their appreciation for the research conducted at the Japanese Studies in Warsaw and for the role it played in promoting Japanese culture in Poland. The most significant accolades received were the Japan Foundation Award (2002) and the Foreign Minister's (of Japan) Commendation (2009).

The Chair of Japanese Studies has been visited by many distinguished guests. The visit of Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko (July 12, 2002) during their official trip to Poland was especially significant.[34] To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Poland and Japan, we were visited by His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan Akishino Fumihito and the Crown Princess of Japan Kiko (June 28, 2019). We have also been visited by other members of the Imperial Family – His Imperial Highness Prince Takamado Norihito and Princess Hisako (November 28, 1994). Princess

[34] For more on the topic of this visit and some other important visits, see E. Pałasz-Rutkowska, *Historia stosunków polsko-japońskich* [*History of Polish–Japanese Relations*], vol. 2, *1945–2019*, Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 2019, pp. 173–178, 181–188, 322–329, 584–587.

Hisako visited the University of Warsaw again on October 28, 2015. We have also hosted other important guests: Foreign Affairs Minister Abe Shintarō (June 11, 1985); the wife of Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, Tsutako (January 15, 1987); the wife of Prime Minister Abe Shinzō, Akie. During his official visit in Poland, Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō met with our students at the Sheraton Hotel in Warsaw, in which he stayed during his trip (August 19–20, 2003).

The Japanese Studies in Warsaw have been lucky to receive valuable donations from several Japanese public institutions, private companies, and also some individuals, including many books, library facilities, as well as classroom and audiovisual equipment. Some donations were given as part of specific official events, while others were a result of private, unofficial meetings. To mention only a few: many valuable books and textbooks have been donated by the Japan Foundation, Toyota Foundation, Mitsubishi Co., Meiji Jingū, Kōgakukan Daigaku, Shōyū Kurabu, Kōdansha and Shōgakkan publishing houses, and also by many private donors. The Japanese Government presented us with books on the occasion of visits from the Japanese Prime Ministers Nakasone and Kaifu, as well as Minister Abe Shintarō. Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo sent us a gift when Prime Minister Jaroszewicz visited Japan (1978). Through a program of culture aid for Poland, in 1992 we received audiovisual devices and equipment for the language lab from the Japanese Government. The traditional Kaian Tea Pavilion is another example of a wonderful gift. It was built in 2004 thanks to the financial and organizational support from Takashima Kazuko, Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Osaka (a position she held between 2002 and 2012). The pavilion was designed by Japanese architect Iijima Teruhito and constructed by Japanese craftsmen. Many of the tea utensils are donations from Master of the Way of Tea Sugimoto Sōen Michiru, who comes to Poland every year to conduct classes with students. These classes are supported by the Urasenke Family, who have been preserving the art of the tea ceremony for many centuries. The presentations and lectures during two visits of the Grand Master of Urasenke, Sen Genshitsu, PhD (2007 and 2010), also helped in promoting the Japanese tea ceremony in Poland.

There are also two important foundations that are active at the Japanese Studies in Warsaw. They support research conducted in the field of Jap-

anese studies and promote Japanese culture in Poland. The first is the Polish Foundation for Japanese Studies – established in 1991 on the initiative of the Japanologists themselves – which has been able to flourish thanks to donations received from many Japanese supporters. The second organization, the Takashima Foundation, has been active since 1993 thanks to the generous support of Takashima Kōichi, CEO of Kyōei Steel Ltd. Between 1996 and 2000, he was also the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Osaka.

Apart from their work within the purview of the Japanese Studies, the Japanologists from the University of Warsaw – employees and students alike – do their best to promote Japanese culture and language in any way possible. The employees hold numerous lectures, talks, and presentations during various gatherings around Poland, including media appearances. Students take part in the activities of academic clubs such as the 'Maru' Japanese Studies Academic Club,[35] they organize language camps, meetings, workshops, symposiums, film screenings, and publish a magazine titled *Tokidoki Shinbun*. The Days of Japan conference has been held at the University of Warsaw regularly since 2007.[36] Since the 1990s, the Polish Foundation for Japanese Studies has also been running the Japanese Language School. In 2017, its activities were taken over by the Nihongo Gakuen – School of Japanese Language and Culture.[37] The language courses were discontinued in 2019, but the School also teaches selected elements of Japanese culture, e.g., the tea ceremony, ikebana, traditional art of kimono dressing, *buyō* dance and pantomime, traditional *nō* theater, and pop culture.

The last initiative I would like to mention is a series of lectures sponsored by Mitsui & Co. Ltd., offered not only to Japanese studies students but also to anyone who might be interested in broadening their knowledge

35 *Japonistyczne Koło Naukowe 'Maru'* [*'Maru' Japanese Studies Academic Club*]. https://jknmaru.wordpress.com; accessed: 10.11.2020.
36 "Dni Japonii" ["Days of Japan"], *Chair of Japanese Studies*. http://japonistyka.orient.uw.edu.pl/wydarzenia/dni-japonii/; accessed: 10.11.2020; "Dni Japonii na UW – 10 lat historii (2007–2016)" ["Days of Japan at UW – Ten Years of History (2007–2016)"], *Chair of Japanese Studies*. http://japonistyka.orient.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Dni-10-lat-historii.pdf; accessed: 10.11.2020.
37 "Kursy japońskiego" ["Japanese Courses"], *Nihongo Gakuen*. https://www.szkola.japonia.net.pl/kursy-japonskiego/; accessed: 10.11.2020.

of Japan. The lectures, organized between 2011 and 2020, were given by renowned experts, famous writers, social activists, sportspeople, and many other interesting guests widely known in Japan. The events were open to the public and helped deepen the relationship between Poland and Japan.[38]

There is not enough space here for me to mention all the initiatives and all the people who have made contributions to the Japanese Studies over the years. I strongly believe that such a rich past is an obligation. What is more, I am convinced that the Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw will make every effort to continue to build on this wonderful history in this century.

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[38] "Wykłady Mitsui" ["Mitsui Lectures"], *Chair of Japanese Studies*. http://japonistyka.orient.uw.edu.pl/wydarzenia/wyklady-mitsui/; accessed: 10.11.2020.

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Abstract

100 Years of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw

This paper was written to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw. The author presents the history of the academic program and the people who created it. The beginnings date back to 1919, when, after Poland had regained its independence, Bogdan Richter, a graduate of Oriental Studies in Leipzig, launched Japanese language classes as a part of a language course at the University of Warsaw. Thanks to a donation from Baron Mitsui Takaharu, the Seminar on Chinese Studies was created in 1934. Its formation offered a possibility to conduct lectures on Japanese culture, and over the years those classes expanded into a proper university program. Formally, Japanese Studies were established after WWII by Professor Wiesław Kotański. He was the first Japanologist in Poland – a linguist, religious studies scholar, translator of Japanese literature and, above all, a tireless researcher of sources of Japanese culture. The development of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw was also greatly aided by all the subsequent employees – both researchers and teachers of the Japanese language. The most important among them is Sensei Okazaki Tsuneo, who has been teaching at the University of Warsaw for fifty years.

Keywords: Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw, Wiesław Kotański, Japanese culture, cooperation with Japan, University of Tokyo, Polish researchers, Japanese lecturers

History of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw. A Gallery

Author of the text – Iwona Kordzińska-Nawrocka

History of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw


1


2


3


4

1919 Bogdan Richter starts giving Japanese classes as one of the language courses offered at the University of Warsaw 1

1952 Wiesław Kotański establishes a special course on Japanese language and culture in the Insititute of Oriental Studies.

1957 Wiesław Kotański establishes an independent Section of Japanese Studies as a part of the Department of Chinese Studies

1969 establishment of the Department of Japanese Studies as a part of the Institute of Oriental Studies

1990 establishement of the Department of Japanese and Korean Studies which has been headed by Krystyna Okazaki, PhD (1945–2008) 2, Prof. Mikołaj Melanowicz 3 and Prof. Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska 4

2015 establishment of the Chair of Japanese Studies headed by Prof. Agnieszka Kozyra 5 6


5


6

Cooperation with Japan
Official Relations


1


2

1964 the first scholarship of the Japanese Government awarded to a Pole – Mikołaj Melanowicz, PhD, uses it to study at Waseda University in Japan

1972 the International Conference on Japanese Studies organized by Japan P.E.N. Club in Tokyo and Kyoto, at that time attended by two Polish scholars: Prof. Wiesław Kotański and Mikołaj Melanowicz, PhD

1978 exchange agreement with the University of Tokyo concluded thanks to the efforts of Prof. Yoshigami Shōzō 1

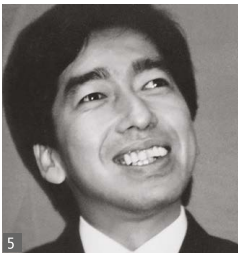
1985 visit of Mr. Abe Shintarō, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2

1987 visit of Mrs. Nakasone Tsutako, wife of the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Nakasone Yasuhiro 3

1994 visit of Prince and Princess Takamado 4 5


3


4


5

6

7

2002 visit of Their Imperial Majesties, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko 6 7

2002 Japan Foundation Award for the Section of Japanese Studies

2003 meeting between the Japanese Studies Section's staff and students with Mr. Koizumi Jun'ichirō, Prime Minister of Japan

2009 diploma of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan awarded to the Section of Japanese Studies

2013 visit of Mrs. Abe Akie, wife of Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Abe Shinzō 8

8


9


10

2015 visit of Princess Takamado Hisako 9 10

2015 membership in the Sakura Network

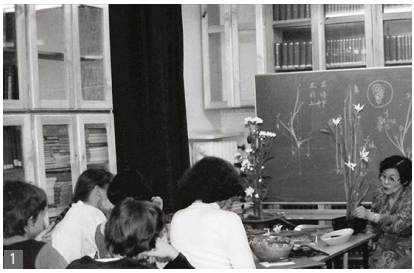
2019 visit of Their Imperial Highness, Crown Prince Akishino and Crown Princess Kiko 11


11

The Chair of Japanese Studies has entered into agreements with:

Dōshisha University
Gakushūin Women's College
Jōsai International University
Keiō University
Kōbe University
Kōgakkan University
Kumamoto University
Kanazawa University
Meijō University
Ochanomizu University
Rikkyō University
Saitama University
Shinshū University
Shōwa Women's University
Tsukuba University
The University of Tokyo

Cooperation with Japan Traditional Arts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2

IKEBANA – The Art of Flower Arrangement

1995–2005 Fujita Satoko comes from Okayama to present the arts of *chanoyu* and ikebana at the University of Warsaw (thanks to efforts of Małgorzata Dutka, a graduate of Japanese Studies) 1

2008–2018 Miyano Teruko from the Okayama Chapter of Ikenobō continues in the footsteps of Fujita sensei and becomes the main instructor at annual ikebana workshops

2012 Kozai Atsuko (President of the Okayama Chapter) is one of the keynote speakers during the 6th Days of Japan at the University of Warsaw, in part dedicated to the 550th anniversary of the historically documented activity of Ikenobō

2015 workshops led by Prof. Toyoda Mitsumasa from the Ikenobō Central Training Institute


3

2018 Ikenobō ikebana workshops at the University of Warsaw officially registered in the Japanese system of educational ikebana (*gakkō kadō*), Prof. Kurata Katsuhito becomes the course supervisor 2

The celebratory exhibition "Form of Freedom" held at the Royal Castle in Warsaw during the 12th Days of Japan at the University of Warsaw 3 Photo by J. Skuza

4

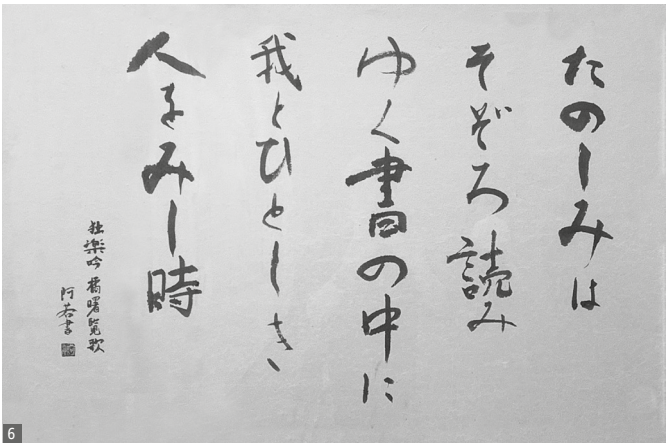
CHANOYU – The Way of Tea

2007 visit by Sen Genshitsu, PhD, XV Grand Master of the Urasenke Way of Tea at the University of Warsaw 4

2008 the Urasenke Grant for the Chair of Japanese Studies is initiated in order to facilitate launching a *chanoyu* course as part of the Japanese Studies curriculum. Sugimoto Sōen sensei becomes the supervisor of the course
Her student and graduate of Japanese Studies and Urasenke Gakuen courses, Urszula Sōu Mach-Bryson, gives day-to-day classes

2010 second visit of Sen Genshitsu, PhD, to commemorate the inauguration of the Urasenke tea course at the University of Warsaw
As of October 2019, more than 400 students have completed the Urasenke tea course
Classes include study of the art of tea as well as practical training in tea procedures, guest etiquette, and flower forms, *chaji.* Tea course graduates organize tea gatherings during university celebrations, like the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the University of Warsaw, annual open days at the "Kaian" Tea Ceremony Pavilion during the Days of Japan or the Night of Museums 5

5



6

SHODŌ – The Art of Calligraphy

2017 Inagaki Shōen sensei from Asuka begins visiting the Chair of Japanese Studies to lead *shodō* workshops for the students. Classes are held a few times a year and comprise the study of history, utensils, and many styles of Japanese calligraphy. Students practice writing *kanji* ideograms in their various forms as well as copying masterpieces of Japanese poetry in *hentaigana* with a small brush 6

HŌCHŌSHIKI – The Ceremony of the Knife in the Shijō Style

2019 presentation of the oldest Japanese culinary ritual, *hōchōshiki* – ceremonial carving in the Shijō Style at the University of Warsaw. Masters participating: Ōmori Kentetsu, Isaka Norihide, Ōmori Chieko, Sumiya Sadako, and Monika Nawrocka, a graduate of Japanese Studies 7


7

The History of Developing Japanese Language Education. The Case of Japanology at the University of Warsaw

Okazaki Tsuneo*

In order to introduce the current situation of the Chair of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw, I will briefly explain its past and its transition to the present state of affairs in order to show how we have responded to the needs of the Japanese language education in the global era.

A Japanese language school had existed in Warsaw since the prewar period, but during World War II its building and most of the documents were burned down. The process of recovery took several decades. Even though I was assigned to the University of Warsaw in 1973, that is almost thirty years later, the problem with the shortage of absolutely everything, including teaching materials, textbooks, and many others still persisted. Therefore, the only thing that could be used as a teaching material was what the teacher managed to write on the board. Yet, in order to write graduation theses, which were to be based on primary sources, it was essential to first procure the relevant books from Japan. There were still no Japanese–Polish or Polish–Japanese dictionaries in existence – only a few Japanese–English and English–Japanese dictionaries – so it was practically impossible for students to prepare and review their work at home.

Of course, there were also no copy machines or mimeographs, so I was forced to prepare all the tests by writing the same thing several times by hand on files of paper sheets with machine-tracing paper inserted

* University of Warsaw.

between them. At that time, I was teaching Japanese with the so-called grammar-translation method, but, to be honest, I am not confident that I utilized it well enough. Back then, there were only a few Japanese residents in Warsaw, which didn't make it easier for the students to find an opportunity to talk to a native speaker. For quite some time, I was the only Japanese whom my students could talk to.

Until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, near the end of the twentieth century, there was a serious shortage of supplies in every communist country, and at the university there was not only no chalk but also no paper. At that time, I think I was chiefly focusing on how the Japanese Studies were to survive rather than on improving our teaching methods or thinking about grammar exercises.

After the fall of communism in 1989, modern educational support equipment and literature began flowing in freely from the Western world and, thanks to the growing number of Japanese residents in Poland, the number of opportunities to talk with native speakers also gradually increased. However, the country's economy was recovering slowly, and due to the influence of the national policy giving priority to the economy, the financial problems related to education sector remained unresolved. Luckily, in comparison to other departments of the university, the Japanese Studies were in a privileged position thanks to the support from Japan. Owing to the Japan Foundation, we were able to complete the process of developing textbooks and teaching materials. It's hard to forget the joy of our teachers and students when Abe Shintarō, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, brought to Poland a word processor – then a novelty in the market – and donated it to the Japanese Studies.

In the early 1990s, the office of the Faculty of Oriental Studies was, for the first time, equipped with a copy machine, and it was around the same time that the Japanese Studies received one as well, as a donation from a Japanese company. A few years had to pass for the other departments to acquire their own copy machines. Still, at that time only a few Japanese companies had entered the Polish market, and there were not too many Japanese residents. It is hard to claim, then, that there were suddenly more opportunities to talk to native speakers. However, what did change was the number of students going to Japan – it increased

rapidly, primarily thanks to the Japanese Ministry of Education incorporating Poland into the *Research Student Program in Japanese Language and Japanese Culture*. Also, as soon as the University of Warsaw signed academic exchange agreements with other universities, more and more students participated in exchange programs like, among many others, the *Program Inviting Language Learners with Outstanding Results* funded by the Japan Foundation.

At that time, as part of the *Program for Financing Grassroots Cultural Projects* carried out by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we were also donated language laboratory equipment and a computer, which helped us to implement audio-lingual teaching methods. For quite a long time we were able to make up for the shortage of occasions to interact with native speakers by exposing students to recorded conversations in Japanese during the classes conducted in the language lab.

Since the communist system was all about information control, from the moment the borders dividing the West from the East disappeared there were no longer any procedures preventing one from quickly importing teaching materials from Japan. However, the delay in the recovery from planned economy proved to be a new obstacle, and even brochures presenting the latest publications were not available to us (although it became much easier to obtain materials on the individual level). Over time, the audio-video equipment used for teaching Japanese has slowly become more and more advanced.

Soon, the manga and anime culture that Japan had shared with the world arrived in Poland as well and evoked a passionate response among Polish junior and senior high school students. There were cases of young people who applied for the Japanese Studies mainly motivated by their fascination with manga and anime. At that time, the hunger for information resulting from the legacy of the communist times in Poland was probably a factor in computers quickly becoming a popular tool for acquiring knowledge, and young people, driven by their fascination with Japan, were able to easily download Japanese series and songs via the internet.

Now, I would like to describe the state of the personal interactions between the students of the University of Warsaw, the Japanese scholarship holders, and the Japanese Club.

Shortly before reaching this point, contacts with the Japanese students studying at the University of Warsaw had become more frequent. And these were not merely superficial relations. Students who wanted to engage more with Japanese native speakers participated in the Language Camp, which was a joint Polish–Japanese effort. At that time, not many students studied Japanese, so when all the Japanese students were invited, the ratio would be quite manageable – about four or five Polish students to one Japanese. The students were divided into groups to perform everyday duties, and there was at least one Japanese participant in each of those groups. The students shopped together as well as prepared breakfasts and cleaned the dishes afterwards. For both parties, this meant discovering a number of shocking cultural differences: as early as at the stage of preparing for going grocery shopping, it turned out that the Japanese were trying to make a detailed plan, estimating the necessary amount of food based on the calculation of portions per person, while the Polish students tried to finish everything as quickly as possible by making only a cursory, general assessment of the needed products. It is not surprising that misunderstandings occurred quite often. But in the process of carrying out conversations aimed at resolving such situations (for the duration of the camp it was compulsory to use Japanese), all the Polish participants were greatly influenced by the fact that they managed to learn how to speak in Japanese, what polite phrases to use, which words to choose, how to calculate amounts, and how to pay attention to hierarchical structures. I heard from some of the camp participants that they had been given an opportunity to experience situations and conversations that the university could not provide, and this, in consequence, led me to conclude that I had to improve my teaching techniques. As a result, I started to pay more attention to making the content of the classes at the university not too different from real-life situations and keeping it up with the times.

One project that we have been implementing for over twenty years now has been of great importance to our efforts of improving teaching here

in Warsaw. It is a regular exchange with some Japanese residents living in Warsaw. It is probably a solution not available in every country, but if there are even a few Japanese people living in one place, I do highly recommend organizing such meetings, as they are mutually beneficial. I would like to give an overview of this idea by using our Warsaw community as an example. In cooperation with the Japanese Club, which brings together Japanese residents in Poland, we have created groups consisting of equal numbers of Polish and Japanese participants who then gather once a month at the Information and Culture Department of the Japanese Embassy to conduct free conversations on topics directly related to their lives. The Polish students benefit from an opportunity to improve their Japanese in conversations with native speakers, and in return the Japanese participants (most of whom do not speak Polish) learn about the realities of life in Poland in their native language and can find local help with solving some of their problems. Additionally, because the Japanese people who gather there frequently have Polish life partners or have lived abroad longer than in Japan, the students have an opportunity to enjoy meeting people who have had experiences with many cultures.

In striving for the goal of linguistic and cultural pluralism, or multiculturalism, which are important elements of teaching Japanese in the global era, there are many challenges to be solved, such as individual preferences, national policy of our country, or encountering financial problems during the implementation stage, but it seems that, as teachers, we should still make our students aware of the need to continue exploring all the aspects of this global reality and make every possible effort to achieve our goals.

Finally, I would like to share some feelings and observations from my point of view, that is, the point of view of a native speaker who has been involved in Japanese language education for the fifty years comprising the latter half of the Japanese Studies' one-hundred-years-long history. The environment surrounding students as well as the students' own temperaments have significantly changed over the years, with 1989 – when Poland's state structure transformed from communism into democracy – being a big shifting point. Here's the list of the changes:

1) Students' motivation for learning Japanese

– Before 1989: I heard about Japan from my grandparents in my early childhood. I saw a rare Japanese movie. I saw a Japanese doll exhibition, *ukiyo-e* exhibition, or a Japanese theater performance. I read a Japanese novel translated into Polish.

– Today: I have an interest in watching manga and anime. I watched Japanese tv-dramas on the internet. I listened to Japanese songs on the internet.

2) Textbook

– Before 1989: I copy the teacher's writing from the board. I got a textbook from a Japanese person I've met. I got an old textbook at a second-hand bookshop. I copied the textbook available at the facilities of the Japanese Studies.

– Today: I ordered a textbook from Japan on Amazon. I downloaded it from the internet. I bought it when I was traveling abroad.

3) Dictionary

– Before 1989: I use one of the few dictionaries available at the facilities of the Japanese Studies. I got it from a Japanese person I've met. I copied the dictionary at the university library. I wrote down words in a notebook and made my own dictionary.

– Today: I bought an electronic dictionary when I traveled to Japan. I ordered it on Amazon. I use an internet dictionary. I use a dictionary on my smartphone.

4) Books

– Before 1989: I borrow books from the Japanese Studies library. My Japanese friend sent me a book from Japan. I wrote a letter to the author and asked him to donate a book. I copied a novel from the library.

– Today: I downloaded a book from a Japanese library via the internet. I purchased one on Amazon. I use an e-book.

5) Conversation practice

– Before 1989: I only talk with a Japanese Studies teacher. I interact with the handful of international students from Japan. After school, I go to the Central Train Station and offer Japanese travelers a guided tour around Warsaw. I often listen to the NHK shortwave radio broadcast.

– Today: I give guided tours to travelers from Japan. I practice with a Japanese conversation app on the internet. I travel to Japan during the summer vacation and talk directly to Japanese people.

6) Study abroad

– Before 1989: Almost no one can study abroad. Occasionally some students are able to go thanks to the recommendation of the Polish Ministry of Education.

– Today: It is possible to study abroad by invitation from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Japan Foundation, partner schools, etc. Students can study abroad at their own expense. They can use the working holiday visa system. They can apply to ERASMUS (European University Exchange Study Abroad System).

7) Career after graduation

– Before 1989: I can't easily go abroad. There are only a few places in Japan where I can work using Japanese.

– Today: There are significantly more possibilities of employment due to the increased number of Japanese investments in Poland. There is an increasing demand for carrying out business translations for Japanese companies. After studying abroad, I will remain in Japan to work. I will work using Japanese language in various European countries. I will work as a tour guide for the increasing number of Japanese tourists.

As you can see, the learning environment as well as the opportunities to study or work abroad have changed a lot since the start of the democratization process. But my impression is that the change in the environment does not necessarily mean that the Japanese proficiency of our students has significantly improved. It turns out that no matter what the times are, if there is a strong learning motivation and a constant effort, the abilities will develop accordingly.

Abstract

The History of Developing Japanese Language Education. The Case of Japanology at the University of Warsaw

In my article, I give an overview of how attempts towards developing Japanese language education have changed over the years. For that purpose, I describe the last fifty years of teaching Japanese at the University of Warsaw from the perspective of my own, personal experience. I also try to demonstrate that the teaching environment has changed significantly after the 1989 transformation in Poland. Among others, I describe two examples of activities that let our students be continually exposed to the Japanese language and people and help them improve both their language skills and knowledge of Japanese culture: the Language Camps and the exchange program with Japanese residents in Warsaw that has been taking place for over twenty years. Finally, comparing the times before and after the 1989 transformation, I point out the crucial differences between the learning environment and available opportunities in the past and nowadays.

Keywords: Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw, Japanese language education, transformation in Poland

Part I

Philosophy and History

chapter 1

How to Measure 'Unique' or 'Universal'? Comparison in Crisis or Crisis in Comparison

Inaga Shigemi

Preliminary remarks

Performing comparison is not possible without stable grids – axes of references which would support the operation. Yet in the area of cross-cultural comparative studies, the very relevance of axiological grids themselves has to be put into question. The sole act of authenticating the criteria implies an imperial and/or piratical usurpation of hegemony, especially when it comes with the recognition of the heretofore unrecognized. This process of official recognition differs depending on the area and epoch. It is worth carrying out a closer comparative analysis of such experiences in which the previously under-recognized partook in pre-, mid-, post-, or ex-colonial situations when facing universalist value judgments. This cross-checking requires transnational participation of researchers and creators, not excluding such people as curators and the administrators involved.

The present paper attempts to critically point out some relevant cases in order to enhance the discussion revolving around the issue. I also propose a new definition of a comparative approach: an intentional and constant examination of the crisis, with criticism being the tool of destabilizing and renewing the *status quo* of cultural heritage.

Figure 4. Okumura Masanobu, *Taking the Evening Cool at Ryogoku Bridge*, 1745, Kobe City Museum. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

Contesting Western European originals and their vernacular copies: the case of linear perspective

Linear perspective was invented and perfected in the West during the Italian Renaissance period. It has gained the status of a universal grid for spatial representation. Owing to Western and Westernized academic training, this technique has been applied all over the world. It has started to play the role of canon, as if it were the only relevant way of rationally grasping and measuring the pictorial plane in a scientific manner.[1]

Andrea Posso's treatise *Perspectiva pictorum…* (1693/1712) was translated into Chinese in 1735, when foreshortenings in spatial representation were frequently practiced in Suzhou woodblock prints, managing to achieve the unexpected illusion of a "real" spatial experience. Japanese engravers, such as Okumura Masanobu, followed suit and started imitating a similar effect from about 1740–1748 (Fig. 4).

However, their understanding was limited, and their implementation of the rules was anything but faithful. Instead of unifying the view of the interior with the outside landscape (which lies at the heart of the Western principle and its Chinese iterations), the Japanese simply superimposed Western perspective upon the traditional Oriental water-and-mountain landscape. In so doing, Masanobu successfully obtained a supernatural effect: it looks as if the interior space in the foreground was floating on air. And yet, the contemporary viewers did not seem to be disappointed with the discrepancies; instead, they were happily astonished by the unexpected, new spatial effect (*ukie* or 'floating image' of which Masanobu boasted to be the inventor). What we can see here is a typical case of 'compartmentalization' by way of multi-track juxtaposition.

[1] The following summarizes (with necessary updates) my earlier paper: Sh. Inaga, "Transformation de la perspective linéaire, un aspect des échanges culturels entre l'Occident et le Japon," *Travaux et mémoires du Centre de recherches historiques sur les relations entre les cultures* 1984, no. 2, pp. 29–62. See also Sh. Inaga, "La réinterprétation de la perspective linéaire au Japon (1760–1830) et son retour en France (1860–1910)," *Actes de la Recherches en Sciences Sociales* 1983, no. 49, pp. 29–49.

Even after obtaining an analytical understanding of the principle of linear perspective, samurai painters nonetheless preferred emphasizing the contrast between near and far, as can be seen in the case of the Akita School of Western-style painting around the 1770s. Instead of implementing a unified pictorial plane and respecting Western canon rules (as the term 'perspective' stipulates), Japanese practitioners reinterpreted and incorporated it into the 'method of far–near' (*enkinhō*).[2] This deviation reached its culmination point with Hokusai, who boasted to "understand" this Western technique. In his approach, the unique vanishing point, which normally should be located in the infinite distance, was instead duplicated, and these two new points were placed at a distance that was both measurable and limited. Thus, Hokusai abolished the original notion of infinity. The horizon line, which should correspond to the viewpoint of the observer, was also declared invalid, as, in Hokusai's scheme, it no longer served as the absolute criterion. Intentionally dissociated from the line depicting the shore, the horizon line went astray. It was no longer the base level for organizing the entire pictorial plane but was now reduced to one of the two duplicated horizontal guiding lines, so as to "reasonably" subdivide the composition into three parts. Hokusai proudly called it 'the law of dividing into three' (*mitsuwari no hō*)[3] (Fig. 5).

It may be tempting to deride Hokusai's lack of comprehension. Yet this value judgment is tenable only in so far as one takes Western criteria for granted as something 'universal.' In Japan, Western scientific accuracy was invalidated, and the Western analytical device misused; instead, they gave way to the aesthetic effect. The Western desire to project three-dimensionality onto a bi-dimensional surface lost its purpose after its application and adaptation to the cultural climate of the Japanese archipelago. The Western idea of seizing infinity in a homogenized pictorial plane was rejected in Japan. Instead, it was replaced by the tactic of realizing multiple instances of symbiosis of heterogeneous spatial conventions in one pictorial plane. The criteria considered absolute in the West were deconstructed and dwarfed by relativizing pragmatics. In

[2] *Enkinhō* 遠近法. The Akita School uses only '*enkin no ri*' or 'the reason of far–near.' Specialists today would avoid '*enkinhō*' as the translation of linear perspective.
[3] *Mitsuwari no hō* 三ツ割の法.

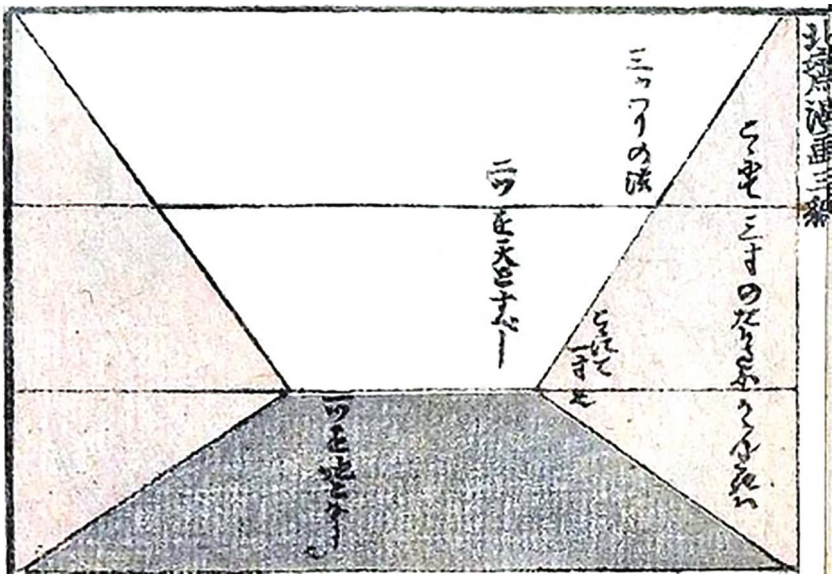


Figure 5. Katsushika Hokusai, *Hokusai Manga*, vol. 3, 1815. Source: Japan Public Domain.

short, the geometrical apparatus for the achievement of spatial coherence was "abused" for the opposite purpose of reinventing an incoherent space of visual representation. Based on this observation, we may deduce the following:

1. The dichotomy between the (Western) original and the (non-Western) copy is not relevant here. We should instead focus on the deviation from the original. Further cross-cultural comparison of similar case studies may prove to be helpful for understanding the relevance and the limits of Western technology as well as its transfer to other cultures. Technology is understood here not only as mechanical advancements but also as a social system and its ideas which are coming from the West and are implemented in the rest of the world. For example, it is worth comparing ideas such as 'democracy' or 'sovereignty' (as we shall see later in Lydia H. Liu's Chinese case study) as well as the aftermath of their implementation.

2. The West cannot proclaim itself immune to such 'deviations,' as it also faces such incompatible realities. The case of Hokusai can serve as a prime example, as it was his works that became the model for over-

coming Western academic artistic conventions in the context of Japonisme in the second half of the nineteenth century. Here we can point to the works of Édouard Manet. In his seascape, Manet intentionally imitated "la perspective *à la japonaise*"[4] (Fig. 6) by declaring that "*je n'ai pas moi la même perspective que l'Institut*" ["My perspective is not the same as that of the Institute"].[5] Referencing non-Western practice allowed the Western avant-garde artist to get rid of conventional visual perception. The non-Western 'abnormality' was thus able to defy and put into question the very normativity of the Western norm.

3. Modernity must be redefined. It should no longer be rendered as an expansion of the Western worldview across the world, but rather should be understood as a series of reciprocal interactions and mutual contaminations. High modernism in art and aesthetics consists of multiple realities of inter-cultural fusions and brewage articulated in the 'West-and-the-rest'-type transactions. The universal validity of Western criteria is tested in the process of expansion and colonization. As a logical outcome, modernity itself comes to its terminus (or a dead-end) together with the end of colonialism. The post-colonial, post-industrial, post-modern era bears witness to the limits of Western hegemony. Western modernity depended on the exploitation and consumption of resources acquired from the rest of the world. Now, human beings are witnessing the time limit of worldwide, supposedly universal, consumption of the value system that has been initiated by the West.

Diplomatic negotiations under unequal treaties: the case of fraternity within the Red Cross

Let us now move on to the second case. A close analysis of this episode, which occurred during a diplomatic exchange, will reveal the inequality inherent to the application of international law, even though it should

4 S. Mallarmé, "The Impressionists and Édouard Manet," *The Art Monthly Review*, 30 September 1876, p. 119.

5 J. Clartie, *La Vie à Paris*, *1880–1885*, Charpentier, Paris 1910, pp. XIX, 222. For further references, see Chapters 1 and 3 of Sh. Inaga, *Kaiga no tōhō. Orientarizumu kara japonisumu e* [*The Orient of Painting. From Orientalism to Japonisme*], Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, Nagoya 1999, pp. 58–59, 148.

Figure 6. Édouard Manet, *Sur la Plage de Boulogne*, 1868, oil on canvas, 32 × 65 cm. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

be 'universally valid.' The following issue is also connected to the basic ideas and ideals of the French Revolution, namely *liberté, égalité*, *fraternité* [liberty, equality, fraternity].

Mori Ōgai (pen name of Mori Rintarō, 1862–1922) was one of the first Japanese medical students to stay in Europe. He was sent to Prussia by the Japanese army in 1884 at the age of twenty-three and stayed there until 1888 (Fig. 7). Today, located at the site of his first lodging in Berlin is the *Mori Ōgai Gedenkstätte* [Mori Ōgai Memorial Center]. Ōgai is remembered as a prolific writer and a German to Japanese translator of many European works of literature; using the original German texts or translations into that language, he produced Japanese-language versions of works by Goethe, Shakespeare, Wilde, Ibsen, Andersen, Schnitzler, Poe, Flaubert, Zola, de Maupassant, D'Annunzio, Hofmannsthal, Dostoevsky, Gorky, and many others. And yet, on top of that, he still managed to reach the top rank of medical doctor and inspector general in the Japanese army. The part of his stay which is of interest to this paper is the conference of the International Red Cross held in Karlsruhe in September 1887, in which young Mori participated during his mission as a military attaché in Prussia.

On the fourth day of the conference, one issue came up in discussion, namely: if a war were to break out outside of Europe, should each of the branches of the European Red Cross be mobilized for assistance? The question was raised by the Dutch delegation. The supposed war, it was assumed, could not be anything other than a clash between the European colonial military powers entering combat with one another and inevitably involving colonized, local rebels. On this occasion, Mori – at the time a young Japanese officer – got permission to speak and presented his opinion as follows.

Firstly, since the issue discussed concerned the European branches only, Japan had to step back from the decision-making process and abstain from voting. This is, of course, the essence of common sense, and this sort of reasoning does not raise any opposition. And yet this example implicitly exposed the inadequacy of the European approach to the issue: they completely overlooked the presence of non-European representatives and their membership in the organization. Japan's abstention amounted to an indirect warning that the proposed resolution would

Figure 7. Mori Ōgai (standing first to the left) and other Japanese students in Germany. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

constitute a violation of the spirit of the Red Cross. Mori's voice made it clear to the European delegates that the issue in question posed an imminent threat to the principle of fraternity among Red Cross constituents. The supposed idea, or rather ideal, of equality among its members was called into question.

Secondly, even though Mori made it very clear that it was neither his nor Japan's intention to propose an amendment to the resolution, in principle the issue should have been presented differently. That is, if a war were to break out on one continent, should the Red Cross branches on other continents be mobilized to offer assistance? Mori added that, should the case be phrased in such a manner, Japan would consider it a given that the Japanese Red Cross would act to provide necessary help if a war were to break out on a continent other than Asia (which would include Europe). The French-language minutes from the meeting show that at this statement by Mori, the sound of "bravo" could be heard from the audience.

During the following session, Mori also made it clear (by way of presenting a printed booklet as proof) that the Japanese army had already distributed the Japanese translation of the 1864 Geneva Convention (which dealt with the treatment of prisoners) among its soldiers. Meanwhile, as it turned out, the other European nations, who had signed the document earlier, had not yet distributed or circulated a similar document among their respective armed forces. Mori somewhat proudly noted in his diary that the Russian representative, "Usfaitcheff" [*sic*], had gently touched Mori's shoulder and expressed his "happy amazement." (It should be added here that Russia was in trouble with the other European delegations at the time). From then on, the European delegates' attitude towards Japan improved.

Obviously, the young Mori, only twenty-six years old at the time, made his statement out of a certain racial and ethnic indignation; he perceived implicit Western discrimination against an Asian nation. The young Japanese envoy was able to publicly expose the unconscious European egocentrism. Mori's rational statement, despite being delivered with barely concealed resentment, gained general approval. For it was stated in full respect of the moral spirit which the International Red Cross had been supposed to uphold: universal fraternity on an equal footing. The sentiment of his statement, originally a modest contribution made by a non-European member, was to be later put into practice by the Japanese army as the embodiment of basic moral spirit.

It is well known that Japanese military discipline shown during the occupation of the Chinese capital city, Beijing, at the time of the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901) was highly praised – at least by Western allied forces (in contrast to the later official version of the Chinese Communist Party). During World War I, the treatment of German prisoners sent from Qingdao to Japan was applauded by the foreign press. The Japanese Red Cross aid dispatched to Europe was also highly appreciated – especially the mobilized nurses who, with their self-sacrificial devotion, played an exemplary role in assisting wounded soldiers. By this time, Mori had already become one of the most important individuals in the whole military operation of medical aid.

Naturally, a question comes to mind: why was the Japanese army's behavior so different in the Sino–Japanese War, which started in 1931, and then again in the Pacific War? Why did the Japanese troops systematically neglect the Geneva Convention within twenty years of Mori's retirement and death? When and why did the Japanese military become 'inhuman'? One may be horrified by the fact that one of the origins of the atrocities committed by the Japanese army in China, Southeast Asia, as well as in the Pacific theater of World War II can be traced back (at least theoretically) to the very same conference of the International Red Cross in Karlsruhe in 1887. Violation of the Geneva Convention was a logical outcome and an automatic extension of the Western principle that Mori had previously criticized in Karlsruhe. Namely, if one were to faithfully respect the logic of the resolution proposed in 1887, Japan should be fully entitled to "manage any wars according to its own will," so long as they occurred in Asia.[6]

This historical irony also reveals another inherent egocentricity that lies hidden in the benevolent actions of the Red Cross. The case discussed in the following section inevitably calls for a general reconsideration of the 'universal' legitimacy of such basic notions as 'nation-state,' 'territoriality,' and 'sovereignty,' especially when analyzed from a cross-cultural, comparative perspective.

Interreligious dialogue under question: kenosis in the East and in the West

A closer look at the previously mentioned Boxer Rebellion will allow us to move to the third and final case discussed in this paper. In English, the Chinese name of this Beijing uprising movement could be translated literally as the 'Battle for Universal Righteousness and Harmony' or the

6 This is only a theoretical speculation. The historical reality was that the military command of the Japanese army had intentionally violated and ignored the Geneva Convention during World War II because it was argued to be a Western agreement which the Japanese army claimed to have no obligation to respect. Yet the roots of this willful violation may be traced all the way back to the incident that Mori had witnessed at the Karlsruhe conference.

Yihetuan Incident.[7] Obviously, the Chinese claims of 'universal righteousness' were disdainfully dubbed as 'rebellion' by the allied Western powers. Beneath the irreconcilable confrontation taken up in search of legitimacy and legality lies the question of equivalence in cross-cultural translation. This question is all the more crucial as it directly touches upon the philosophical and religious order administrating the ethical dimension of the issue. To examine it fully, it will be necessary to mention numerous points of contention throughout history. Among the relevant cases that could be recalled in our context is the Chinese Rites controversy between the Vatican authority and the Qing Dynasty regarding the religiosity of rites, which was caused by a lack of equivalence between the Catholic notion of Heaven (as the God Almighty) and the Confucian idea of Heaven.[8] For our present paper, however, we will briefly examine the case of the Buddhist notion of nothingness and the Christian idea of kenosis.

Tanabe Hajime (1886–1962) was one of the representatives of the so-called Kyoto School of philosophy. His moral responsibility for his behavior during World War II remains controversial to this day. In his final years, Tanabe published *Varerii no geijutsu tetsugaku* [*Aesthetic Philosophy of Paul Valéry*] (1951). In his reading of "La Jeune Parque," Tanabe develops the idea that the concept of nothingness in Zen Buddhism is "equal" (*soku* 即) to love (*musokuai* 無即愛) in Christianity.[9] Jesus Christ's love consists of his abnegation of his divinity (*Heiligkeit*). By separating himself from God, he descended from Heaven and came to earth – the event that is known as his nativity in Bethlehem. By this abnegation the Savior made an advent (coming) to this world and was to be crucified. This self-sacrifice, or the redemption by the Son of God, was indispensable for the salvation of the souls on earth. Paul the Apostle called it kenosis.[10]

7 *Giwadan no ran* 義和団の乱.
8 *Tenrei ronsō* 典礼論争.
9 *Musokuai* in Tanabe's terminology. H. Tanabe, "Varerii no geijutsu tetsugaku" ["Aesthetic Philosophy of Paul Valéry"], [in:] *Tanabe Hajime zenshū* [*The Collected Works of Tanabe Hajime*], vol. 9, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1963–1964.
10 Philippians 2:6–8 (King James Version).

Kenosis (which forms a pair with the theological term of *theosis*) is a Greek word that, based on its etymology, can be translated into German as *Entleerung*, i.e., making oneself empty.[11] If one's body is emptied, this empty vessel can then become a receptacle of divine will. This was the case with the advent of Christ on earth (as understood in Catholicism). By the same token, one can become a receptacle of divine will through the self-abnegation of one's own selfishness (as is the case in Protestantism). This selflessness, or *Ichlosigkeit*,[12] in kenosis is to be likened to the Buddhist idea of 'nothingness'[13] (a Taoist idea later applied in Zen Buddhism). Indeed, this 'limitless emptiness'[14] alone can guarantee *agape* – the limitless, indiscriminate, and gratuitous love, the utmost and sacrosanct mystery of Christianity.[15] This comparison around the notion of *kūmuka* 空無化 was put forward by a Japanese Jesuit scholar, Father Abe Nakamaro, in his PhD dissertation.[16]

This invites another question: how and why can a human body, a container with limited capacity, manage to contain unlimited and infinite love? Is kenosis, or the emptying of one's self, enough for God's will to pour in (*enifüllen*)? Nishitani Keiji (1900–1990), one of the followers of Tanabe in the Kyoto School, asks this question in his *Shūkyō to wa nani ka* [*What Is Religion?*].[17] Nishitani also equates *agape*, or unconditional and indiscriminate love, with self-emptying or *Entleerung*. In the same

11 R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu* [*The Pathos of Being Together*], Kobushi Shobō, Tokyo 2018, p. 379. See also the German edition of the same work: R. Ōhashi, *Phänomenologie der Compassion. Pathos des Mitseins mit den Anderen*, Karl Alber Verlag, Freiburg 2018.

12 *Muga* 無我 in Tanabe's terminology. H. Tanabe, "Varerii no geijutsu tetsugaku," p. 381.

13 *Mu* 無.

14 *Mugen/musaigen* 無限/無際限.

15 Sh. Inaga, *Sesshoku zōkeiron. Fureau tamashii tsumugareru katachi* [*In Search of Haptic Plasticity. Souls Touching Each Other, Forms Interwoven*], Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankan, Nagoya 2016, p. 185.

16 N. Abe, "Nihon ni okeru 'Kami no jikomuka'" ["The '*Gelassenheit*' of God in Japan"], PhD diss., Sophia University, 2009. See also N. Abe, "Mu o meguru Kirisutokyō shingaku oyobi Bukkyō no hikaku kōsatsu" ["A Comparative Study of Christian Theology and Buddhism around the Notion of 'Nothingness'"], [in:] *Hikaku shisō kara mita Nihon Bukkyō* [*Japanese Buddhism from a Comparative Perspective*], ed. F. Sueki, Sankibō Shoin, Tokyo 2015, pp. 246–298.

17 K. Nishitani, *Shūkyō to wa nani ka* [*What Is Religion?*], Sōbunsha, Tokyo 1961; see also R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, pp. 380–381.

passage Nishitani makes an almost literal paraphrase from Meister Eckhart, referring to Eckhart's idea of *Abgescheidenheit*.[18] Nowadays, *Selbstäusserung* or *Sich-Entäusserung* is usually given as German translation for the Buddhist notion of emptiness as an equivalent of the notion of kenosis that was preached by Paul the Apostle.[19] Let us add that the notion of kenosis had also been translated into German as *Gelassenheit*, which Martin Heidegger analyzed in his study of Meister Eckhart in 1951, and the term *Gelassenheit* was then translated into Japanese as *hōka*[20] by borrowing the term from Zen Buddhism. Finally, Nishitani also proposes referring to 'emptiness' (Sanskrit: *śūnyatā*, Japanese: *kū*[21]) in place of 'nothingness' (Japanese *mu*[22]).

In order to help facilitate understanding of these seemingly impossible equivalences, Ōhashi Ryōsuke (b. 1944) resorts to the Jewish Kabbalah's notion of *tzimtzum*.[23] For God Almighty to reveal himself, he had to first make some reduction in his dimensions so as to make room for his own revelation. This initial contraction from infinite God to his finite manifestation is referred to as *tzimtzum*. By this recession, God creates an empty space into which his Infinite Light then floods. As the Bible says: "Then God said, 'Let there be light': and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good."[24] Kabbalah tells us that the Unlimited Light, because of its infinite intensity, destroys most of the vessels available to receive it (*Shvirat HaKelim*). Yet, it is only through the human effort of restoring the remaining fragments of those broken receptacles that human beings can perceive traces of God's initial light, or at least some remnants of its lost traces.[25]

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18 R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, p. 381.
19 R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, p. 327, note 8.
20 *Hōka* 放下. The pronunciation '*hōka*' is proposed for the translation of Heidegger in Japanese, to be distinguished from the same Chinese term, which has been traditionally pronounced as '*hōge*' in Zen Buddhism.
21 *Kū* 空.
22 *Mu* 無. See Sh. Inaga, "'Hi' no sesshoku hensei to 'Kū'- Kenosis no kanōsei to Daijō Bukkyō to Yudaya-Kirisutokyō shingaku o kakyō dekiru ka" ["Compassion in Contact Metamorphism and the Possibility of 'Emptiness' as Kenosis. Can We Bridge the Gap between Mahayana Buddhism and Judeo-Christian Theology?"], *Book Review Press* 2019, no. 3402.
23 R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, p. 384.
24 Genesis 1:3–4 (King James Version).
25 Sh. Inaga, *Sesshoku zōkeiron*, p. 59, note 14.

By this logic of Judaic esoterism, the truth (the way to salvation) can only be suggested by its absence – a void which is left behind as a negative by the initial revelation. The divine creation reveals itself through the loss it has inscribed by the way of self-negation. Here is what we could call *kenosis Gottes*.[26] In his *Totalité et Infini*, Emmanuel Lévinas explains this mechanism: "*L'infini se produit en renonçant à l'envahissement d'une totalité dans une contraction laissant une place à l'être séparé*."[27] And Nishitani dares to compare this *kenosis Gottes* to *taihi*[28] or *mahā karunā* (Sanskrit) in Mahayana Buddhism, which Ōhashi translates as 'compassion,' borrowing the term from the English standard translation of the corresponding notion.

Let us ask a question here: in the final analysis, are these notions compatible or commensurable with each other? And what exactly would compatibility or commensurability mean here?

This case induces us to ponder the nature of equivalence in the reciprocity of cross-cultural translation of religious notions. As Lydia H. Liu points out in a different context, the establishment of this equivalence cannot happen without tautology. "The tautology of difference as value within a structure of unequal exchange victimizes that difference by translating it as lesser value or non-universal value on an assumed ground of equivalence."[29] Hence comparison is constantly in crisis, as it cannot be conducted without overlooking this methodological tautology. In other words, crisis inherently creeps into any tentative attempt at comparison. Liu goes on to declare that until recently, "the ground of equivalence in

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26 R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, p. 379.

27 "Infinity is produced by withstanding the invasion of a totality, in a contraction that leaves a place for the separated being." E. Lévinas, *Totalité et Infini, essai sur l'extériorité*, Martinus Nijhoff, La Haye 1965, p. 67. English translation quoted after E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity. En Essay on Exteriority*, 4th ed., trans. A. Lingis, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht 1991, p. 104. See also R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, p. 499, note 337.

28 *Taihi* 大悲. See R. Ōhashi, *Kyōsei no patosu*, p. 386.

29 L.H. Liu, "Desire and Sovereign Thinking," [in:] *Grounds of Comparison. Around the Work of Benedict Anderson*, ed. Ph. Cheah, J. Culler, Routledge, New York–London 2003, p. 213.

unequal exchange is one of those areas that has received very little philosophical attention."[30]

Let me go a step further by pointing out one more tautology emerging together with the notion of equivalence. In any translation between different languages, formal (i.e., morphological) identity is automatically lost between the language of departure and that of arrival,[31] so long as the linguistic transfer is worthy of the name of translation (otherwise, translation work is not needed from the outset). As formal identity (on the level of *signifiant*) is fatally lost, it is at least expected that 'equivalence' in its semantic 'effect' (if not of *signifié* then at the least on the level of *signifiance*) be retained between the start and end point, despite linguistic transfer and morphological alteration in the course of translation.

In this guarantee of equivalence lies the very definition of 'relevance' in translation. In the monotheistic tradition of religious revelation, any act of translation has to face a fundamental dilemma. That is, being faithful to the epiphanic revelation may rule out any form of translation, as it inevitably alters the original message sent from God. (For example, Islam would not recognize as authentic any translations of the Qur'an from Arabic.) Yet the propagation of beliefs to people of different, foreign tongues cannot happen without translating the prophecy. Philo of Alexandria is known to have played an important role in this area. The notion of equivalence as faithful and reliable translation stems from his efforts of bridging Hebrew and Greek in the Holy Scripture in the aftermath of its first Greek translation (the Septuagint) two centuries earlier.

Towards a conclusion

Thus, translation inevitably has to be suspended between (imagined) fidelity and (real) infidelity. Equivalence here becomes a prerequisite for maintaining the (illusory) belief among peoples speaking different lan-

30 L.H. Liu, "Desire and Sovereign Thinking," p. 213.

31 I would like to point out here that I deliberately do not use the terms 'source language' or 'target language' as they automatically efface the tautology I am discussing.

guages (hence the Tower of Babel[32]). An imaginary community of common beliefs is sustained among foreigners by this illusion of sharing an equivalence bridging different translations of the original prophecy. However, equivalence here is no longer a matter of verification by way of comparison, but rather an issue of recognizing scriptural authenticity and religious authority. It no longer belongs to the realm of knowledge but becomes proof of religious acknowledgement. To put it in a different way, equivalence can by no means be established in translingual semantic migration (let alone in its phonetic and typographic identities), but is surreptitiously replaced by the question of belief: a confession of either assuming a particular translation is equivalent to the orthodox text or rejecting this identification as heresy.

Philosophers (such as Tanabe Hajime, Nishitani Keiji, and Ōhashi Ryōsuke) may well speculate on the possibility of equating kenosis in Christianity and nothingness in Zen Buddhism, i.e., *Śūnyatā* or *mahā karunā* in Mahayana Buddhism. These were the 'unique' Japanese intellectual endeavors in search of the universal. Exegesis on the issue may be developed in terms of compatibility or commensurability. Ultimately, however, the approval or denial of this equivalence is no longer the task of comparative philology or comparative religious studies. Rather, it relies on the decisions made by the religious authorities concerned. The discussion of 'equivalence' in translation thus results in the logical bankruptcy of 'equivalence' itself. Our exercise has so far demonstrated, I hope, that the notion of 'equivalence' is no longer a reliable/relevant scholarly technical term.[33]

By its very nature, comparison is always in crisis and crisis is by nature embedded in any attempts at comparison. A comparative approach is constantly floating on this unstable terrain. To return to the first part of the present paper, the comparative approach is therefore doomed to lose sight of any relevant perspective, either monocular or stereoscopic, and is open to ambiguous, transcultural polysemy – the polysemy being the 'margin' which allows for creating an illusion of successful communica-

32 Cf. J. Derrida, "Des tours de Babel," [in:] idem, *Psychè, inventions de l'autre*, Galilée, Paris 1987, p. 210.
33 Cf. A. Chesterman, *Memes of Translation. The Spread of Ideas in Translation Theory*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam–Philadelphia 1997, pp. 27–34, 123–133.

tion. The case of Mori Ōgai in the second part of the paper has revealed the hidden side of this illusion in Western claims of universality.

However, it is for this very reason that comparison is indefinitely capable of uncovering fallacious illusions of universality (the third part of the present paper is dedicated to revealing this purpose); it manifests its capacity of questioning and renewing the *status quo* of cultural heritage in humanities. In lieu of compensation, however, every methodology in comparative studies testifies to its own relevance at the very moment when it turns out to be invalidated. By revealing its irrelevance and by its own failure, comparison allows us, at its extreme limit, to understand the nature of the illusion, thereby revealing the gap – 'empty' 空 and 'void' 無 space 空間 – between the 'unique' and the 'universal.' Ultimately, here lies a unique way of questioning the universal.

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Abstract

How to Measure "Unique" or "Universal"? Comparison in Crisis or Crisis in Comparison

Is Japan contributing to world civilization? If yes, then to what extent? Is this contribution beneficial or negative? In order to examine these questions, the paper addresses three cases of cross-cultural transfers analyzed from a comparative perspective. First, we will examine the adoption of Western linear perspective as an example of a technological transfer in the Far East. Second, we will look at a legal issue in the field of international diplomatic negotiations. Finally, the third case discussed will deal with the intricacies of inter-religious understanding. The first case dates back to the second half of the eighteenth century, the second – to the end of the nineteenth century, while the last one became a topic of conversation in the mid-twentieth century. We hope that these three examples will help to elucidate the worldwide geopolitical circumstances as well as historical vicissitudes in which Japan's contribution to worldwide civilization can be measured. Applying a comparative approach and analyzing both the positive and the negative sides of the issues discussed will help us make a critical assessment of Japanese studies in the international dimension.

Keywords: linear perspective, Okumura Masanobu, Édouard Manet, Mori Ōgai, Red Cross, Sino–Japanese War, kenosis, Yihetuan Incident, Boxer Rebellion, Tanabe Hajime, *agape*, Nishitani Keiji, Ōhashi Ryōsuke, Christianity, nothingness, Zen Buddhism

chapter 2

Nishida Kitarō on the Uniqueness of Japanese Culture – the Problem of Logic and Scientific Spirit

Agnieszka Kozyra*

In Japan, the discourse on national cultural identity is referred to as the *Nihonjinron* (lit. 'the theory about Japanese people'). From the Meiji era (1868–1912), the purpose of discussing the unique features of Japanese culture was to consolidate the Japanese around the idea of a unique nation. The concept became popular after World War II, and books and articles in line with this trend were intended to analyze, explain, or explore the peculiarities of Japanese culture and mentality, usually in comparison with Europe and the United States. The literature on this subject is extensive and covers many fields, such as history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, linguistics, and philosophy.[1]

The theories of Nishida Kitarō (1830–1945) (Fig. 8), the founder of the philosophical Kyoto School, on the unique features of Japanese culture take into account historical arguments,[2] but the starting point for his deliberations on the subject is a metaphysical vision of reality as an

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1 K. Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan*, Routledge, London 1992, pp. 3–4.

2 Typically, three types of *Nihonjinron* arguments are distinguished: ecological/environmental, linguistic, and historical. The first of these arguments focuses on the problem of the so-called 'island mentality' (*shimaguni konjō*) of the Japanese, which influences the formation of strong social ties by cultivating common values and adherence to common norms. According to the second argument, the structure of the Japanese language influences the mentality of the Japanese. The last argument is historical and often refers to the dynastic continuity of the imperial family in Japan, emphasizing the role of the Emperor in different periods. Much attention is paid to the mono-culturalism and mono-ethnicity of Japan, as well as to the causes of collectivism, the source of which are, *inter alia*,

Figure 8. Portrait of Nishida Kitarō, September 1943. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

absolutely contradictory self-identity (*zettaimujunteki jikodōitsu*) and its logical consequences. Nishida believed that the absolutely contradictory self-identity is not only the structure of reality but also of the "primordial form of culture." All cultures of the world represent different directions of self-determination of such a primordial form of culture.[3]

Nishida's interpretation of Japanese cultural identity differs from the theory of Nakamura Hajime (1912–1999), a well-known Indologist and Buddhologist, which he presented in his book titled *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples. India, China, Tibet, Japan*.[4] Nakamura believed that in Japanese culture, the Shinto matrix determines the creatively adapted foreign religious and philosophical theories. In contrast, Nishida tries to show that the uniqueness of Japanese culture lies in the fact that it exhibits an exceptionally large amount of reflection on the experience

the traditional value of harmony (*wa*) and Confucian ethics related to the belief that there is a natural hierarchy in society.

[3] K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai" ["Reflections on Japanese Culture"], [in:] *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* [*Nishida Kitarō's Complete Works*], vol. 12, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1979, p. 377.

[4] H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples. India, China, Tibet, Japan*, ed. P.P. Wiener, East–West Center Press, Honolulu 1964.

of reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity. In his opinion, this reflection was most fully expressed in Buddhist teachings, especially in the Zen tradition. A comparative analysis of the theories of Nishida and Nakamura will aim to show that cultural identity is a construct, not only selectively created but also modified and interpreted in various ways. It should be noted that in such context, the notion of 'uniqueness' must be regarded as a relative idea, dependent on the point of view.

In my article *Tożsamość kulturowa Japonii a rzeczywistość jako absolutnie sprzeczna samotożsamość w filozofii Nishidy Kitarō* [*Cultural Identity of Japan and Reality as an Absolutely Contradictory Self-Identity in Nishida Kitarō's Philosophy*],[5] I analyzed this philosopher's views on such unique features of Japanese culture as: the primacy of pathos, an affirmation of temporality, a tendency to avoid complicated theories, and the unique position of the Emperor. In this paper, I would like to present Nishida's views on logic and the 'scientific spirit' in Japanese culture. Many researchers, including Nakamura Hajime, have shown that in Japanese culture, the emotional, intuitive aspect prevails, while the scientific and logical approach is marginal; therefore, Nishida's approach should be considered original and innovative.

After outlining the vision of reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity in Nishida's philosophy, I will discuss his views on the distinguishing features of Western and Eastern cultures, and then contrast his vision of logic and the spirit of science in Japanese culture with Nakamura Hajime's conclusions. The theories of Nishida and Nakamura are good examples, as their comparison proves that national cultural identity is a rather fluid construct, since it is often presented and interpreted in various ways.

[5] A. Kozyra, "Tożsamość kulturowa Japonii a rzeczywistość jako absolutnie sprzeczna samotożsamość w filozofii Nishidy Kitarō" ["Cultural Identity of Japan and Reality as an Absolutely Contradictory Self-Identity in Nishida Kitarō's Philosophy"], [in:] *W poszukiwaniu tożsamości kulturowej Japonii* [*In Search of Japanese Cultural Identity*], ed. A. Kozyra, I. Kordzińska-Nawrocka, Wydział Orientalistyczny UW, Warszawa 2020, pp. 35–64.

Reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity in the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō

Nishida Kitarō began practicing Zen at the Enkakuji Temple in Kamakura after being inspired by his close friend Suzuki Daisetsu.[6] According to Suzuki, Nishida attained Enlightenment (*satori*) in 1923, and the subsequent development of his philosophy is inextricably linked with the insight into reality obtained as a result of this breakthrough. Suzuki also quotes Nishida's words: "My thinking has reached the point where it cannot be expressed within the framework of conventional philosophical thinking."[7] What went beyond conventional thinking was his vision of reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity. It can be said that Nishida managed to implement what he wrote in his diary: "It would be good if someone, after getting Enlightenment, could explain the truth about Zen by creating a philosophical theory."[8]

Within reality, the structure of which is an absolutely contradictory self-identity, the unity of all elements does not exclude their separateness or difference. From the point of view of classical logic, such a definition does not follow the principle of the excluded middle (either identity or difference – there is no other option). However, according to Nishida, classical logic is applicable only to one aspect of reality, the aspect of difference, and ignores the other aspect, which is the identity of all elements of the universe. Only the logic of absolutely contradictory self-identity, in which the truth is a statement following the principle of internal contradiction ($A = A$ and $A \neq A$), is adequate to reality as an absolutely contradictory identity. All statements following classical logic are only partial truths about reality.

In Mahayana Buddhist texts, there are many sentences in which opposite concepts are identified, for example 'nirvana is [identical with]

6 Sh. Muramoto, "Nishida no zenron" ["Nishida on Zen"], [in:] *Zen to gendai sekai* [*Zen and the Contemporary World*], ed. Sh. Ueda, Zenbunka Kenkyūjo, Kyoto 1997, p. 91.
7 D. Suzuki, "Shokan" ["Letters"], [in:] *Suzuki Daisetsu zenshū* [*Suzuki Daisetsu's Collective Works*], vol. 28, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1968–1971, pp. 520–521.
8 M. Yusa, *Zen and Philosophy. An Intellectual Biography of Nishida Kitarō*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2002, p. 66.

samsara' (*shōji soku nehan*) or 'form is [identical with] emptiness' (*shiki soku kū*). Due to this fact, the researchers of Mahayana Buddhism have coined the term 'logic of simultaneous negation and affirmation' (*sokuhi no ronri*). However, absolutely contradictory self-identity implies not only unity of opposite elements but also unity of all the different elements. Such contradictory unity of all the elements of reality can be found in the description of Buddha Śākyamuni's[9] Enlightenment in the *Flower Garland Sutra* (Sanskt. *Avatamsaka sutra*; Jpn. *Kegongyō*) as a state in which 'one is all and all is one' (*ichi soku issai, issai soku ichi*).[10] In the Kegon School, such a state is also referred to as 'the state of mutual interpenetration of all phenomena' (*jijimuge*).[11] It can be said that the logic of 'the state of mutual interpenetration of all phenomena' in the Kegon School is a static aspect of Nishida's logic of absolutely contradictory self-identity, since it does not take into account the dynamic aspect – movement and change.[12]

Searching for the source of movement and changes in contradiction may evoke associations with Hegel's philosophy, but Nishida did not treat the development of reality as a one-way process of deriving synthesis from the contradiction of thesis and antithesis. In Hegel's thought, we will not find equivalents of the concepts of 'eternal now' (*eien no ima*) or 'final topos' (*kyūkyokuteki na basho*), which indicate the aspect of simultaneous existence both in the temporal and the spatial aspect. Nishida realized that his vision of a reality where 'one is all and all is one' seemed absurd from the viewpoint of common sense. However, in his philosophy, the existence of the sphere of stillness and timelessness (the sphere of simultaneous existence) does not exclude the movement and flow of time. On the one hand, in the world of absolutely contradictory self-identity, there occurs an infinite process of development (an aspect of movement), but on the other hand, there is a simultaneous existence

9 Jpn. *Shakamuni*.

10 See A. Kozyra, *Filozofia zen* [*Zen Philosophy*], Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2003.

11 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," pp. 365–366. Nishida believed that the Tendai theory of 'three thousand worlds in one thought' (*ichinen sanzen*) had similar logical consequences.

12 K. Nishida, "Zettaimujunteki jikodōitsu" ["Absolutely Contradictory Self-Identity"], [in:] *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* [*Nishida Kitarō's Complete Works*], vol. 9, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1979, p. 187.

of all the elements (the aspect of stillness). In the aspect of movement, "there is a continuous shift from what is created to what is creative, and as a result countless individual units are created."[13]

Reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity is an 'absolute nothingness' (*zettaimu*) in the sense that it cannot be objectified as an object of cognition available to the cognitive subject, because it is an internally contradictory unity of a subject and an object.

In the epistemological aspect of reality perceived as absolutely contradictory self-identity, Nishida used the concept of 'active intuition' (*kōiteki chokkan*). Man knows the world because he is identical with it – active intuition as a direct insight into reality means that man "thinks, becoming things, and acts, becoming things" (*mono to natte kangae, mono to natte okonau*).[14] It should be emphasized that the identity of the subject and the object of cognition in the act of active intuition is always internally contradictory – the subject is separate and, at the same time, identical with the object of cognition. Nishida refers to the concept of 'no-mind' (*mushin*) in the Zen tradition while explaining his understanding of active intuition. According to him, 'no-mind' is not a state of non-discrimination (*mufunbetsu*) but of 'discrimination without discrimination' (*mufunbetsu no funbetsu*), that is, discrimination in the aspect of difference and non-discrimination in the aspect of unity.[15] This is a reference to the words of the Sixth Patriarch Huineng (Jpn. Enō, 638–713), who stated that 'no-mind' is "thinking without thinking."[16]

Distinguishing features of selected Western and Eastern cultures

Nishida stated that the forms of culture in the West and in the East differ when perceived from the metaphysical point of view, since each

13 K. Nishida, "Keiken kagaku" ["Experimental Science"], [in:] *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* [*Nishida Kitarō's Complete Works*], vol. 9, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1979, p. 301.
14 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 342.
15 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 344.
16 *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, ed. P.B. Yampolsky, Columbia University Press, New York–London 1967, p. 138.

vision of reality has a different metaphysical premise. He distinguished the Western 'culture of being' (*u no bunka*) from the Eastern 'culture of nothingness' (*mu no bunka*), arguing that the ancient Greek culture has as its foundation the concept of being.[17] Nishida emphasized that in Greek philosophy, reality always has a form. "In Greek philosophy, one cannot find a theory in which reality is regarded as something absolutely infinite, something that absolutely transcends the object of sensual and rational cognition."[18] The culture of ancient Rome, unlike the aesthetic and intellectual culture of ancient Greece, was primarily related to politics and law.[19] Christianity with the idea of a personal and transcendent God has also become an important source of Western culture.[20]

In Europe, due to the proximity of various national cultures, there was a constant competition. However, the countries of the East separated by seas or mountain ranges were not in such a constant melting pot of confrontations.[21] According to Nishida, it is for this reason that there are certain characteristics common to Eastern cultures, but they do not form a common, coherent system of concepts.[22] The cultures of India, China, and Japan can be described as 'subjective' (subject-oriented) as opposed to the rational and 'objective' (object-oriented) cultures of the West. However, the cultures of India, China, and Japan differ significantly from one another.

Nishida claimed that, due to the propagation of Confucian philosophy, one can speak of a certain cultural unity in China, where social and political aspects are important.[23] The basis of Chinese culture is etiquette (*reizoku*) and the belief in eternal/unchanging human nature.[24] On the other hand, Indian culture, while also subjective, is religious. It is

17 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai* [*The Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*], *Nishida Kitarō zenshū* [*Nishida Kitarō's Complete Works*], vol. 7, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1979, p. 429.
18 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, pp. 430–431.
19 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, pp. 437–438.
20 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, p. 432.
21 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 285.
22 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 285.
23 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 339.
24 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," pp. 339, 356–357.

also intellectual, as was the culture of ancient Greece.[25] It is generally thought that in the philosophy of India, the problem of individual self was taken into consideration less often than in ancient Greek philosophy, but Nishida stressed that "the negation of separate, individual self in India must have been preceded by the profound analysis of individual self."[26] In the culture of India, the negation of a subject is important in order to reach its core, that is, the essence of the subject. However, the act of self-negation means being separated from the objects of cognition.[27] According to Nishida, in Indian philosophy the subject is "absorbed by the world."[28] "It melts into objects of cognition, therefore the exploration of subjectivity often stops at the stage of quiet contemplation. Indians, unlike the Japanese, have not developed a reflection on reality in which the subjective is absolutely contradictorily self-identical with the objective."[29] In this context, Nishida emphasizes that in Indian philosophy, there is no full reflection on reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity in which silence is as important as activity. For the same reason, the notions of creativity and productivity are not essential to the culture of India, contrary to Western culture.[30]

Nishida argued that the culture of Japan is not only subjective but also receptive (*juyōteki*). It is also due to the fact that in the Japanese tradition, the concept of harmonious coexistence of man and nature is crucial.[31] The emotional aspect and pathos are very important in Japanese culture. However, Nishida disagreed with the conclusion that in Japanese culture, the most important thing is the religious authority (*kyō*), characteristic of Eastern cultures, and not the scientific approach (*gaku*), typical of the West.[32] He was looking for the scientific spirit in Japanese culture, taking as a starting point the logical structure of reality conceived as an absolutely contradictory self-identity.

25 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 357.
26 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 357.
27 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 358.
28 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 367.
29 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 359.
30 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 377.
31 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 359.
32 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 279.

The problem of logic in Japanese culture

Nakamura emphasized that "it is historically true that the neglect of logic is one of the salient features of the traditional Japanese ways of thinking. Concrete intuitions are favored much more than abstract concepts devoid of any tangible connection with the humanly perceived world."[33] The logic of Buddhism called *inmyō*[34] was introduced in Japan by Dōshō (629–700) in the seventh century and since then the number of books written in Japanese on Buddhist logic has reached a considerable figure. However, Nakamura points out that Buddhist logic was employed only as a technique of expression in the case of questions and answers at Buddhist meetings. Almost all Buddhist sects in Japan came to hold such discussions (*rongi*), and *inmyō* logic was completely transformed into a formalized ceremony, a decorum of the most pious form.[35] No effort was made to set forth a well-organized logical system based upon a monk's own thinking. Therefore, when it came to Japan, logic as a discipline had nothing to do with mathematics or natural sciences. According to Nakamura, it was not simply that logical thinking was not developed among the Japanese people – "the significance of exact logic was not realized by them at all."[36]

It should be emphasized that when Nishida writes about Buddhist logic, he does not mean the logic of *inmyō*, but the logic of the "state of mutual interpenetration of phenomena" of the Kegon School, which does not follow the principle of the exclusive middle of classical logic. It is often the case that researchers try to analyze Buddhist texts, especially the teachings of Zen masters, from the point of view of classical logic and therefore conclude that they are "irrational" and "mystical." This is clearly seen in Nakamura's reflections on Dōgen's philosophy.

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33 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 542.
34 *Inmyō* logic (logic of argumentation) was traditionally studied as one of the auxiliary disciplines of the study of idealistic doctrines of the Hossō sect, one of the Buddhist schools in the Nara period.
35 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 545.
36 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 549.

Nakamura stated that some contemporary philosophers in Japan had tried to see in Dōgen,[37] who continued to write philosophical works through his lifetime, a pioneer of Japanese philosophy. However, according to Nakamura, Dōgen did not develop a logically coherent system of thought. He was a distinguished thinker as well as a high-minded spiritual leader, but he was not inclined to elaborate on his thoughts through a strictly logical system.[38] Nakamura quotes the following words of Dōgen: "Life and death matter little because the Buddha exists therein. And one is not perplexed by life and death because the Buddha does not exist therein."[39] According to Nakamura, "we have here two formally contradictory assertions about Buddha's existence. But the gist of what he meant by the two sentences was quite the same: Be resigned!"[40]

In my opinion, Nishida would not agree with such a conclusion, because for him the hidden meaning of this sentence was: "See the reality as an absolute contradictory identity of the phenomenal world and the Absolute." Recognizing as truth that 'Buddha exists in life and death,' and at the same time and in the same respect that 'Buddha does not exist in life and death' complies with the logic of the absolutely contradictory self-identity – Buddha (Buddhahood) refers to the aspect of the Absolute, and life and death – to the aspect of the relative (phenomenal). Dōgen, who attained Enlightenment in China, after returning to Japan stated that all he had learned was a 'Flexible Mind' (*jūnanshin*). According to Nishida, by a Flexible Mind Dōgen meant the most crucial term for Zen, the 'no-mind,' that is, the mind of a subject which is in an absolutely contradictory identity with all objects of cognition. In such a state of mind a person perceives and acts by becoming an object of cognition.[41]

It seems that Nakamura does not pay any attention to the logic of the state of mutual interpenetration of phenomena (a logic of an absolutely contradictory self-identity in the vision of reality in which 'one is all and all is one') consistently applied by Dōgen as well as by many other Zen

[37] Dōgen Kigen (1200–1253) – a Japanese Zen master, founder of the Sōtō School.
[38] H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 540.
[39] H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 541, note 27.
[40] H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 541.
[41] K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 347.

masters. This is also evident in his interpretation of the Buddhist theory of identity of phenomenal reality and the Absolute (*genjitsu soku jitsuzai*).

Nakamura claimed that Dōgen's teachings proved that the Japanese were willing to accept the phenomenal world as the Absolute and rejected the recognition of anything existing over and above the phenomenal world.[42] He stressed that "it was characteristic of the religious views of the ancient Japanese that they believed spirits reside in all kinds of things."[43] Although in Shinto this means that matter contains spirit or divinity, he did not pay attention to the problem of the relationship of spirit and matter in Japanese culture, focusing on the lack of a transcendent dimension in Japanese culture. Nakamura thought about 'identity' in terms of classical logic, and therefore to him to treat the world of phenomena as the Absolute simply means to absolutize the world of phenomena. From here it is only one step to the conclusion that there is only a world of phenomena, that there is no dimension other than temporality. According to Nakamura, such an absolutization of the world of phenomena is the reason for the Japanese tendency to "live contentedly in this given phenomenal world."[44] Nakamura believed that it was under the influence of Shinto that many representatives of various Japanese Buddhist schools emphasized the possibility of an ordinary man achieving Buddhahood, even during his present life (*sokushin jōbutsu*).[45] He quoted Dōgen's words that "the impermanence of grass, trees, and forests is verily the Buddhahood,"[46] adding that this sentence meant that "fluid aspect of impermanence is in itself the absolute state."[47] According to him, "the Japanese way of thinking centering upon life in this world transformed the basic Buddhist doctrines."[48]

On the other hand, Nishida emphasized that the theory of the identity of phenomenal reality with the Absolute (*genjitsu soku jitsuzai*) should be understood in accordance with the logic of the absolutely contradictory

42 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 350.
43 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 350.
44 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 354.
45 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, pp. 363–364.
46 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 352.
47 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 352.
48 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 363.

self-identity. Identity in this case does not mean that the identified elements are synonymous. According to Nishida, the absolute dimension is the identity (the unity) of all the elements of reality, but such identity is internally contradictory, therefore it also presupposes the existence of separate elements. Nishida believed that the absolutely contradictory self-identity of the Absolute and the phenomena is experienced in an act of a Buddhist Enlightenment. Thus understood, the Absolute is not transcendent, it is not outside our world, but it is something that human beings can find in the depths of their minds in the act of self-negation. The Absolute in Nishida's philosophy is an 'immanent transcendence' (*naizaiteki chōetsu*). In the aspect of identity/unity with the Absolute, man does not perceive the world subjectively, because there is no dualism of the subject and the object. It is not true that there is only a phenomenal reality (separate objects), because the act of the subject's self-negation reveals the absolute dimension of the Absolute at the bottom of the Self. This absolute dimension is the absolutely contradictory self-identity of all elements of reality.[49]

In this context, Nishida also quotes the words of Dōgen, which he believes to express the truth about the essence of reality:

> The world of birth and death [i.e., Samsara] is Buddha's life [i.e., Nirvana], whoever rejects our world loses Buddha's life. However, to stop only in this world also means losing Buddha's life. One should live in the state of Buddhahood. One can attain the Buddha Mind only when one neither rejects [this world] nor becomes attached to it.[50]

Nishida emphasized that in the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism, "absolute negation is the same as affirmation," but it is an intrinsically contradictory identity. He cited a Zen *kōan* in this context: "The willow is green and the flowers are red" as evidence that Buddhism "on the one hand postulates a departure from the phenomenal world, and on the other clearly presupposes sensualism."[51] This statement does not mean that there only exists a world of phenomena, because each phenomenon

49 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 347.
50 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 370.
51 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, p. 449.

reveals the truth about the hidden dimension of unity of all elements of reality.

Nishida emphasized the enormous influence that Zen had had on Japanese culture. During the Kamakura period, Zen became an important element of the samurai spirit, but it was not limited to this social layer – it had penetrated the lives of all the Japanese people.[52] Nishida pointed out that all elements of reality in Japanese art and literature were very often affirmed due to the influence of Zen. From the Buddhist teaching that 'one is all and all is one,' it can be concluded that even the smallest elements of reality have a hidden depth and contain the entire universe.

In this context, it is interesting to note the disagreement between Nishida and Nakamura about haiku poetry. Nakamura stressed that the Japanese language was unsuitable for logically precise expression, but it was well adapted to the expression of intuition and individual emotions.[53] The non-logical disposition of the Japanese and their emphasis on emotional moods are revealed in the form of their poetic expression. In the Japanese *tanka* poetry, the subject and the predicate are hardly ever distinguished, and the relation between the principal and the subordinate clauses is not clear. In haiku, where the abridgement of wording is taken to the extreme, words are cut down to a still shorter form; consequently, the emotional mood which is conveyed by each single word is of greater importance. According to Nakamura, "to interpret Buddhist ideas in poems, the Japanese people, using concrete imagery, appealed to sensuous intuition and added flavor of emotional moods to general ideas."[54]

Nishida, on the other hand, believed that in haiku, a form immensely influenced by Zen, the absolutely contradictory self-identity of the Absolute (Nirvana) and phenomena (Samsara) was fully expressed. "In a haiku poem, the world is captured in one particular moment."[55] In haiku, "there is no thing that is seen"[56] because the observer (the subject of cognition) experiences the identity together with the object of cognition. According

52 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, p. 449.
53 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 551.
54 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 556.
55 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, p. 445.
56 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 372.

to Nishida, feeling is neither objective nor subjective – "the emotional is impersonal."[57] In his opinion, it is possible to bestow someone/something with a feeling only in the state of unity of the subject and the object of cognition. "In fact, there is no inside and no outside in feeling. The concept of 'pathos of things' (*mono no aware*) has such a meaning."[58] It is worth noting that Nishida treated *mono no aware* as an ability to be empathetic, but he referred to Buddhism, not to Shinto, as Motoori Norinaga[59] did. According to the Buddhist interpretation, the source of *mono no aware* is a sense of impermanence, but Nishida disagreed with this conclusion. In his opinion, the source of empathy is the experience of reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity. A man is always identical with all the elements of the world, although he or she retains his or her individuality and therefore is able to 'empathize' (experience unity) with them.

Nishida believed that emotionality understood in this way should not be associated with irrationality (as seen in Nakamura), because feeling as a state of unity of the subject and the object of cognition is a manifestation of the active intuition as a 'non-differentiating differentiation,' which includes also the aspect of reason (differentiation).

It should be emphasized that Nishida did not disregard the importance of logic developed in the West, meaning not only the logic of Aristotle, but also the dialectic of Hegel.[60] However, he disagreed with the conclusion that the so-called Western logic was the only logic of thinking about reality. For Nishida, Western logic was "the logic of things/objects of cognition" (*mono no ronri*), the logic from the point of view of the subject-object dualism.[61] In contrast, he regarded the Buddhist logic of the "state of interpenetrating phenomena" (*jijimuge*) as a "logic of the mind" (*shin no ronri*).[62] One might question this conclusion by saying that there is no 'logic of the mind' because the object of logic must not be subjec-

57 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, p. 444.
58 K. Nishida, *Tetsugaku no konpon mondai*, p. 444.
59 Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) – representative of the National Learning School (*kokugaku*).
60 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 361.
61 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 362.
62 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 363.

tive. However, it is not possible to study the material world in isolation from the human mind. In Buddhist philosophy, the key concept is the I/Self (*ga*), which is treated neither as a subject nor as an object of cognition. As argued by Nishida, the I/Self is the absolutely contradictory self-identity of the subject and the object of cognition, and therefore it is at the same time separate from the world and identical with it. If one analyzes the aspect of reflecting the world in the mind, then one moves "from the environment/from the objects of cognition to the subject" (*kankyō kara shutai e*) – this is the direction of Western philosophy and Western logic.[63] In Western philosophy, the world does not contain the subject, the subject is not negated, it is always an observer separate from the world. Contrary to this approach, in Buddhist philosophy one can find a direction "from the subject to the environment/to the objects of cognition" (*shutai kara kankyō e*).[64] In this direction, the subject is negated in such a way that it does not lead to the annihilation of the subject but to a perfect knowledge of the objects of cognition, because in such a state, man "thinks, becoming the object of cognition, and acts, becoming the object of cognition" (*mono ni natte miru, mono ni natte okonau*).[65] In such a state, "becoming the object of cognition" is not metaphorical – the subject, precisely because it is absolutely contradictorily self-identical with the objects of cognition, "enters things and perceives them from their inside" (*mono no naka ni haitte, mono no naka kara mono o miru*).[66]

Nishida pointed out that even in the Buddhist tradition one can find a tendency to keep the principle of the excluded middle of classical logic in the analysis of the relation of the subject and the object of cognition. For instance, the unity of the mind (a subject) and objects of cognition is sometimes misinterpreted as solipsism – the idea that the 'only mind' exists. This constitutes a negation of the existence of objective reality and recognizing that the objects of cognition are merely a projection of the mind.[67]

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63 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 365.
64 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 345.
65 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 380.
66 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 380.
67 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," pp. 364–365. For instance, the so-called 'Only Mind' theory (*yuishinron*).

Although Nishida used the terms "Western logic" and "Eastern logic," he always insisted that there were no two different kinds of logic. There is no English math or German physics – there is just physics and math, although there may be math and physics schools that have been most active in a certain country. There is one logic, but it has branched off in different directions in the process of its historical development. Nishida believed that the Buddhist logic of "the state of interpenetrating phenomena" had so far been regarded as merely the logic of religious experience and had not been applied to things.[68] It can be said that Nishida's logic of the absolutely contradictory self-identity, which also takes into account the aspect of changes in the historical world, can be interpreted as a further development of Buddhist logic.

Scientific spirit in Japanese culture

According to Nakamura, the Japanese of the past were for a long time inclined to neglect the rational perception of laws of the objective world of nature. The reason is that the imaginative power of the Japanese, ever since ancient times, has been limited to, and has rarely gone beyond, the concrete and intuitive world of nature. The Japanese people are inclined to grasp the order of laws of the objective world of nature in relation to humans rather than as a law of objective things. This neglect of objective cognition is reflected in the usage of the Japanese language.[69] As a consequence, the Japanese language is, generally speaking, very poor in imaginative words based on abstract and universal ideas.[70] Nakamura Hajime believed that the lack of a scientific approach in Japanese culture was best expressed by Motoori Norinaga, who had written about the spirit of ancient Japan: "In ancient times, we had no talk at all even about the Way." It is a reference to Kakinomoto no Hitomaro (ca. 700), who declared that "in our land covered with reed and rice-ears, they have not argued since the time of gods." Not to argue means not to expatiate or indulge in much talk, as is the custom in foreign countries.[71]

68 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," pp. 289–290.
69 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 573.
70 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 557.
71 H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p. 539, note 22.

Nishida also referred to Motoori Norinaga's claims that in Japan, the land of gods, one did not criticize or conduct polemics for the sake of polemics, and did not create concepts for the sake of concepts.[72] However, he paid special attention to Motoori's words about "ways directly leading to things themselves," which Nakamura did not comment on. For Nishida, this was an important indication that the most important thing in Japanese culture was to search for the truth about the essence of reality, and not to maintain tradition in the conventional way or to surrender to subjective feelings.[73] In his opinion, the spirit of Japan, which Motoori compared to "a cherry blossom shining[74] in the morning sun," is a spirit of "honesty, objectivity, and justice."[75] Any scientific research must also be objective and fair,[76] so Nishida tried to show that Japanese culture contained a 'scientific spirit' exactly in this aspect of seeking truth about the essence of reality. "One should bow one's head humbly before the truth,"[77] which means that one should strive for the truth uncompromisingly, devoting oneself entirely to it. One should not be afraid of the truth, since it is cowardice comparable to avoiding a confrontation with the enemy. The spirit of Japan is not the spirit of a coward. It does not accept evasion of confrontation with the truth or protection of the status quo. The spirit of Japan is always objective and fair, courageously striving for the truth. In this context, Nishida quoted the following poem by Fujita Tōko:[78]

The majestic and honest Spirit of Heaven and Earth
in its pure form it is present in the divine country of Japan.
As it rises – this is the incomparable peak of Mount Fuji […]
And when it penetrates everything – it's a cherry tree in full bloom.[79]

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72 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 279.
73 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 279.
74 Nowadays, the word *niou* means 'to give off fragrance,' but since the cherry blossoms do not give off any fragrance, the word, according to its classical use, means 'to shine.'
75 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 279.
76 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 279.
77 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 280.
78 Fujita Tōko (1806–1855) – representative of the so-called Mito School, whose views inspired the supporters of overthrowing the Tokugawa regime and the restoration of imperial power.
79 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," p. 288.

Nishida was convinced that the structure of reality was an absolutely contradictory self-identity, therefore the reflection on the absolutely contradictory self-identity in Japanese culture was for him extremely valuable also from a scientific point of view. In his opinion, the Japanese spirit transcends subjectivity and, in its depths, reaches the truth about things in the act of cognition when the subject becomes an object by self-negation. The Japanese spirit is consonant with the spirit of the East but at the same time, as a manifestation of striving for the objective truth, complies with the spirit of the West. In this sense, one may say that Japanese culture unites the East with the West.

Conclusions

Nishida did not agree with the opinion that Western culture and Western logic were the only possible and correct direction for human development. The global culture does not develop in any specific direction, so it is a mistake to search for only one universal criterion in any discipline, for instance in aesthetics. As is commonly known, the criterion of beauty which was created in ancient Greece cannot be applied either to the art of non-European cultures or to European art in other periods, such as Gothic art.[80]

Nishida defines the spirit of science as an uncompromising pursuit of truth and finds this approach in Japanese culture. His theory could also explain why, of all Asian countries, Japan was the fastest in adopting science and technology from the West and has also been successful in various fields of science.

One may ask why science, in the Western meaning of this word, did not develop in Japan on the basis of the Buddhist 'logic of mind.' Nishida would probably suggest a change to this question: "Why not yet…," because he tried to prove that scientific evidence for reality being an absolutely contradictory self-identity could be found primarily in the

80 K. Nishida, "Nihon bunka no mondai," pp. 287–288. Nishida refers to the theories of Alois Riegl and Wilhelm Worringer.

micro-world (e.g., in the results of quantum mechanics experiments) and in the macro-world (e.g., Einstein's theory of relativity).[81]

As can be seen from the above comparison of the views of Nishida Kitarō and Nakamura Hajime, the idea of national cultural identity is a result of a selective reflection on the culture of a given nation in terms of its distinguishing elements. Cultural identity is constantly being reshaped and significant differences can be seen in the choice of the cultural elements that are to form its basis in various theories.

Currently, all those who conduct research on the unique features of national cultures must take into account the views of Wolfgang Welsch, the founder of the theory of transculturalism, as a distinguishing feature of all cultures.[82] Welsch criticized theories of unique features of national cultures, believing that they ignored the phenomenon of transculturality and enhanced chauvinistic sentiments. Welsch was right when he pointed to the relation between national cultural identity and chauvinism. However, in my opinion, the research on the national cultural identity of a given nation is important, because it allows us to discover a system of symbols which is set up in long-lasting moods and motivations that have a great influence on the identity of an individual. National cultural identity is an ethos that unites at least some citizens, because it gives them a sense of community and solidarity without which they are not able to carry out specific tasks while supporting one another. The historical, social, and political determinants of the discourse on national cultural identity should be clarified by researchers, so that they can explain why certain cultural elements have been recognized as integral parts of a certain national cultural identity not only by individuals, but also by educational institutions.

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81 More regarding this problem in: A. Kozyra, "Nishida Kitarō's Philosophy of Absolute Nothingness (*Zettaimu no tetsugaku*) and Modern Theoretical Physics," *Philosophy East and West* 2018, no. 68(2), pp. 423–446.

82 W. Welsch, "Transkulturowość. Nowa koncepcja kultury" ["Transculturalism. A New Concept of Culture"], trans. B. Susła, J. Wietecki, [in:] *Filozoficzne konteksty rozumu transwersalnego. Wokół koncepcji Wolfganga Welscha* [*Philosophical Contexts of Transversal Reason. Around Wolfgang Welsch's Concepts*], ed. R. Kubicki, Wydawnictwo Fundacji Humaniora, Poznań 1998, p. 197.

Showing the heterogeneity of the discourse on national cultural identity in a given country is very important, because the diversity of theories on this subject shows that national cultural identity as a construct is not something irrefutable and unchangeable. This leads to a further conclusion that it only depends on the individuals when it comes to which of these discourses they will deem persuasive and with which version of national identity they will identify, even when they are subject to indoctrination in the 'national spirit' by educational institutions or the media. Of course, in many cases national cultural identity is not an important aspect of an individual's identity, but the 'resurgences of nationalisms' which are now noticeable all over the world prove that national cultural identity is not a relic of the past which should not be dealt with by 'progressive' intellectuals.

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Abstract

Nishida Kitarō on the Uniqueness of Japanese Culture – the Problem of Logic and Scientific Spirit

The purpose of this text is to provide an analysis of Nishida Kitarō's (1870–1945) views on logic and 'scientific spirit' in Japanese culture. Many researchers, including Nakamura Hajime, claim that the emotional, intuitive aspect prevails in Japanese culture, and the scientific and logical approach is marginal, therefore Nishida's approach should be considered original and innovative. I introduce the vision of reality as an absolutely contradictory self-identity in

Nishida's philosophy and link it to the problem of distinguishing features of Western and Eastern cultures (India, China, and Japan). Nishida's view on logic and the spirit of science in Japanese culture is confronted with Nakamura Hajime's opinions. The theories of Nishida and Nakamura are good examples, since their comparison proves that national cultural identity is a rather fluid construct, often presented and interpreted in various ways.

Keywords: Nishida Kitarō, absolutely contradictory self-identity, scientific spirit, logic, Nakamura Hajime, Japanese culture

chapter 3

'Binal-Relationship' and '*Mono no Aware*' in Mori Arimasa

Wakui Yōko

Introduction

The theme of this volume is a discussion on whether Japanese culture is *unique* or *universal*. Naturally, to give an answer to this question, it is necessary to understand what the term *universal* means and, consequently, what the term *unique* means in comparison to *universal*. For example, the phrase *mono no aware* (as defined by Motoori Norinaga) is thought to be a key word to understanding the nature or the criteria of beauty shared by the Japanese people. However, *mono no aware* is also thought to encompass humans. In the modern age, freedom and independence of the individual have been recognized as supreme values. However, having taken this approach, can it also be said that the view of an individual in *mono no aware* is universal?

In his work, Mori Arimasa (1911–1976), a modern Japanese philosopher, compared the concept of man as seen from the European perspective to the one emerging from *mono no aware*. This paper will take a closer look at *mono no aware* in relation to the term 'binal-relationship,' which was coined by Mori.

A brief biography and main works of Mori Arimasa

Mori Arimasa was born in Tokyo in 1911. Iwakura Tomomi (1825–1983), his great-grandfather, was one of the leading court nobles who over-

threw the Tokugawa Shogunate and took part in the founding of the Meiji Government, promoting the Westernization of Japanese society. Hiroko, Mori's grandmother, was Iwakura's fifth daughter.

Mori Arinori (1847–1889), his grandfather, was the first Minister of Education in the Meiji Government, and before being appointed to the post, he had left for the United States and England as an ambassador. He endeavored to modernize the Japanese educational system, however, his efforts in the area of education came to a halt with his tragic death on February 2, 1889 – the day of the promulgation ceremony of the Meiji Constitution. He was assassinated by a nationalist displeased with Arinori's agenda of rapid modernization.

Mori Akira (1888–1925), Arimasa's father, was the only son of Arinori and Hiroko. He was only nine months old when he lost his father. Some fifteen years later, he and his mother were guided towards Christianity by Frank Muller, a man from an American mission who had been invited to the Meiji Government by Arinori as an English teacher. Christianity appealed to them so strongly that they were baptized by famous minister Masahisa Uemura (1858–1925) of the Reformed Church. Eventually, Mori Akira became a minister himself and founded the Nakashibuya Church in Tokyo. With an aim to preach Christianity to the younger generation, he founded the Imperial University Student Christian Association (Teikoku Daigaku Gakusei Kirisutokyō Kyōjokai), which ended up being one of his most prominent achievements during his short life (he died at the age of 37). He married Tokugawa Yasuko of the shogunal family, who had received a Western style education and was a Christian like him. In consequence, young Arimasa was brought up in an atmosphere strongly influenced by Christian and Western thought.

Arimasa spent his elementary and junior high school days at Gyōsei Gakuin, a Catholic school in Tokyo founded by the French Society of Mary, so he had been learning French as his second language from a very young age. Though he became familiar with Catholicism at school, he kept his Protestant faith.

He entered the Department of French Literature of the Tokyo Imperial University (currently University of Tokyo) in 1932 and graduated in 1938,

specializing in seventeenth-century French philosophy, especially Blaise Pascal and René Descartes. After graduation, he continued his studies at the graduate school and as a research student at the Tokyo Imperial University.

The turning point in his life came in 1950, five years after the end of World War II. He went to France as one of the first postwar Japanese exchange students on a scholarship granted by the French government. His initial study plan was to complete his doctoral thesis on Pascal within one year, however, he eventually decided to stay there, leaving his family in Tokyo and resigning his position as an associate professor at the University of Tokyo. In 1955, he began to teach Japanese language at the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations, first as a part-time instructor. Later on, he lectured on Japanese literature and thought at the University of Paris as a professor. He stayed in France until his death in 1976.

Mori's main output can be clearly divided into two parts: the works written before going to France and those created during his stay there. In Japan, he published *Pasukaru no hōhō* [*The Method of Pascal*] (1943), *Dekaruto yori Pasukaru e* [*From Descartes to Pascal*] (1943), *Dekaruto no ningenzō* [*The Image of Man in Descartes*] (1948), *Kindai seishin to kirisutokyō* [*Modern Spirit and Christianity*] (1948), *Dosutoefusukī oboegaki* [*Note on Dostoevsky*] (1950). He also translated French books into Japanese. His translation achievements include an abridged version of Pascal's *Les Provinciales* (1938), *Pascal* by Émile Boutroux (1942), *Sermons de Jean Calvin* (1943), *Histoire de mes pensées* by Alain (1944), *De l'esprit géométrique* by Pascal (1946), and *La recherche de la vérité par la lumière naturelle* by Descartes (1947). It is surprising that he was able to publish such a large number of studies on Pascal, Descartes, and Dostoevsky, as well as translations, especially in such a short period, that is, during the seven years between 1943 and 1950 (the year he departed for France).

During his stay in France, Mori published *Babiron no nagare no hotori nite* [*On the Flow of Babylon*] (1957) as well as *Nagare no hotori nite* [*On the Flow*] (1959), *Jōmon no katawara nite* [*By the Side of the Castle Gate*] (1963), and *Sabaku ni mukatte* [*Towards the Desert*] (1970). These books, collectively called the Series of Babylon, are philosophical essays written in an epistolary style, and much different in both style and content from Mori's

books published in Japan. He also wrote two other philosophical essays with Notre-Dame in the title: *Haruka na Nōtoru Damu* [*A Faraway Notre--Dame*] (1967) and *Tōzakaru Nōtoru Damu* [*A Receding Notre-Dame*] (1976).

In his later years, Mori's interests led him to start thinking about the mentality of the Japanese people and about Christianity. In particular, *Keiken to shisō* [*Experience and Thought*] (1977) shows his own profound insight and understanding of Japanese sensitivity, mentality, and way of thinking. In this book, he sets out in detail his ideas about 'experience.' He gives here his unique definition of the term 'experience' which constitutes the core of his thoughts. I will take up his idea of 'experience' in the following sections.

The relationship between 'sense,' 'experience,' and 'thought' in Mori Arimasa's writings

Recollecting his anxiety for Paris on the way to Marseilles in *Babiron no nagare no hotori nite*, Mori wrote as follows:

> Though I had just arrived there, I wanted to go back to Japan. It was unbearably terrible for me to go to Paris. I felt that in Paris there was surely something uncontrollable and beyond my capacity… To explain my fear in detail: it was a feeling that in Paris there was something hard and of high density which I could never control. And then it was a feeling that Paris knew nothing about me and never had a need of me. You would say that it was I who needed Paris and also I who would learn a lot of things there. But as far as I understand it, this is not the case. What on earth could we learn in Paris? The idea itself seems ridiculous and a mere folly. *All* that we can learn *by ourselves* in Paris, we can also learn in Japan.[1]

In the passage quoted above, we can see Mori's recognition of the weight of European civilization and his own pride in himself having a deep understanding of it. What made him assert those ideas were the

[1] A. Mori, "Babiron no nagare no hotori nite" ["On the Flow of Babylon"], [in:] *Mori Arimasa zenshū* [*Complete Works of Mori Arimasa*], vol. 1, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1978, pp. 15–16. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

following: (1) his European life environment which was better compared to that of other Japanese people in the early 1900s; (2) his commitment to Christianity from a very young age; (3) his long period of study of Pascal, Descartes, and French humanists and moralists. Through those elements he was able to experience a strong connection with the European civilization. Among the three reasons mentioned above, it was his inquiry into Christianity that was the most important one as it formed the basis for almost all of his works.

It seemingly means that him having been overtaken by a strong desire to return to Japan on arriving in France was his unconscious intuition and realization of what existed in European civilization as "something hard and of high density" and "something" that he "could never control." It gradually occurred to him that without building an actual and proper relationship between himself and the European civilization he could not find out "how human beings become human," this particular phrase being later repeated in his books. In the end, he chose to stay in Paris, renouncing his career and leaving his family in Japan. Through a difficult struggle to understand the European way of thinking, he realized that European thinkers conceptualized the meaning of 'thought' very differently from how it was perceived by the Japanese. While Japanese thinkers put forward a definition of a 'thought' as an idea a person might have, that is, some feelings or expressed opinions, the Europeans had formulated a precise and full definition of it. He summarized this conclusion in the following way:

> Whenever they refer to 'thought,' it is understood that there exists an inseparable relationship between the individual consciousness on one hand, and the universal value on the other. The contents of the individual consciousness naturally remain within the conditions delineated by perception, therefore, directly and indisputably within itself. To start from perception and continue on through abstraction and generalization, the individual consciousness attains recognition with universal values. This is the idea of 'thought' expressed in the form of the proposition 'condensed and of high density' after being reduced to the essential elements.[2]

[2] A. Mori, *Keiken to shisō* [*Experience and Thought*], Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo 1977, pp. 62–63.

As we see above, the 'individual consciousness' is the starting point of 'thought' and it remains "within conditions delineated by perception, therefore, directly and indisputably within itself." Without this individual consciousness, or perception, 'thought' could not be produced. Mori gave a definition to this process starting from 'individual consciousness' or 'perception' and leading to 'thought' or 'experience' (*keiken*). He found that European civilizations were cultivating exactly this system of developing from 'experience' to 'thought' and deepening the 'individual consciousness' into an 'universal value.' From antiquity through the Middle Ages to modern times, Europeans achieved it by interrogation, affirmation, negation, refutation, and dialectic. This system is prevalent not only in academic circles but also in every facet of European life; in other words, it is the essence of Europe. Mori realized that what he felt in Marseilles, and what formed "something hard and of high density in Paris," was the very essence of Europe which involved 'thought' and embodied it constantly in every phase of life.

In Paris, the finding of 'experience' and 'thought' resulted from Mori's awakening to 'sense' through his contact with things. It must be emphasized that his awakening had never taken place in Japan, but only in Paris: through nature, buildings, streets, and human relationships with Europe's historical background.

'Experience' and 'binal-relationship' in the Japanese people

Mori gave his own new definitions to the old and traditional notions of 'sense,' 'experience,' and 'thought.' There is a mutual relationship between those terms, and the last word in this sequence – 'thought' – aims at 'universality.' And 'universality' is achieved by performing a continuous work of deepening, theorizing, and systematizing through the process of thinking.

The contact with people, nature, and with spiritual things in Paris resulted in Mori's 'awakening' to 'sense.' It also made him notice the "profound tendency" in 'sense' and 'experience' of the Japanese people. He noticed that the process where 'sense' developed into 'experience' was formed only in the relationship between 'the first person' and 'the

third person.' In European 'experience,' 'the first person' and 'the third person' – 'I' and 'he/she/it' – are independent and solitary. However, the Japanese people do not perceive such a relationship between 'the first person' and 'the third person.' Therefore, it is very rare in case of the Japanese to have this 'sense' develop into 'experience.' In comparison, the general relationship on which they focus is the one between 'I' and 'you' ('the second person'). The 'I' in this relationship is not the 'I' contrasted with 'the third person' as it fundamentally lacks an independent and solitary self. It always changes its 'self' according to 'you.' And at the same time, 'you' is fundamentally connected to 'I' and changes its 'self' accordingly. A 'you-you' relationship like this shares an intimate and close bond, which is strictly internal, and it aims at sharing the intimacy itself. Mori named this relationship the private 'binal-relationship.'

Mori points out that this private 'binal-relationship' has two features. One is that 'experience' for the Japanese people is not a solitary occurrence, that is, it occurs between two persons. In the 'you-you' relationship, the 'I' does not operate as a completely independent personality, but it changes itself like a function, depending on to whom the 'I' is talking. A variety of words used to express the first personal pronoun in the Japanese language illustrates this fact. Basically, the Japanese language did not have the pronouns to express the third person until European grammar was introduced. This means that the Japanese did not have a clear notion of the third person.

The Japanese use a different first-person pronoun depending on their social position, sex, age, and their level of intimacy with the speaker, being able to choose from such examples as *watashi*, *watakushi*, *ore*, *ora*, *atashi*, *boku*, *temae*, *kochira*, *jibun* and so on. To directly address another speaker, they choose one of the Japanese second person pronouns of *anata*, *anata-sama*, *kimi*, *sochira-sama*, *omae*, *omē*, *temē*, *kisama* and so on. However, more often, when they address others directly, they append *-sama*, *-san*, *-kun*, *-chan* or *-sensei* after their first or family names, and the selection of the suffix depends on their relationship to the other speaker.[3] The existence of so many words to perform the function of the

[3] One can find a more detailed analysis of and reflection on the modes of expressions in Japanese language in A. Berque, *Kūkan no Nihon bunka* [*Experiencing*

first and the second person pronoun in the Japanese language is a clear evidence of this 'binal-relationship.' Mori suggests that the 'binal-relationship' occurs mutually and interchangeably.

The other feature of the 'binal-relationship' is the inequality between the two persons, that is, a hierarchical, or a vertical, relationship reflecting their social standing. Mori studies this problem through the analysis of honorific expressions used in Japanese, and by noting the difficulties he experienced while trying to teach the language to French students.[4]

An outline of Mori's understanding and usage of the term 'experience' should be given here before explaining the term in the context of 'binal-relationship'. His 'experience' completely differs from the use of the term in empiricism and in the opposing argument of idealism. He explains 'experience' as follows:

> I found that 'experience' is the meaning of myself. Each individual has the person's own 'experience' and it cannot be replaced by another person's 'experience.' To be a human being is the same as to have one's own 'experience,' and the 'experience' defines the self of the person. It is impossible to think about a human being without the person's 'experience.'[5]

Space in Japan], trans. M. Miyahara, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1985, originally published as *Vivre l'espace au Japon*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1982.

4 Mori points out that honorific expressions, the expressions of the vertical human relationship in the Japanese language, construct the nature of the Japanese language itself. In his *Leçons de Japonais*, he explains it as follows: "In Japanese language, the language of respect occupies a particularly important, even a privileged place. It is in this particular aspect of Japanese that the real social life of the people and their linguistic space interact in the most intimate way. The fundamentally Japanese social structure and its emotional traits flow directly into the polite language, and thus the Japanese language is a faithful reflection of the human relations in the community. **Respectful language is therefore not only a part of Japanese, but it is rooted in its most intimate spirit. The positive and negative degrees of respect animate and determine the concrete expression of this language which thrusts the entirety of it into a rigidly hierarchical community. In this case, for this particular language, a neutral and indifferent utterance about it is rather an exception**." (bold in original, trans. by the author) A. Mori, *Leçons de Japonais*, Taishūkan Shoten, Tokyo 1972, p. 96.

5 A. Mori, *Ikiru koto to kangaeru koto* [*To Live and to Think*], Kōdansha, Tokyo 1965, pp. 49–50.

In other words, by 'experience,' Mori means the life of a person itself. It is limited by the historical time, birthplace, upbringing, nature, culture, society, race, gender, language, etc. Although the conditions vary, 'experience' reveals to us the truth of life. Mori mentions it in many of his books: "There are many people, and naturally they have numerous experiences, but there is only one 'experience.'" This idea of "only one experience" leads us to think that 'experience' is universal to Mori.

According to him, the 'binal-relationship' is a characteristic of the 'experience' of the Japanese people, and it has a critical influence on them. This leads to the following two results: (a) for the Japanese people, 'experience' cannot produce the self of the first person which is necessary for each person's experience to become an 'experience,' and (b) in the actual forms of human relationships, the 'binal-relationship' always derives emotions from vertical and social relationships.

In Europe, 'thought' starts from 'sense' and through the process of abstraction, it becomes 'experience' or forms a certain proposition. By comparison, among the Japanese the 'binal-relationship' utterly infiltrates the process of 'sense'—'experience'—'thought,' and does not produce the 'self' of the first person. Mori suggests that 'experience' is the base of 'thought,' however, 'experience' of the Japanese people is inseparably tied to the linguistic structure of the Japanese language, to the way they express themselves and to the methods of how they construct 'thought.'

'Binal-relationship' and *mono no aware*

Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) (Fig. 9), a scholar of ancient Japanese thought and culture, defined *mono no aware* as the source of expression of traditional Japanese emotions and sensitivity through his studies of *Kokin wakashū* [*Collection of Japanese Poems of Ancient and Modern Times*], *Shin kokin wakashū* [*New Collection of Japanese Poems from Ancient and Modern Times*], and *Genji monogatari* [*The Tale of Genji*]. Motoori wrote that *aware* originated from 'ah,' the breathing sound of deep emotion uttered when someone is moved by something. In *Aware-ben* [*On* Aware] written in 1757, he argued that the substance of *waka*,

a 31-syllable Japanese lyrical form, should be the Japanese inherent feeling of *mono no aware*, defined also as sensitivity to things.[6] Since then, *mono no aware* has been accepted as the key literary and aesthetic notion to express Japanese emotions towards the fleeting nature of beauty.

I will give some thoughts on *mono no aware* as described by well-known Japanese language specialist Ōno Susumu (1919–2008) in his *Genji monogatari no mono no aware* [Mono no aware *in* The Tale of Genji]. Ōno points out that even though Motoori gave a detailed explanation on *aware* in *mono no aware*, he did not make any reference to *mono*. Ōno divides *mono no aware* into three parts: *mono*, *no*, and *aware*, and classifies the meanings of *mono* into the following five groups: (1) a general rule occurring in the world, (2) ceremonies, rites, and festivals, (3) destiny, an established fact, and the course of an event, (4) a being, and (5) a vengeful ghost. *No* is a particle which determines the place of existence or of belonging between a noun and another noun.[7]

Mono in tandem with *aware* implies 'a rule,' 'destiny' or 'an established fact,' 'the course of nature' and 'the rapidly and impenetrably changing seasons.' In these examples of *mono*, it can be noticed that they all stand in for something powerful, something beyond human capabilities, like destiny, rules that must be obeyed, or the inevitably changing seasons. Ōno recognizes *aware* with such *mono* as a kind of sentimentality – closer rather to the feelings of sadness or loneliness than to joy or delightfulness. Therefore, the seasons of *aware* for the Japanese people are not spring and summer but rather autumn and winter, when nature's creations wither, disappear, and die. The notion of *aware* may then be helpful in finding some clues about the humans' primordial attitudes towards nature. However, its presence in Japanese culture may also be found in the feelings of the Japanese people towards their personal and social relationships.

6 N. Motoori, "Awareben" ["On *Aware*"], [in:] *Motoori Norinaga zenshū* [*Complete Works of Motoori Norinaga*], vol. 4, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1969, pp. 583–588.
7 S. Ōno, *Genji monogatari no mono no aware* [Mono no aware *in* The Tale of Genji], Kadokawa Shoten, Tokyo 2001.

Figure 9. Motoori Norinaga self-portrait. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

Mono no aware gives words to the Japanese people to express their personal will and desire when they feel oppressed by the rules of society. It also enables them to react to the fragility of nature, as the short period of flower bloom is often paralleled with the fragility of human life. However, we need to remember that *mono no aware* is not only a sympathy for fragile things but also an important criterion for beauty in Japanese literature.

Mori refers to Motoori Norinaga when comparing 'experience' as it was understood by European philosophers, like Pascal or Descartes, to its conceptualization by Japanese thinkers. He believes that the Japanese emotions have accumulated from ancient times only to condense in the concept of *mono no aware*. With both its characteristics and its distortion, he can grasp the unique shape of 'existence' of the Japanese people.

Mori writes that 'existence' has not been seen as an abstract concept in the history of Japanese philosophy. The cases of looking at this concept as a problem to be solved used to be very rare. It was only after contact with the Western thought, especially with Christianity, that 'existence' was taken up as an idea in Japanese philosophy. Japanese intellectuals tried to live existentially, and for many of them, their lives ended tragically. For example, Arishima Takeo and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke committed suicide, and Uchimura Kanzō lost his position as a professor and suffered persecution through his life because of his Christian faith.

Where does Mori place *mono no aware* in his 'binal-relationship'?

> It is very interesting to take into consideration how the ancient Japanese, who lived in their original and primitive culture, reacted and expressed emotions towards nature and humans… When I say 'reacted' and 'emotions,' what I mean is the general circumstances and the way in which the ancient Japanese people responded to nature, things, and humans. It is also the very problem of how they *recovered their mental equilibrium*, that is, what made them calm and what helped them in returning to their stable state.[8]

[8] A. Mori, *Keiken to shisō*, pp. 62–63.

The Japanese people regain their mental composure and *recover their mental equilibrium* by keeping in mind and being aware of the 'binal-relationship,' a process used towards the things they sense, and how this 'sense' then changes into 'experience.' Mori points out that Motoori defined the accumulation of 'experience' by the Japanese people as a process closely related to 'nature, things, and humans,' that is, as *mono no aware*. He expressed his recognition of this form of 'existence' of the Japanese people in the phrase: 'to know *mono no aware*.' In addition to the above, he also gave the following comment:

> Considering the basic emotions of the Japanese people towards nature: they recover their mental equilibrium by seeing themselves being permeated by nature in which they were born and by which they were surrounded. [...] It is worth noticing that the emotions of the Japanese people towards nature are not vast and romantic but focused on *the individual things*. Nature enters the senses of the Japanese people by means of vivid and concrete images of each individual thing, even in the case of a flower or a pine tree. These basic emotions towards nature are consistent throughout works created by Japanese artists, their representations of religion and visual arts, poetry, and literary works. These basic emotions towards nature are close to a desire. The emotions or the desire to be one with 'nature,' which they endlessly face, may be considered as a reflection of the actual human relationships. It can be realized in a more ideal way when they deal with insentient nature than when they interact with other humans. There is a close affinity between nature and humans, however, there is also an inevitable estrangement. The Japanese are moved deeply by the similarity of nature to their own life, by its beauty, fragility, and transience, but nature does not share such evocative emotions with them. The recurring unchangeability of nature also causes them to be moved more deeply by their recollections of the fragility and weakness of humans. *Mono no aware* symbolizes the basic emotions of the Japanese people and it is the ultimate *stable point* of their emotions.[9]

The 'binal-relationship' or the 'you-you' relationship is defined by a type of a connection that the second person is supposed to modify in accordance with the position of the first person. However, the second person, being a fixed point in relation to the first person, changes just like a func-

[9] A. Mori, *Keiken to shisō*, pp. 75–77.

tion as far as he or she is a human with their own self. Such instability of human relationships results in some unsatisfactory emotions. That is the reason for why humans require nature without the 'self' for the purpose of building stable relationships – those that they cannot form within real human relationships. Nevertheless, it is obvious that nature does not give them the stability they crave as they cannot help but feel an emotion of loss due to not being one with nature. Mori states that *mono no aware* is the historically consistent symbolic expression of this emotion of lacking, and 'a kind of desire' means that the 'binal-relationship' or 'you-you' relationship fundamentally controls the thinking and the way of living of the Japanese people.

What does it mean for the 'experience' of the Japanese people that *mono no aware* is the 'ultimate stable point' for their 'basic emotions,' and that they long for this point and want to stay there? In the draft of *Jitsuzon to shakai* [*Existence and Society*], which was planned as the continuation of *Keiken to shisō* [*Experience and Thought*], but was not completed because of the sudden death of Mori in 1976, he left a few words about *mono no aware*:

> It can be said that *mono no aware* is essentially a dual state of an individual in the 'binal-relationship.' It is a kind of a passive state of lacking. [...] The subject in this state cannot establish the self as a solitary existence. As an essential state of lacking, the subject is unstable, and develops constant empathy [as defined by Mori: of the subject to enter and sink into an object] and constant esopathy [of the subject to be entered and "sunk into" by an object], not sympathy. The subject is absorbed into its object but also, on the contrary, the object is absorbed into its subject. In principle, this state of the subject absorbed into the object and of the object into the subject occurs with no restrictions.[10]

It is believed that Mori considered it absolutely necessary for one be a sole subject that would be located in the primary position of the sequence of 'sense'—'experience'—'thought,' and experience change through-

[10] A. Mori, "Jitsuzon to shakai" ["Existence and Society"], [in:] *Mori Arimasa zenshū* [*Complete Works of Mori Arimasa*], vol. 12, Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1979, p. 302.

out the process. In *mono no aware,* that is in a solitary state of lacking resulting from the 'binal-relationship,' it is impossible for the subject to produce 'experience' because the subject falls into and is satisfied with the mutual relationship between the subject and the object ('you-you').

It is important to note that Mori pointed out the problem in *mono no aware* as "the basic emotions of Japanese people" and "the ultimate *stable point*" for the Japanese people.

Conclusion

Mori Arimasa identified a linked sequence of 'sense'—'experience'—'thought' and contemplated it deeply while in Paris. During this process, he could not help thinking about the uniqueness of 'experience' when it comes to the Japanese people. The abovementioned universal sequence of thinking was, in his opinion, a unique achievement of the European civilization. At its very foundation, this universal sequence inevitably involves an existential subject. The starting point to this universality is the 'sense' of the subject. Mori explains that 'existence' originates from the structure of the European 'experience' itself, therefore, it is natural that the Japanese experience does not produce 'existence.' If there is to be found a Japanese 'experience,' it emphasizes the 'binal-relationship' that Mori recognized as typical for the Japanese way of thinking. This is why he referred to Motoori Norinaga – a thinker who defined the emotions represented through Japanese history in nature, objects, and human relationships and which reflected on the 'binal-relationship' through the lens of *mono no aware*. Mori states that the goal of 'thought' is universality, and that universality is produced only by European civilizations. In opposition to that, *mono no aware* is the emotion caused by the loss of the object in the 'binal-relationship,' which does not produce 'existence' as the base of universality, because 'sense' and 'experience' leading to 'thought' are produced only by the solitary and sole subject.

In his later years, Mori wrote about what he thought was the essence of European civilization:

European civilization is a type of civilization that keeps on the inside something essentially different from what it actually is, and remains itself on the inside, while fighting against what it actually is. The so-called critical way of thinking or spirituality, and that what is thought to be the essence of European civilization, has no meaning except for pointing out the kind of a state addressed above. If so, it is obvious how irrelevant and impossible it was for the Japanese people to learn Europe, even though they continued to study it and tried to accept it since the Meiji era. Europe is *almost as much as* a destiny. It can be neither learned nor imitated.[11]

This is considered to be Mori's answer to the fear he had experienced in Marseille in 1950.

It may be said that the achievements of Mori Arimasa relate closely to the question of uniqueness and/or universality of Japanese culture. In his works Mori: (1) found the meaning and the universality of the notion of 'thought' within the history of the European way of thinking, (2) gave an insight into the 'profound tendency' of 'experience' of the Japanese people and noticed in it a distortion that had been present throughout the Japanese history (that is, to reversely irradiate the 'universality' of 'thought' in European civilization), and (3) for the first time, gave a philosophical and critical consideration to *mono no aware* that has been received rather positively by some subsequent studies. He defined it as a lack of emotions in the 'binal-relationship,' which he identified through his insight into the structure of the Japanese language.

In *Keiken to shisō*, Mori analyzed and provided an in-depth reflection on the profound mental and emotional tendencies of the Japanese people, especially in comparison with the modern European civilization, which he believed to be the one to have achieved the highest level in history. From the viewpoint of Mori, *mono no aware* as a category of emotions or feelings typical for the Japanese people, perceptible in the specific 'binal-relationship,' is unique, not universal. It is essentially "a dual state of an individual in the 'binal-relationship.' It is a state of lacking and

[11] A. Mori, "Dostoefusukī to kami" ["Dostoevsky and God"], [in:] *Mori Arimasa zenshū* [*Complete Works of Mori Arimasa*], supp., Chikuma Shobō, Tokyo 1982, p. 173.

a passive state. […] The subject in this state cannot establish the self as a solitary existence." Mori defined Japanese culture as a culture of assimilation. According to Mori's definition, Japanese culture hides the subject deep within the concept of *mono no aware*, and this phenomenon explains the attitudes of the ancient Japanese intellectuals who came into contact with Chinese civilization and Buddhism. At the end, they succeeded in assimilating the 'more developed' civilization and culture without losing their primal principles. Nevertheless, even though intellectuals of the Meiji era made great efforts to force the Japanese to adopt the European civilization, the Japanese people failed to assimilate it. The unique and primal characteristics of the Japanese people emerged clearly through the struggles to adopt the European civilization. Mori believed that it was still impossible, even for the Japanese people of his times, to grasp and understand it in its entirety.

Mono no aware is the abstract of the primal mentality and emotions maintained by the Japanese people from ancient to modern times. If the idea of the individual produced and developed in modern Europe is universal, it can be said that the view of the individual through the concept of *mono no aware* is unique. And if there is something to contribute to the modern world in *mono no aware*, it would be to exemplify the efforts of creating intercultural bonds between the Japanese culture and the 'universal' culture of the West.

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Abstract

*'Binal-Relationship' and '*Mono no Aware*' in Mori Arimasa*

Mori Arimasa (1911–1976) was a Japanese philosopher who has not been discussed much in Japan in recent times. However, he seems to hold a unique and important position among modern Japanese intellectuals. He intended to go to Paris for one year in 1950 to complete his study of Pascal and Descartes, but he was so greatly impacted upon experiencing the real Europe that he decided to extend his stay. After leaving his family in Japan, he ended up continuing his in-depth studies of the European civilization until his death in 1976. In his last years, he focused on a unique feature of the Japanese people – their so-called 'binal-relationship' to other humans and nature, a concept which he developed through comparing the structure of French and Japanese languages. Moreover, he suggested that the category of '*mono no aware*,' as defined by Motoori Norinaga, was a feeling of isolation resulting from the loss of one of the sides in the 'binal-relationship.' Thus, the only way the Japanese can keep themselves stable is by being in an intimate 'binal-relationship.' Among many books and treatises written on the subject of '*mono no aware*,' it seems that Mori's work is the only one to look at its essence through a philosophical approach. It is believed that the 'binal-relationship' is the very key word for non-Japanese people to consider and understand not only the way of thinking of the Japanese, but also their society and language. In addition, the 'binal-relationship' concept offers a way to elucidate some aspects of European culture.

Keywords: binal-relationship, *mono no aware*, Mori Arimasa

chapter 4

Unique Customs of Universal Meaning – Japanese Etiquette and the English East India Company (1613–1623)

Jędrzej Greń*

The *Liefde* and the *Clove*

The aim of this paper is to present how the merchants of the English East India Company,[1] who arrived in Japan in 1613, adopted local Japanese etiquette to establish stronger relations with the locals and to facilitate their business in this country. By using both Japanese and English historical sources I will investigate whether the intentional adoption of Japanese customs gave the English a better chance to fulfill their goals and try to determine whether those customs really were unique tools of communication.

The Company's official mission to Japan arrived in Hirado in 1613 under the command of John Saris (1580–1643), its former main factor at Bantam. Japan was not even the secondary destination of the mission. The Company advised Saris to travel to Japan only in case the merchants had not successfully filled up their ships' cargoes in the Middle East and in India. In an elaborate set of instructions given to Saris in London, Japan only appears as late as in the point number twenty-three of the manual. Out of the three vessels participating in the voyage, only the *Clove* was eventually sent to Japan from Bantam in January 1613.

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1 The Company, called at the time 'The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies,' was established on December 31, 1600, and started trading in the East in 1603 (the First Voyage to Java by James Lancaster).

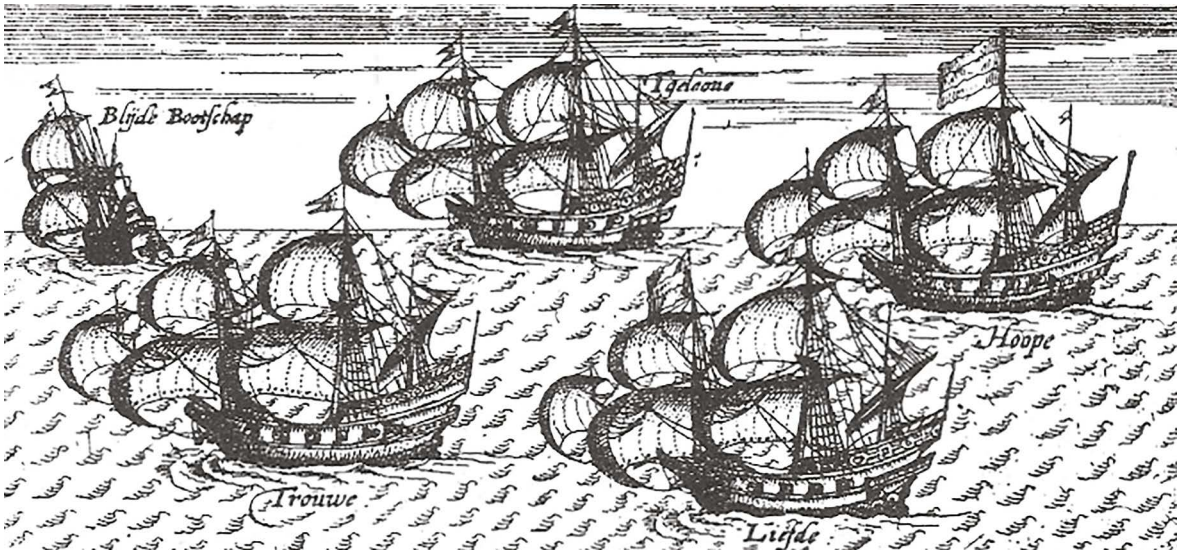

Figure 10. The *Liefde* on her voyage to Asia. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

Let us examine the knowledge the Company had about Japan prior to 1613. The first Englishman to arrive in Japan was William Adams (1564–1620), the pilot of the Dutch vessel *Liefde*, who reached the province of Bungo with his Dutch co-voyagers in 1600 (Fig. 10). Adams himself will not be the main subject of my considerations here; however, his role as a source of information on Japan and Japanese culture to the later-arrived English merchants should not be underestimated. In fact, the members of the Company's mission who reached Japan in 1613 considered Adams to be so much immersed in Japanese culture that they called him a "naturalised Japanner."[2]

The Court Minutes of the East India Company for that period are missing, but we know that the Company was aware of Adams's presence in Japan. It is unlikely, however, that much information from him would have reached London before their voyage to Japan.[3] In fact, it is likely

2 *The Voyage of Captain John Saris to Japan, 1613*, ed. E.M. Satow, The Hakluyt Society, London 1900, pp. 108–109.

3 The voyages organized by the Company were numbered. Japan was visited by the Company during the so-called 'Eighth Voyage.' The mission consisted of three ships and was bound for Surat, Mocha, and, eventually, Japan.

that the English knew very little about Japanese culture before their arrival. Saris himself wrote two notes about Japan but did not mention anything about the Japanese people or the local customs.[4]

Adams, on his part, tried to inform his family and the Company about his situation in Japan by sending them two letters. The first one, sent to his wife in England probably in 1605, did not survive in its complete form, so we can only guess whether it contained any information on Japanese culture. In the second one, sent in 1611 from Hirado "to unknown friends and countrymen" at Bantam, Adams, who at the time had already spent eleven years in Japan, wrote only one short sentence, where he mentioned, however, the important role etiquette played in the lives of the Japanese people:

> [...] the people of the lande [are] good of nature, curteous out of measure, and valliant in warres, justice is severely executed upon the traunsgressor of the lawe w'thout partiallety, governed in great civillety, I mean not a lande better governed in the worlde by civil pollecy.[5]

After arriving in Japan in June 1613, Saris visited and introduced himself to the local officials, including the *daimyō* of Hirado, Matsura Takanobu (1592–1637). The Japanese were presented with gifts such as textiles from India, fowling pieces, and gunpowder. Later Saris traveled to Kantō to visit Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632). Smartly enough, on his way towards Edo he first stopped at Sumpu in Suruga to pay his respects to the real military ruler of Japan – the ex-Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616). On both occasions Saris presented official gifts from King James (1566–1625) and received reciprocal tokens of friendship from the Tokugawas.

The Company and its merchants conducted the gift-exchange policies as a basic method of establishing and sustaining beneficial relations with the local ruling classes in all regions visited during the early stages

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4 "Observations of Saris on the Eastern Trade, Compiled during His Residence at Bantam as Factor," [in:] *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, pp. 212–230; "John Saris's Observations on Commodities to be Bought and Sold in Japan, 1605–1609," [in:] *The English Factory in Japan*, ed. A. Farrington, 2nd ed., vol. 1, British Library, London 1991, pp. 56–58.

5 *The English Factory*, vol. 1, p. 68.

of the Company's expansion – from Sierra Leone to Bantam. The Company's instructions issued for Saris in London clearly stated that he should:

> […] take good aduise with the rest of the Factors and espetiallie with William Adams, an English man nowe resident there and in greate favour with the kinge as wee heare,[6] to desire his opinion whatt course should be held, both for the delivery of his Maiesties letters nowe sent, whatt presents are to [be] geuen, to whome, by whome and in whatt manner the same is to be done, with all dilligence that shall be requisitt.[7]

As we see, the Company regarded the exchange of presents as the main element of etiquette and one of the most universal activities in social communication that had to be set into motion in its new trading areas. We can also see that the Company's officials were aware of the various local customs and cultural differences that should be identified in order to carry out the gift-exchange protocol smoothly and effectively.

However, we should differentiate between the two main types of gift-giving practices. The first one may be regarded as official or diplomatic. The Company used gifts as an introductory mode of communication when the merchants arrived in a new port, at the court of a local ruler, or in a trading post of another European power. Such an 'introductory' gift was by definition more elaborate and costly, and usually given in a ceremonial manner. Since it was a gift from the Company itself, its personnel were expected to carefully calculate its cost and contents for accountancy reasons. The Company's merchants put much effort into preparing such presents, and seldom failed to deliver.[8]

Two days after arriving in Japan, Saris presented the lord of Hirado with an official gift – a spectacular set of thirteen types of textiles (mainly

6 William Adams was indeed acquainted with Tokugawa Ieyasu.

7 *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, p. xiii.

8 However, from time to time, they made a mistake. For example, in 1615, Thomas Keridge, the Company's envoy to Ajmer in India, informed London that the portrait of the Great Mughal which was to be given to him was completely inappropriate: "The Mogoll's picture drawn in England is nothing like him so will serve for no use at all." *Letters Received by the East India Company from its servants in the East*, ed. W. Foster, vol. 3, Sampson Low, Martson & Co., London 1899, pp. 67–68.

Indian), two double-locked damasked guns, two barrels of gunpowder, and two gilded cups.[9] The value of the present was calculated at more than 340 reals of eight.[10] Saris noted down that the ceremony was prepared and carried out with proper dignity:

I went ashoare and deliuered these presents accompaned with the marchants, the master and best of the salors, and had 9 pees shott[11] at the deliuerye of each present, being the fashion so to doe, as the Flemings[12] informe me, other wayes they thinke it not giuen with a free heart. I allso gaue to the younge King or Governor my Kittasall,[13] which he toke a liking to, being verye faire, of white dammaske with a deepe silke and gould fringe; not at present, but after my retorne aboard sent it vnto him, which he most kindlye accepted, requiting me with a millyan of Complyment, wherein they are very perfect by Portugales and Spannyards instructyons.[14]

As we can see above, the official gifts were accompanied by a private present of an umbrella (*kittasall*) from Saris to the *daimyō*.

Once the official gifts were exchanged, the English could focus on building their relations in Hirado, where their factory was established. As the Company's personnel quickly learned, the *daimyō* and his officials expected many gifts on a daily basis. Compared to the introductory gift, this second type of gift-giving practice may be regarded as much less official. Just before leaving Japan in December 1613, Saris wrote a detailed note to Richard Cocks (1566–1624), a merchant left in charge of the factory, in which he advised him on the way the every-day gifts should be given to the Japanese from that point on:

Hould good correspondensie with the king[15] and nobles of this place. Be not to bountifull but observe this dicorum,[16] rather pleasure them often with

9 *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, p. 85.
10 Spanish dollars.
11 An artillery salute.
12 The Dutch merchants.
13 An umbrella.
14 *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, p. 86.
15 I.e., the *daimyō*.
16 Good manners.

Figure 11. *A Map of the Earth* by Joseph Moxon, 1681. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

smalle matters then seldome with things of worth, for you are not ignorant that they crave much but give little.

As we can see, Saris again identified gift-giving as the main element of the etiquette, warning Cocks not to give expensive presents, but rather to offer small ones more often. His critical opinion about the greed of the local ruling class seems hasty after such a short stay in Japan, but it is later justified by much evidence in Cocks's *Diary*.[17]

[17] In the following years, the Japanese officials in Hirado were usually very keen to accept gifts and at the same time they used their political leverage to force Cocks into lending them money. Cocks tried to resist but, as he could not put mutual relations in danger, he usually relented.

After Saris's departure, the personnel of the English factory truly immersed themselves in the 'dicorum' of the Japanese gift-giving culture.

Japanese gift-giving customs

Let us take a look at the Japanese sources and see how the Japanese merchants tried to build their relations with the warrior class. In fact, their aims were similar to the Company's. The Japanese merchants occupied a position subordinate to the ruling warrior elite, and good relations with the samurai were the key for their commercial success. Establishing and sustaining good relations with the officials could result in lucrative orders, special privileges, or trade monopolies bestowed upon merchants by the local military class.

There is no surprise, then, that many sources left by the Japanese merchants record numerous instances of gift exchanges with the warriors. The sources are full of such evidence. Shimai Sōshitsu (1539–1615), an influential merchant from Hakata, left a set of records spanning from 1565 to 1598, today called *Shimai shi nenroku*.[18] Almost one fourth out of the eighty-seven recorded notes in the *Nenroku* concern some kind of gift exchanges between Sōshitsu and the warriors.

In a set of correspondence left by Kamiya Sōtan (1553–1635), Sōshitsu's fellow merchant from Hakata, more than a half of the total number of thirty letters mention sending or personally giving all types of gifts, such as customary New Year gifts, special occasion gifts, or just little tokens of friendship sent along with the letters.[19] For example:

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[18] "Shimai shi nenroku" ["Records of the Shimai Family"], [in:] *Fukuoka kenshi. Kinsei shiryō hen. Fukuoka han machikata* [*The History of Fukuoka Prefecture. Early Modern Sources. The Merchants of the Fukuoka Domain*], vol. 1, Nishi Nihon Bunka Kyōkai, Fukuoka 1987, pp. 86–102.

[19] "Kamiya monjo oyobi kiroku" ["Documents and Records of the Kamiya Family"], [in:] *Fukuoka kenshi shiryō* [*Historical Sources of Fukuoka Prefecture*], vol. 6, Fukuoka ken, Fukuoka 1932, pp. 178–214.

To Sōtan from [Kobayakawa] Takakage,[20] 13th day of the 3rd month[21]

Your letter and two salted fish reached me here in a distant province. I am grateful and happy. I feel reassured that you are all right. So Taikō[22] will visit us on his arrival in [our] province. This is a really big deal. I guess you have [similar] feelings. I will keep you informed [in this regard]. Respectfully.[23]

The merchant's diaries record more information of this kind. For example, Sōshitsu recorded in his *Nenroku* two consecutive visits that he had paid to the local *daimyō* Ōtomo Sōrin (1530–1587) in his castle in 1566:

A silk cloth (*Hakata ori*) was produced for [lord] Sōrin. I sent a messenger to hand it over to him. On the morning of the 15th day of the 8th month [Lord Ōtomo] gave me 1 *yu*[24] of large nuts as a token of gratitude. This is more than I expected. I remember that when I went to the capital region last year, it was unusual for me to receive large nuts from the province of Tanba. However, the [nuts] obtained this time from [Lord] Sōrin seem even larger than those [of] Tanba.

On the 21st of the 8th month, I went to the castle to thank [Lord Ōtomo] for giving me huge nuts. He ordered [for me] to be served.[25]

As we see here, the Japanese sources inform us that traditional tokens used as gifts were usually common, albeit sizable, victuals. On other occasions, the sources mention sake, various types of fish, tea, as well as other things used as small gifts – tea utensils, textiles, and fans.

20 Kobayakawa Takakage (1533–1597) was the third son of Mōri Motonari (1497–1571), who was adopted by the Kobayakawa family of Aki. He first opposed Nobunaga and Hideyoshi but later came to terms with them and became a trustworthy retainer of Hideyoshi.
21 The year is unknown.
22 The title *taikō* was bestowed upon a former chancellor (*kanpaku*) and was used by Hideyoshi from 1592.
23 "Kamiya monjo," p. 182. Unless otherwise stated, the Japanese-English translation is by the author.
24 About 288 liters.
25 "Shimai shi nenroku," pp. 86–87.

The custom of every-day exchange of small victuals was just as greatly respected within the Japanese warrior class itself. Matsudaira Ietada (1555–1600), a local samurai of Mikawa and a retainer of Tokugawa Ieyasu, notes down on the 14th day of the 6th month of the Tenshō 8 (1580):

Today I oversaw the construction works. I received fish from Ieyasu.[26]

The Japanese officials had presented the English with this type of gift on the very first day (even before the official gift from Saris), which was noted by Saris in his account. He notices the fact that the gifts consisted of food and he requited them with Indian textiles:

Diuers eatable presents weare sent me by the king and his nobilyty, Tubbes of the Counterye wyne, fish, hoggs, pigges and such like, which in requitall to them which brought it, was by order giuen 3 peeces course Baftas.[27]

From then on, such acts of gift-giving (or food-giving) served as knots of social relations of the English as well. The meaning of the exchange was clear to them, as giving small tokens of friendship had been popular in their own culture. As we see in the famous diary written by Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) between 1660 and 1669, exchange of gifts was present in everyday life of the English at the time. In his meticulously kept diary, Pepys occasionally notes down gifts given to children, royal officials, and family members, which lets us conclude that he considers them a tool used within his social relations. The exchange of gifts, however, was not as frequent as we see in Japanese sources, and it often took the form of ready money. Official gifts at the time usually consisted of silver plates or pieces of cutlery which were given on various occasions, not only as symbols of affection but also as political bribes. On Tuesday, June 26, 1660, Pepys notes:

Went to my house, where I found my father, and carried him and my wife to Whitefriars, and myself to Puddlewharf, to the Wardrobe, to Mr. Townsend,

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26 *Ietada nikki* [*The Diary of Ietada*], ed. R. Takeuchi, Rinsen Shoten, Kyoto 1979, p. 76.

27 Bafta is a type of an Indian textile. *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, p. 83.

who went with me to Backwell, the goldsmith's, and there we chose 100 £ worth of plate for my Lord to give Secretary Nicholas.[28]

Victuals, too, were used as more common gifts exchanged between acquaintances and business partners. In this case, however, the specificity of burgher life in London during the Restoration promoted the exchange to take place at various taverns and inns of the royal capital. On Wednesday, November 6, 1661, Pepys notes down:

Going forth this morning I met Mr. Davenport and a friend of his, one Mr. Furbisher, to drink their morning draft[29] with me, and I did give it them in good wine, and anchovies, and pickled oysters, and took them to the Sun[30] in Fish Street, there did give them a barrel of good ones, and a great deal of wine, and sent for Mr. W. Bernard (Sir Robert's son), a grocer thereabouts, and were very merry, and cost me a good deal of money, and at noon left them, and with my head full of wine.[31]

In less formal relationships between friends or family members, exchanges of victuals as souvenirs were rather common, too. For example, on Tuesday, August 14, 1660, Pepys wrote:

After dinner in comes young Captain Cuttance of the Speedwell, who is sent up for the gratuity given the seamen that brought the King over. He brought me a firkin of butter for my wife, which is very welcome.[32]

Therefore, the English merchants were able to maneuver the Japanese gift-giving social environment while bringing with them both their own cultural background – which clearly recognized the social function of gift-giving customs – and clear instructions issued by the Company in London and repeated by Saris just before he left, that they should participate in it.

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28 *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. H.B. Wheatley, vol. 1, George Bell & Sons, London 1893, p. 185.
29 A custom of drinking in the morning instead of eating breakfast.
30 A tavern located at the place of today's Monument to the Great Fire of London in the City of London.
31 *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. 2, pp. 131–132.
32 *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. 1, pp. 221–222.

It is not surprising then that exchanging everyday gifts, especially victuals, with the Japanese soon became common practice for Cocks and his co-workers. The English clearly recognized this Japanese custom and called it *nifon cata(n)ge* or *Japon maner*.[33] The term is an anglicized version of Japanese words *nihon katagi*, i.e., 'Japanese style,' and refers to Japanese culture of exchanging food and gifts, or to organizing banquets, which also had the function of facilitating relations between the English and the Japanese. The term may also refer to the 'Japanese form' of certain practices. Cocks used the term *nifon cata(n)ge* on many occasions in his *Diary*.

The English were learning Japanese customs not only from their 'Japanized' countryman William Adams but also from the Dutch. The Dutch East India Company established a trading post in Hirado in 1609 (Fig. 12), so its personnel were the natural guides to the newly arrived English. Both Protestant countries competed for Asian trade revenues, but at the same time fought against common enemies, that is, the Catholic powers of Portugal and Spain. As a consequence, the Dutch and the English coexisted in Japan in a peculiar balance between rivalry and friendship. Finally, in 1620 the English and the Dutch companies formed an official alliance.

Cocks described this process of learning from the Dutch in October 1613, that is, about four months after arrival:

> Wee had a very good Dinner at the Dutch House, the meate being well drest both after the Iapan and Dutch fashion, and serued vpon Tables, but no great drinking. [...] Captaine Brower[34] did not sit at all, but carued at Table, all his owne people attending and seruing on their knees; and in the end, he gaue drinke to euery one of his ghests with his owne hands and vpon his knees; which seemed strange to me. [...]

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33 *Diary of Richard Cocks Cape-Merchant in the English Factory in Japan 1615–1622 with Correspondence*, ed. E.M. Thompson, vol. 1, The Hakluyt Society, London 1883, p. 79.

34 Hendrik Brouwer (1581–1643) was at the time the head of the Dutch factory.

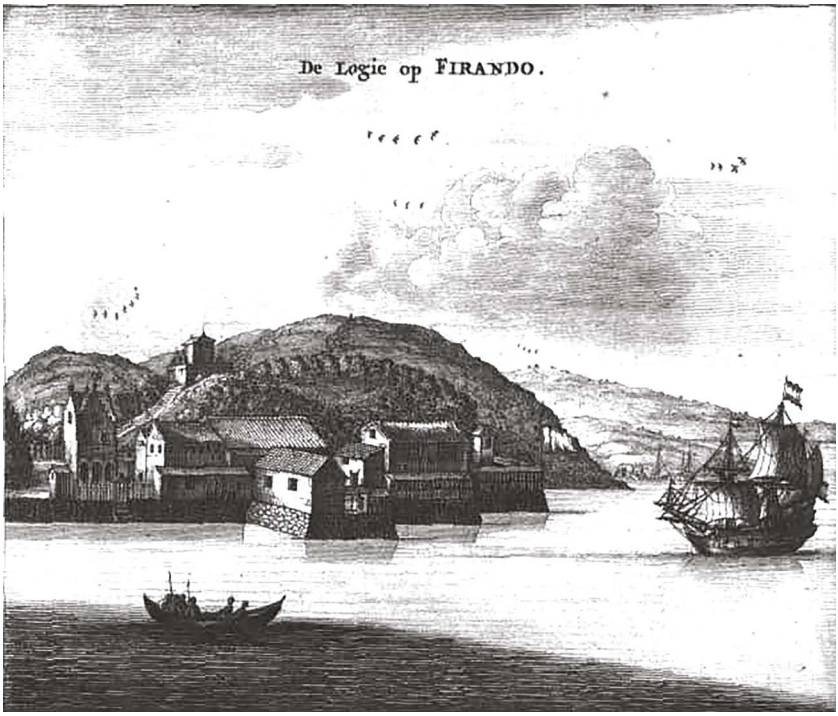

Figure 12. Dutch factory in Hirado by Montanus, 1669. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

I asked him why he serued these people vpon his knees, they sitting at Table. He answered me it was the fashion of the Country, and if the King himselfe made a Feast, hee did the like for the more honour of his ghests.[35]

On other occasions, Cocks notes the rivalry of both Protestant nations over gaining amicable relations with the Japanese. For example, in the spring of 1616, Cocks and the Dutch head merchant Jacques Specx (1585–1652) fiercely competed for the attention of the *daimyō* of Satsuma (*king of Shashma*):

[…] the king of Shashma passed by this place with [1 cm missing] barkes […]. I went abord his bark with a present of 2 damaskt fowling peeces, 2 barilles wine, & fish, *nifon catage*. The Du[t]ch went also and Capt' Speck thrust in before me to d[eliver] his present, which was a fayre looking-glasse & 3 or

35 *The Voyage of Captain John Saris*, pp. 161–162.

4 tattamis of broadcloth, with som peec China stuffes[36] geven to other his followers. […][37]

Cocks's *Diary* proves that the Japanese gift-giving and dining practices became a part of the every-day routine of the English. The repetition of the deliberately used term *nifon catage* in English sources shows that the head merchant and his colleagues were conscious of the fact that the etiquette they were using formed a part of a system of social interactions. It was important to the English, as at the beginning of their Japanese venture they planned to establish branches of the factory in several places, including not only Kyoto, Osaka, or Edo, but also remote locations such as Tsushima or Okinawa.[38] To fulfill their goal, they had to build good relations with many Japanese partners. On November 9, 1616, Cocks wrote:

The 10 of the ward where we lodged in Miaco,[39] with 10 other princepall men, came to vizet me with a present, *nifon cantange*, only to see the fation of our English habit and our behavior. I used them in the best sort I could, they offering me any kyndnes they could about our busynes.[40]

It is important to note that the participation of the English in the local etiquette also facilitated the relation-building practices with the local Japanese authorities in Hirado. In case of the etiquette, local officials treated the English, Dutch, and Japanese merchants in a more or less similar way. The Europeans who actively participated in local customs were treated with growing familiarity and were gradually drawn into Japanese cultural and social relations, including local festivities, annual

36 I.e., Chinese ceramics.
37 This fight with the Dutch caused a long conflict over the English–Dutch precedence. Cocks complained for many weeks about this incident, which proved how important the etiquette was to him. He was much concerned with the idea that the English should be regarded by the Japanese to be superior to the Dutch. *The English Factory*, vol. 1, pp. 393–394.
38 As a consequence, some members of the personnel (which consisted of eight merchants in total) temporarily lived in or traveled to other parts of Japan. Another city frequently visited by English merchants was the cosmopolitan port of Nagasaki, where the main Jesuit mission operated.
39 Kyoto.
40 *Diary of Richard Cocks*, vol. 1, p. 205.

celebrations, etc. For example, Cocks notes on August 14, 1615, that he was treated by a samurai official from a neighboring province with a customary gift announcing new harvest:

> Sugian Dono[41] sent me a present of new rise, *nifon catange*.

The Japanese style of gift-giving was not limited to the officials, however. On numerous occasions, Cocks notes down presents sent to or received from various trading partners, subordinates, neighbors, and other friends of the Company. For example, in October 1615, when the Company's trading junk, the *Sea Adventure*, was being prepared for the voyage to Siam, the net of relations that the English had managed to build in Hirado manifested in a form of many people bringing gifts and visiting the ship:

> October 27. We set the mastes of our junck the *Sea Adventure* this day; at the doing whereof were 3 or 400 men persons, all the neighboures, or rather all the towne, sending their servantes, and came themselves (them that were of accointance) and brought presents (*nifon catange*), after Japon manor, of wyne and other eating comodety, abord the junk, wishing a prosperouse voyag.[42]

The Japanese gift-giving customs so prominently present in the relations with the local populace proliferated among the European community as well – the English and the Dutch soon started to exchange gifts in the Japanese style between themselves. When Richard Wickham (d. 1618) was leaving Japan for Bantam, Cocks and others (including the Dutch) bid him farewell, bringing Japanese-style gifts:

> January 31 1617. I went abord with Mr. Wickham to take my leave. And as we past the Du[t]ch howse they shott of 3 chambers. And Mr. Leanord,[43] the

41 One of the high-ranking samurai of the Ōmura domain in the province of Hizen.
42 *Diary of Richard Cocks*, vol. 1, p. 79.
43 Leonard Camps (d. 1623) was at the time the head merchant of the Dutch factory.

Cape merchant, came after in a boate with a present, *nifon cantange*, to byd hym farewell, as Capt. Adames did the lyke with 2 barell wyne and hense.[44]

The term *nifon catage*, therefore, did not refer only to a type of gift but also to the custom itself, as a lot of European produce was also given within the *nifon catage* practices:

December 28 [1615]. The China Capt.[45] built or reard a new howse this day, and all the neighbours sent hym presentes, *nifon cantange*. So I sent hym a barill *morofack*,[46] 2 bottells Spanish wine, a drid salmon, and halfe a Hollands cheese; and after, went my selfe with the nighbours.[47]

As we see in the citation above, Spanish wine and Dutch cheese were given along with Japanese sake.

Finally, let us analyze what types of goods were typical in this exchange. It seems that among hundreds of gifts given within the *nihon catage* practices during the stay of the English in Hirado, we may distinguish three main geographic origins of these products, i.e., (1) Japan, (2) Europe, and (3) continental Asia. On the other hand, when we consider what types of gifts were given, we see three main categories such as (a) victuals, (b) luxury commodities, and (c) money and precious metals. The cross-section of those two groups of categories forms a surprisingly wide variety of articles recorded in the English sources.

The gifts of Japanese food consisted of fish, seafood, meat, fruit, eggs, fowl, wild game, seaweed, nuts, *mochi*,[48] radish, various types of sake, vinegar, or whole banqueting boxes (probably containing food). Imported food included English beef and butter, Dutch cheese, marmalade, Spanish wine, etc.

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44 *Diary of Richard Cocks*, vol. 1, p. 233.
45 *China Captain* or *Captain China* refers to Li Dan (d. 1625), a former pirate who became the head of the Chinese merchant community in Hirado.
46 I.e., *morohaku*, a type of rice wine (*sake*) from Hakata.
47 *Diary of Richard Cocks*, vol. 1, p. 92.
48 A type of cake made of pounded rice and usually other ingredients.

Sometimes an edible gift was demanded by the Japanese to be prepared in the European style:

> May 3 [1617]. The king dyned at Shosque Dono his chamberlens howse, whoe sent to me to desire to have a pie, a roset[49] hen and a duck, dressed after our English fation, which was performed and sent to hym.[50]

Non-edible commodities from Japan were often swords, armor, Japanese paper, folding screens, etc. Finally, imported goods included textiles from India, hides from South-Eastern Asia, European firearms, knives, pots, jugs, wax, looking glasses, stockings, pictures, and even carpets from Turkey. Precious metals included not only silver plates but also lead, not precious *per se* but very important in the production of ammunition.[51]

Conclusions

It seems fair to state that the Japanese customs of gift-giving were both unique and universal to the English.

Beyond doubt the English used reciprocal gift-giving practices both at home in Europe and in their merchant relations overseas. We find evidence of these relation-building methods in many sources produced by the East India Company throughout Asia. In the case of Japan, however, the usage of the term *nifon catage* by the English shows that their awareness when it came to the Japanese gift-giving practices and dining culture was peculiarly strong. The English clearly considered *nifon catage* to be a specific set of unique practices, somewhat different to what they had known and practiced before in other parts of Asia. The Japanese customs were unique because of the frequency of social interactions that entailed gift exchanges and the elaborate form of these practices. Official audiences, informal visits and revisits, exchanging good news,

49 Roasted.
50 *Diary of Richard Cocks*, vol. 1, p. 253.
51 The Dutch often transported textiles wrapped in lead as this procedure protected the cloth from worms. They were selling the lead afterwards with much success.

New Year's and housewarming meetings, ships' departures, or exchange of small, every-day favors were all occasions for giving a gift.

On the other hand, the Japanese practices formed a type of a common social behavior which was universally understood. As we have seen above, food was a typical gift for the English, too. They were used to treating themselves with meals at pubs and inns. Pepys shows that in England such a 'treat' was also considered a 'gift.' More luxurious goods, such as silver plates, were considered as typical tokens of gratitude, affection, and bribery. From the viewpoint of the English merchants, the Japanese gift-giving customs must have to a large degree resembled their own relation-building practices.

The Japanese customs were therefore recognized by the English as uniquely Japanese, but the Company's merchants used them simply as one of the several universal tools in their efforts for relation-building and trade expansion. This strategy seemed successful. Immersion into *nifon catage* allowed the English to more easily build stronger relations with the locals. The locals were satisfied as well. The English used important parts of Japanese social and cultural communication and at the same time offered them high-demand products imported from the gradually globalizing world.

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Abstract

Unique Customs of Universal Meaning – Japanese Etiquette and the English East India Company (1613–1623)

The mission of the English East India Company arrived in Japan in 1613, and their factory there operated until 1622. During this time, the personnel of the factory usually competed with other Europeans for the favors of the local Japanese officials who could influence their trading revenues. In order to facilitate their communication with the locals, the English merchants adopted significant parts of Japanese social etiquette. The local customs which were included in the daily routine of the factory were mostly related to gift-giving practices, which were used to strengthen the factory's relations. In this paper, I use both Japanese and English historical sources to investigate whether the intentional adoption of Japanese customs gave the English a better chance to fulfill their goals and try to determine whether those customs, from the point of view of the English merchants, really were unique tools of communication.

Keywords: gift, English East India Company, John Saris, Richard Cocks, Samuel Pepys, merchants, Japanese customs

Part II

Aesthetics and Visual Arts

chapter 5

The Universal Appeal of the Japanese Concept of *Ma*

Yamanashi Makiko

The concept of *ma* plays an important role in Japanese society and culture. Translating the word *ma* into English poses a significant challenge. Whereas another possible pronunciation of the same word, i.e., *aida*, tends to directly indicate a physical distance or a gap between objects, *ma* evokes less literal connotations and points more towards a conceptual 'in-betweenness' or liminality of both space and time. It is possible to put forward a hypothesis that in Japanese culture, *ma* represents a specific ethical and aesthetic criterion in space and time, as well as an appreciation of beauty – both in literature and in the arts. The liminal position (concerning time) or margin (concerning space) allows for a balance in communication between the agents.

Academic studies focusing on *ma* cover a broad range of subject fields, such as linguistics, poetry, dance, music, architecture, and visual arts.[1] The philosophy of *ma* was proposed by Shinohara Motoaki under the name of *aida-tetsugaku* ('the philosophy of in-betweenness') and by Danish anthropologist Bjørn Thomassen as liminality. Both approaches enhance the idea that the relational dynamics of *ma*/liminality are generated in a shifting process between different agents and subjects. Thomassen defines liminality as "a world of contingency where events and ideas, even 'reality' itself, can be carried in different directions. But

[1] The book by H. Minami, *Ma no kenkyū – Nihonjin no biteki hyōgen* [*The Study of* Ma – *The Aesthetic Expression of Japanese People*], Kōdansha, Tokyo 1983 is one of the most comprehensive publications to date. Academic discourse on *ma* in relation to contemporary culture in the global context after the 1980s is still much needed.

for precisely these reasons, the concept of liminality has the potential to push social theory in new directions."[2] One could easily replace the word 'liminality' in that phrase with the word '*ma.*' What is more, Thomassen also confirms that "the concept has gained enormous popularity within a variety of subfields, broadly speaking together with the notion of 'hybrid culture.'"[3] This validation of the concept of liminality/*ma* as a universal measure could further allow for examining Japanese modernity and contemporary Japanese popular culture.

This paper questions the ambiguous concept of *ma*, which may be uniquely Japanese, but, with its universal validity, also provides a means to cross the borders of different cultural codes. In response to the theme of the volume – 'unique or universal?' – I argue that the concept of *ma* plays an essential role in generating unique "Japaneseness" and, at the same time, has universal validity. This paper attempts to suggest that the concept of *ma* may contribute to creating a peaceful yet dynamic traffic of interculturality (or more comprehensively: of transculturality) in the age of multi-faceted globalization where boundaries in cultural fields are becoming increasingly blurred. Based on the hypothesis that *ma* withholds tension and generates a certain balance or harmony in different subjects, the paper will first clarify the approach taken towards one of the keywords of this volume – 'civilization' – specifically in the context of Japanese modernization. It will then look at *ma* from three different perspectives: first we will investigate its literal background, then its manifestations in architectural and visual arts, and, finally, its physical practice in performing arts. Some relevant references to philosophy and the previously established theory of *ma* will be presented in order to support the arguments stated throughout the paper.

Civilization in the context of Japanese modernization

First of all, the full title of this publication, compiled with an intention to commemorate the centenary of Japanese Studies at the University of

2 B. Thomassen, "The Uses and Meanings of Liminality," *The Journal of International Political Anthropology* 2009, no. 1(2), p. 5.
3 B. Thomassen, "The Uses and Meanings," p. 18.

Warsaw, reads: *Unique or Universal? Japan and Its Contribution to World Civilization*. However, is the word 'civilization' still a valid term today? According to the Western definition in the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 'civilization' means "the stage of human social development and organization which is considered most advanced," "the society, culture, and way of life of a particular area," or in a specifically urbanist context, "the comfort and convenience of modern life, regarded as available only in towns and cities."[4] On the other hand, its closest Japanese equivalent, *bunmei*, is defined not only in relation to urbanization but also where "the state of modern society, i.e., a society in which the standard of living has been raised by the development of production methods and general rules with respect to human rights and equal opportunities are recognized." Furthermore, the significance of *bunmei* lies in the characteristics in which "technological and material products of external human activity, as opposed to culture in its narrow sense as spiritual products such as religion, morality and arts."[5] According to this definition, *bunmei* is defined by the material affluence of living conditions, while culture does not necessarily signify material wealth but rather a mental or metaphysical ripeness. Then, what is 'culture' in relation to, if not as opposed to, civilization? In the English definition, 'culture' is "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively" and also "the ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society."[6] Whereas, *Kōjien* points out specifically that *bunka* in Japan is "often used almost synonymously with civilization, but in the West, culture refers to what concerns spiritual aspects of life of human beings and distinguishes it from civilization, which is more nuanced in terms of technological development."[7] Nevertheless, we must remember that this interpretation of *bunmei* was imported in the Meiji period. For Fukuzawa Yukichi and other leaders of Japan – at that time a nation still considered

4 *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford 2003, p. 316.
5 *Kōjien* [*Japanese Dictionary* Kōjien], 6th ed. [online], 2008. https:/sakura-paris.org/dict/%E5%BA%83%E8%BE%9E%E8%8B%91/prefix/%E6%96%87%E6%98%8E/; accessed: 30.12.2020. The author's own translation.
6 *Oxford Dictionary of English*, p. 422.
7 *Kōjien*.

new in comparison to the modernizing Western countries – it was the notion of *bunmei* rather than *bunka* (culture) that needed to be tackled.[8]

The term *bunmei* became significant in Japan during the critical time of the so-called *kindaika* (modernization), which was almost synonymous with *seiyōka* (Westernization). When Japan opened its doors to visitors from abroad after two hundred years of the isolationist policy of the Edo period, the influence of the industrialized West started an entirely new epoch for the Japanese people. The capitalist economic system, mass production, and a consumer society founded on Western and Christian values were rapidly, and thus superficially, becoming interwoven with Japanese society and culture, which, in turn, hailed from the culture of farming and Shinto's polytheism.[9] The whole phenomenon of adapting Western standards by way of negating the hitherto dominant feudal society was described as *bunmei kaika*. When translated, *bunmei kaika* literally means "opening to civilization." The slogan was first used in Japan by the Ministry of Education in 1871 and contextually meant breaking away from the past feudal system and conventional modes of thinking. It also carried a meaning of bringing Westernization into many other possible aspects of social structure and cultural habits. As a result of this process of Japanese modernization, after the country was flooded by foreign influences, which heavily impacted people's everyday lives, Japanese culture sought an equilibrium in *ma* – i.e., a balance between the alien and the domestic. This encounter between the two nurtured a new sense of modernity in their liminal spaces. Thus, a presupposition could be made that the Japanese notion of *ma* could help merge, dissolve, and blend these binary oppositions in order to create a new 'cultural' balance and a 'civilized' dynamism.

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[8] The important difference between the words *bunmei* and *bunka* in terms of their origin and reception is critically discussed in N. Nishikawa, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru bunkajuyō no shomondai" ["Various Problems of Cultural Reception in Modern Japan"], *Ritsumeikan Gengo Bunka Kenkyū* 1991, no. 2(5–6), pp. 23–56.

[9] Sociologists Hashizume Daizaburō and Ōsawa Masachi discuss the importance of understanding the long history of Christianity and its impact on the civilization of the modern world and its subsequent globalization. (D. Hashizume and M. Ōsawa, *Fushigi na Kirisutokyō* [*Strange Christianity*], Kōdansha, Tokyo 2010.) *Ma* could also be discussed in relation to the native polytheist ways of living and thinking, but that is beyond the scope of this paper.

The literal background of *ma*

To deepen the understanding of Japan's modernization, i.e., adopting Western social codes and cultural modes, I argue that a thorough understanding of the idea of *ma* is crucial. In order to prove this, it is necessary to first analyze the literal background of this conceptual term. *Ma* in Japanese has a significant yet ambiguous nuance, encompassing the meaning of *hazama* ('threshold'), *chūkan* ('middle'), *kyōkai* ('boundary'), and *yohaku* ('margin'). *Ma* concerns not merely a certain liminality of space and time, but also implies a way of existence and an idea of humanity. In Japanese language and literature, *ma* is considered vital, as one can tell by looking at the plethora of idiomatic expressions such as *ma ga yoi/warui* (literally 'good *ma* and bad *ma*,' meaning good timing and bad timing), *ma ga motanai* (literally 'being unable to bridge the time gap well,' meaning not knowing what to do with the time), *machigai* (literally 'wrong *ma*,' meaning mistake), *manuke* (literally 'slipping out of *ma*,' meaning absurd or stupid) and so forth. There are both temporal and spatial implications in those connotative nuances of *ma*. In Japanese society, this *ma* represents some conventional ethics in daily communication. This tendency can be observed in the way the Japanese language tends to conceal the subject of a sentence, such as 'I,' 'you,' and 's/he'; people are used to reading between the lines to get the nuanced meanings in (often uncompleted) sentences by being sensitive to the indicative tones and rhythm of the utterance.[10] Furthermore, philosopher Amano Masao points out that *ma* refers to human relationship. The word for humans in Japanese is suggestively written as *ningen* (literally 'between people,' meaning human beings) and indicates that a person can only exist in between other persons, which makes them all humans.[11]

[10] For a linguistic study of *ma*, see S. Betsumiya, "Nihongo no rizumu" ["The Rhythm of Japanese Language"], [in:] H. Minami, *Ma no kenkyū*, pp. 76–93.
[11] M. Amano, "Ma no tetsugaku" ["Philosophy of *Ma*"], *Wakayama Daigaku Kyōyō no Mori* 1990, no. 119. http://www.wakayama-u.ac.jp/kyoyonomori/message/-119.php; accessed 27.10.2019.

Architectural and compositional aesthetics of *ma*

Architect Isozaki Arata approaches the concept of *ma* both as a distinctive character and as a method observed in traditional Japanese architecture and gardens. Isozaki points out the importance of *mitate*. In Japanese culture, *mitate* is an aesthetic method used to articulate the subject by making associations via analogies to other historical or literary sources.[12] *Mitate* is a common practice in Japanese arts, including traditional strolling gardens and theatrical stage sets.

The examples of *ma* mentioned in the previous section might appear confusing to the Western reader, because the liminal agent can refer to space, time, or to both at the same time. In the tradition of Western epistemology, space and time are usually recognized as separate agents, and there is no perfect equivalent word to translate *ma* into English. Isozaki characterizes Japanese *ma* as a harmonious union of space and time combined or, better said, space and time in a balanced flux in an aesthetic attitude built upon liminality. He states: "The margins of painting, pauses in music and dance, we call them *ma*. As you can see from these examples, *ma* can be regarded as a concept of both space and time. It is a feature of *ma* that space is felt to be one with time. This is in opposition to Western culture, which splits them into two separate systems and analyzes the two separately. This method of distinct space-time recognition has been defining our culture and art."[13] Isozaki argues that this unified, internal range of *ma*, implying both space and time, or even something beyond them, differs from Western sensibility, where space and time are two completely different ideas, and, as such, is unique to Japan.

Let us suppose that such a mentality were to be unconsciously nurtured by several environmental factors. If that were the case, the sense of *ma* would so innately penetrate the Japanese mentality that its functions would balance ethical and aesthetic relationships in both private and public life. Nishiyama Matsunosuke seeks its origins in the Japanese way of

12 A. Isozaki, *Mitate no shuhō – Nihon-teki 'kūkan no dokkai'* [*Ways of* Mitate – *Reading Japanese Space*], Kashima Shuppan, Tokyo 1990.
13 Stated in the exhibition's online message, see "Kaisai shushi," *The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts*. https://www.geidai.ac.jp/museum/art_museum/shushi.html; accessed: 30.12.2020.

life and defines it as a discontinuous sense of beauty, independent from both time and space, which ought not to be definite but appreciative of ambiguity.[14] Therefore, *ma* is omnipresent in Japanese life: it can be found anywhere, from the *madori* residential layout (literally 'division of space,' meaning floor plan) to the rhythm in everyday dialogues of Japanese people. Under such environmental conditions, *ma* has naturally penetrated virtually all forms of art, from poems, music, and visual arts (in the form of mass-produced graphic media such as posters and manga) to the traditional performing arts. Let us now look at some examples in more detail.

Visual arts

At the time when Western influences were becoming evident in Japan, the aesthetic movement inspired by Japan, known as Japonisme, was quickly gaining recognition in the world of European art. Walter Crane, who was involved in the English Arts and Crafts Movement with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, asserts: "the opening of Japan's port […] had an immeasurable impact on European art. Both artists and artisans have proficiency in all decorative work, yet they are under the influence of bold and vibrant naturalism. In short, there is a living art, a folk art, in which tradition and artistic proficiency continue to thrive, and the work style is full of various charms and natural vitality. It is not surprising that these arts have made European artists so enthusiastic, and that their effects have been remarkable."[15] What is interesting in Crane's affirmation is an equal amount of praise devoted to craftsmanship and artistic value. This balance of the two aspects seems to have been striking to Crane and other artists like him in Europe, where adherence to strict values and criteria was of great influence in the area of fine arts. In the Western hierarchy, everyday objects and the art of people's living sphere had long been judged as "lesser art," as William Morris put it.[16]

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14 M. Nishiyama, "Ma no bigaku seiritsu-shi" ["Development History of the Aesthetics of *Ma*"], [in:] H. Minami, *Ma no kenkyū*, pp. 116–129.

15 Quoted in K. Yoshioka, "Japonizumu to Āaru Nūbo ten ni yosete" ["For the Exhibition of Japonisme and Art Nouveau"], [in:] *Japonismus und Art Nouveau*, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg 1981, p. 8. Translation from Japanese is the author's.

16 W. Morris, "The Lesser Arts of Life," [in:] *The Collected Works of William Morris*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1882.

Japanese art in the West had such an impact that by 1876, the term 'Japonisme' had been registered in the French dictionary.[17] Though the influence was also visibly strong in England and Germany, the trend ultimately became known by its French name. The massive popularity of Japonisme in France can be partially attributed to Japanese art lover Siegfried (Samuel) Bing (1838–1905), who moved from Hamburg to Paris in 1871 and opened an art gallery named Art Nouveau, which specialized in Japanese art.[18] Because of Bing, Japanese influence in France can be seen not only in impressionist paintings by Vincent van Gogh and Claude Monet, but also, even more intentionally, in the graphic arts of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Alphonse Mucha. It is not difficult to notice their inspirations taken from Japanese woodcut prints, arts, and crafts (Fig. 13). French art critic Ernest Chesneau described the influential characteristics of their style as "asymmetry, stylization, and gradation of colors."[19] To balance out these three elements, I must add *ma*, which plays a central role in composing a stylized form out of bold outlines on a flat surface by minimizing perspective and dimensionality and deleting details. The Western tradition of articulating perspective from a single point was not relevant in the world of Japanese art. It was rather the use of void space, i.e., *ma*, that created the stylized originality. Japanese art historian Nakamura Tanio argues that the way of utilizing *ma* differs depending on the artist's state of mind. In short, *nihonga* (Japanese painting) simply cannot be *nihonga* without the artistry of *ma*.[20]

When it comes to the modern period, especially at the height of popularity of the international trend of Art Nouveau, *ma* played an indispensable role both in the artistic context of Japonisme and in modernism. The

17 M. Shibata, "Furansu ni okeru Japonisumu no aru sokumen ni tsuite" ["About an Aspect of Japonisme in France"], *Kinjō Gakuin Daigaku Ronshū* 2003, no. 203, pp. 57–71.

18 W. Tarnowski, *Japonismus und Art Nouveau Grusswort*, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg 1981, p. 7.

19 J. Volný, "Nihon no dentō bijutsu to Yōroppa bijutsu ni okeru sono eikyō" ["Japanese Traditional Art and Its Influence on European Art"], *Nihongo, Nihon Bunka Kenshū Puroguramu Kenshū Repōtoshū* 2016, no. 31, p. 84. https://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/files/public/4/42509/20170216141908515172/ReportJTP_31_75.pdf; accessed: 30.12.2020.

20 Ta. Nakamura, "Tōyōga ni okeru ma no geijutsu – toku ni Nihon koten kaiga ni tsuite" ["The Art of *Ma* in Oriental Art – Especially Concerning Japanese Classical Paintings"], [in:] H. Minami, *Ma no kenkyū*, pp. 241–265.

Figure 13. Alphonse Mucha, *Zodiac*, 1869. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

mutual influence mediated by effective use of *ma* seems to have penetrated the globalizing age of mass-production and consumption and has remained a strong force in popular culture until today. To prove this point, let us have a closer look at the national tour exhibition *Timeless*

Mucha: *From Mucha to Manga – the Magic of Line*, which started in Tokyo in July 2019 and toured Kyoto, Sapporo, Nagoya, Shizuoka, Matsumoto, and finally Kōriyama, where it finished in March 2021. The exhibition aimed at tracing the mutual stylistic interactions between Japonisme and Art Nouveau by presenting a wide range of objects: from the poetry book cover of Yosano Akiko's *Midaregami* [*Tangled Hair*] (1901) to girls' manga from the 1970s, including works of Mizuno Eiko and Yamagishi Ryōko, with the organic style then related to today's popular animation game graphics by Amano Yoshitaka.[21] The highly compositional decorativeness and romantic flare combined with organic floating lines are present in all of the images, where *ma* as void space transforms the artificial combination into an aesthetic harmony. On these grounds, one can argue that the roots of the global popularity of today's Japanese visual media culture, e.g., manga, anime, and video games, may be traced to its inter/transcultural quality from the past century.

Mucha's creative period closely corresponded with the rising popularity of Art Nouveau, followed by the more minimalist trend of Art Déco in the 1920s.[22] In appearance, the contrast is quite stark, but the straight lines and mechanical forms of Art Déco also took advantage of *ma* aesthetics, inheriting them from Art Nouveau and Japonisme as a manifestation of modernity. Importantly, these two major art trends in the first few decades of the twentieth century were dependent on the rapid development of print media, which enabled the production of an unprecedented number of advertisement posters and printed paper items. For instance, leading department stores' posters functioned as symbols of urban life and consumer society in all major modern cities. Typical examples are those promoting Harrods in London and Bon Marché in Paris, which successfully adopted the graphic style to radiate a tone of trendiness with a high sense of modernity.

What is common in those images is not only the effective use of *ma* as a void or a marginal space, but also the depiction of women as highly

21 *Timeless Mucha: Mucha to Manga – The Magic of Line*. https://www.ntv.co.jp/mucha2019/; accessed: 30.12.2020.

22 Art Déco as a style was officially defined by the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris, see Ch. Benton, T. Benton, and Gh. Wood, *Art Deco: 1910–1939*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London 2003, p. 16.

stylized, fashionable silhouettes. In addition to the spatial *ma*, one can also differentiate the *ma* of social codes such as nationality, gender, and age, to name just a few typical norms. The new styles, i.e., Art Nouveau and Art Déco, with their underlying Japanese influence, were able to transcend those norms in a stylish way. For example, the Isetan Department Store poster, which inaugurated the opening of their Shinjuku store in 1930, shows a harmony between two stylized ladies: one in Western clothes with a bob and a hat, the other one dressed in kimono but with a modern perm. This commercial poster radiates a sense of modernity achieved by balancing liminal images and ideas, such as those situated on the border between the West and the East, conventionality and novelty, quietude and liveliness. Like this shopping imagery, the graphic designs created to advertise modern leisure activities should also be analyzed not only through the lens of the 'Western' or 'exotic foreign' but also as the 'modern Japanese,' which was simultaneously corresponding to the modern global trend. Here, *ma* functions as a negotiated liminal balance, filling the gap between differences and finding a new harmony out of heterogeneous elements in the transcending dynamism of shifting culture.[23]

In this way, Japan joined the trend of Art Nouveau and Art Déco nurtured through Japonisme. The irony is that Japan re-imported the modern Japanese style as a representation of its own modernization in accordance with the nation's scheme of Westernization. Another subsequent outcome was the building of the residence of Prince Asaka (today's Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum) constructed in the style of Art Déco in 1933. Two representative French artists of the epoch, Henri Rapin and René Lalique, designed the interior and the glassworks. The stripped-down simplicity of the white cubic exterior and the decorative elegance of the interior are marks of a modern masterpiece, which combines fine arts, crafts, and architecture. The fact that the building stands in harmony with the Japanese garden surrounding it is not surprising if we recall the style of the epoch, which shows an interaction and a harmonious blend of Western and Japanese elements through the practical, as well as beautiful, orientation of *ma*.

[23] The author is aware that this metaphorical reading of *ma* cannot be exhaustively discussed in this paper but requires further analysis and discussion.

As the examples above show, two parts of the world shared a strong concurrent sense of modernity across national borders by taking in the other's cultural elements, an exchange in which *ma* played an essential role.

Performing arts

Seeking to balance such differences was also a necessary attitude in the field of performing arts. Unlike visual arts, however, performing arts engage with liminal aesthetics in physical terms, being mediated by living bodies. This fact may well make the concept of *ma* more physical and inter-disciplinary. Although the *ma* of performative movement, as well as of speech and music, has been well studied since Zeami (ca. 1363–ca. 1443) put forward theories for *nō* theater, the following argument also focuses on another type of *ma*, one which allows flexibility of roles and genres.

In talking about the Japanese theater tradition, scholars have mostly discussed *ma* in music, dance, storytelling, and kabuki.[24] In medieval Japan, the Japanese aesthetician, performer, and *nō* playwright Zeami, in his performance theory book titled *Kakyō*, theorized about the concept of *ma* and placed importance on achieving aesthetic detachment – *riken no ken* ('sight outside of sight') – by *senuhima* ('momental gap of doing nothing').[25] This *ma* of doing nothing does not literally mean no performance, but is a crucial moment for the actor to withhold his heart and radiate his inner tension, which would exhibit a convincing beauty in that suspended moment of silence. Minami Hiroshi points out that this temporal *ma* of *nō* is similar to the spatial *ma* in Japanese paintings.[26] Thus, both in the Japanese visual arts and performing arts, nothingness or blankness is considered an integral part of the art to be filled by the artist and the audience's attentive hearts and minds.

24 Minami Hiroshi's book includes essays encompassing the discussion of *ma* in Japanese music, dance, kabuki, and *yose* (storytellers' theater).
25 F. Suzuki, "Zeami no 'riken no ken'" ["Zeami's 'Sight outside of Sight'"], *Aichi Kyōiku Daigaku Kenkyū Hōkokusho* 1979, no. 28, p. 145.
26 H. Minami, *Ma no kenkyū*, p. 16.

In the Meiji period, many unprecedented genres emerged in Japan under the influence of Western theater and music. How this may or may not have influenced the conventional practice of *ma* is only one part of the argument. My discussion shall focus on another side of *ma*, specifically on its flexibility across genres and media, as well as on it being a prerequisite to talking about modern theater. The Japanese theater scholar Kamiyama Akira calls the new emerging genres *chūkan engeki,* as they fall in between kabuki and *shingeki* (seen here as translations of Western dramas). Realistic drama in the Western style, *engeki,* was a new challenge for Japanese people who had hitherto been used to highly exaggerated *shibai*, with its stylized form and *ma.* Nevertheless, the traditional appreciation of *ma* seems to have provided a favorable environment for adapting and domesticating Western ways of acting and fabricating a superficial resemblance.

The modernizing period in Japan, like in Europe, saw the emergence of women and children in the public sphere. The theater world was not an exception.[27] While kabuki and other traditional performance arts were practiced exclusively by men, Japanese female performers other than the geisha sought their careers in new genres. These genres included *onna kabuki* (women's kabuki), *onna kengeki* (women's swordplay), *musume gidayū* (girls' ballad drama), and *shōjo kageki* (girls' revue). The practice of single-sex theater is typical in Japan and results in creating highly stylized forms in order for the performers to play various characters, in particular the other sex. The all-male kabuki's *onnagata* (female impersonators) and the all-female Takarazuka Revue's *otokoyaku* (male impersonators) are renowned for their artistry (Fig. 14). The fabricated 'other' relies on the natural attire made possible by *ma*, the artificial yet aesthetic act of balancing in the liminal space between the two opposite sexes and their signifiers. When all the characters are played by a single sex, the impersonators enhance the stage fantasy by using costumed gender manipulated by the space between the real sex and the artificial one. Moreover, the featured young women (*musume* or *shōjo*) de-emphasize female sexuality and take advantage of the ambig-

[27] The author has extensively discussed this issue in: M. Yamanashi, "Japanese Women on Stage. From Tradition to Modernity," [in:] *The Palgrave Handbook of the History of Women on Stage*, ed. J. Sewell, C. Smout, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham 2019, pp. 329–352.

Figure 14. Takarazuka Revue, 1939. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

uous *ma* between immature childhood and mature adulthood. The success of these new female theater genres might well prove that neutrality or ambiguity, mediated by the use of *ma*, was certainly appealing to Japanese audiences.

In order to articulate more actualities of *ma* in today's context of what is called "mix media" in Japan, referring to multimedia franchise within Japanese performance conventions, let us have a closer look at various transitions which happened to the traditional all-male kabuki and the modern all-female Takarazuka Revue. Kabuki, since the Meiji period, has been eagerly adopting new trends. They would perform dramas set in contemporary Westernized Japan, as well as adaptations of Shakespeare.[28] Today, kabuki continues to be a bridge between tradition and today's popular culture, as could be seen in the recent manga-based kabuki productions of *One Piece* (2015–2018) and *Naruto* (2018–2020), or *Chō-Kabuki* [*Super Kabuki*] (2017), which had Nakamura Shidō co-star-

[28] For instance, Kawatake Mokuami wrote a modern kabuki play *Ningen banji kane no yo no naka* [*Everything in Man's World Is about Money*] based on the English comedy by Edward Bulwer-Lytton.

ing with the digital star singer Hatsune Miku. In Nakamura's words, it was a performance produced by technically mastering *ma* between the virtual and the analogue.[29] In this way, *ma* reconfirms popular theater as positioned between convention and innovation. The fact that this production won the 1st Cool Japan Matching Award[30] indicates the contemporary catch phrase of 'Cool Japan,' and should be critically interpreted from a historical perspective as confirmation that *ma* is a transformative notion.

The all-female Takarazuka Revue, established in 1914 and promoted nowadays under the Cool Japan scheme,[31] is another distinctive modern Japanese theater tradition competing with kabuki.[32] Originally, it aimed to be a new popular theater situated between kabuki and Western musical theater, in which the male-impersonators *otokoyaku* became the central attraction for the audience. The impersonators risk being perceived as queer in the European or American Christian context, where homosexuality has been seen as something abnormal and condemned. In Japan, such impersonation is considered an established form of art. Hiding one's real sexuality beneath the stage costume is a common stage practice to visually deceive, as well as amuse, the audiences. In 1974, four decades before kabuki's adaptations of manga and anime, Takarazuka adopted a popular manga *The Rose of Versailles* on their theater stage to great commercial success. Takarazuka continues to create the multimedia franchise stage by balancing between two-dimensional graphics and three-dimensional physical productions. Takarazuka is a prototype of modern Japanese theater. From its outset in the Taishō period, it consisted of liminal features balancing between two seemingly binary

29 Sh. Nakamura, "Hatsune Miku to Nakamura Shidō kyōen – saishin gijutsu de enshutsu shita *Chō Kabuki*" ["Hatsune Miku and Nakamura Shidō – Co-Starring in *Super Kabuki* Directed by the Latest Technology"], interview by Asahi Shimbun Digital 2017, April 2, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIzcO6bOWpA; accessed: 26.12.2020.

30 "Cho Kabuki," [in:] "The Future of Kabuki – New Kabuki Endeavors," *The Shochiku Company*. https://www.shochiku.co.jp/global/en/kabuki/about/newchallenge/; accessed: 26.12.2020.

31 In 2014 and 2015, Daito Bunka University organized international symposiums themed *Cool Japan! Cool Takarazuka!*. See *Digital PR Platform*. https://digitalpr.jp/r/13557; accessed: 27.12.2020.

32 M. Yamanashi, *A History of the Takarazuka Revue Since 1914. Modernity, Girls' Culture, Japan Pop*, Global Oriental/Brill, Leiden 2012, pp. 83–89.

aspects, e.g., girls and women, educational and commercial, individual and collective, conservative and innovative, foreign and domestic, provincial and urban, national and global. These liminal features show that the identity of Takarazuka resides in between seemingly binary oppositions. The balance between these opposites is why Takarazuka has remained active for more than a hundred years until today, even though other revue companies have since ceased to exist.

In this way *ma* seems to be a key element in performing arts. To keep tradition alive and fresh, there is a constant challenge to adapt traditional disciplines in order to meet new criteria, which makes it possible to maintain popularity at a mass level. Combining traditional arts and contemporary media contributes to broadening the audience. It also reaches young people – even those abroad who are interested in manga, anime, and video games. Then, there may be a chance that *ma*, not only of genres but also of media, will become a universal mode of hybrid culture beyond national and socio-cultural differences.

Concluding remarks

For more than a century and a half since the beginning of *bunmei kaika*, under the inevitable influence of Western culture, Japanese modern culture seems to have been seeking a progressive equilibrium in *ma*. This point of view suggests that the concept of *ma* could merit all of the following: allowing for diversity, proposing alternatives, generating flexibility, adaptability, fostering inter- as well as transculturality, crossing borders of pre-fixed identities, avoiding conflicts and simplified judgments, finding harmony in the middle way traffic, opening traversal, interdisciplinary and cross-sectional communication, and facilitating comparative and relative viewpoints. Therefore, beyond the performing arts and visual arts, the aesthetic notion of *ma* penetrates into many aspects of Japanese life, social structure, and cultural forms. This sensory uniqueness might contribute to promoting a universal aesthetic attitude in resolving conflicts that cause discrimination and create barriers, and in seeking harmony in the age of heterogeneous culture accentuated by internet technology. We can interpret *ma* as a trans-cultural aesthetic notion creating a balance between differences.

When thinking of the popular reception of both traditional and contemporary Japanese culture abroad today, the concept of *ma* seems likely to cross borders of different cultural codes with its universal validity. Could it function as a common sensibility of human beings and contribute to the dynamic traffic of inter-/transcultural communication in our age of globalization towards a new 'civilization' in search of new harmony? Today, unlike a century ago, our life quality criteria are bound to technological progress and material affluence. We have to question what 'civilization' can mean at a global level, and what kind of potential role *ma* as a cultural concept could play and develop. Could it be a means of combining differences? At the very least, it gives us a margin to consider and to experiment with the possibility. From a historical perspective, the visual artistic *ma* introduced in Western Japonisme has developed into a multi-layered *ma* that connects more complex differences and contributes to a freer and more borderless sensitivity and taste.

Let me close this article with an anecdote. I live in Nancy, a city of the Art Nouveau movement situated in the eastern part of France, known for Émile Gallé and Louis Majorelle – famous artists from that epoch. My French friends, a mother and her teenage son, are both big fans of Japan, but each of them shows interest in very different elements of Japanese culture. The mother admires Japanese ceramics, woodblock prints, and paintings, while her son is obsessed with Japanese manga, anime, and video games. At first, seeing a woodblock print on the wall of the mother's room and a Super Mario poster in her son's room was a rather puzzling experience for me. There is more than a hundred-year gap between these pieces of art, and they are quite different in both style and subject matter. However, both are certainly representative of Japan. Then, in the corridor between their rooms, I found a poster of the cabaret singer Aristide Bruant portrayed by Lautrec. I reckoned that this renowned Art Nouveau work created under the influence of Japonisme could explain the connection between the two. In other words, that time when cultural exchange was fertile between the West and Japan held the key to fostering mutual cultural appreciation.

Employing the metaphysical idea of *ma* as an analytical tool has enabled this paper to examine the reasons behind the popularity of Japanese cultural forms of different times and how people's image of Japan was

influenced by the presence and usage of *ma*. If Japanese culture still has something to offer to the world's civilization, we may well need to understand the universal validity of *ma* to cultivate global cultural dynamics.

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Abstract

The Universal Appeal of the Japanese Concept of Ma

The Japanese concept of *ma* is an abstract and complex notion which constitutes an essential aesthetic attitude present in the Japanese society and culture. It has been well-developed as an aesthetic notion in the Japanese visual and performing arts tradition. It has played an important role in Japanese modernization since the *bunmei kaika*, which is when many Western influences started to take hold in Japan and impact the everyday lives of the Japanese people. While the West adopted *ma* as a Japanese artistic sensitivity within the trend of Japonisme, Japanese culture also sought out a new equilibrium in *ma* and used it as a means of balancing foreign and domestic factors. These processes led to the simultaneous creation of a sense of modernity on both sides of the globe. This paper investigates the Japanese notion of *ma* that overcomes the dichotomy between opposing components and helps to connect the differences by crossing borders of conflicting cultural codes instead of separating them. Furthermore, analyzing modernity by using the concept of *ma* enables us to connect Japanese culture of the past and present, and to generate through this process a unique 'Japaneseness' which at the same time has a certain universal validity. If the civilization of our times becomes focused on increasing the unity and balance of transculturality, the idea of *ma* might still contribute to world civilization.

Keywords: *ma*, civilization, modernity, Japonisme, transculturality, Japanese art and theater

chapter 6

Ōshima and Ogasawara of the 1920s in Works of Ukrainian Artists: Experience of Cultural Dialogue

Svitlana Rybalko, Nomura Chieko*

Introduction

The 1917 Revolution and the ensuing civil war caused the emigration of many artists whose life and work had been closely connected with Ukraine. Some of them ended up in Japan in the 1920s. Among them were such well-known representatives of the avant-garde as David Burliuk,[1] Viktor Palmov,[2] Sergey Shcherbakov,[3] Nikolay Nedashkovskiy,[4] and Václav Fiala.[5]

The islands situated outside 'inner Japan' were unfamiliar to the Japanese themselves. Classical art was limited to routes associated with the fame of places glorified by poets, pilgrimages to Buddhist monasteries and city attractions. Visual travel journals representing the life and landscapes of various regions, which became popular during the Edo

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1 David Burliuk, born in 1882 in Semirotovka, Kharkiv Province, died in 1967. Artist, poet, art critic, curator of many exhibitions, one of the leaders of the literary and artistic avant-garde.

2 Viktor Palmov, born in 1888 in Samara, Russia, died in 1957 in Kyiv. Artist. After returning from Japan to the USSR, he was a professor at the Kyiv Art Institute.

3 Sergey Shcherbakov, born in 1894 in Kharkiv, died in 1967 in San Francisco. Painter.

4 Nikolay Nedashkovskiy, born in 1895, probably in Kharkiv, died in 1924 in San Francisco. Painter.

5 Václav Fiala, born in 1896 in Prague, died there in 1980. Painter, graphic artist, illustrator, curator of exhibitions. Between 1911 and 1915, he lived and studied in Kharkiv.

period due to the development of postal roads, were also limited to 'inner Japan.'[6]

The beginnings of active development of the island theme by many artists is associated with the adoption of colonial policy of Japan in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. Artists and writers were purposefully directed towards the islands. Their artworks helped broaden the understanding of Japan by its own inhabitants and shape its new image. The Japanese audience inevitably compared images created by the Japanese and the Ukrainian artists. Such a comparison is also interesting from a research point of view, since it shows how people rooted in two different cultures viewed one and the same object.

The creative activity of the aforementioned Ukrainian artists in Japan has not been comprehensively covered in the research literature. The greatest attention is paid to David Burliuk as the group leader and a prominent representative of the avant-garde. The study of his output is also facilitated by his robust literary activity. He recorded his memories of Japan in stories, short stories, letters, and biographical notes.

Publications dedicated to the above-mentioned artists usually describe exhibitions they organized, their contacts with local artists, writers, and public figures, as well as their influence on Japanese art. The fundamental work *Taishōki shinkō bijutsu undō no kenkyū* [*Study of the New Art Movement of the Taishō Period*] published in 1995 by Omuka Toshiharu is one of such pieces, in which two chapters are devoted to the relationship of David Burliuk with the Miraiha Bijutsu Kyōkai (The Society of Futurist Artists), as well as his travel to the islands. Regarding Ogasawara Islands, where all the five artists met, Omuka writes: "Probably an important question for art history is whether it was a movement, a kind of creative grouping, or did they come together just to overcome difficulties?"[7]

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6 Numerous variations on the theme of the 'fifty-three stations of the Tōkaidō road' serve as an example. The *Ryūkyū hakkei* [*Eight Views of the Ryūkyū Islands*] series of prints produced by Katsushika Hokusai is an exception and may be considered evidence of the hidden colonization of the Ryūkyū Kingdom.

7 T. Omuka, *Taishōki shinkō bijutsu undō no kenkyū – The Japanese Modern Art Movement and the Avant-Garde 1920–1927*, Sukaidoa, Tokyo 1998, p. 165.

It is worth noting that publications devoted to the artistic activity of Burliuk in Japan are significantly inaccurate in regard to dates and facts. It may be explained by the fact that there exists a variety of sources whose respondents (including Burliuk himself) were not always accurate. Only after many years of research was a local Japanese historian and translator, Suzuki Akira, able to make a significant contribution to the chronological reconstruction of the 'Japanese period' in the oeuvre of Burliuk and his peers. His findings were published in such works as *Bururyūku no koro no Ōshima* [*Ōshima in the Time of Burliuk*],[8] *Ogasawara v bytnost D. Burlyuka i V. Fialy* [*Ogasawara in the Days of D. Burliuk and V. Fiala*].[9]

Several pages of the book *David Burlyuk v Amerike* [*David Burliuk in America*] by Nobert Yevdaev are devoted to the artists' stay at Ogasawara.[10] The author cites the memoirs of Václav Fiala, which substantially supplement Burliuk's own texts dedicated to the island. In this regard, one should especially note an article by Amir Khisamutdinov which sheds light on the least known period in the life of those Kharkiv artists.[11] The author quotes the recollections of Sergey Shcherbakov about Ōshima and Ogasawara and publishes photographs stored in the archive of the Russian Center of San Francisco.

Publications of such Ukrainian researchers as Serhii Kapranov, Iryna Teslenko, Yevgeniy Demenok, and Viktor Markov should also be mentioned. Kapranov, commenting on the literary text *Ōshima*,[12] believes that Burliuk's trip to Japan on his way to America had its own logic, which stemmed from his conviction that, as an avant-garde artist aspiring to arrive in the country of the future, he should first plunge himself

8 A. Suzuki, T. Fujii, and A. Kapitonenko, *Bururyūku no koro no Ōshima – Ōshima v bytnost Burliuka* [*Ōshima in the Time of Burliuk*], Fond im. Burlyuka; Kimura Gorō Ōshima Nōmin Bijutsu Shiryōkan, Simferopol–Tokyo 2005.

9 A. Suzuki and N. Yevdaev, *Ogasawara v bytnost D. Burlyuka i V. Fialy* [*Ogasawara in the Days of D. Burliuk and V. Fiala*], Design ER, New York 2006.

10 N. Yevdaev, *David Burlyuk v Amerike* [*David Burliuk in America*], Nauka, Moskva 2008.

11 A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki v Yaponii (1918–1922)" ["Russian Painters in Japan (1918–1922)"], *Izobrazitel'noe Iskusstvo Urala, Sibiri, Dal'nego Vostoka* 2020, no. 3(2), pp. 30–37.

12 D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, Izdatelstvo Marii Nikiforovny Burliuk, New York 1927.

into archaism – at least for a little while.[13] While considering the paintings and literary works of the futurist artist as a whole, Teslenko does not single out the island motifs from the general body of artworks created during his stay in Japan. While attempting to characterize his interpretation of nude female figures, she notes that this is a generalized image of the overseas and the mythical East. It constitutes a kind of a parallel to the Tahitian series of works by Gauguin.[14] Bogdan Pudlo, on the other hand, analyzes the texts of Burliuk in the context of time.[15] Pudlo shows that Burliuk constructs a metaphorical image of an ancient civilization. The understanding of its tradition gives him a tool for building the future.

The article by Demenok is dedicated to the Japanese period in Burliuk's creative work and contains a brief overview of the artist's activity in Japan.[16] Demenok clarifies some facts related to his trip to the distant islands.[17] Markov's article *Russkiy sled v Yaponii* [*A Russian Trace in Japan*] focuses on those few works of Burliuk which interpret the Japanese artistic experience.[18]

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13 S. Kapranov, "*Oshima* Davyda Burliuka, prochytana yaponistom" ["*Ōshima* by David Burliuk, Read by a Japanologist"], *Vsesvit* 1997, no. 826(10), pp. 138–143.

14 I. Teslenko, "Yaponiya ochyma Davyda Burliuka" ["Japan through the Eyes of David Burliuk"], *Visnyk Derzhavnoi Akademii Kerivnykh Kadriv Kultury i Mystetstva* 2004, no. 19(2), pp. 62–68.

15 B. Pudlo, "Plusquamperfectum of Futurism. Experience of Time in the Japanese Oeuvre of the Father of Russian Futurism," March 2019. https://www.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.32905.90729; accessed: 31.10.2022.

16 Y. Demenok, "Yeshche o Burlyuke v Yaponii. David Burlyuk v dnevnikah i memuarah" ["More about Burliuk in Japan. David Burliuk in Diaries and Memoirs"], *Novyy Mir* 2020, no. 1138(2).

17 In particular, the author provides the name of the third artist who joined Burliuk and Palmov on the island of Ōshima. It was the Russian artist Ilyin, who had already lived in Tokyo for several years. It was he who encouraged the artists to go to Ōshima.

18 V. Markov, "Russkiy sled v Yaponii. David Burlyuk otets yaponskogo futurizma" ["A Russian Trace in Japan. David Burliuk, the Father of Japanese Futurism"], *Izvestiya Vostochnogo Instituta* 2007, no. 14, pp. 191–219.

The publications of Myroslava Mudrak,[19] Valentyna Nemtsova,[20] Oles Noha,[21] and Serhii Pobozhii[22] should also be noted. They cover different periods of Burliuk's artistic activity, allowing us to comprehend his creativity before and after his trip to Japan. For most researchers, the theme of 'Russian artists' in Japan is understood as the artistic work of Burliuk and his relationship with the local futurists, as well as his influence on the development of Japanese art. Only a few researchers mention the existence of previous or parallel visual versions of the Japanese islands without comparing them with the artworks of the Ukrainian artists. In regard to Ōshima, we may mention here the articles written by Omuka Toshiharu and Suzuki Akira. Images of Ogasawara in Japanese art have been described in an article by Charles Fox, who notes that Kurata Hakuyō[23] was the first person to paint pictures in Chichijima, and it was Burliuk who, himself remaining under the influence of Gauguin, brought a new vision to the depiction of the Japanese islands.[24]

The research carried out by Mikhail Oshukov in his *Representation of Otherness in Literary Avant-Garde of Early Twentieth Century. David Burliuk's and Ezra Pound's Japan* also deserves attention in the context of our discussion.[25] The author defines the perception model of Japan employed by Burliuk as a "Russian's/westerner's view of the 'East,'" with which one cannot but agree. In this sense, Burliuk is not alone: finding

19 M. Shkandrij, M. Mudrak, and I. Holubizky, *Futurism and After. David Burliuk, 1882–1967*, The Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg 2008.
20 V. Nemtsova, "Ukrainskie korni tvorchestva Davida Burlyuka (1882–1967)" ["Ukrainian Roots of the Art of David Burliuk"], *Visnyk Kharkivskoi Derzhavnoi Akademii Dyzainu i Mystetstv* 2005, no. 10, pp. 59–71.
21 O. Noha, *Davyd Burlyuk i mystetstvo vsesvitnoho avanhardu* [*David Burliuk and the Art of the World Avant-Garde*], Osnova, Kharkiv 1993.
22 S. Pobozhii, *Davyd Burliuk i suchasnist – Burlyuk D. Kataloh vystavky tvoriv z muzeinyh ta pryvatnyh zibran Ukrainy* [*David Burliuk and the Contemporary – D. Burliuk Catalog of Exhibitions of Works from Museums and Private Collections of Ukraine*], Natsionalnyi Khudozhnii Muzei Ukrainy, Kyiv 1998.
23 Kurata Hakuyō, born in 1881 in Urawa, died in 1938 in Ueda. Kurata was one of the artists who represented the Western style in Japanese painting (*Yōga*).
24 Ch. Fox, *Natives and Others. Prewar Representations of the Ogasawara/Bonin Islands*. http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/re/k-rsc/lcs/kiyou/pdf_22-4/RitsIILCS_22.4pp.53-68Fox.pdf; accessed: 31.10.2022, pp. 58–63.
25 M. Oshukov, "Representation of Otherness in Literary Avant-Garde of Early Twentieth Century. David Burliuk's and Ezra Pound's Japan," *Annales Universitatis Turkuensis*, vol. 430, Painosalama Oy, Turku 2017, pp. 97–154.

himself in a country strikingly different from his usual world, any European (if he is not a researcher of Japan), being in the minority, identifies himself as a representative of the conditional 'West.' Burliuk realizes this fact and explains:

> We know so much about each other; our tastes, our interests, environment, and education. All of these are like a single seed bed that created plants of the same kind; but here, there is a type of beauty, an education level, amount of knowledge and its nature due to the lack of a bridge or any perch across the abyss established by the total ignorance of the language and its other type which is foreign to us and hasn't been met earlier![26]

To understand the perception and depiction of life on the Japanese islands by the Ukrainian artists, it is necessary to consider their work not only in the context of conceptually related artistic movements, but also against a broader background of the artistic life and tradition of Japan in those years. It is also advisable to take into account the artistic experience and ideas about Japan that these five artists had before arriving in the Land of the Rising Sun.

Thus, this article aims to consider the images of the Japanese islands (Ōshima and the Ogasawara archipelago) in the creative works of artists whose activity relates to Ukraine in order to identify the features of their assimilation in the context of artistic, cultural, and political realities of Japan at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Materials and methods

In this article we use various sources, such as autobiographical stories, memoirs, and letters written by David Burliuk, Václav Fiala, and Sergey Shcherbakov, as well as their paintings and graphic works identified as having been drawn from life or as impressions created during trips to the islands of Ōshima (the Izu archipelago) and Chichijima (the Ogasawara archipelago). In the course of the research, we use methods of content

[26] D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 5. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are by the authors.

analysis as well as a formal, figurative, and stylistic analysis of artworks. Numerous observations are the result of our own expeditions to Ōshima and Ogasawara islands in 2008.[27]

Results of the study

As previously mentioned, at the beginning of the 1920s, among the emigrants who ended up in Japan there were five artists whose work was somehow connected with Ukraine. To understand their chosen routes and creative strategies, it is fundamentally important to note that four of them had been taking an active part in the artistic life of Kharkiv. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Kharkiv was one of the country's major art centers and, without a doubt, it was the most free and liberal city when it came to art.

Fiala, Shcherbakov, and Nedashkovskiy received professional art education in Kharkiv.[28] The creative formation of Burliuk is also connected with this city. It was there that he was given his first drawing lessons. Konstantin Pervukhin,[29] a graduate of a local art school, tutored him at his home. From 1905, Burliuk was a regular participant in exhibitions of the Kharkiv Association of Artists.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the artistic life of Kharkiv was determined by the coexistence of two trends: academism and modernism. The residents would receive art education in their home city and later continue their studies in St. Petersburg, Kraków, Munich, and Paris. Returning to their hometown, many of them taught at the Kharkiv Art School or opened their art studios. An atelier in Kharkiv in those years was more than just a workshop or a class where you could get drawing

[27] S. Rybalko, "Yaponiya: Neotpravlennye pisma. Ogasavara" ["Japan: Unsent Letters. Ogasawara"], *Anima Rerum/Dusha Veshchey* 2009, no. 5, pp. 40–44.
[28] In 1869, a private art school organized by Maria Raevskaya-Ivanova was opened in Kharkiv. It became the Kharkiv Art College in 1912. In 1921, it was reorganized into the Institute of Arts. Nowadays, it is known as the Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts (Kharkivska Derzhavna Akademiya Dyzaynu i Mystetstv).
[29] Konstantin Pervukhin, born in 1863 in Kharkiv, died in 1915 in Moscow. Impressionist painter, illustrator, and photographer.

lessons for a fee. It was also a club of like-minded people, a venue for meetings, discussions, and experiencing exchange. One of such places was the studio of Yevgeniy Agafonov,[30] a prominent representative of the Ukrainian Secession, a friend and colleague of Burliuk. Shcherbakov and Nedashkovskiy also belonged to Agafonov's circle. It was in Agafonov's studio that the artists found interest in Persian miniatures and Japanese woodblock prints, and, according to Nemtsova, they even showed "signs of fascination with Chinese and Japanese graphics."[31]

Various circumstances brought these five artists to the Far East. However, a certain pattern emerges when we note the fact that they all ended up in Japan in the 1920s. Their meeting and the several months spent together on Chichijima, an island little known even among the Japanese, does not seem to be accidental at all.

Burliuk was the leader among the five artists. He was an artist and a poet, a descendant of the Ukrainian Cossacks, and the founder of Russian Futurism. He was an outstanding person: he generated ideas, acted as an organizer of exhibitions, meetings, and performances. It is about his life that the most information has been preserved. He himself wrote a lot about his trip to Japan, and his stay there was described abundantly in Japanese newspapers. If we follow the information concerning Burliuk, we can also find out more about the other artists.

Thus, on October 1, 1920, Burliuk, along with his friend Palmov, arrived in Japan. They soon opened the *First Exhibition of Russian Paintings* in Tokyo and after it ended on November 1, they went to Ōshima.

The artist does not report on the reasons for this trip. However, the answer can be found in the Museum of Folk Art in Ōshima, where a photograph of Shcherbakov's painting has been preserved. Shcherbakov and Nedashkovskiy had left for Japan earlier than Burliuk. Perhaps they

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30 Yevgeniy Agafonov, born in 1879 in Kharkiv, died in 1955 in Ansonia, USA. He was a painter, a graphic artist, and founder of Kharkiv's creative associations such as the Blue Lily (Golubaya Liliya; 1907–1911) and the Ring (Koltso; 1911–1914).

31 V. Nemtsova, *Izobrazitelnoe iskusstvo Kharkovshchiny. Istoricheskiy ocherk* [*Fine Arts of Kharkiv Region. A Historical Essay*], Region-Inform, Kharkiv 2004, p. 81.

advised the artist to go to Ōshima, a place with low prices and beautiful landscapes. Very little information has been preserved about their stay on this island. In 1965, a volcanic eruption destroyed the paintings left by the artists as payment for their accommodation. Other sources, such as documents and photographs, were lost as well. According to Shcherbakov's memoirs kept in the archives of the Russian Center of San Francisco,[32] the artists were greatly impressed by Ōshima and Japan as a whole. They stayed on the island for two months. Autumn was the most beautiful season for painters – at least judging by the preserved photograph of the landscape painted by Shcherbakov during his stay on the island. Russian scientist Khisamutdinov reports that

> they rented the largest house located on the top of the mountain. Its back side was facing the crater, and its facade overlooked the famous Khadu Bay,[33] sung about in Japanese songs [...] The southern part of the island, Toshiki no hana,[34] where the cliffs fell right into stormy waters, was amazing.[35]

A photograph of the painting *Ōshima. Autumn* by Shcherbakov (Fig. 15) corresponds to these descriptions. The artist depicted mountains and some distant groups of trees in silhouette. He focused his attention on the foreground, where the leaves are sparkling with golden colors of autumn like a garland on the sheer rock. The line depicting the leaves clearly refers to *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* woodblock print by Hokusai.

Inspired by the nature of the island that seemed fantastical compared to the views in their native Kharkiv, they painted landscapes every day. Taking into account the fact that those artists, like many of their contemporaries, considered Ukraine to be the 'second Italy,' contrasting its blessed climate, fertile land, and rich vegetation with the sober colors of Moscow, and especially St. Petersburg, it is easy to imagine their surprise and delight at Ōshima. Japan significantly changed their perspective. Artists did not expect to see such a variety of colors observed in nature throughout the year.

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32 Both Shcherbakov and Nedashkovskiy moved to San Francisco in 1923.
33 I.e., Habu Bay.
34 I.e., Toshikinohama.
35 A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki," p. 31.

Figure 15. Sergey Shcherbakov, *Ōshima. Autumn.* Paint on canvas. 1920. Source: Published as a postcard in Japan. Photo provided by Mr. Suzuki Akira.

A substantial part of artworks produced on Ōshima was sold immediately after returning to Tokyo.[36] A graphic work from the archive of the Russian Center of San Francisco allows us to imagine what the entire Ōshima series looked like.[37]

In the painting *Japanese Temple*, Shcherbakov depicted a temple surrounded by trees (Fig. 16). It is noteworthy that there are no elements in the composition indicating whether this temple belongs to the Shinto or Buddhist religion. For Shcherbakov, the generalized image of Japanese archi-

36 A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki," p. 31.
37 A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki," p. 32.

Figure 16. Sergey Shcherbakov, *Japanese Temple*. Ink on paper. 1920. Source: A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki v Yaponii (1918–1922)" ["Russian Painters in Japan (1918–1922)"], *Izobrazitel'noe Iskusstvo Urala, Sibiri, Dal'nego Vostoka* 2020, no. 3(2), p. 32.

tecture with its sliding walls, an open veranda, and compliance with natural landscape is much more important. He carefully draws trees and shrubs in the foreground and, with the same thoroughness, conveys the texture of wooden beams of the temple that closes the background. In some elements depicting vegetation, the artist repeated squiggles similar to those of *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* by Hokusai. He demonstrated a view of the Japanese landscape through the prism of Japanese prints. This appeal to the masters of *ukiyo-e* is explained in the following remark of Burliuk:

> I am not the only one interested in the Japanese culture, which includes Hokusai, Hiroshige, Toyokuni, Utamaro. Sixty years ago, a Frenchman, Goncourt, influenced artists with the arts of Japan; we were his heirs. So, it appears now as if the grandchildren have come to their ancestors' land.[38]

[38] "Kao ni inu o egaite kōfuku na Nihon o arukitai 'mirai-ha no chichi' to 'kisai' no futari" ["The 'Futurist Father' Who Wants to Draw a Dog on His Face and Walk in a Happy Japan, and the Two Geniuses"], *Tokyo Nihon Shimbun*, October 4, 1920.

Stylistically, the artworks of Shcherbakov correspond to secessionist aesthetics promoted by his friends in the Kharkiv studio. Undoubtedly, Japan, as the source of this aesthetic, seemed to be a real heaven on earth to its loyal followers. In the photographs published by Khisamutdinov, it is not difficult to notice that the friends enjoyed their stay in the country. While on the island, they were actively involved in the life of the Japanese and were in touch with the local people. According to the researcher, before the artists returned to Tokyo, the residents of Ōshima bid them farewell by holding a banquet with local treats.[39]

When visiting the island during the same autumn of 1920, Burliuk and Palmov perceived Ōshima quite differently. They had arrived in Japan about a month earlier and spent only ten days on Ōshima. During this very limited period of time, they did not have a chance to become familiar with the country or gain enough language skills. Culture shock, inevitable in a collision with another civilization, had not yet passed and the artists couldn't help but to perceive the island through the prism of their own preconceived ideas of the country, which were inconsistent with what they found at the site. The sketches and texts by Burliuk testify to the artists' confusion. Their image of Japan, conjured from the woodblock prints of Utamaro, Hiroshige, and Hokusai, was strikingly juxtaposed with the harsh living conditions encountered on the island. An active volcano, the creak of the volcanic rock underfoot, poverty – all this was not at all like the scenes from the Japanese woodblock prints. Palmov quickly lost his interest, closed himself in his room, and painted geishas from memory. The surviving postcard with a reproduction of the painting *Palmov and Geisha* (Fig. 17) provides a good illustration of the artist's mood. The grotesque depiction of a geisha with a mask-like face in the arms of a European man is an example of a typical colonial subject. However, Palmov interprets the theme with a noticeable shade of irony and self-irony.

Burliuk walked around the island every day, watching the life of the local residents. He painted, drew with a pencil, took notes for a future story. The island was permeated by the spirit of rural life, and the futurist started to paint some impressionistic landscapes. Four of them would

[39] A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki," p. 31.

Figure 17. Viktor Palmov, *Palmov and Geisha*. Postcard, 1920. Source: S.M. Tret'yakov and N. Aseyev, *Khudozhnik V. Pal'mov* [*Artist V. Palmov*], Ptach, [Chita] 1922.

be shown in Osaka at the first exhibition of paintings produced by the Russian artists. The painting *Ōshima. Motomura* signed and dated by the artist himself is the exact opposite of the futuristic program proclaimed by Burliuk. It shows a desire to depict the landscape as is, to convey the state of nature on the island. In general, the picture is distinguished by the thoroughness of execution and a certain completeness. Burliuk wrote:

> An artist in velvet trousers was doing sketches in the open air, he was working very carefully on a sketch depicting Motomura Street.[40]

This work was shown at an exhibition in Kyoto and was bought by a member of the Japanese imperial family.

40 D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 9.

It is noteworthy that in his short story *Oshima*, Burliuk wrote about himself in the third person. He wrote as if trying to assume the point of view of a local resident. At the time of his arrival, he introduced himself as "an artist in velvet trousers in a black beret," like he imagined the local residents saw him from the shore, when he, with other guests, was descending from the boat. He also described himself as "a stout man in velvet trousers" when walking down the street. According to Burliuk, he was perceived by the short and lean local people as a life-size figure only from a distance, and from closer up, he was simply 'unperceivable' above the waist. Burliuk was distinguished by an impressive physique – even when compared to his compatriots. In Japan, he could not help but feel too big in a country of miniature spaces and objects, just like Gulliver in the land of the Lilliputians.[41] He realized that he and his friends looked comical in the eyes of the Japanese. The foreigners could neither sit nor eat in the proper way when using chopsticks.[42]

The short story also allows us to follow the author's view. Burliuk notes all the details of his everyday life. At the same time, his eyes don't linger much on close objects. At every opportunity, his gaze rushes into the distance, namely to the volcano top, to the vastness of the ocean, or to the boats in the bay. Burliuk endows elements of the landscape with anthropomorphic features and provides their detailed outline.

Perhaps, at first, the futurist artist did not really feel inspired by the archaic life on Ōshima. However, in some respects, the island, situated far from the main civilization, surprised him with its modern development. For example, Burliuk noted that there were lightbulbs everywhere, even in a cowshed.[43]

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41 The feeling of disproportion is a common motif in the texts of Burliuk. In the poem "Pervyy vzglyad" ["The First Look"], he notices: "it is not a country, but an anthill, […] everything is microscopic here." D. Burliuk, *1/2 veka* [*Half of a Century*], Izdatelstvo Marii Nikiforovny Burliuk, New York 1932, p. 13.

42 Burliuk wrote that "the Russians are an entertainment for all the hotel dwellers: they are so comic in not being able to sit […], and the chopsticks are a hindrance rather than an aid to them." D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 5.

43 D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 11.

Western researchers rightly highlight the fact that Burliuk's account models an exotic image of the islands. It should be noted that in the context of rapid modernization, Ōshima, with its patriarchal lifestyle, made a strong impression on the Japanese themselves. Impressionism was an officially recognized academic style at the Tokyo Fine Arts School (Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō), and its students would go to Ōshima to make sketches. The slogan: "If you want to succeed, draw Ōshima"[44] was popular among artists.

Despite the fact that almost none of the Ōshima series of artworks have been preserved, thanks to Burliuk's notes we know that there were certain landscapes which he would visit every morning to sketch. At a walking distance from the hotel where he lived, there was a magnificent view of the strait with Mt. Fuji emerging on the horizon. It is quite obvious that Burliuk, as well as Shcherbakov, perceived Ōshima in the context of Japanese woodblock prints. Their lack of familiarity with the language, history, and culture also led to them determining their matrix of perception of unknown things through the images that were familiar: a series of prints by Hokusai, or the landscapes of Ukraine, Crimea, and Siberia described in literary texts.

One cannot rule out that Japanese artists depicting Ōshima were also tempted to draw in parallel to the series by Hokusai. Themes such as Mt. Fuji seen across the strait or landscapes featuring local people doing their daily work are all based on the traditions established by Hokusai. Artworks of Itō Shinsui[45] and Kawase Hasui[46] serve as examples. However, in addition to the landscape, the image of a local girl (*anko-san*) plays an important role in paintings and graphic works of Japanese artists. Girls of Ōshima kept an aristocratic custom of growing long hair. They were modest and hardworking. It was only possible to see them while they were performing domestic work. Japanese woodblock art-

44 A. Suzuki, T. Fujii, and A. Kapitonenko, *Ōshima*, p. 2.
45 Itō Shinsui, born in 1898 and died in 1972 in Tokyo, a Japanese artist, representative of the *shin-hanga* style (new version of the *ukiyo-e* style).
46 Kawase Hasui, born in 1883 and died in 1957 in Tokyo, a Japanese artist, representative of the *shin-hanga* style.

Figure 18. Itō Shinsui, *Woman of the Island*. A piece in the *Twelve Images of Modern Beauties* series. Colored woodcut. 1921. Source: Google Art and Culture.

Figure 19. Maeda Masao, *Ōshima Anko*. Colored woodcut. 1946. Source: Ukiyo-e Search.

ists such as Itō Shinsui, Maeda Masao,[47] and others created beautiful images of *anko-san* – an island version of *bijinga*[48] (*Woman of the Island* by Itō, Fig. 18; and *Ōshima Anko* by Maeda, Fig. 19). It should be noted that all of them emphasized the peculiarities of the rural (exotic) way of life, with its closeness to nature, primitive technologies, and simplicity of customs. It is a city dweller's look at the countryside, a resident of inland Japan's look at distant islands.

Burliuk and Palmov did not notice the charm of the peasant woman because of their cultural shock. The few female images that Burliuk painted were much different from how the same theme was depicted by his Japanese peers. They differed from each other like prose from poetry. Examples are *Nei-san Housemaid* (Fig. 20) and *Japanese Woman with a Child* (Fig. 21). The ink portrait of the housemaid is far from being a display of admiration. The woman has a small forehead, puffy cheeks, and protruding lips. The latter picture, another side-face depiction of a woman carrying a child on her back, is only slightly different in general appearance. Verbal descriptions are not dissimilar to the visual ones:

> Without exception, the women are ugly: there is no woman's beauty, only chests wrapped in kimonos, narrow pelvises, and angularity, where sensual seduction has no place![49]

For Burliuk, even the beauty of long hair evokes an association with snakes.[50] The artists did not understand the language, they did not understand the conditions of the local life, and they felt lost.

Burliuk and Palmov left Ōshima and, on November 15, arrived in Osaka. Leaving the island, Burliuk emphasized that Motomura wasn't a boring place with its landscapes, houses, people, and everyday life:

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47 Maeda Masao, born in 1904 and died in 1974 in Hakodate, a Japanese artist, representative of the *sōsaku-hanga* style.
48 *Bijinga* – paintings of beauties, a genre of Japanese prints and paintings.
49 D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 4.
50 D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 11.

Figure 20. David Burliuk, *Nei-san Housemaid*. Ink and brush on paper. 1921. Source: D. Burliuk, *Voskhozhdenie na Fudzi-san* [*Climbing Mount Fuji*], Izdatelstvo Marii Nikiforovny Burliuk, New York 1926.

I'm not tired of a monotonous, calm life in a *hoteru*, but I had to go. Life called me. The big island asked me to leave the small one.[51]

In Tokyo, Burliuk and Palmov were joined by Burliuk's family and his friend, Fiala. In December 1920, they went together to Ogasawara, the most remote part of the Japanese archipelago, where ships went only three times a year. This trip is even more confusing for many research-

[51] D. Burliuk, *Oshima*, p. 19.

Figure 21. David Burliuk, *Japanese Woman with a Child*. Ink and brush on paper. 1921. Source: D. Burliuk, *Voskhozhdenie na Fudzi-san* [*Climbing Mount Fuji*], Izdatelstvo Marii Nikiforovny Burliuk, New York 1926.

ers: what kind of Japan did Burliuk look for in this region so distant from the Japanese civilization?

The artist himself partially answered this question in his story *Po Tihomu okeanu* [*Across the Pacific*]:

When I had to spend winter in a cold house in Japan, it was horrible… And I had to paint pictures there! I can't deal with painting when I am freezing!

I really wanted to spend an interesting year without snow, without warm clothes, without worries about heating and that sort of things.[52]

The decision to go to islands closer to the tropics was motivated by the need to work creatively, to save money, and, last but not least, by the opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream:

In childhood, we read many novels written by Defoe, Cooper, Mayne-Reid, and found inspiration in the artworks of Gauguin. As a result, there is a constant thirst for exotic countries in the heart of every artist. [...] Just imagine! To live on a small island, among the endless waves, to live on a rock, where a steamer comes once a month, to go to those places about which no one can even tell you anything in detail![53]

Fiala expressed similar reasoning in his notes:

Our decision was facilitated by the mystery of the travel to the Bonin Islands,[54] which were unknown to most of the Japanese, as well as by the fact that the southern coast of one of the islands must be warm enough for our artistic work.[55]

Burliuk arrived on Ogasawara with his family and friends on December 22, 1920. The first impressions did not disappoint him:

The shore is pleasing to the eye: there is no familiar specimen of trees that we know; all sorts of palm trees, fig trees of the size of several [human] girths and huts between the trunks.[56]

The artists settled on the island of Chichijima, in the Ōgiura village. Burliuk felt inspired by everything around him, from the shore brimming with giant fish to the hotel by the stream, where in the evenings one

52 D. Burliuk, *Po Tihomu okeanu* [*Across the Pacific*], Izdatelstvo Marii Nikiforovny Burliuk, New York 1927, p. 4.
53 D. Burliuk, *Po Tihomu okeanu*, p. 4.
54 I.e., the Ogasawara Islands.
55 V. Fiala, *Ogasawara*, Václav Petr, Praha 1928, p. 12.
56 D. Burliuk, *Po Tihomu okeanu*, p. 8.

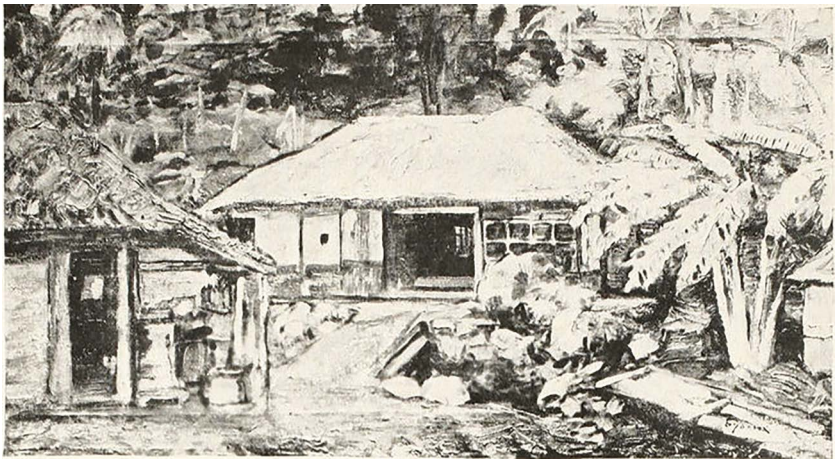

Figure 22. David Burliuk, *Our Apartment. David Burliuk's Studio on the Island of Chichijima in the Great Ocean*. 1921. Source: D. Burliuk, *Po Tihomu okeanu* [*Across the Pacific*], Izdatelstvo Marii Nikiforovny Burliuk, New York 1927.

could hear the rustling of crabs. Even the inconveniences at the hotel were described by him with a frank delight:

> [T]here are no ceilings in the house, the roof is made of palm leaves, when you lie on the floor and look up you can never forget that you are in the tropics. The house is made of thin boards. When you look at it from the side at night, and a lamp is on inside the room, the whole house shines through with large slits and round holes, the holes that have been gnawed by the local shipworms.[57]

The artists did not choose this island merely by chance. Nedashkovskiy and Shcherbakov, their friends from the Kharkiv studio, had already been living there. We learn from police reports that they all settled in neighboring houses. It is likely that the friends continued their 'studio-like' lifestyle on Chichijima. We can see one of their lodgings in the picture *Our Apartment* (Fig. 22). It seems no coincidence that Burliuk signed the image depicting his house as follows: "David Burliuk's studio on the island of Chichijima in the Great Ocean." The huts themselves have not been preserved,[58] but we can see them in the drawings and paintings of the artists.

57 D. Burliuk, *Po Tihomu okeanu*, p. 9.
58 Houses on the shore of the bay were destroyed during World War II.

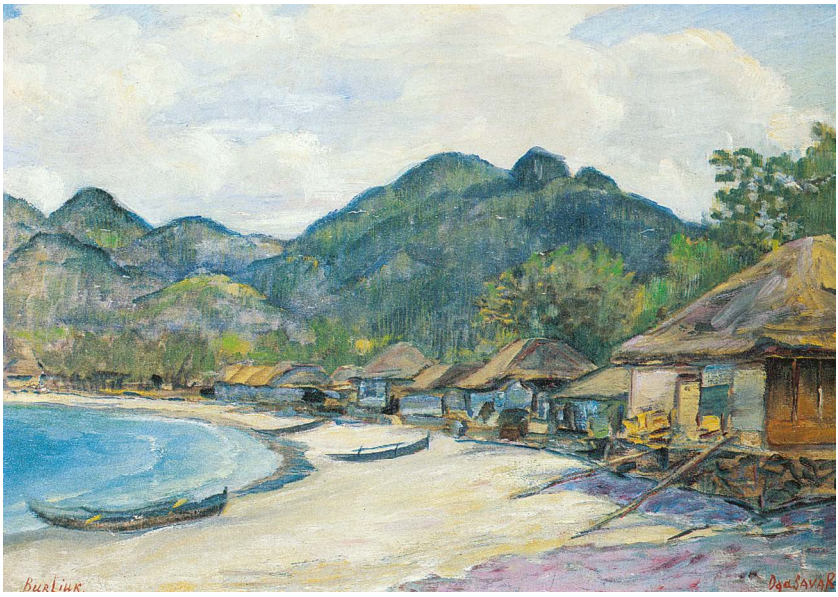

Figure 23. David Burliuk, *Japanese Village*. Oil on canvas. 1921. Source: WikiArt. Visual Art Encyclopedia.

An image of the village where they lived has also survived. The piece *Japanese Village* shows several houses with thatched roofs, blue water of the bay, boats drying on the shore, and emerald mountains which close the space like on a screen (Fig. 23). This painting by Burliuk is the only surviving depiction of the coastline of the village to have been produced before World War II.

The artists spent several winter months on the Ogasawara Islands. Warm climate, minimal expenses, and lack of business activity allowed them to devote all their time to creative pursuits. For all of them, it was a fruitful period. The artists made many paintings depicting nature and the life of the island. Shcherbakov later recalled that this was the happiest period in his life.[59] Fiala, too, produced many drawings and sketches, while also taking notes. One of his watercolor works depicts an evening filled with creative activities taking place on the island: Burliuk is dictating the text of the story *Oshima*, and his wife, Maria, is writing it down. In Chichi-jima, Burliuk began to write a story about Ogasawara. As mentioned

59 A. Khisamutdinov, "Russkie khudozhniki," p. 32.

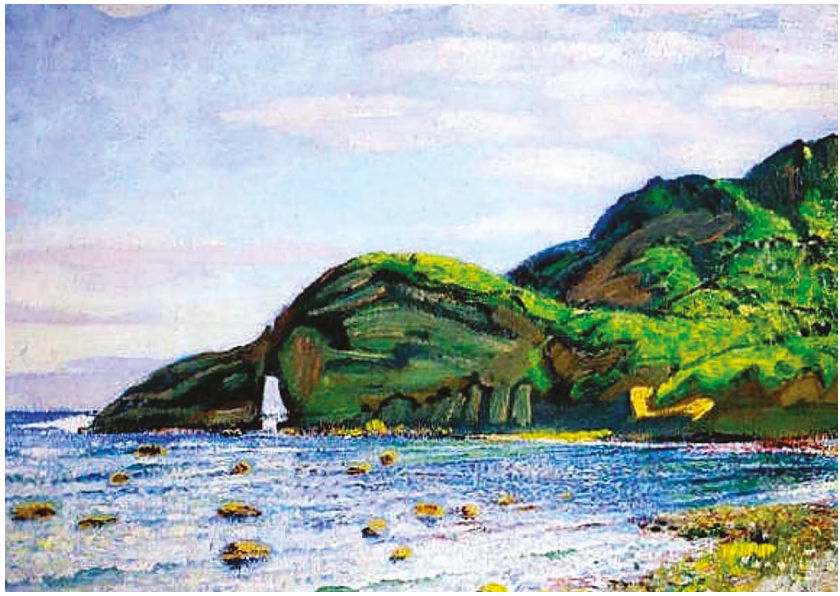

Figure 24. David Burliuk, *Japanese Bay*. Oil on canvas. 1921. Source: WikiArt. Visual Art Encyclopedia.

above, in the former narrative the author is hiding behind a character called "an artist in velvet trousers." However, the story about Ogasawara is written in the first person. The artist emphasizes his role as a traveler who actively observes and gets to know the nature, history, and customs of the island, as well as communicates with the local residents. His literary texts confirm a great admiration, as an inhabitant of the East European plains, towards the strangeness of the main components of the landscape. Green grass seems to be embroidered with green silk on red velvet, and corals – instead of plain sand – are sparkling in the sun, crunching under the feet of the ocean. The artist often painted quick landscape impressions, as if afraid of not having enough time to capture all the beauty of this kingdom of nature. The landscapes: *Forest Thicket*, *Ogasawara*, *Fire Paths*, *Palm Tree*, or *Japanese Bay* (Fig. 24) were produced after these sketches.

Burliuk writes with gratitude about the hospitality of the residents of the island. He notes that the way of life of the people in the village on Chichijima does not differ from the rest of Japan, but in the mountains, you can run across natives who are descendants of the first settlers. In

general, the literary image of Ogasawara Islands is an image of Paradise, of "blessed islands":

> The Japanese people live well: sugar cane feeds everyone; there is no winter, it's easy to build a house, whatever you plant into their red soil, it grows without watering. […] The fisherman catches fish of all colors and shades: sometimes he comes across some purple ones: these are not fish, but peacocks, blazing with all the colors of the rainbow. […] Men and women walk in the streets in the evenings, not ashamed of their nudity. […] They don't work very much, they treat work as a sport; the body is honored. […] How easy the life is here and how much the people value their own energy.[60]

These idyllic descriptions are reflected in such paintings of Burliuk as *Japanese Fisherman* (Fig. 25) and *Women from the Tropics* (Fig. 26). Bright colors, emphasis on the equivalence of man and the surrounding nature, as well as the naked bodies painted in the colors of the sun create an image of people whose lifestyle stays in harmony with nature.

Fiala also developed the motif of 'Japanese Polynesia' in his book *Ogasawara* and saturated the story with ethnographic details. The woodblock illustrations in his book visualize the exoticism of the southern seas. We see huge shells on the coast, human-sized ferns, straw huts, shark cutting, and people who are not ashamed of their nakedness (Figs. 27–28). It should be noted that references to the Tahitian series of works by Gauguin in depicting the life of islanders could be seen in the artworks of Japanese artists long before the arrival of Burliuk and his comrades.[61]

After returning from Ogasawara, the artists organized three simultaneous exhibitions, which took place in Tokyo. *Nature and Life of the Ogasawara Islands – An Exhibition of Russian Expressionists* included 200 artworks produced by Burliuk and Fiala, while the *Exhibition of Russian Paintings* consisted of 180 artworks by Shcherbakov and Nedashkovskiy. A special exhibition of 73 paintings by Palmov became a part of *The Second Exhibition of National Art*. All three exhibitions featured land-

60 D. Burliuk, *Po Tihomu okeanu*, p. 10.

61 Tsuchida Bakusen's *Women of the Islands* (1915) serve as an example. Tsuchida was born in 1887 on Sado Island and died in 1936 in Kyoto. He was a Japanese painter working in the *Nihonga* style.

Figure 25. David Burliuk, *Japanese Fisherman*. Oil on canvas. 1921. Source: WikiArt. Visual Art Encyclopedia.

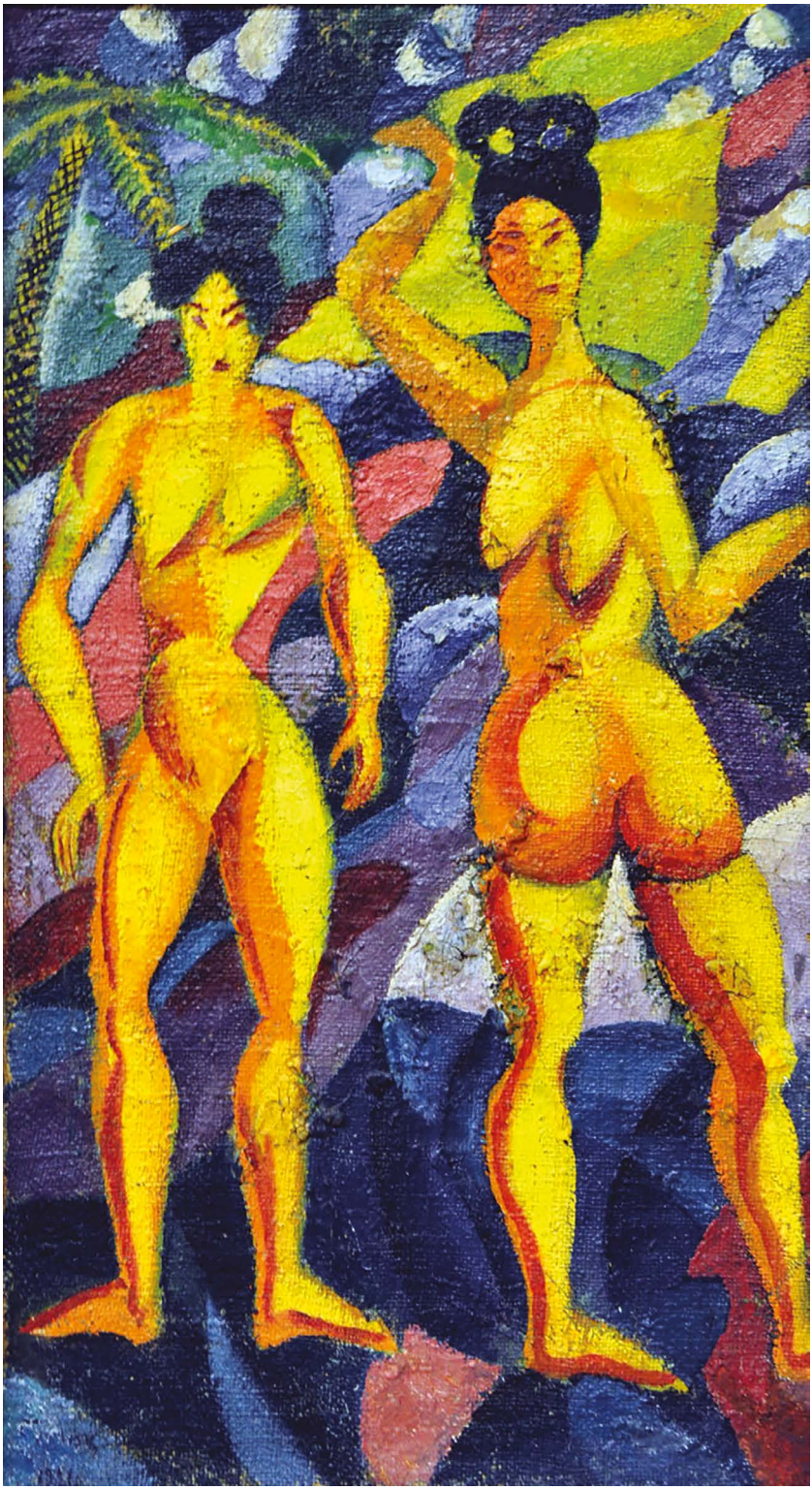

Figure 26. David Burliuk, *Women from the Tropics*. Oil on canvas, 1921. Source: WikiArt. Visual Art Encyclopedia.

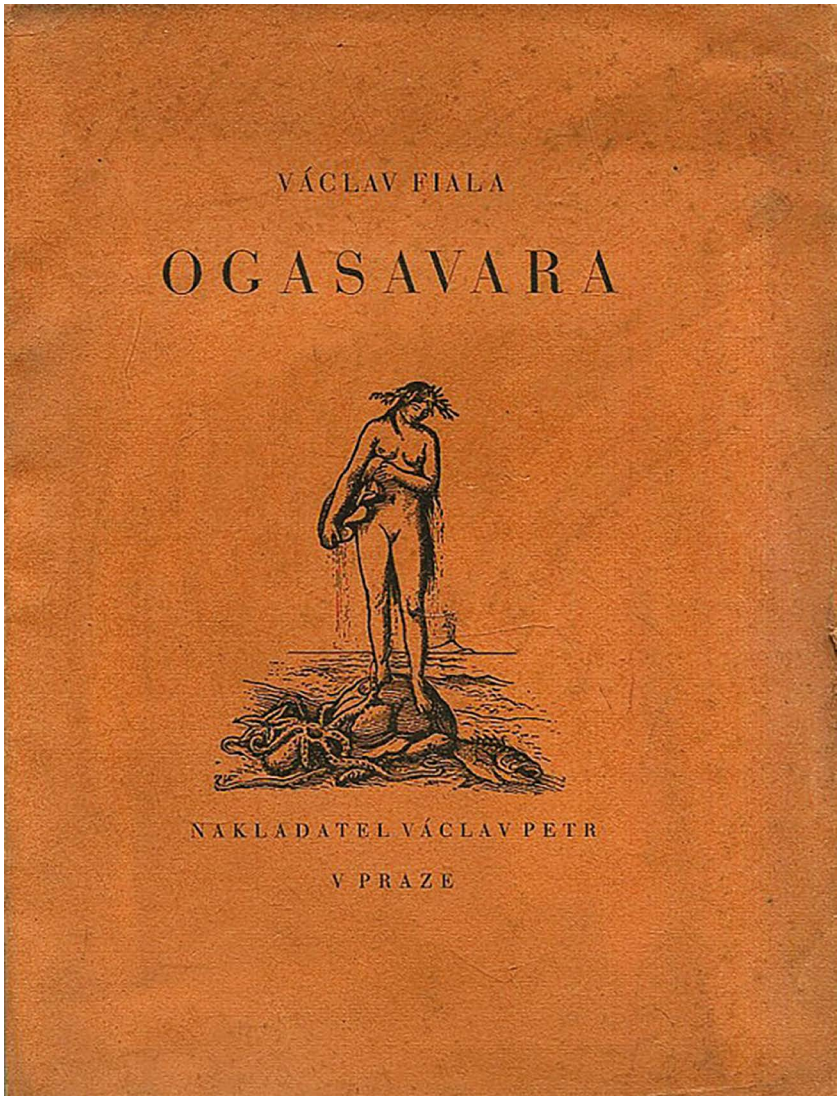

Figure 27. Václav Fiala, *Ogasawara*. Cover illustration. Source: V. Fiala, *Ogasawara*, Václav Petr, Praha 1928.

scapes of Ōshima and Ogasawara. The presented artworks are not only valuable as art, but also as records of everyday life on Ōshima and Ogasawara in the 1920s. Today, however, the location of most of these pieces is unknown.

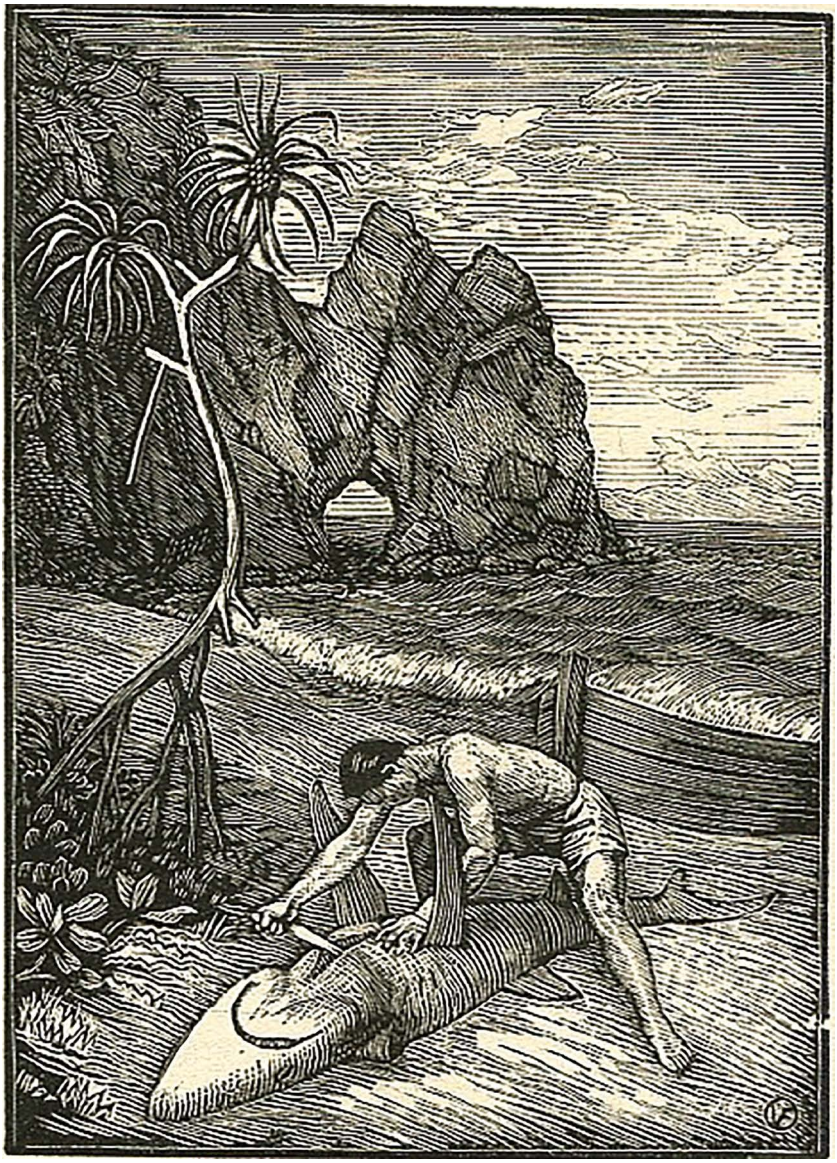

Figure 28. Václav Fiala, *Ogasawara*. Illustration. Source: V. Fiala, *Ogasawara*, Václav Petr, Praha 1928.

Conclusions

Biographical materials related to the creative activity of Burliuk, Fiala, Nedashkovskiy, and Shcherbakov make it possible to conclude that the formation of the 'creative colony' on Ogasawara was not accidental. This fact is further confirmed by the creative approach and passion for Japanese woodblock prints which were shared by the artists. These circumstances determined their attitude towards Japan as not merely a country of transit, but above all the land of Hokusai and Hiroshige. References to *ukiyo-e* prints can be seen both in their texts and in their figurative pieces.

There is a change in the optics in Burliuk's literary texts: a feeling of isolation from the incomprehensible environment and the unfamiliar world of Ōshima is replaced by an active participation and a desire to know and understand that world as much as possible while on Ogasawara. On Ōshima, Burliuk and Palmov (unlike their Japanese counterparts) were far from poeticizing local motifs and women's beauty, but on Ogasawara they started to develop the 'heaven on earth' motif. They did it both in literature and in the visual arts. The artists felt like the first discoverers of Japanese island exoticism, but in reality, they only supplemented and enriched the already existing Japanese cultural 'island text' with their own artworks.[62]

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[62] The authors would like to thank Mr. Akira Suzuki and the staff of the Ogasawara Municipality for their invaluable advice and assistance.

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Abstract

Ōshima and Ogasawara of the 1920s in Works of Ukrainian Artists: Experience of Cultural Dialogue

Addressed in the article are the literary, pictorial, and graphic works of Ukrainian artists inspired by their impressions from trips to the islands of Ōshima and Ogasawara in the early 1920s. The motivation and results of these journeys are the least studied aspect in the research of the Ukrainian avant-garde. We describe the differences in perception of the islands between Ukrainian and Japanese artists. We also highlight the Ukrainian 'versions' of Ōshima in the context of political and socio-cultural processes taking place in Japan at the time. We address selected issues of artistic communication and dialogue of cultures. The paper is based on a summary of the results of research work conducted by Japanese, Ukrainian, and Russian experts, as well as on an analysis of paintings, graphics, and literary works, archival materials, and other materials collected during the expeditions to Ōshima and Ogasawara islands in 2008.

Keywords: dialogue of cultures, Japan of the Taishō period, Ukrainian artists in Japan, Ukrainian avant-garde, Futurism, Impressionism

chapter 7

Yokohama-e, or Prints from Yokohama, as Images of the Westernizing World

Aleksandra Görlich

Since ancient times, graphic art has been an important part of art history. It was the first way of copying texts and drawings that was both fast and efficient. Prints on sheets of paper were also valued for being easy to deliver and convenient for circulating the news. Among various kinds of graphic techniques developed in different corners of the world, woodblock printing is the one with the longest history. Japanese woodblock prints, or *hanga*, were originally created based on printing methods derived from Chinese Buddhist temples, but over the centuries Japanese techniques had been steadily evolving. This process finally resulted in producing color prints, created by carving out patterns on as many woodblocks as might be needed, depending on the colors and designs involved (including blind embossing).[1] The first non-religious printed books in Japan were published at the end of the sixteenth century, with both the text and the images carved out in wooden blocks. The spread of literacy among townsmen and the rising interest in art and leisure among the samurai class resulted in an increasing number of books being printed and sold. With time, single prints or series of prints also started to become available for purchase by fans of theater, travel, and the pleasure quarters.[2] In comparison, prints in Europe at the same time were rather being used as a kind of a sketch that could be circulated in multiple copies among potential customers, while only the original paintings themselves were considered valuable. When one takes into

1 R. Lane, *Images from the Floating World*, Office du Livre, Fribourg 1978, p. 32.
2 R. Lane, *Images*, p. 34.

consideration the popularity, availability, and technical mastery of Japanese prints, their unique place in the art world becomes apparent.

When it comes to the subjects depicted in Japan using woodblock-printing techniques, one must acknowledge that there exist a vast variety of images: the topics ranged from bodhisattvas and portrayals of daily life to maps and trivia about various villages. Whatever might have turned out to be of interest was printed and sold. One of the most famous examples is Hokusai's *Manga*, which presents illustrations of every possible subject imaginable. As the Japanese were interested in foreign matters (forbidden at the time when *Manga* was printed), Hokusai also drew some pictures utilizing Western perspective and instruments. However, there were no foreigners depicted in his sketches as, generally, no *gaijin* (foreigner) was allowed to live in Japan until the latter half of the nineteenth century. There were only few groups of traders staying in the small island of Deshima, near Nagasaki.

The year 1853, when Commodore Perry's 'black ships' arrived in the Uraga Harbor, was a time of great change with respect to the relationship between Japan and the so-called Western world. It is safe to assume that Western countries were not expecting anything other than the establishment of typical trade relations and that the 'local' culture and cuisine would have very little impact on the colonizing countries. However, Japanese culture and art turned out to be far more interesting and intriguing than anyone had anticipated. Within the next twenty years, the impact on European and American art, fashion design as well as on various other aspects of culture was enormous. Westerners were purchasing, collecting, and even smuggling items out of Japan in order to display them in their foreign homes.[3]

[3] An interesting example of such behavior was Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796–1866), who stayed in Japan between 1823–1829 and, as a physician, was exceptionally allowed to open a practice in mainland Japan. He was buying and receiving various Japanese items as gifts. Among them were some maps and, since possession of maps was considered illegal, he was accused of being a spy for Russia and expelled from Japan. See R. Leca, *Japan in Kaart. Mapping Japan*, Japanmuseum SieboldHuis, Leyden 2017; "Siebold," *Japanmuseum SieboldHuis*. https://www.sieboldhuis.org/en/about/siebold; accessed: 29.12.2020.

In this article I would like to present the way in which the Japanese perceived and portrayed Western people, how this portrayal varied in accordance with their country of origin and their distinctive features, as well as how Western elements of composition and iconography were used along with traditional Japanese imagery. The Yokohama prints (*Yokohama-e*) will serve as examples. These images, created between 1859 and 1862, were commissioned not only by Japanese people but also by foreign diplomats and merchants. There exist several hundred known prints, depicting subjects such as portraits of foreigners, events portrayed in the Western style, maps, and ships. Japanese artists were interested in both Western subjects and their artistic techniques. Let us look at these examples of artistic exchange and examine what they can tell us about their authors, the people portrayed in them, as well as the changing world in which they were created.

Nanbanzu, or pictures of 'southern barbarians'

For the purposes of this inquiry, it may be useful to begin with a short summary of the situation back in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that is, the time when Japan experienced its initial encounters with European countries. The first Western ships arrived in Japan from Portugal, bringing over sailors, merchants, and Jesuit monks. For the Japanese, the people of visibly different appearance, clothes, and customs were a curiosity and soon became a subject of paintings by artists from the Kanō and Tosa Schools.[4] These images were created in the Japanese style, but depicted foreign, Western elements, such as dresses, hairstyles, poses, and typical attributes. On a screen portraying the arrival of a Portuguese ship, the choice of this particular scene, the perspective from above (*fukinuki yatai*[5]), the colors, and even such elements as the

4 Ch. Guth, *Japanese Art of the Edo Period*, Calmann and King Ltd., London 1996, p. 143. Kanō and Tosa Schools were the leading schools of traditional painting, both active since the mid-fifteenth century. Tosa represented native Japanese style, while Kanō represented style inspired by Chinese painting; it was an official art school of the Edo shogunate.

5 *Fukinuki yatai* literally means 'blown-off roof.' A scene using this perspective is presented from above and includes the interiors as well as beams, while the roofs and walls are removed.

Figure 29. Kanō Naizen, *An Important Nanban Six-Fold Screen Depicting the Arrival of a Portuguese Ship for Trade*, Edo period, seventeenth century. Ink, color, and gold leaf on paper, 122 × 373 cm. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

golden clouds are all in the Japanese style. If viewed from a distance, the only unusual element on this Japanese screen would be the presence of the big ship itself (Fig. 29).

There were some early attempts to incorporate Western techniques into Japanese images. As Christine Guth says in her book on Japanese art in the Edo period:

> Before the proscription of Christianity, some Japanese artists had experimented with the techniques of chiaroscuro and scientific perspective. They had also helped to satisfy the curiosity about the appearance and customs of Europeans by painting large-screen compositions, known as 'pictures of southern barbarians' (*nanban-zu*) because Portuguese traders were thought to come from the south. These highlighted the arrival of huge black Portuguese ships and processions of exotic Portuguese merchants, sailors, and Jesuit monks through streets crowded with curious Japanese onlookers. For the most part, they were painted in Kyoto by Kanō and Tosa artists, based on pictorial models rather than firsthand observation. The production of such screens ceased around 1639, when the country was officially closed to the Portuguese and foreign subject-matter was proscribed.[6]

Despite the fact that Japan's borders were officially closed, it is evident that some Western knowledge in the field of science, technology (especially related to weapons), and art was still making its way to the Japanese public. The instances of usage of chiaroscuro or linear perspective (in the form of *uki-e*)[7] occasionally appear in Japanese prints, a form of art that was considered to be both the most popular and the least exclusive. Some famous examples may be found in the art of nineteenth-century artists. Among them we can observe the use of shadows in *Saruwaka-chō Yoru no Kei* [*Night View of the Saruwaka Street*][8] by Utagawa

6 Ch. Guth, *Japanese Art*, p. 143.

7 R. Lane, *Images*, 340. *Uki-e* is a type of print and painting that imitates the European way of presenting space in a linear perspective. (R. Lane, *Images*, p. 340). Concerning *uki-e*, see also another article in this publication: *How to Measure 'Unique' or 'Universal'? Comparison in Crisis or Crisis in Comparison* by Inaga Shigemi.

8 Print no. 90 from the series *Meisho Edo Hyakkei* [*One Hundred Views of Edo*], 1856.

Hiroshige (1797–1858), linear perspective in volume three of the *Manga* sketches by Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), and chiaroscuro combined with linear perspective in the *Chūshingura Jūichidanme Yo[chi] no Zu* [*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers, Act Eleven: Night Attack*] by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798–1861).

Yokohama-e, or prints from Yokohama

When the black ships brought a large group of foreigners to Japan in the second half of the 1850s, the Japanese were most curious about their appearance and habits. This time around, the 'southern barbarians' were a group of people stationed in Yokohama harbor who identified themselves as either American, English, French, Dutch, or Russian. In the years 1859–1880, several hundred prints of various kinds were issued, mainly created by artists from the Utagawa School.[9] Artists and publishers extensively used the same elements that they had tried previously, but at the same time they were composing the images by using traditional Japanese techniques of woodblock print, contour, and stylization.

The first example I would like to analyze is the *Complete Detailed View of Yokohama Honchō and the Miyozaki Pleasure Quarter*, an 1860 triptych print by Utagawa Sadahide (Fig. 30). The artist composed a view of a city pictured from above, presenting the new quarters by the sea as well as the ships positioned in the harbor. In the streets there are people in Western clothing, mostly men, shown walking among Japanese buildings, lanterns, and traditional vehicles. In the bottom right corner, the United States flag is visible. Except for the subject matter, all the elements present are typical for Japanese woodblock prints: the title, the

9 R. Lane, *Images*, p. 348. The Utagawa School – a large group of woodblock-print artists active from the end of the eighteenth century to the second half of the nineteenth century, whose prints were famous preeminently for actor portraits and historical subjects but comprise also of such subjects as landscapes, famous places, fashionable beauties, and many other popular genres. The first master of the Utagawa School is considered to be Utagawa Toyokuni (1769–1825), and the most famous are his pupils Utagawa Hiroshige, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, and Utagawa Sadahide (1807–1873).

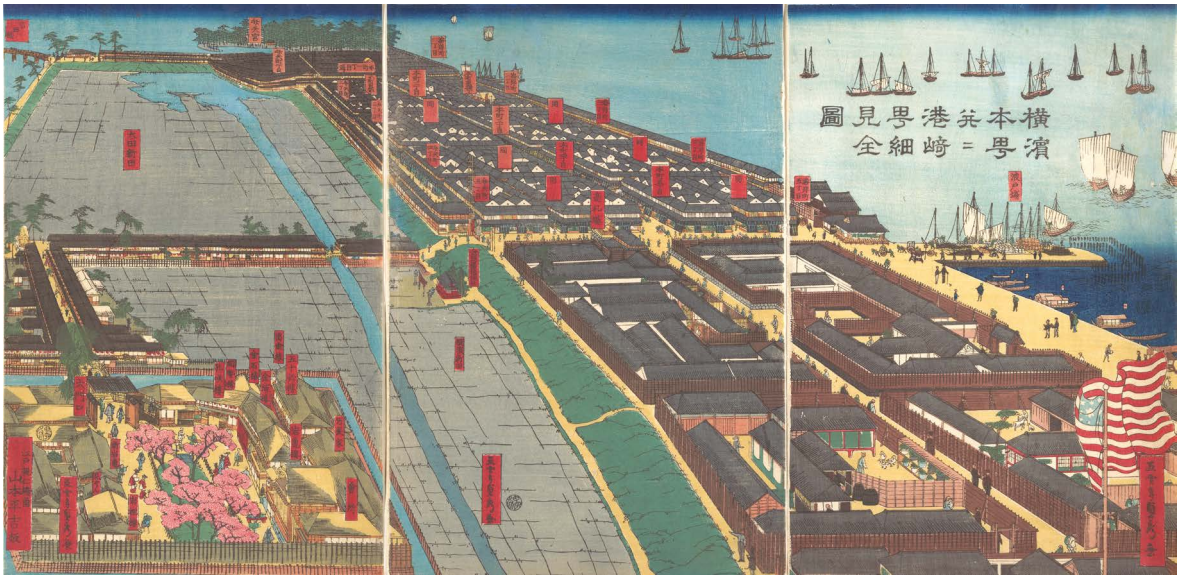

Figure 30. Utagawa Sadahide, *Detailed Print of Yokohama Hon-chō and the Miyozaki Pleasure Quarter*, 1860. Color woodblock print, 36.5 × 24.4 cm, 36.2 × 24.8 cm, 36.2 × 23.8 cm. Source: MET Public Domain.

artist's signature in a red panel, the publisher's and censors' seals, and cartouches with additional names of the parts of the quarter. All those elements are in common use in all other woodblock prints (presenting either a landscape or a city view) made by Japanese artists. They had also been previously used in battle illustrations, such as *Chūshingura: Youchi no Zu* [*The Treasury of Loyal Retainers: Picture of the Night Attack*] (1827–1830) by Utagawa Kuniyoshi, where a panel with a name is placed next to each of the warriors. Upon a closer look at the silhouettes of people in the harbor, one sees they are either Japanese workers or foreigners. The latter can be distinguished mostly by their long trousers, walking sticks, and assumed poses, which are less dynamic than those of the workers. What is more, the adoption of a slightly more vertical pose for the figures of the foreigners results in them looking taller than the Japanese.

Another example is a print titled *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise* (1861), also by Sadahide (Fig. 31). Here, the main focus is placed on foreign merchant ships crowding the sea. The five nations, that is, the nations that had trading relations with Japan

during the 1850s and 1860s, are differentiated by their flags and by the characteristic clothing (one can see the flags of the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Russia, United States, and France placed on their ships and boats). The ships are afloat, and on each of their decks there are people dressed in their countries' fashion busying themselves with arranging the newly delivered items. On a deck of the American ship, one can see men in bowler hats inspecting barrels and women observing the workers who are carrying boxes. On the deck of a ship marked with the French flag, there is a group of men talking to each other and a person peering through a telescope. Through the window, a female silhouette can be spotted inside the cabin. On the Dutch deck, there are men and women in the middle of a lively discussion, a man smoking a cigar (or possibly a pipe), while some women are looking at their surroundings with a keen interest.

Between the ships one can also see a number of small boats bringing over some items from land. In one of them, marked with the flag of the United Kingdom, an elegant pair is sitting down while being accompanied by eight soldiers in uniforms. On the one hand, everything in the picture seems to be in flux, and the composition is diagonal – the same as it used to be in Japanese prints depicting sea battles. Once again, one can see a subject that is related to Western people but presented in a traditional Japanese form reminiscent of sea battle images. On the other hand, this composition also resembles illustrations from contemporary newspapers, such as one from the *Illustrated London News* (November 3, 1860) that presents a harbor scene from Naples[10] (Fig. 32). It has not been proven that a specific image from this particular newspaper was a model for Sadahide; however, it is possible that the artist had an opportunity to interact with Western newspapers and their illustrations. In this case, I would say that the traditional Japanese form is combined with inspirations from foreign sources.

The next example shows how typical Japanese composition was employed for the purposes of presenting foreigners. There are five different nations present in Sadahide's *Picture of a Sunday in Yokohama* (1861) (Fig. 33).

[10] *Illustrated London News*, November 3, 1860. http://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/yokohama/yiln1103.html; accessed: 12.01.2023.

Families are taking part in some kind of a parade, which is being accompanied by an orchestra. Women's dresses are all in one Western style and quite similar, while the men's suits differ depending on their nationality. The uniforms of the orchestra members, as well as the trousers of the soldiers, are white with the folds of the fabric marked with chiaroscuro. The building on the right and the pier on the left are drawn using elements of linear perspective, but it is not properly constructed and, as a result, the lines of the house lead towards the bottom of the image while the lines of the pier are directed towards the upper part of the print.

Apart from these Western elements, the print is composed as a presentation of an official walk or a parade. As such, it can be easily compared to the *Cherry Blossoms in Yoshiwara* (1844) by Hiroshige, in which we can see a courtesan going out for a walk with her attendants. The difference is in the elements of linear perspective and chiaroscuro utilized by Sadahide, which make his image resemble illustrations from Western magazines.

Figure 31. Utagawa Sadahide, *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise*, 1861. Color woodblock print, *Yokohama-e*, 36.0 × 122.5 cm. Source: Wikimedia Commons (User: Falcated, CC BY-SA 2.5).

Portraits of foreigners

As foreign people presented a very interesting subject for the Japanese, images portraying the Dutch, the English, and people of other Western nations were published long before the official opening of the country. Between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century, the *Nagasaki-e* prints were created in Nagasaki harbor in the south-west of Japan.[11] It was the only place where trade between Japanese and Western merchants was legal. The *Nagasaki-e* prints served mostly as souvenirs for foreigners; they were printed without specifying the name of the author of the drawing and, while done within the local *ukiyo-e* style, they portrayed a Western person or subject.[12]

[11] Nagasaki, located in the south-west of Japan, was the only port with the right to maintain official trade contacts with foreigners from the West. The Western traders were obliged to stay in Deshima island in the Nagasaki Bay.
[12] R. Lane, *Images*, p. 196.

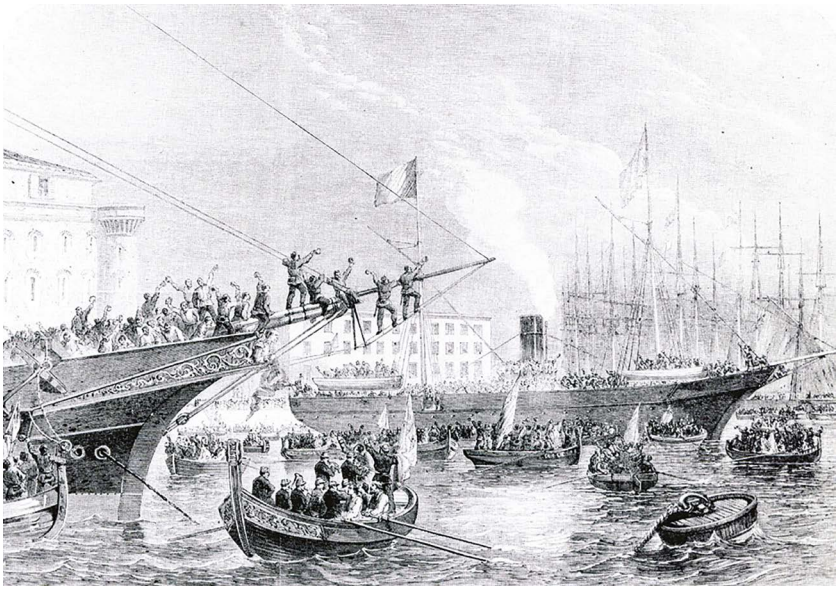

Figure 32. *Harbor Scene at Naples* (detail), *Illustrated London News*, November 3, 1860. Source: http://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/yokohama/yiln1103.html.

An anonymous representation of *A Young Dutch Woman Holding a Parrot on a Perch* (ca. 1830–1844) may serve as an example of *Nagasaki-e*[13] (Fig. 34). The woman is presented in a Western dress and pose but portrayed in Japanese style: with an empty background, in clear contour, and with the use of color shading instead of chiaroscuro. The dress she is wearing is of particular interest to us: the author rendered in his work many varied textures, among them lace, appliqué elements, and frills. The design of the skirt on the print is an example of pure Japanese style: created by printing one decorative pattern all over it. Also the red hair of the woman, despite its unusual color and curly shape, is nonetheless printed in a classical style with the details presented with lines.

[13] Anonymous, *A Young Dutch Woman Holding a Parrot on a Perch*, early nineteenth century, woodblock print, *Nagasaki-e*, 41.6 × 15.9 cm. Available in the British Museum on-line catalog: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=783183&partId=1&searchText=dutch+woman+with+a+parrot&page=1; accessed: 12.01.2023.

Figure 33. Utagawa Sadahide, *Picture of a Sunday in Yokohama,* 1861. Color woodblock print, *Yokohama-e*, 36.4 × 74.2 cm. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

When it comes to the *Yokohama-e* portraits, one can see that these images were created in different circumstances, with clear inspiration from Western images. The first example is *A Frenchwoman and a Dutchman* print by Ochiai Yoshiiku (1833–1904) (Fig. 35). A Dutchman is presented wearing a suit and sitting on a Western-style chair. But even more interesting is the lady next to him – presented in a regency dress and shown in a half-seated position. This kind of presentation was popular in French paintings of the first half of the nineteenth century – examples can be found in paintings by Théodore Géricault (1791–1824) and Firmin Massot (1766–1849). The design of the dresses as well as the seated poses of the portrayed French ladies are strikingly similar to the ones adopted by Yoshiiku while presenting the Frenchwoman in his image.

Another example, that of a British couple by Utagawa Yoshikazu (fl. ca. 1850s–1860s) (Fig. 36), presents people dressed in contemporary clothes (we can confirm this by comparing them with an illustration from a fashion magazine from the same time). Here, the image illustrates not only a particular couple, but also a typical example of the British people. Accordingly, the man is wearing a suit and a top hat, while the woman is

Figure 34. Anonymous, *A Young Dutch Woman Holding a Parrot on a Perch*, early nineteenth century. Woodblock print, *Nagasaki-e*, 41.6 × 15.9 cm. Source: The Trustees of the British Museum (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).

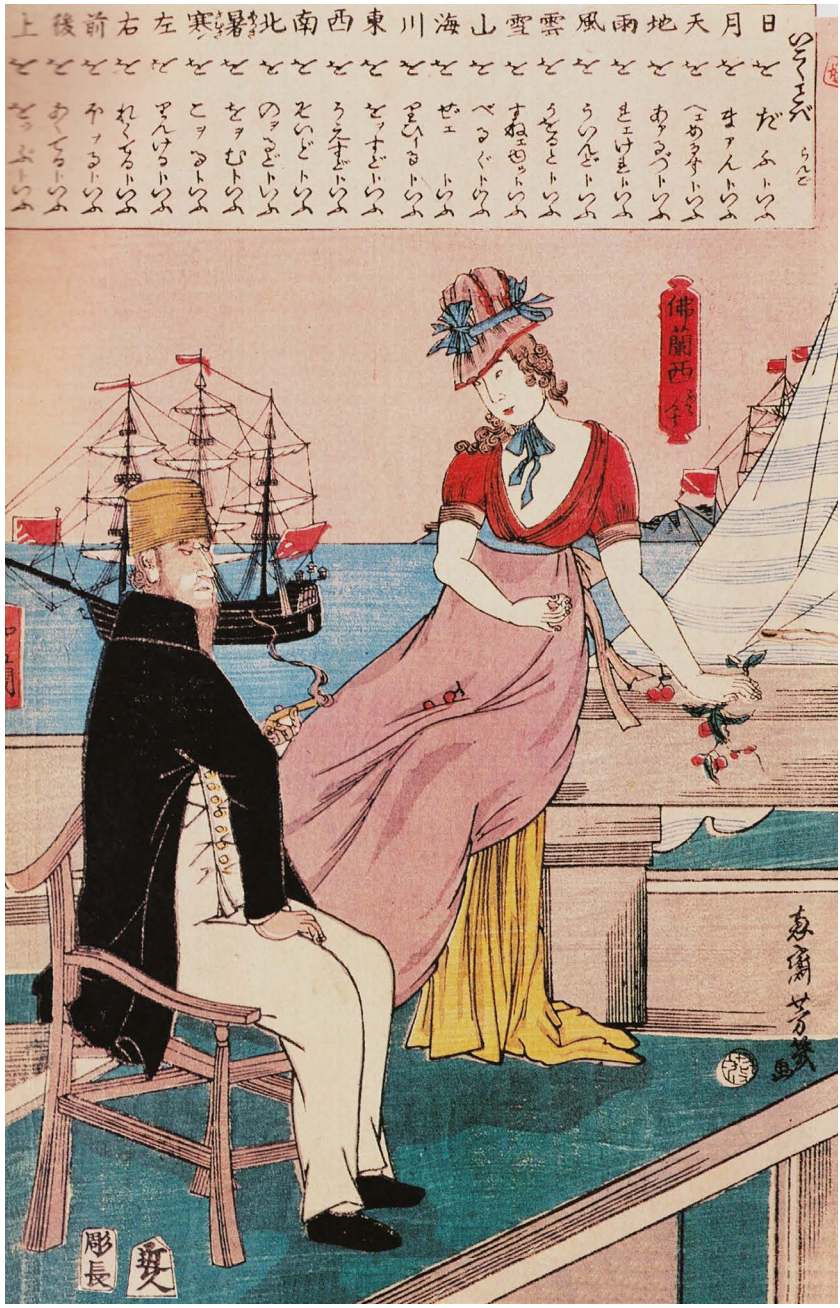

Figure 35. Ochiai Yoshiiku, *A Frenchwoman and a Dutchman*, 1864. Color woodblock print, 35.9 × 24.4 cm. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

Figure 36. Utagawa Yoshikazu, *The British*, 1861. Color woodblock print, *Yokohama-e*, 24.3 × 35.8 cm. Source: Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

Figure 37. Utagawa Sadahide, *American Merchant Strolling in Yokohama*, 1861. Color woodblock print, 36.5 × 25.4 cm. Source: MET Public Domain.

wearing a fashionable dress and a hat. They are also being accompanied by a dog. What may be of interest is the print visible in the lady's hands. She is holding an image in which two Western men, depicted with Mount Fuji positioned in the background, seem to be shaking hands. It is certainly possible that such an image really existed and the portrait owner was familiar with it, therefore referencing it here would serve as a kind of a citation. Furthermore, as all the people depicted are of either European or American nationality, this couple's portrait would seem to have been commissioned by the couple themselves or by the person who is portrayed in the image with Mount Fuji. As such, it may be concluded that what one is looking at is a Japanese print made on a Westerner's request. If that is the case, however, the title *Eigirisujin* [*Briton*] poses a question: why would any English person commission a print with such a general title? What is more probable, then, is that this image is one example of a specific kind of print popular at the time.

These kinds of images are what can be called 'stereotypical representations.' It seems that there was a certain demand among Japanese customers to depict each of the five nations. Another work by Sadahide from the second half of the nineteenth century shows an American merchant in a black coat and a cap strolling with a girl and a dog (Fig. 37). The size of the man is remarkable: he occupies most of the print sheet, which may suggest that he is accompanied by a young girl, most probably his relative. It is highly possible that the print was commissioned by the merchant. However, the additional Japanese elements, such as the title and the persons' names written in red cartouches, suggest someone from Japan, as the names are: "*Amerikajin*" (American man) and "*Onaji mewarawa*" (Girl [of] the same [nationality]). Also, above the couple there is a title *Yokohama torai Amerika shōnin ryokō no zu* [*American Merchant Strolling in Yokohama*]. It seems unlikely that this merchant would have asked for a portrait in which he would simply be called "the American merchant," but also it is not certain whether the commissioner was able to understand Japanese names on the print. Technically, it is possible that the first commission came from a foreigner who wanted to have a souvenir from Japan, but later the same woodblock was used to prepare prints for Japanese interested in Western people.

Figure 38. Utagawa Yoshifusa, *Briton*, 1860. Color woodblock print. Source: The Trustees of the British Museum (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).

The other portrait, this time of an Englishman, also seems to be an example of a national stereotype rather than a specific representation of a particular man.[14] The Englishman has brown curly hair and a beard, is wearing a black coat, white trousers, and a metal helmet (or, possibly, a blue cap). Although his attire does not resemble any known, official British Army uniforms, the rifle in his hand and the sword at his side suggest that he was meant to be a military man. The title calligraphed in Japanese characters (*kanji*), accompanied by the Japanese reading aid (*ofurigana*), says "*Eigirisujin*" [*Briton*], and there is Japanese text visible around the man that looks like a description or a story. If not for the physiognomy and the uniform of the man depicted, the print would look extremely similar to any other of Kuniyoshi's portraits of Japanese or Chinese warriors. Therefore, I would argue that in this case the Japanese style adopted the Western subject, most probably for the purposes of satisfying a Japanese customer.

The last two prints presented here show Russian couples captured in the midst of partaking in indoor activities: one is shown playing music and the other dealing with some official situation. The first of the two is part of a print by Utagawa Yoshitora (fl. ca. 1850s–1870s) portraying a Russian and an English couple (Fig. 39) and is a double portrait in which one can see a woman in a dress playing a trumpet. She is also wearing a jacket and a kind of turban. The man who is accompanying her is sitting in a chair and playing an accordion. He is wearing white trousers and a black jacket. Here, the typical attributes of Western people are their characteristic clothes, the chair, and the musical instruments, which are very different from Japanese ones. The title – *Gaikoku jinbutsu zukushi* [*Various Types of Foreigners*] – is most probably the title of a series, while the *kanji* below, to the left, represent the country name – *Rosha* (Russia). The other portrait is by Utagawa Kunihisa II (fl. ca. 1862–1863) (Fig. 40) and also presents a Russian couple but in official attire, which consists of a coat, a fur, and a pair of elegant hats. The Russians are walking arm in arm and looking at each other – another element that distinguishes them as non-Japanese. The title in the cartouche describes the image

[14] Utagawa Yoshifusa, *Briton*, 1860, color woodblock print. Available in the British Museum on-line catalog: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=783487&partId=1; accessed: 12.01.2023.

as *Go kakoku no uchi. Ronishiajin* [*Out of the Five Nations. People from Russia in West Asia*], while around the silhouettes of the people there is text in Japanese that looks like a list. When studying these words carefully, one can find Japanese words and their Russian counterparts, i.e., "*hana o tsuhietoku to iu*" ("flower is called *tsuhietoku*") where "*hana*" is "a flower" in Japanese, while "tsuhietok" (*tsvetok*) – in Russian. Another example is "*Haha o machi*" ("Mother is *mat'*"). Maybe in this case it is not a simple portrait of Russian couple that feeds into the stereotypes of Western nations but a short, handy Japanese-Russian dictionary? If so, then the audience of this print is definitely Japanese, and the image is only a sign for quick recognition, as today's national flags at the language-switching buttons on the websites.

The characteristic elements that help distinguish the images of those people as belonging to particular nations are: the clothes (such as women's dresses, men's suits, coats, hats and caps), followed by their physiognomic features, such as big noses, blonde hair, beards, and, in the case of the Russians – red faces. The facial expressions and the poses struck by the people in the images, as well as types of activities they engage in, are all attributes that serve to clearly distinguish them as foreigners.

Conclusion

At the time of the first encounters between the Japanese and Westerners, there was an understandable curiosity on both sides. The Japanese expressed it by writing about the 'southern barbarians' in their travel diaries[15] and depicting them in their art. Some of the presented images seem to have been commissioned by Western foreigners themselves, but the majority of them look like they were intended for Japanese audiences. Their creation was driven by a universal human need to describe, analyze, and familiarize oneself with the elements present in one's environment. What seems to be unique and, as such, the most interesting, is that, in the case of these foreign subjects, Western elements were incorporated

15 M. Yonemoto, *Mapping Early Modern Japan. Space, Place, and Culture in the Tokugawa Period (1603–1868)*, University of California Press, Berkeley–Los Angeles 2003, pp. 70–81.


外國人物盡
魯西亞

Figure 39. Utagawa Yoshitora, *English and Russian Couples*, 1861. Color woodblock print. Source: MET Public Domain.

Figure 40. Utagawa Kunihisa II, *Russians*, 1861. Color woodblock print, 36.2 × 24.8 cm. Source: MET Public Domain.

in order to present the characteristics of these foreigners in the most precise way possible. Therefore, in the images we can observe examples of Western dresses, faces, and stereotypical elements such as red hair, or characteristic poses like in the case of the Russian or the French woman. In spite of this, the form always remains clearly Japanese and, in the audience's eyes, resembles traditional prints, such as actor portraits, landscapes, or famous views. A linear perspective is sometimes attempted, but in the woodblock prints it nonetheless coexists with contour lines, shading colors, stylized simplified shapes, and descriptions in cartouches – all elements that clearly belong to the traditional style of Japanese prints. As was the case in many other fields in Japan, the artists borrowed some elements from the West and then used them by incorporating them into their own images. It was the universal purpose of expressing curiosity and new elements in the environment done in unique Japanese style.

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Abstract

Yokohama-e*, or Prints from Yokohama, as Images of the Westernizing World*

The year 1853, when Commodore Perry's 'black ships' arrived in Uraga Harbor, was a time of great changes with respect to the relationship between Japan and the so-called Western world. It is safe to assume that Western countries

were not expecting anything other than the establishment of typical trade relations and that 'local' culture and cuisine would have very little impact on the colonizing countries. However, Japanese culture and art turned out to be far more interesting and intriguing than anyone had anticipated. It proved to be extremely unique in the context of Asia and accessible enough for Western artists to become a part of their universal cultural heritage. Within the following twenty years, its impact on European and American art, fashion design as well as on various other aspects of culture was enormous. Westerners were purchasing, collecting, and even smuggling items out of Japan in order to display them in their foreign homes. This article presents examples of Japanese woodblock prints depicting Western people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It focuses especially on the mixing of Japanese and foreign elements in these illustrations and on the way in which they were used. Based on these examples, it is demonstrated how external elements were incorporated into Japanese traditions, resulting in a unique artistic style.

Keywords: Japanese woodblock prints, *Nagasaki-e*, *Yokohama-e*, prints from Yokohama, prints from Nagasaki, illustrations of foreigners

Index

The first volume of texts resulting from the international conference celebrating 100 years of Japanese Studies at the University of Warsaw opens with two texts paying homage to the history and tradition of researching Japan in Poland. In the subsequent chapters, researchers specializing in the field of Japanese studies discuss the uniqueness or universality of Japanese philosophy, history, aesthetics, and visual arts, reflecting on Japan's contribution to world civilization in relation to the globalizing world of blurred boundaries.

"The theme of this volume is a discussion on whether Japanese culture is unique or universal. Naturally, to give an answer to this question, it is necessary to understand what the term universal means and, consequently, what the term unique means in comparison to universal. For example, the phrase *mono no aware* (as defined by Motoori Norinaga) is thought to be a key word to understanding the nature or the criteria of beauty shared by the Japanese people. However, *mono no aware* is also thought to encompass humans. In the modern age, freedom and independence of the individual have been recognized as supreme values. However, having taken this approach, can it also be said that the view of an individual in *mono no aware* is universal?"

From the chapter by Wakui Yōko

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