The role of place names in the political culture of medieval Japan

Ekaterina Kirillovna SIMONOVA-GUDZENKO

The article focuses on the role and place of toponyms in the medieval Japanese political culture. The toponym can be considered as a hyperlink, "clicking" which reveals an endless chain of general cultural, historical, and literary images, events, and phenomena. Place name study requires a multidisciplinary approach. The insularity of the Japanese territory, terrain features, prevalence and sustainability of animistic beliefs contributed to the fact that the exact localization of an event or phenomenon took on special significance. A detailed address of an event or phenomenon most often consists of toponyms relating to a province, county, village or some particular place, which almost always makes it possible to find the specified object on a geographical map. Moreover, once introduced into the context of culture, geographical locations become places of worship, sources of inspiration for many generations and are rarely subject to change. Toponyms are an integral part of the names of deities, emperors and their family members. Place names were also important in determining and fixing the boundaries of the state. Probably, for the first time in the Japanese literary tradition the geographical area of the entire archipelago, except for the remote north-eastern part, was referred to in the oldest existing anthology of the Japanese poetry "Manyoshu" (dated by the second half of the VIII century). This article presents a detailed analysis of the provenance and use of toponyms making up the cultural and historical image of the country, its name (Yamato – Nihon), and the name of the archipelago's highest mountain (Fuji). Also, as an example, we examine the toponym for a barrier (Shirakawa), the site which is currently little known, though once it used to be an important element of the medieval state political and administrative structure.

The toponym as a type of proper names is inherently conservative, which allows it to be the custodian of historical information, to be an indicator of time in the written culture, that is, using the term coined by M.M. Bakhtin, to shape a chronotope of culture. The geographical certainty characteristic of the insular mentality and the correlation thereof with the imperial myth that has been one of the Japanese political culture's foundations right down to the twentieth century, have become the grounds for the increased attention to the cultural tradition toponymy.

Keywords: place name, toponym, Yamato, Nihon, Fuji, *kami,* islands.

Most cultures have their own list of basic toponyms. As a rule, it includes the names of the country, capitals and significant geographical features – mountains, rivers, lakes, etc. It seems that defining place names for the Russian culture are Rus – Russia – the USSR; Moscow, Saint Petersburg; the Volga, the Baikal; Siberia. In modern language, a toponym can be considered as a hyperlink, clicking which reveals an endless chain of general cultural, historical, and literary images, events and phenomena.

The Japanese culture is no exception, although it has a number of peculiar features. The insularity of the Japanese territory on which it was formed and developed must have manifested itself in a careful "study of the space", when under the conditions of the limited area of the firm ground the precise localization of the event or phenomenon took on special significance. This territory's terrain, its length from the north-east to the south-west and relatively small width, mountain ranges, coastal valleys enhanced this feature. Anthropogenic activities (irrigated rice-growing, fishing in coastal waters), having predetermined a "high degree of the settled way of life", manifested it still more [Meshcheryakov 2000, p. 291]. Telling a myth, a fairy tale, a poem or a real story, a Japanese will always accurately indicate the locus in quo. The detailed address of an event or phenomenon most often includes the toponyms of a province, county, village or some particular place. This was also strengthened by animistic beliefs widespread throughout the archipelago. The location can almost always be found on a geographical map. Moreover, once introduced into the context of culture, geographical landmarks became places of worship, and sources of inspiration for many generations.

Before creating a state mythological pantheon (and after, to some extent), each geographically isolated area had its own deities – kami – of natural phenomena and objects, economic activities, "responsible" for farming, fishing, overall "tranquillity of nature", so necessary in the land of typhoons, earthquakes and other frequent natural disasters.

The names of most Japanese deities, kami, are composite, incorporating the toponym of the place where the deity dwelt, and over which its power spread. The imperial myth, the story of the divine origin and the right of the Imperial family to supremacy became the core idea of the Japanese statehood for many centuries. The ancestry of the imperial family deriving from the supreme deity of the mythological pantheon guaranteed its right to supreme power. The mythological pantheon was to include the most influential deities, placing them according to a strict hierarchy, as reflected in the earliest written sources "Kojiki" ("Records of Ancient Matters", 712), and "Nihon Shoki" ("The Chronicles of Japan", 720). The list included just over 250 kami.

The lists of the theonyms, including geographical names, are structurally different in "Kojiki" and "Nihon Shoki". While "Kojiki" is dominated by "proper" names of the gods, in which the toponym is a composite element [Hayamika-no takesahaya-jinumi-no kami; Ame-no hibaraoshinadomi-no kami, etc.], "Nihon Shoki" is abundant in "descriptive names" [The evil god of Strait Kibi-no ana[1], the god of the Awaji Island[2] etc.]. This might be due

[1] In the text of the source: "Kibi-ni itarite ana-no umi-o wataru. Sono tokoro-ni araburu kami ari." [They reached Kibi, they crossed the sea of Ana. There was a bad deity there.]. [Nihon Shoki 1965, p. 300].

[2] In the text of the source: Shima no kami [Deity of the island]. It is preceded by a story about the way the emperor hunted on the Island of Awaji. [Nihon Shoki 1965. p. 446].

to the difference in both the tasks and the structure of the written sources. In "Kojiki", a sacred, magical text, it was important to convey all possible magical formulas to the initiates, and the names of the gods were almost the most important ones. In "Nihon Shoki", the state chronicle, the history of the state unfolded most extensively in quasi-historical and historical time and space. The multivariance of one story (from 1 to 11 versions), characteristic of "Nihon Shoki", demonstrates the existence of many ancestral chronicles which the compilers had at their disposal. Ancestral versions, as a rule, included local deities that happened to be secondary in national mythology. The toponyms in their names expanded the space of the state, demonstrating the degree of land development.

The theonyms of those deities that play an important role in the plot of the "imperial myth" coincide in "Kojiki" and "Nihon Shoki". First, there are the deities of the sea, born during the rite of purification of Izanagi-no kami after his return from the Land of Darkness (Yomi no kuni), Suminoe-no oomukami. Suminoe is the name of the area in the Settsu Province, on the coast of the Setonaikai, the Inland Sea of Japan. Then, there are the names of the deities born at the time of the dispute between Amaterasu and Susanoo. The story of the marriage – dispute of the two main deities of the mythological cycle is considered by experts to be the unification of two different culture complexes of Izumo and Ise, with Izumo prevailing, probably being stronger, and perhaps even more ancient. The names of the characters in the myth about Susanoo's descent to earth after the expulsion from the Plain of High Heaven to the Izumo region (the western coast of the Island of Honshu, modern Shimane Prefecture) include the toponyms of the Izumo land: Susa in the name of Susanoo, Kumano – Kumano-kusubi, Inada –Kamu-inada-hime, Suga – Suga-no-yatsu-mimi. The theonym of the mediator between the celestial and earthly deities Saruta-hiko has the component of Saruta, the toponym of the land of Ise. He met the grandson of the goddess Amaterasu, the progenitor of the Japanese sovereigns, during his descent from Heaven to Earth.

In "Kogo Shui" (807), the records of the Shinto priest clan of Imube, toponyms also occur in the theonyms of participants in the imperial myth (Susanoo-no kami, Sarutahiko-ookami, Suminoe-no omukami, Watatsumi-no kami).

Correlating the legendary genealogy of the ruling dynasty and toponyms of specific geographical features, with which one or another kami was associated, made it possible to reconstruct the space of the state, to outline its boundaries. The toponyms, the components of the names of deities that make up the list of the mythological pantheon, cover, in fact, the territory of Central and Western Japan.

The goddess-creator Izanami went from the land of darkness, where she descended after the birth of the god of fire, to Kumano in the land of Ki [Nihongi 1972, p. 21]. The god-creator Izanagi, having performed the purifica-

tion right after returning from the Yomi-no kuni, having spawned a multitude of gods of nature, landscape and main characters of the subsequent cycle of myths – the gods of the sun, moon, wind, disappeared in Awaji [Nihongi 1972, p. 34), and then made his way to Taga in the land of Omi [Kojiki 1981, p. 51). The dispute for supremacy between Amaterasu and Susanoo ends with the placement of three goddesses, born out of the sword, in the area of Munakata at Tsukushi [Kojiki 1981, p. 58; Nihongi 1972, p. 37] and the expulsion of the god himself from the Plain of High Heaven to the Earth, to Izumo [Nihongi 1972, p. 52]. After the Supreme Goddess's decision to restore order to earth, the story's action is practically entirely transferred to the territory of the Japanese Islands, with the progress of the gods and legendary emperors from the south-west to the central part, and further to the northeast. The sacred Shrine of Ise, which is most important for the ruling family, is introduced at the stage of preparing the descent of the Heavenly Grandson to earth. The significance of this area is evidenced by the mythical marriage of the heavenly goddess Ame-no uzume, the companion of Ninigi, and the earthly god Sarutahiko, the deity of the strong local sun-cult [Nihongi 1972, p. 76–77; Kojiki 1981, p. 113–114]. A prominent Japanese scholar of mythology, Matsumae Takeshi, believes that before Amaterasu was revered as a goddess and ancestor of the sovereign clan in Ise, there used to be a sanctuary of the deities of the Sun. Sarutahiko was one of them [Matsumae 1978, p. 4–5]. The toponym of Yamato, the center of the Japanese statehood, appears relatively late, with the mention of the first legendary emperor, Jimmu. The development of the land can be traced through the places where imperial palaces were located, for example, Kashiwara (in Asuka) – with Emperor Jimmu, Muro – with Koan; or as the place of origin of the wives of the legendary sovereigns Suizei, Annei, Kosho – with Kasuga, Kamo, Yamato.

The Japanese posthumous names of emperors appear to deserve close attention. Let's consider Rikkokushi[3] (Six National Histories), including the chronicles of 58 names of sovereigns – from the legendary Jimmu (660–558 BC in traditional chronology) to the historical Emperor Koko (884-887). The authors, the nature of the narrative, the volume of the six works are different. The first begins with a mythological part, then proceeds with the chronicles of legendary, semi-legendary and historical emperors. The next five are the chronicles of the reign of one or more sovereigns, for example, "Shoku Nihongi"

[3] Nihon Shoki (720) consists of two parts: the mythological one and the chronicles of the emperors, beginning with the legendary Jimmu and up to Empress Jito (690–697). Shoku Nihongi (797) contains the chronicles of 9 sovereigns from Emperor Monmu (697–707) to 789 of the reign of Kammu (781–806). Nihon Koki (840) contains the chronicles of 4 emperors, from 790 of the reign of Kammu to Emperor Junna (823–833). Shoku Nihon Koki (866) is a chronicle of Emperor Ninmyo (833–850). Nihon Montoku Tenno Jitsuroku (879) is a chronicle of Emperor Montoku (850–858). Nihon Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku (901) contains the chronicles of Emperors Seiwa (858–876), Yozei (876–884), Koko (884–887). Sandai Jitsuroku (901) contains the chronicles of Emperors Seiwa (858–876), Yozei (876–884), Koko (884–887).

describes nine of them, while "Nihon Montoku Tenno Jitsuroku" covers one reign. Along with synchronizing the events and time of their fixing they become filled with details of various elements of state, ritual, economic aspects of life, domestic and foreign policy. The nature of the narrative of the mythological story in the first part of "Nihon Shoki", bonding with the Chinese prototype historiography, gradually acquires a chronicle-like clarity, some dryness of narration. The same tendency is illustrated by the posthumous names of the emperors. Starting from the 46th, according to the official imperial genealogy, Empress Koken (749–758), the detailed posthumous Japanese names are transformed and by the 50th Emperor Kammu (781–806) disappeared entirely, leaving only the posthumous reign ones [Grachev, Simonova-Gudzenko 2002, p. 148–165].

Let us consider the names of 50 legendary, semi-legendary and historical rulers, recorded in the first national histories "Nihon Shoki" and "Shoku Nihongi." The list of posthumous Japanese names of emperors from the point of toponyms contained therein can be conditionally divided into four groups:

I. The toponym of Yamato is a component of the names of the first 9 legendary emperors, from Jimmu4 to Kaika, except for the name of the 5th sovereign, Kosho; as well as of the names of the historical sovereign Seinei (480–484) and Empresses Genmei (707–715) and Gensho (715–724).

II. Toponyms are not included in the names of 10 semi-legendary emperors, from Sujin (97–30) to Hanzei (406–410), yet they contain the names of plants or animals.

III. The toponyms of the land of Yamato, falling under the comparatively exact localization, are integral components in the names of 15 sovereigns, from Ingyo (412–453) to Jomei (629–641). These are the toponyms of Asazuma, Anaho, Hatsuse, Magari, Tachibana, Hinokuma, as well as the toponym of the land Omi Okinaga. In the same group, three names are distinguished by the *hiro-kuni* element – standing for the "broad country", and the name of the 22nd sovereign Seinei, as noted above, contains the toponym of Yamato.

IV. A special group consists of names with components *ame* – Heaven and *kuni* – earth. The names of Emperors Kinmei (539–571) and Shomu (724-749) contain both elements. The first seems to mark the beginning of a new stage in the imperial genealogy and history of the state, while the second ends the tradition of including the Japanese emperors' composite posthumous names in the chronicles. The names of 6 sovereigns, from Kogyoku (642–645) to Tenmu (673–686), as well as Monmu (697–707) and Shomu (724–747) begin with the ame component – "Heaven". This component is included in the name of Empress Genmei, but is not the first. The names Kogyoku (642–645), Kotoku (645–654) and Saimei (655–661) correlate *ame* with *hi* – "Sun".

[4] This paper refers to the emperors by their posthumous reign names, as is generally used in the Japanese national historiography. The years of their reign are indicated in brackets by the traditional chronology.

The component of Yamato, the name of the state, is included in the names of the first 9 legendary and semi-legendary sovereigns – the founders of the Japanese state. The names of sovereigns from the 35th to the 40th contain the notion of "Heaven", the names of the 43th and 44th – the Yamato component, and the names of the 29th and 45th – both "Heaven" and "Earth" elements. It is important to note the custom of tabooing names, as well as the fact that posthumous reign names demonstrate "changes" of dynasties [Grachev, Simonova-Gudzenko 2002, p. 148–165]. In addition, a number of laws (dated 647, 701) prohibited giving names repeating the names of gods and emperors, and in 774 the prohibition was extended for 30 generations. The change of components in the names of emperors demonstrates not only the processes of extending the borders and exploring the state territory, but also the expansion of ideas about its role and place, the prevalence of the Chinese cultural tradition in the governance of the state.

The names of empresses include place names of predominantly the land of Yamato, while the names of other wives and children of emperors appear not to be subject to such heavy regulations. The toponyms that make up their names are more diverse; they include the names of the lands on the coast of the Inland Sea (Setonaikai) – Kibi, as well as Izumo, Tajima, Iga, the Island of Awaji, the Peninsula of Kii.

Assimilation of the Chinese cultural tradition is also seen in changing the principle of recording toponyms. Transferring place names from the oral form to written, and development of character script required regulation on the part of the state. The decree by Empress Genmei (707-715) dated 713 on compiling historical and geographical descriptions of the lands known as Fudoki emphasized the need to record geographical names with "good" characters. It reads: "The 6th year of Wado, the 5th moon, day two. It is ordered to write down, on choosing good characters, all the counties and villages in all the provinces of Kinai and seven districts. And it is also ordered to make a careful record of which is available in the counties regarding silver, copper, dyes, herbs, trees, birds, animals, fish, and insects, and record the data on the quality of the soil, origin of the names of mountains, rivers, valleys and fields, commit to paper the ancient legends and divine stories told by the old folk. The above information shall be submitted to the higher authorities"[5]. Thus, as far back as in 713 the state was concerned that the recording of toponyms is done with characters with positive connotations.

The place name study was also important when fixing the boundaries and area of the state lands. Conceivably, it was for the first time in the Japanese written tradition that the geographical area of the whole archipelago, except for the remote north-eastern part, was referred to in the first poetic anthology "Manyoshu" ("Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves", the second half of the VIII century). It, along with the first historical chronicles Rikkokushi (Six

[5] See: Shoku Nihongi: [713] Wado. 6-5-2.

National Histories), is the most important written source for the ancient and early medieval history and culture of the Japanese people. The geography in the poems of the anthology covers almost the entire territory of the archipelago: from the north of the Island of Kyushu to the north-east of the Island of Honshu. Its compilers included works of both known and anonymous authors from distant parts of the country, apparently seeking to cover the archipelago as widely as possible, presenting it as the space of a single cultural state. Poems of the central district of Kinai prevail in the collection, as, for example, in book XI, poems of Yamato do. However, book III includes a poem, dedicated to Mount Fuji in the eastern province of Suruga; books IV and V contain poems-messages from Tsukushi on the Island of Kyushu; book VII – poems of the province of Settsu and the area of Yoshino; while book XIV is entirely devoted to the poems of the eastern provinces; books XV-XVI include poems from the north-western provinces of Echizen, Etchu, and Noto. The end of the VIII century is the time when Japan maintained its independence from the Tang Empire, which probably required demonstrating the spread of "high culture" over the largest possible area of the archipelago, and the ability to write poetry was one of its aspects [Grachev 2009, p. 174, 184].

While in the poetic anthology the state borders are vast, while the land exploration is as yet fragmentary, by the X century the knowledge about the state territory is deepening. The verbal geographical map of the Japanese archipelago indicating the governors of the regions, who were their actual rulers and priests of the local kami, is presented in the text of "Kuni-no miyatsuko hongi", the 10th book of "Sendai Kuji Hongi" [Simonova-Gudzenko 2005, p. 207–218]. Determining the state external borders was undoubtedly significant as well, but must have receded into the background both due to the specific geographical position of Japan, and in connection with "isolation of the country from the outside world", characteristic of the period when "Kuni-no miyatsuko hongi" was compiled.

Elaboration of the state space concept was one of the characteristic features for the special period of development the Japanese culture experienced in the IX c. – first half of the X century. Completing the stage of coming to grips with the mainland cultural information required self-identification. However, all noble families, especially those who had become irrelevant, considered it important not only to establish their position in the hierarchy of nobility and influence, but also to justify their ancestral, since the time of the gods, rights to land ownership. Given the nature of beliefs (the abundance of local deities), compiling a list of kuni-no miyatsuko (governors of the regions) with genealogies also allowed to "fit" the local deities into a single mythological pantheon. Including local deities in the genealogical tree of the state pantheon was an indisputable proof of the antiquity and nobility as to the origin of a provincial clan, thus ensuring their primordial right to own

land. Moreover, one of the most important functions of kuni-no miyatsuko was veneration of local deities.

The list of kami, to which provincial nobility families trace their origin, illustrates the complex process of creating a nation-wide hierarchy of noble lineages. It is important to note that the text was already being compiled under the conditions of a functioning imperial myth. The list includes two astral deities, Takami-musubi and Kami-musubi, occupying the upper level in the state mythological pantheon. They are venerated as ancestors by five ruling clans in the archipelago's south-west regions: Takami – musubi – in Awaji and Kii, Kami-musubi – in Awa, Usa, and Tsushima. Though large part of provincial noble families derived their origin from the celestial kami, those kami came from the lowest level of the mythological pantheon and had no direct ties with the imperial genealogy. These are the deities accompanying the grandson of Amaterasu-omikami, the ancestor of the Japanese ruling family, during his descent from the Plain of High Heaven to the Japanese Islands. Local deities, even when they are named, are listed as descendants to the deities of the state mythological pantheon. It would be logical to assume that the authors of the "Kuni-no miyatsuko hongi" considered it important to emphasize the local noble families descending from the deities of the state pantheon.

By the X century, the state borders embraced the territory of the islands of Kyushu, Shikoku, and Honshu, except for the north-eastern part and a group of minor islands. The documentary evidence of these representations, in addition to the already mentioned list of deities, can be the lists of counties and provinces included in "Engishiki"[6] [Engishiki 1999]. Although such a vision of the state space can be considered somewhat idealized, since the real central government was rather weak, the desire to show as much territory as possible is extremely important. In addition, the knowledge, or at least the availability of information about the deities and sanctuaries of all 68 provinces and 590 counties known at the time is essential. Toponyms play an important role in the territorial principle of ranking.

It is known that at the initial stage of its history Buddhism in Japan "was more of a policy than a religion" [Konrad 1980, p. 30]. Once in Japan, it did not just take on the sacred layout of the space that had already existed on the islands, by placing temple structures in ancient sacred places, it used and preserved the toponyms in the names of its temples, for example, Asuka-dera, Ikaruga-dera, Hagiwara-dera, etc. It may have contributed to the popularity of the temple structures of the new, introduced religion. The written record of the Buddhist traditions (Setsuwa) that used to exist in the oral form required spatio-temporal clarity, which strengthened the credibility of the presented

[6] Engishiki ("Procedures of the Engi Era"), 967. A collection of internal regulations for officials of all departments, includes lists of state departments, provinces and counties, collected taxes, protocols of court ceremonies, and annual festive occasions.

events. Each legend begins with the indication of the "address": the name of the province-county-village or capital, indicating a particular district or palace. Many patriarchs of Buddhism in such a way retain their connection with certain geographical landmarks in the historical and cultural tradition.

The same direction is taken by the development of all-Japanese syncretic cults formed in the XII–XIV centuries. The "history" of the origin and development of the cult correlated with a specific geography, and toponymy is included in the names of the temples. A perfect example of this phenomenon is one of the major and most popular cult devoted to the Hachiman deity. Originally he used to be the ancestral deity of several clans of the province of Buzen (modern Ōita Prefecture) on the Island of Kyushu. In 752, in the area of Usa there appeared the first shrine, known as Usa-Hachimangu. Then the participation by the representatives of the families from the province of Buzen, engaged in metalworking when casting the statue of Great Buddha for the Todaiji temple in Nara, transformed the insignificant ancestral deity into the guardian of Buddhism. Since Buddhism in Japan at an early stage acts as the guardian of the young Japanese state, Hachiman acquires a new additional function. In the vicinity of the Heian capital, another temple complex is established, named after the Iwashimizu toponym Iwashimizu Hachimangu (859). The functions of the deity expand, or rather become more detailed, when it becomes the Minamoto clan guardian. The third major sanctuary appears in Kamakura and is given the name Tsurugaoka Hachimangu (1180) after the place name of the hill on which it is located. It was founded by the first shogun Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147–1199). The formation of history and creating a network of main shrines of other major cults, such as Tenmangū, Inari, Sengen, etc. went down a similar path.

Let us try and trace the existence of the state name, the Yamato toponym. In written sources it appears relatively late.

In Chinese chronicles, the people who inhabited the Japanese archipelago were called "Wa" (倭). The Japanese Islands residents began to use this Chinese character to designate their own country, at least, in the literary tradition. However, they read it "Yamato", probably initially having related it to a specific territory. As noted above, geographical certainty is one of the characteristic features of the Japanese historical and cultural tradition. The modern dictionary of ancient toponyms says that originally this name belonged to a small territory within the confines of the Yamanobe Road, in the district of Shiki-no kami of the Yamato province (modern Nara Prefecture).

With strengthening the political power of Yamato, the toponym designates the village (go), the governor of the region (kuni-no miyatsuko), and with the state of Ritsuryo coming into its own, it designates the country as a whole as well [Kodai chimei daijiten 1999, p. 1478]. Thus, the researchers proceed from the assumption that the toponym of Yamato has existed in the central part of the Island of Honshu, in the territory of the modern Prefecture of Nara, since ancient times.

Given that the name “Yamato” was the name of an ethnic group (Jap. – *minzoku*) which had come to the Island of Honshu from Kyushu, and, possibly, still earlier – from the mainland, the land in Central Japan could obtain the name from this ethnonym. To some extent this might be confirmed by the absence of the toponym in the names of deities of the mythological pantheon, and its first mention in the posthumous Japanese name of the legendary Emperor Jimmu, who is associated with the “Expedition Eastward” from Northern Kyushu to the central part of Honshu. The modern historiography interprets the “Campaign” or “Expedition” as the migration of large groups of the population.

The list of provinces and counties “Engishiki”, in the province of Chikugo (modern Fukuoka Prefecture) contains a district of Yamato [Engishiki 1999, p. 566], whose record literally means “the gate (gap) in the mountains”. The authors of the etymology dictionary embracing the ancient Japanese toponyms, referring to “Wamyosho” (the Encyclopedia of Japanese names, dated by the X century), note that the toponym was found in the provinces of Chikugo and Higo (modern Kumamoto Prefecture) in the names of counties and villages. Today it is still preserved in the name of a county of the Fukuoka Prefecture [Kodai chimei gogen jiten 1981, p. 321]. It is known that people take their familiar, favorite toponyms with them as they move, especially when it comes to significant migrations. However, one cannot ignore the homonymy of the Japanese language and rule out the probability that similarly sounding place names could arise in different parts of the archipelago, and were recorded in different ways, perhaps, due to the value they had or acquired by the time of being committed to writing. However, taking into account the increased attention of the islanders to the geographical certainty and toponymy, the location of the land called Yamato in the northern part of Kyushu Island, where, as the researchers believe, the “Jimmu’s Expedition Eastward” could begin, is suggestive.

On or after 702, the written tradition sees the appearance of the new ethnonym – Nihon 日本 (the compound of the *nichi* and *hon* characters literary means “the origin of the Sun”), which, in the opinion of the researchers, is due to the fact that one of the meanings of the Chinese character “倭”, which designated Japan, had a pejorative meaning of “dwarf” [Meshcheryakov 2010a]. It is difficult to say whether the new name of the country functioned in the oral and written tradition or was perhaps developed for restricted application only in the foreign policy documents. The Semmyo sovereigns decrees (VII–VIII centuries) call the country Ooyashima-kuni, while the “deceased Emperor or the Empress”, who is to be followed by the one solemnly speaking the decrees, is named Yamato Neko no Sumeramikoto, “son or daughter of Yamato”.

The article in the “Encyclopaedia of National History” devoted to the concept of Nihon, says that the idea of a compact territory of the state was formed around the VII century and was called Ooyashima-kuni. This figura-

tive name reflected the idea of the many islands that make up the space of the state, but at the same time pointed to the very specific islands of Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu, Awaji, Oki, Tsushima, Iki, and Sado. On the Island of Honshu, the borders of the state did not include its northeastern part, the provinces of Mutsu and Dewa. The development of these lands occurred during the Nara (710-794) – Kamakura (1185–1333) periods, and only by the XVI century, the Japanese advanced to the southern part of the island of Hokkaido [Kokushi daijiten 1990, p.104]. The list of islands produced by the deities Izanagi and Izanami, named Ooyashima-kuni – "the country of eight great islands", occurs in the mythological parts of the first written sources of "Kojiki" and "Nihon Shoki" [Simonova-Gudzenko 2005, pp. 179–185]. This image-bearing name of the country is used in geographical and political writings by such thinkers as Nishikawa Joken (1648–1724), Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), Shiga Shigetaka (1863–1927), and Watsuji Tetsuro (1889–1960).

Kitabatake Chikafusa (1293–1354), the author of the famous medieval historical work "Jinnoshotoki" (1343), explains all the names of the country existing in his time. The book begins with the words: "The Great Country of the Origin of the Sun (*nihon*) – the land of gods" (大日本者神國), and next to the *nihon* characters there is the phonetic reading of Yamato.[7] Similar inscriptions are found in other works and on geographical maps. Thus, despite many descriptive, metaphorical names of the country, the toponym of Yamato seems to remain stable until the late Middle Ages.

The history of existence of the toponym Fuji is of interest as to the fact that after the Meiji Restoration in 1868 the mountain becomes a kind of state symbol. Dr. Alexander N. Meshcheryakov gave a detailed and interesting account of this event [Meshcheryakov 2010b]. I would not like to repeat it, all I want to draw the readers' attention to two points.

The first, and the earliest, mention of the toponym Fuji in the state chronicle "Nihon Shoki" is associated with the mountain, located on the Island of Kyushu. Habitually, traditionally the place name refers to a mountain in the northeast of the archipelago in the province of Suruga (modern Shizuoka Prefecture). The chronicle of the legendary / semi-legendary Emperor Keiko (71–130) runs: "On the day of Hinoto-no tori, the sovereign reached the district of Yame, went over the Fuji mountain (藤山), overlooked Ava-no saki lying towards the south saying : "There are many mountain peaks towering here, and this view is beautiful. Is there a deity living on this mountain?" Then Saru-oomi, the Minuma-no agata lands controller, said: "There is a goddess here. Her name is Yametsu-hime. She usually abides on this mountain. "Hence the name of this country, Yame-no kuni". A commentary to the academic publication "Collection of Japanese Classical Literature" states that the mountain is likely to be located in the Fukuoka Prefecture, near the

[7] More research is needed to determine whether the Furigana (phonetic reading) was done by the author of the work or was added later by copyist.

town of Kurume, north of Yame County, on the way to Mii County (the former province of Chikugo) [Nihon Shoki 1965, p. 296–297]. What is curious is that in the same province there used to be the county of Yamato, mentioned above. The existence of toponyms in the north of Kyushu, homonymous to the major toponyms of the Japanese statehood, provides food for thought and further research.

The first and only mention of Mount Fuji in the province of Suruga is found in the state chronicle "Shoku Nihongi" dated 781, the first year of the Emperor Kanmu reign (781-806). It runs: "They report from the province of Suruga: "At the foot of Mount Fuji there fell ashes, and leaves in the trees withered[8]"".

However, the poetic anthology, almost synchronous with the "Nihon Shoki" chronicle as to the time of their compilation, devoted 11 poems to Mount Fuji. They can be divided into two roughly equal groups: those praising the beauty of the mountain (by the famous poets) and those mentioning its formidable, dangerous character (mainly by unknown authors)[9] .

A. N. Meshcheryakov clearly brings out Mount Fuji as part of the Japanese Taoist spatial representations [Meshcheryakov 2010 b, p. 18–27], which to some extent explains the praising hymns by the authors – the greatest poets of "Manyoshu", two literati, Yamabe no Akahito (?-736) and Takahashi no Mushimaro (?–730).[10] However, this did not prevent the latter, when compiling Hitachi Fudoki, from including the legend of the region showing the negative image of Mount Fuji.

"Engishiki" in the County of Fuji noted three shrines – one large and two small. The big one is called Asama Sengen Jinja Shrine, and Fuji-Jinja Shrine refers to the small ones [Engishiki 1999, p. 229]. Researchers suggest that in ancient times the mountain could be called Asama-yama. "Asama" is a place name often used to denote volcanoes [Kodai chimei gogen jiten 1981, p. 12]. It is believed that the network of sengen jinja[11] sanctuaries, in which the deity of Mount Fuji is worshiped, now comprises more than 1,300 shrines. In the sanctuary, which according to the legend was founded in 806 by Sakanoue no Tamuramaro[12], the deity of Asama is worshiped. Today at the top of the mountain there is still an inner sanctuary where the spirit of the mountain resides [Meshcheryakov, A.N. (ed.) 2010, pp. 200–201]. Thus, the attempt to combine the two deities – the deity of the volcanic mountains and the local mountain kami – must have not been quite successful, and the deity

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[8] See: Shoku Nihongi: [781] Tengyō. 1-7-6.

[9] See: Manyoshu. Poems 317–321, 2695, 2697, 3355–58.

[10] From 713 to 725 Takahashi no Mushimaro worked in the Hitachi Province administration.

[11] *Sengen* is the on-reading of the characters, with which the Asama is recorded.

[12] Sakanoue no Tamuramaro (758–811). A military commander, known for his victories over the Emishi, was the first to receive the title of Sei-i Taishogun ("Commander-in-Chief of the Expeditionary Force Against the Barbarians"). He is believed to be the founder of the Kiyomizu-dera temple.

of Mount Fuji retained its independence, although somewhat truncated, but still expressed in preserving its own sanctuary.

The records of Mount Fuji contain references to the fact that the Heian period people ascended the mountain. It also says that over the crater of the volcano you can see dancing beautiful maidens in white robes [Miyako no Yoshiko 2009, p. 55–56]. Numerous written accounts of that time demonstrate an already stable literal and geographical image of this mountain [Ise monogatari 1965; The Tale of Bamboo-Cutter 1978]. In the Muromachi period (1392–1467), sporadic ascents of the mountain turn into pilgrimage, as evidenced by then created numerous Buddhist mandalas.

It becomes a sacred mountain of the state only in the Tokugawa period (1603–1867), when the capital, the actual center of the country, was transferred from Kyoto to Edo. The transfer of the centre of sacred geography from Western Japan to Eastern led to the need to "search for the sacred mountain, another control centre". It was important to create, "design" the state sacred space in a new place; besides, this may also demonstrate the shogun's drive to strengthen the sacred aspect of his own power, to match or at least approach the high imperial one. From this time on, the process of the mountain sacralisation acquires a core set of ideological issues. Restoration of the shrine, conducted in 1604 on the initiative and at the expense of the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), the ban on climbing the mountain seem to be related to the high sacral status of the mountain.

The other thing I wanted to note is as follows: in the folk culture from antiquity to the XIX century Mounts Fuji and Tsukuba existed, if you could say, in opposition to each other. The Tsukuba Mountain in the province of Hitachi (modern Prefecture of Ibaraki) had been considered sacred since time immemorial. The tradition must have begun with the famous legend of the two mountains, cited in Hitachi Fudoki. "The old folk say: in ancient times God Ancestor travelled around the mountains – the abode of gods. When he reached Mount Fuji in the province of Suruga, evening came, and he began to ask for an overnight stay. Then the god of Mount Fuji replied: "[Now] we're having the new harvest feast and we don't want any strangers here. Today we cannot shelter you". God Ancestor got frustrated and began to scold and curse: "I am your ancestor. Why do not you want to give me shelter? May the mountain where you live be deserted, may it snow in winter and summer, may it set in frost and may it always be cold, may no people rise here and no one bring you food". Then, he climbed Mount Tsukuba and again asked for an overnight stay. The God of Mount Tsukuba replied: "Although today we are partaking of new corn, we cannot but honour your request". He brought meals and respectfully dished them up to the God. God the Forefather rejoiced and sang: "My dear children! May your sanctuary be beautiful, and I desire that it be as eternal as Heaven and Earth, as the sun and the moon, that people get together, have fun, that food and drink may be plenty, that joy may not cease for centuries, and that day by day everything

may flourish. May you always have joy". For this reason, it is always snowing on Mount Fuji and it is impossible to climb, yet, many people gather on Mount Tsukuba. They sing and dance, eat and drink, and it has been going on hitherto" [Fudoki 1973, pp. 39–41].

"Manyoshu" mentions the toponym of Tsukuba 23 times[13], and the one of Fuji – 11 times. While the image of Fuji in the anthology is ambiguous, Tsukuba has always been represented only positively. This mountain hosted the spring and autumn kagai, harvest festivals associated with fertility, this is where lilies and tachibana blossomed; streams and springs murmured, its root saw ripe rice being harvested and silk being spun from the "spring mulberry silk filament", etc. The image of the mountain, benevolent to man, was glorified by both famous poets (Takahashi no Mushimaro who poetized the rival-mountain – among them) and unknown ones. They emphasized its incomparable beauty, its twin peaks, as well as frequent ascents thereof. Among the poems dedicated to the mountain climbing, the work by Tajihi-no Mahito Kunihito stands out due to its pronounced political and magical traits: he performed the rite of kunimi – "contemplating the country" from high above. "This rite appears in the contexts as a kind of influencing an object with the aim of stabilizing and restraining it or even empowering it", it was performed by both the founder of the ruling dynasty Ninigi-no-Mikoto, the grandson of the gods Amaterasu and Takamimusubi, and by the emperors, upon ascending the mountain or any higher ground [Norito. Semmyo 1991, p. 27). However, it was not the sovereign, but Tajihi-no Mahito Kunihito[14], who ascended the Tsukuba Mountain, demonstrating by his action that the eastern part of the island was either included in the space of the state of the VIII century, or was considered by its rulers as an independent territory.

In the XVIII century, as well as in the first half of the XIX century, both mountains, Fuji and Tsukuba, still retained high sacred status, which is to

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[13] See: Manyoshu. Poems 382, 383, 1497, 1712, 1743–54, 1757–59, 3350–51, 3389–96, 4367, 4371.

[14] Manyoshu. Poem 382. The Tajihi-no Mahito clan, one of the oldest aristocratic families of the Kinai metropolitan area, was considered a branch of the ruling clan and came from Prince Kamitsu Uueha, the heir of Emperor Senka (535–539). The clan representatives not only occupied the highest state positions (dainagon, sangi), but also together with 4 other clans tried to prevent or at least slow down the rise of the Fujiwara family. This is well illustrated by the destiny of Kunihito. He was known to be the son of Tajihi no Mahito Hironari, the associate councilor (sangi) of the emperor, and up to 757 he successfully moved up through the ranks: in 736 he had the 5th rank of the junior grade and held the post of the principal assistant in Mimbusho, in the year of 757 he received the 4th rank of the junior grade. In the same year he was exiled to Izu for having taken part in the rebellion of Tachibana no Naramaro (? –757). Perhaps, it was then, during his stay in Izu, when he got to the neighboring province of Hitachi and climbed Mount Tsukuba. Considering that the "Manyoshu" compilers were representatives of the Ōtomo clan, the inclusion in the anthology of the poems by Tajihi no Mahito – the ally clan in confronting Fujiwara, praising the rite of kunimi beyond that, was intended to demonstrate not only the political strength of the opposition, but also, which is equally important, their "right" to the Eastern Lands.

some extent illustrated by the image of the two mountains in the engravings by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858). The quantitative calculation shows a gradual increase in the value of Mount Fuji compared to Tsukuba, 20 to 13 in the cycle "100 Views of Edo".[15] Only in the second half of the XIX century, since the Meiji period, Mount Fuji becomes the symbol of the "new" Japanese state, especially when the Emperor as the bearer of the highest sacred authority moves to Eastern Japan, to Edo. The high sacredness of the mountain was also facilitated by its aesthetic image.

The aesthetic aspect, which was contained in the list of toponymy of the Japanese culture, is vividly illustrated by the name of the barrier of Shirakawa. Though this geographical object is not included in the list of basic toponyms, yet, being an element of the political and administrative structure, it is of interest for analysis. In the early Middle Ages the Japanese state had two types of barriers, located in the mountains, in the passes and in strategically important locations on the roads [Kogo jiten 1986, p. 715]. When recorded, they differed in nomenclature words added to the toponym. In the case under consideration it is a road barrier. There are several versions as to the time of the first mention of the toponym in written sources. Authors of the "Encyclopaedia of National History" note that it might be one of the barriers set up in the V century in the east of the country, on the border with the hostile world of the Emishi. They confirm the dating by mentioning the toponym in "Kuni-no miyatsuko hongi" [Kokushi daijiten 1990, p. 730–731]. The dictionary of ancient place names says that the barrier was first mentioned in the "Ruiju sandaikyaku" (dated by the XI century) among the three on the eastern border of the state[16].

During the Heian period (794–1192), the toponym occurs in different regions not only in the name of the barrier, but also in those of the Mutsu province (modern Fukushima Prefecture), the large villages in the provinces of Mutsu (modern Miyagi Prefecture) and Hitachi (modern Prefecture of Ibaraki), land holdings (*sho*) in the provinces of Echigo (modern Niigata Prefecture), Hida (modern Gifu Prefecture), Kii (modern Wakayama Prefecture) [Kodai chimei daijiten 1999, p. 796–797].

The barrier of Shirakawa was located in the northeast of Honshu in the province of Hitachi (modern Fukushima Prefecture). The "Dictionary of Ancient Japanese Toponyms Etymologies" states: "Shira is the altered shiru – which stands for "juice, soup", therefore it means a "swamp, bog". The toponym may mean "the valley of the river flooded during high water" [Kodai chimei gogen jiten 1981, p. 166]. In the Middle Ages the barrier must

[15] The attention of the author was for the first time drawn to this fact by S. Krikalova.

[16] Three outposts: Shirakawa, Kita, and Nezu. See: "Ruiju sandaikyaku": [835] Showa 2-12.3. [Kodai chimei daijiten 1999. p. 796–797].

have served as a border crossing point between the "cultural" central region and the "uncultured lands" populated by the Emishi.[17]

Although not mentioned in the first poetic anthology "Manyoshu", the barrier of Shirakawa was in the focus of poets attention for seven centuries, such great masters as Saigyo (1118–1190) and Basho (1644–1694) among them. In this article the literary studies of the "barrier of Shirakawa" subject matter in the Japanese poetry are not as important for us as the reasons why this geographical landmark has taken its place in the historical and cultural memory.

One of the first references to the barrier in the poem by Noin hoshi (988–?) was associated with sadness, dolor, caused by the distance from the capital, from its culture: "... I left the capital with the spring haze, but at the barrier of Shirakawa the autumn wind blows." Saigyo wrote in the same key:"... The guardhouse // at famed Shirakawa gate // now ruined, lets the moon // filter in; its shaft is like // having another staying here!"[18] Five centuries later, Basho writes about the outpost of Shirakawa in a completely different way, for him the sensations of a "cultural breakaway" are no longer a near concern of his, he just admiringly listens to the sound of the wind, emphasizing the aesthetic aspect: "From the East or West? // Among the first rice sprouts now // The sound of the wind".[19]

Basho's remark in the notes of a journey "Oku no Hosomichi" (The Narrow Road to the Deep North and The Narrow Road to the Interior) can serve as something of a confirmation of the inclusion of the "outpost of Shirakawa" in the national culture aesthetic series. He writes: "Day after day had passed in vague uneasiness; but now we approached the barrier at Shirakawa and, for the first time, I felt that our journey had truly begun. I could understand why the poet had felt at this spot that he wanted to send word to the people in the capital that he had crossed the Barrier. As one of the Three Barriers to the North, Shirakawa has always appealed to poets and writers. Yet even as I delighted in the green leaves of the trees, an autumn wind seemed to sound in my ears, and crimson leaves danced in my mind's eye. The whiteness of deutzia, the white rambling roses, made us feel as if we were crossing the Barrier in snow. According to Kiyosuke, people of long ago straightened their hats as they crossed, and changed their clothes". [Basho 2004, p. 322]. In the text, the author connects his reflections with a direct quote from the verses by poets glorifying the outpost at different seasons, shows the history of the national poetry, the process of revealing different meanings of the toponym (sacred-magical and aesthetic ones), and, of course, confirms the themes of the

[17] The Emishi – an ethnic group of people inhabited the north-eastern part of Honshu Island in ancient and medieval times.

[18] Transl. by Lafleur, William R. Awesome Nightfall: The Life, Times, and Poetry of Saigyo. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2003. P. 23

[19] Transl. by Tr. Chillcot.

calendar cycle, so very much favoured by the Japanese poetry since antiquity. Here are the words by Minamoto no Yorimasa (1104–1177): "... And here the maple trees grow crimson ... // Shirakawa outpost!", then we read about the "autumn wind" in the poem by No-in hoshi; the winter onset from Sozu-insho: "...And everything is covered with snow ... // Shirakawa outpost!"; the composition by Fujiwara no Kiyosuke completes the seasonal cycle: "sprigs of deutzia // adorn our hat – formal dress // for the barrier" [Basho 2004, p. 322].

The toponym as a proper names type is inherently conservative, which allows it to be the custodian of historical information, to be an indicator of time in the written culture, which is to say, using the term by M. M. Bakhtin, to shape a chronotope of culture. The geographical certainty characteristic of the insular mentality and the correlation thereof with the imperial myth, being one of the foundations for the Japanese political culture right down to the XX century, have become the grounds for the stepped-up attention to the cultural tradition toponymy.

The peculiar feature of the Japanese toponymy, as well as of culture in general, is its pronounced aesthetic component. One of the Russian journalists quite remarkably described the said feature of the Japanese culture: "... the entire ideology of Japan, from official to the most delicate variants of philosophy was, first and foremost, aesthetics. In its highest manifestations, it was a gigantic extended metaphor, very beautiful, very romantic, and imbued with one of the most irresistible obsessions of art – the spirit of tragedy, that is, the spirit of beauty and the inevitability of death. A metaphor ... disappearing into the world of remote ancestors as to its last pedestal" [Agapov 1974, p. 269].

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