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CONTENTS

Japan's Approach towards Quadrilateral Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region

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Abstract. The article highlights the peculiarities of Japan's approach to the Quadrilateral Strategic Dialogue, the *Quad*, in the Indo-Pacific region. Tokyo initiated this framework in 2007, when Abe Shinzō proposed establishing permanent cooperation between Japan, the USA, Australia, and India. For several reasons, including the resignation of Abe Shinzō from the post of Prime Minister, the *Quad* ceased to exist. In 2017, Tokyo returned to the idea of reviving the quadrilateral dialogue, seeing this as one of the ways to keep the US focused on the region and balance China's influence. The resumption of quadrilateral cooperation in 2017, in the face of more pronounced contradictions between the members of the *Quad* and China, marked new priorities for Tokyo's regional agenda. Interest in quadrilateral cooperation is closely related to the strategy of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, put forward by Abe Shinzō in 2016, which provides for close political interaction with key players in the region and active infrastructure construction. Government of Suga Yoshihide continued the foreign policy course proclaimed by Abe, and the attention of the Biden administration to the *Quad* gives reason to believe that this area will become a key one in Japan-US cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Participation in the *Quad* is a logical continuation of Japan's close bilateral and trilateral dialogue with the United States, as well as with India and Australia, relations with which are reaching a level that can be characterized as quasi-alliances. At the same time, Japan is interested in the *Quad* not being perceived as an exclusive format that reduces the establishment of the rules of conduct in the region to the will of the

four players. Regarding the *Quad* as a tool to contain China, Tokyo emphasizes the open nature of this framework and seeks to expand the format of interaction that would include the ASEAN countries and European partners.

The year 2017 witnessed the first meeting of officials from the USA, Japan, India, and Australia in ten years; it marked the revival of the quadrilateral mechanism of cooperation – *Quad*. The evolution of contacts within the *Quad* framework signifies that it gradually turns into a sustainable platform of regional cooperation. This article dwells on some aspects of its efforts through the prism of Japan's interests, as well as highlights the role of Japan in the *Quad*. The study raises the question of whether the extent of Japan's adherence to the idea of quadrilateral cooperation is long-term and of how it fits in its foreign policy strategy. It relies on the realistic paradigm of international relations to answer this question, applies the chronological method, content and event analysis. For this purpose, a short review was made of the Quad mechanism origin, the appearance of this idea in Tokyo's foreign policy vocabulary, the role and place of the quadrilateral cooperation in Japan's Indo-Pacific cooperation under Abe Shinzō and his successors, the following prime ministers Suga Yoshihide and Kishida Fumio.

Quadrilateral Cooperation: Background

The history of quadrilateral cooperation dates back to 2004, when Japan, the USA, Australia, and India united their efforts aimed at reconstruction after the tsunami in the Indian Ocean. The group that was set up then had a specific objective and did not provide for long-term cooperation outside its framework. In 2007, Prime-Minister Abe Shinzō put forward a proposal to enter into a quadrilateral strategic dialogue based on the time-tested format. The idea received a positive response

from other participants, and the first and only meeting of the *Quad* at that time was held during the summit of the Regional Forum of the Association of Southeast Asian Countries (ASEAN) in the Philippines in August 2007.

The very fact of political interaction in this format, as well as the Malabar military maneuvers taking place at the same time and involving the *Quad* countries and Singapore received a negative response from China. The reluctance to provoke Beijing finally served as a reason for the format dissolving soon. Australia was the first to announce its secession as the Rudd Government that had come to power refused to head for a confrontation with China as this, in their opinion, went against the nation's interests. Australia was soon followed by India, which lost interest in continuing cooperation. Abe Shinzō resigned in September 2007 and his successor Fukuda Yasuo headed for rapprochement with China; thus, the *Quad* idea was gradually forgotten.

Japan returned to the idea of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in the autumn of 2007. Giving an interview to the *Nikkei* newspaper in October 2007, Foreign Minister Kōno Tarō raised the idea of reviving the *Quad* format, which would ensure peace in the oceanic space from Asia to Africa.[1] The *Quad* resumed its work in November 2017 after a ten-year interval. The first meeting of senior officials in Manila discussed maritime security, war on terrorism, and reconstruction after natural disasters. The *Quad* proved to be viable this time: several meetings of senior officials were held regularly twice a year as well as three ministers' summits (including the telephone format). The landmark event was the first quadrilateral summit of March 12, 2021, in the format of video conference, which was followed by a personal meeting of the four national leaders in Washington on September 24, 2021. It is expected that summits will become regular and take place annually. The regular agenda of the *Quad* is gradually shaping up. It includes, predominantly,

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[1]   Japan to propose dialogue with US, India and Australia. Nikkei Asian Review. https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Japan-to-propose-dialogue-with-US-India-and-%20Australia

issues of non-military security, such as war on terrorism, maritime security, and reconstruction after natural disasters. The two summits of 2021 extended and specified this agenda – they proclaimed partnership in combating COVID-19, climate change, cooperation in the field of new technologies, cyber security, space research, and joint construction of infrastructure. Practical cooperation is mainly concentrated in the areas that China will not perceive as a direct threat.

A new tendency is to include discussions of particular countries into the agenda. Thus, the meetings of autumn 2019 discussed the situation around North Korea, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. The leaders' statement of March 2021 mentioned maritime order in the East and South China Seas, North Korea's denuclearization, the abduction issue and the situation in Myanmar.[2]

The very fact of the *Quad* mechanism's appearance and existence is not perceived straightforwardly. Beijing does not conceal its critical attitude to this mechanism, and the Chinese rhetoric has acquired new tinges over time: while, in 2018, Foreign Minister Wang Yi compared the *Quad* with sea foam that would soon disappear, in 2020, he referred to the *Quad* as the "Indo-Pacific NATO", stressing, thus, that the alliance of the four regional players would pose risk to security in the region [Rej 2020]. The *Quad* is criticized for its attempt to set up a certain exclusive block of states, which promotes the revival of the Cold War rationale. According to Russian Deputy Foreign Minister V. Morgulov, the implementation of the Indo-Pacific concept presents a threat of the fragmentation of common space and enhancement of existing dividing lines.[3]

The appearance of the *Quad* was perceived with suspicion in Southeast Asia and was often interpreted as an attempt to reduce the

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[2]   Quad leaders' joint statement: "The spirit of the Quad". 12.03.2021. The White House. https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/12/quad-leaders-joint-statement-the-spirit-of-the-quad/

[3]   Morgulov: Russia and Japan are only at the beginning of their way to peace treaty conclusion. TASS. 4.05.2018. https://tass.ru/politika/5175651

role of ASEAN in the region. These suspicions were quite natural, as the USA often de-facto ignored regional institutions regarding the most significant issues and, at best, assigned them a secondary role in discussing security problems [Koldunova 2017, p. 62].

In response, the *Quad* countries started speaking about the central role of ASEAN in cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Statements related to the Indo-Pacific region underline its openness and inclusivity, thus mitigating the negative perception of the *Quad* as the format of elite players. The parties express public support of the ASEAN-centrality principle as well as the "Indo-Pacific outlook" developed by the Association in 2019. There have been precedents of cooperation with other states: when the *Quad* gathered at the climax of the struggle against COVID-19 in March 2020; representatives of New Zealand, South Korea, and Vietnam participated as well.

On the eve of the *Quad*'s September 2021 Summit, two of its participants, the USA and Australia, made a tripartite pact with Great Britain providing for Australia acquiring British nuclear submarines. The effect of this event on the Quad received various assessments: some analysts believe that the new partnership will strengthen the quadrilateral mechanism, while others, on the contrary, fear that it will reduce the significance of the quadrilateral cooperation [Rajagopalan 2021].

Quad in Japan's Foreign Policy

Japan initially came forward as the most active participant of the *Quad*. The first meeting in this format took place in August 2007 at Abe's proposal. Japan's foreign policy showed an explicit geopolitical approach during Abe's first term in office, underpinned by a focus on the diplomacy of values. The Japanese Foreign Ministry developed a concept of the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity aimed at enhancing Japan's solidarity with countries that shared its values of democracy, market economy, human rights protection, etc. The Arc spread from the Baltic

countries through Central and South Asia, reached Southeast Asia and then went to Australia. Japan intended to cooperate closely with the Arc countries and provide them with financial assistance, if necessary. The fact that the Arc bypassed China and Russia made many observers interpret it as an instrument of containment. Almost concurrently, Japan's statements started reflecting the new understanding of the Asia-Pacific regional frontiers. This referred to the Indo-Pacific concept, or Big Asia (*Kakudai Asia*), so well-established today.

The Indo-Pacific concept, although not at all new (it appeared in the US and Great Britain's strategic insights during the Cold War), first arose during the post-bipolar period in Indian analyst G. Khurana's article devoted to Japanese-Indian cooperation on ensuring safety of sea lines of communication. The article argued that, with India's economic growth, its interests were increasingly tied to maritime communications, thus coinciding with those of Japan, whose vitally important trade arteries go through the Pacific and Indian Oceans [Khurana 2007, p. 140]. The Indo-Pacific concept was soon embraced by Tokyo – it entered the Japanese foreign policy lexicon in 2007. While visiting Delhi, the Japanese Prime Minister made a speech in the Indian Parliament called "Confluence of Two Seas", in which he emphasized the importance of Japanese-Indian cooperation on the above-mentioned issues.

In September 2007, Abe Shinzō resigned, and his initiatives related to Japan's increased role in ensuring regional and international security receded into the background. Under the new Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo, the concept of the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity gradually ceased to be mentioned as one of the landmarks of Japanese diplomacy. Tokyo also lost its interest towards the *Quad*. The period of thaw in relations with China proved to be short while the policy of the opposition Democratic Party of Japan, which came to power in 2009, for rapprochement with Asia, creation of the East Asian Community, and adopting a policy independent from the USA was a failure, which became evident after the Air Station Futenma scandal and the 2010 crisis in Japanese-Chinese relations. Upon return to power in 2012, Abe revived many undertakings of his first stint as Prime Minister. That

also concerned the further development of views on the quadrilateral cooperation in the region. One day after his victory, Abe's article "Democratic Security Diamond" came off the press. It stated the need to develop a mechanism with corner points being Australia, India, Japan, and the American state of Hawaii to protect the common maritime space stretching from the Indian Ocean to the western part of the Pacific.[4] The concept was, first of all, aimed at containing China, which, in Abe's opinion, tried to turn the South China Sea into "Beijing Lake". The concept did not become part of the official diplomatic agenda and it may rather be regarded as the Prime Minister's personal vision but this does not, however, reduce its importance.

As China put forward the *One Belt One Road* initiative, Japan began a more active search for the ways to meet China's geopolitical and economic rise from East Asia to Middle East and coastal Africa [Galimzyanova 2018, p. 161]. The response to the Chinese project was the buildup of Japan's economic presence in Central Asia, invigoration of diplomacy in Southeast Asia and the growing interest in the African continent. At the TICAD sixth meeting in Kenya in August 2016, Abe explained the provisions of the strategy for the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Region, highlighting Asian-African interconnection and prospects for joint prosperity. This strategy with East Asia as the pivotal point also covers South Asia, Middle East, and Africa, where it is planned to launch activities on creating infrastructure, trade, investments, establishing business conditions, development and training of human resources.[5] The Indo-Pacific is characterized as the space where freedom, rule of law, and market economy are respected.

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[4] Abe, S. Asia's democratic security diamond. Project Syndicate. http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/a-strategic-alliance-for-japan-and-india-by-shinzo-abe

[5] Jiyū de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyō senryaku [Strategy of Free and Open Indo-Pacific Region]. Diplomatic Bluebook. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/2017/html/chapter1_02.html#T003

The three pillars of the Indo-Pacific strategy include:
– Advancement and establishment of the rule of law, freedom of navigation, and free trade;
– Achievement of economic welfare;
– Assurance of peace and stability.

The first is definitely related to China as, according to Japanese analysts, the only player threatening freedom of navigation and the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific oceanic space is China. The second is recognition of the important role of ASEAN. One of the goals of the concept is to enhance solidarity with ASEAN. The reason is not only the geographical factor, with the South China Sea connecting the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but, also, the existing multilateral mechanisms with ASEAN as the core participant (ASEAN Regional Forum, the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN defense ministers' meeting plus, etc.). Japan does not intend to set up new structures of cooperation to pursue its Indo-Pacific strategy but strives to use the existing mechanisms with ASEAN as the axis. As to the third point, Japan puts a special emphasis on the development of Africa. It was no accident that the strategy was articulated at the TICAD conference. It is planned to create economic corridors to connect inland areas and coasts of such countries as Mozambique and Kenia [Okamoto 2019].

The notion of the Indo-Pacific region that was mentioned by Abe acquired new content many years later, as it covers not only India but also more faraway countries up to the African coast. In addition, the strategy relies on Abe's basic foreign policy principles – "diplomacy that takes a panoramic perspective of the word map" and pro-active pacifism. The "panoramic" diplomacy provides for increasing the number of foreign policy partners while pro-active pacifism is aimed at making Japan's participation in international security more visible as well as widening the range of Self-Defense Forces' activities. The outlines of regional orientation inherent in the strategy of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific region is evidently similar to the Chinese *One Belt One Road* concept covering key ports on the Indian Ocean coast and stretching as far as the coasts of the African continent.

It may be stated that Abe's version of the vision of the Indo-Pacific region began to turn more anti-Chinese, reflecting the growing perception of Beijing's efforts as a challenge to Japan's national interests. China's assertive rhetoric, its actions in the regions of the East and South China Seas, its growing economic might, and prospects for enhancement of geopolitical influence as the *One Belt One Road* initiative was being implemented made the Japanese leadership look for new ways of containing its neighbor. After Abe put forward the strategy of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific, the Japanese started speaking about a possible renewal of multi-lateral interaction with the USA, Australia, and India. Yet, the change of administration in Washington faced Abe with the task of keeping the White House's focus on the problems of the region.

In the Japanese analysts' opinion, the idea of turning to the concept of the Indo-Pacific was regarded in Tokyo as a way to breathe new life into Donald Trump's Asia-Pacific policy. The President repeatedly mentioned the Indo-Pacific region during his first Asian tour. Japan's interest consisted in preventing Washington from neglecting problems of regional security given the general tendency of the Republicans for isolationism, reduction of the US role in Asian affairs, and apprehensions that China's influence in the region may exceed that of the USA. Japan was keen on enhancing its leadership in the region, which is testified by its active diplomacy, relations with Southeast Asian countries included, as well as Abe's resolute stance on disputed issues with neighboring states and his initiatives for supporting security in Asia.

Tokyo noted that President Trump's speeches mentioned the Indo-Pacific concept, which Prime Minister Abe had referred to before. Analysts concluded that, unlike the standard algorithm of action, the USA tried to adjust to Japan, rather than vice versa [Miyake 2018].

The *Quad* statements advance the ideas of common interest as well as values, which provides for wide interaction. Although Japan was initially building its Indo-Pacific strategy around the notions of "free" and "open", its political lexicon soon saw the appearance of the term "inclusivity", mainly under the influence of India, which

insisted on such understanding of regional cooperation. Abe Shinzō stated repeatedly that the concept was not aimed at containing China; he even considered it possible to include China into the Indo-Pacific cooperation, should it wish so. Tokyo declares its readiness to interact with all countries adhering to the principles of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific: the *Quad* and the ASEAN participants, as well as European countries are included into this interaction today. According to Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu, the Free and Open Indo-Pacific region enables all countries adhering to the basic values of freedom, democracy, rule of law, and freedom of navigation to participate,[6] yet it can be assumed that Tokyo is not likely to see China among these countries.

Suga Yoshihide, who came to power in September 2020, followed his predecessor's foreign policy in most respects. At his first press conference on September 16, 2020, he mentioned the strategic promotion of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific as one of the goals of his diplomacy. This relates to the cooperation within the *Quad*, which retained importance in the Japanese regional policy and in the Japan-US dialogue. The *Quad* summits were held during Suga's premiership; he attended the second one a few days before his resignation, thus demonstrating his adherence to this forum's contribution and drafting a blueprint for his successor for the future.

The September 2021 summit of the *Quad* was held in parallel to the formation of the new defensive alliance of the USA, Australia, and Great Britain (AUKUS). Suga welcomed the new partnership at the *Quad* meeting and stressed its role in assuring peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.[7] The emergence of such mechanism, from Japan's viewpoint, raises the potential of containing China in the Indo-Pacific

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[6] Press conference by Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu. 6.10.2020. MOFA Japan. https:/ www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/kaiken4e_000852.html

[7] Quad leaders press for free Indo-Pacific, with wary eye on China. 24.09.2021. Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/world/china/ quad-leaders-meet-white-house-amid-shared-china-concerns-2021-09-24/

Region – without Japan's military participation among others, which might have had a negative effect on its relations with the PRC as its most important trade partner and might have been taken negatively by the Japanese public. Japan established close relations in the field of security with all three members of AUKUS, as they all share concern over how the situation develops in the Indo-Pacific region. As to the *Quad*, it is likely to preserve its role of a political and economic counterbalance to the Chinese influence, which is in conformity with Japan's national interests

Infrastructural Cooperation
in the Indo-Pacific Region

While political cooperation with the *Quad* countries for Japan is predominantly associated with the solidarity front created against China, its economic aspect follows the purpose of expanding export of infrastructure to other countries. Infrastructural construction, including increased export of Japanese infrastructure, was one of the pillars of Abe's economic policy. Back in 2013, an expert commission on infrastructural strategy development was set up; this course acquired momentum with the emergence of China's *One Belt One Road* initiative. In May 2015, Abe announced the Initiative of Quality Infrastructure and appropriated some $110 billion for reconstruction and modernization of various facilities in Asia. A year later, it was transformed into the Extended Partnership of Quality Infrastructure, which increased the amount of support to $200 billion and covered not only Asia but also Africa and the southern part of the Pacific. While Japan is not likely to compete with the Chinese project alone, the integrated effort of the *Quad* countries will provide more magnitude to its foreign infrastructural construction. This cooperation will be able to give substance to the format of quadrilateral cooperation and make it long-term because it will not be perceived by China as negatively as, for example, cooperation in the military and security spheres.

Infrastructural cooperation in third countries has been on the agenda of Japan's relations with the *Quad* countries for several years. Trump and Abe repeatedly expressed their intent to cooperate in the establishment of quality infrastructure.[8] During Vice-President Pence's visit to Tokyo, a joint agreement was signed on the promotion of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific region by means of cooperation in the spheres of energy, infrastructure, and digital communications. In November 2016, Abe Shinzō and Narendra Modi put forward the "Asia-Africa Growth Corridor" program aimed at increasing the well-being and interconnection of Asian and African countries; it is projected to allocate about $40 million towards projects of quality infrastructure, institutional interconnection, training, and capacity building [Dobrinskaya 2019, p. 41].

Currently, there are tripartite agreements on the joint establishment of infrastructure between Japan, India, and the USA as well as between Japan, Australia, and the USA. In September 2017, the meeting of Foreign Ministers of Japan, the USA, and India made a decision to cooperate in the sphere of infrastructure establishment in the Indo-Pacific region, predominantly in the South and Southeast Asia, and in such countries as Nepal, Bangladesh, and Myanmar, particularly. It is expected that India will develop port infrastructure, Japan will create industrial parks, and the USA will build power plants. There also exist agreements on infrastructural partnership between Japan, Australia, and the USA.

In November 2018, the Japanese Bank of International Cooperation, the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as well as the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding that gave rise to the tripartite infrastructural partnership in the Indo-Pacific region. The first project was to be an LNG facility in Papua New

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8   Japan-US summit meeting. 18.04.2018. MOFA Japan. https://www.mofa. go.jp/na/na1/us/ page3e_000845.html

Guinea where it was planned to invest $1 billion.[9] The funding of the $30 million project for a fiber-optical cable installation in Palau was approved in 2020.

At the 2019 business forum in Bangkok, the USA announced the *Blue Dot Network* initiative providing for certification of projects that conform to the high-quality standards, ecological performance, and transparency; it is supposed to attract investors in funding infrastructure. This program is similar to the Extended Partnership of Quality Infrastructure, advanced by Abe Shinzō, and Australia's Partnership for Infrastructure; the program immediately received approval in these countries, yet its potential was not utilized for a long time. The Biden Administration made a decision to invigorate efforts in this area; June 2021 saw the first meeting of the advising group attended by over 150 business representatives.

The idea of infrastructural cooperation was repeatedly discussed at *Quad* meetings, yet no particular projects have been approved so far. Based on the results of the November 2019 meeting, the four countries agreed to enhance coordination of investment in quality infrastructure in keeping with international standards such as the *G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment*, including strengthening partnership and support for existing regional units. With the Biden Administration's arrival, the US attention to this area intensified: the September 2021 summit announced the launch of the *Quad* new infrastructural partnership, and some specific projects of cooperation may be expected in third countries.

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[9]   Alifirova, E. SShA, Yaponiya i Avstraliya v protivoves Kitayu sozdayut sobstvennyi «Poyas i Put'», reshiv proinvestirovat' SPG-proekt v Papua-Novoi Gvinee [USA, Japan, and Australia build their own Belt and Road as a counterweight to China by deciding to invest in LNG project in PNG]. Neftegaz. https://neftegaz.ru/news/ politics/455892-ssha-yaponiya-i-avstraliya-v-protivoves-kitayu-sozdayut- sobstvennyy-poyas-i-put-reshiv-proinvestirov/

Japan's Political Dialogue with Quad Countries

In addition to emerging prospects for multilateral infrastructural cooperation with the *Quad* countries, Japan has, for many years, maintained successful cooperation with these countries in the military and political spheres – both in bilateral and mini-multilateral formats.

At the meeting of the Japanese and US Foreign and Defense Ministers in August 2017 – the first after Donald Trump's coming to power – the parties expressed their intention to enhance cooperation in the sphere of security and defense with Australia, India, and Southeast Asian countries. The Japanese side announced an allocation of $500 million to support programs for assurance of coastal states' maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region.[10] Whereas Trump's effort and propensity for isolationism made the Japanese uncertain about the US adherence to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific region, Joe Biden's initiatives were, on the contrary, perceived as the return to the habitual division of roles.

Japan became the first country that participated in the "2+2" consultations under the new US Administration, while Suga Yoshihide was the first foreign leader who met Joe Biden. The parties confirmed the classical wording of the alliance being important as the cornerstone of peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region and in the world, the coverage by the Security Treaty of the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu), and US adherence to Japan's security assurance. The summit resolution contained extremely strong wording related to China, including the situation in the Taiwan Strait, Hong Kong, and XUAR. Tokyo supported the attitude of Washington, which referred to China as the main strategic opponent.

One of the President's initial steps was to hold the first *Quad* summit in history, which allows considering *Quad* as the key element of the new administration's Asian strategy. The attention paid by the White House to the Indo-Pacific region and its intention to play the role of the driving link

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[10] Japan-US security consultative committee. 17.08.2017. MOFA Japan. https://www.mofa. go.jp/na/st/page3e_000714.html

in the *Quad* corresponds to Tokyo's interests and is especially important after the resignation of Abe Shinzō, who was enthusiastic in adhering to the concept of quadrilateral cooperation. Suga continued the course initiated by Abe and fully supported Washington's initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region. It is already during their first telephone conversation that the Japanese and the US leaders discussed the idea of holding the *Quad* summit, which was conducted in an online format on March 12, 2021. The statement made by Suga Yoshihide and Joe Biden following their bilateral meeting in Washington confirmed their commitment to work with Australia and India within the framework of the *Quad*, which was "stronger than ever". The agenda of the *Quad* meetings becomes more and more similar to what is discussed in the Japanese-American dialogue. The joint statement by Suga and Biden on the meeting results indicated cooperation in the war on coronavirus; it also launched partnerships in the sphere of climate and technology, which corresponds to the *Quad* lines of effort. Thus, the quadrilateral format and the US-Japan alliance complement and strengthen each other in the field of non-military cooperation.

The rapprochement with India simmering during Abe's first term continues and gains momentum. Abe's foreign policy vision correlated with India's *Act East* policy conducted by Narendra Modi. In November 2016, the two leaders proclaimed the emergence of the new era in their relations based on the combination of Japan's strategy for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific region and India's *Act East* policy [Dobrinskaya 2019]. This cooperation covers nuclear energy, space research, IT, and other spheres of mutual interest.

In November 2016, Japan and India announced their joint intention of implementing the program of the *Asia-Africa Growth Corridor* at the cost of $40 billion, which provided for projects of quality infrastructure development, institutional interconnection, training, and capacity building. The parties highlight the recipients' financial responsibilities, involvement of local labor force and training thereof, as well as sustainability from the viewpoint of durable use as strong advantages of Japanese-Indian projects over those of China. Unlike a Chinese one,

a Japanese-Indian project focuses on the financial responsibility and does not encourage irrecoverable debts like in the case of Sri Lanka that fell into China's debt trap.

The Japanese-Indian relations in the field of security have recently reached a new level. The countries established close defense cooperation including exchange of secret information and prospects for mutual use of military facilities; they hold multilateral and bilateral maneuvers, and although India follows the non-alignment policy, its positions on many issues related to security are similar to those of the USA and Japan [Dobrinskaya 2019]. The new coronavirus wave made Suga Yoshihide cancel his visit to India, yet he managed to hold a personal meeting before the *Quad* summit, where the leaders confirmed the importance of the Japanese-Indian partnership and adherence to cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Australia as the USA's military and political partner is a matter-of-course partner of Japan as well; their relations in the sphere of security have broken new ground in the last fifteen years. In 2007, the parties published the Joint Declaration on security cooperation, which gave impulse to bilateral interaction. In 2010, they signed an agreement on reciprocal provision of supplies and services between the Self-Defense forces of Japan and the Australian Defence force (ACSA) and Australia became the second country after the USA that signed such kind of agreement with Japan. In May 2012, the parties signed an Information security agreement providing for an effective exchange of secret data; in July 2014 an agreement on the transfer of defence equipment and technology was signed. The Reciprocal Access Agreement regulates the status of military forces of both countries in each other's territory. Japan and Australia regularly participate in bilateral and multilateral maneuvers as well as maintain intensive military exchanges.

Australia shares Japan's vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific region, which was confirmed during Abe's trip to Australia in November 2018 and Scott Morrison's visit to Tokyo in November 2020. In June 2021, the leaders of the two countries announced the launch of partnership in the

sphere of carbon dioxide emissions reduction through technology, thus bringing the program of cooperation launched by the *Quad* countries in March 2021 to the bilateral level.

In addition to the above-said, the tripartite dialogue mechanisms of the USA-Japan-Australia, the USA-Japan-India, and Japan-India-Australia have long been in action, and so have the meetings of the defense ministers of the USA, Australia, and Japan. The year 2002 saw the first tripartite meeting of senior officials from Japan, Australia, and the USA, and the level of dialogue was raised to ministerial in 2005. The negotiation mechanism of Japan-India-USA has been in existence for several years: the fourth dialogue of senior officials took place in Deli in April 2018, and the leaders of the three countries met in November 2018 and June 2019. The June of 2015 witnessed the first meeting in the tripartite format of Japan-Australia-India. All of this proves that Japan has established close military and political ties with all the *Quad* participants and created pre-conditions for improving multilateral cooperation in the quadrilateral format.

The main constraining factor is the relations of the *Quad* participants with China, which relates to Japan as well. The thesis of the "Chinese threat" has been popular in Tokyo for a long time and, unlike India and Australia, Japan is more consistent in calling for the containment of China. Yet, Tokyo is traditionally pragmatic in combining the policy of China's involvement into cooperation in Asia and containment of its influence in other regions.

The Japanese-Chinese relations are characterized by the alternation of thaw and cooling periods; rapprochement in the relations between Tokyo and Beijing began against the backdrop of increased American-Chinese and American-Japanese trade contradictions in 2018–2019, but it does not testify to the dramatic change of the foreign policy course.

The reference is more likely made to the limited improvement of Chinese-Japanese relations in mutually beneficial forms, which do not, however, drift into a more significant rapport, with strategic rivalry in the sphere of politics and security in the Indo-Pacific region remaining [Kireeva 2020, p. 41].

Opportunities for Partnership
in the Indo-Pacific Region outside the Quad

The Japanese side has repeatedly emphasized that the vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific brings together not only the USA, Japan, Australia, and India but also ASEAN and Europe. Tokyo tries to win ASEAN support for its Indo-Pacific strategy, which invigorates their economic, military, and political interaction.

Japan has been attempting to enhance its security role in Southeast Asia for the last few years. Like Washington, Tokyo provides assistance to ASEAN countries, equipping their coastal guard and providing for more effective control of the maritime space and capacity building in counterbalancing China. It is accompanied by active diplomatic efforts focusing on rapprochement with the countries having territorial contradictions with China.

Relations with the Southeast Asian countries take up a special place in Japan's foreign policy, which was demonstrated by Abe's vigorous diplomacy. It is for this purpose that the then newly appointed Prime Minister's first visit was made to the countries of Southeast Asia – Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand. Abe Shinzō managed to visit all the ASEAN countries during his first term and set the tone of active diplomacy in this area. Regular summit meetings resulted in strategic partnership relations being established (for example, with Cambodia and Malaysia) as well as existing partnerships being strengthened (with Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia). Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide made his first foreign trip to Vietnam and Indonesia; the visits resulted in arrangements reached on defense and security cooperation. Apart from the close political dialogue and economic interaction, Japan has recently shown an interest for military cooperation, especially with the countries having territorial contradictions with China [Dobrinskaya 2021, p. 62].

It is important for Japan that ASEAN supports its regional initiatives, as this makes them more extensive and legitimate in the regional public's view; yet it does not reduce them to the Japanese-American alliance

efforts – therefore, Japanese official documents mention the central role of ASEAN in the promotion of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Japan welcomed ASEAN unveiling the "Outlook on Indo-Pacific" and hurried to confirm its similarity to Japanese approaches. The defense cooperation agreement under the title of the "Vientiane Vision" advanced by Abe Shinzō contains statements on the combination of the ASEAN "Outlook on Indo-Pacific" with the Japanese strategy of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific as well as the thesis about the ASEAN central role in the Indo-Pacific. The ASEAN-Japan 23rd summit of November 2020 adopted a joint statement on cooperation in the spirit of the ASEAN view of the Indo-Pacific.

The problems of security and stability in the Indo-Pacific increasingly appear in the dialogue between Japan and European countries: Great Britain, France, and Germany. The region is evidently attracting more and more attention of the European countries: while, earlier, it was only France that marked its presence in the Indo-Pacific, now, Germany and the Netherlands have also developed strategies for the region. In January 2021, Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu was invited to the EU Council of Foreign Relations to make a speech devoted to the Free and Open Indo-Pacific, which promoted a substantive discussion of regional problems and development by the EU of its own Indo-Pacific strategy in April 2021. Japan and some European countries recorded their intention to cooperate in the Indo-Pacific region on the bilateral level. In August 2017, Japan and Great Britain signed a joint declaration on security cooperation including interaction in the Indo-Pacific. Prospects for interaction in the Indo-Pacific have been indicated in the newly adopted Japanese-French Road Map of new horizons for exclusive partnership and confirmed in the joint statement made by Emmanuel Macron and Suga Yoshihide at their meeting during the Tokyo Olympics. September 2019 saw the first round of the maritime dialogue between Japan and France. Both Great Britain and France participate in the maneuvers or patrolling in the South China Sea. Germany showed its focus on the problems of South China Sea. Thus, for example, the situation

in the South China Sea was under discussion between Abe Shinzō and Angela Merkel during their meeting in October 2014. Speaking at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu emphasized that Japan was interested in creating a network of associates in the Indo-Pacific for the purposes of building a free and open world order based on the rule of law. He also mentioned the countries of the Middle East and Africa in addition to Europe and ASEAN.[11]

This goes to prove that Tokyo strives to widen the range of partners on the basis of common interests associated with the support for the power balance in the Indo-Pacific and neutralization of Beijing's ambitions. It can be said that it tries to create "soft coalitions" with the countries that share its concern over today's trajectory of China's rise, its toughening foreign policy, and possible domineering [Kireeva 2020, p. 29]. This defines Japan's interest for creating a wide front of associates – which could unite it with other players – rather than acting within the isolated format of the *Quad*. The combination of mini-multilateral mechanisms with participation of regional and external players concerned about China's rise seems optimal for Japan.

Conclusions

The closer quadrilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific advanced by Prime Minister Abe in 2007 has so far taken hold as the strategic approach of Japan's policy in the Indo-Pacific area. Tokyo's promotion of the *Quad* continued the policy of balancing against Beijing: as bilateral contradictions exacerbate, Japan sees the *Quad* as an instrument for containing China's offensive policy. The *Quad* was also regarded by

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[11] Quad should work with ASEAN, Europe, Middle East and Africa: Motegi. Nikkei Asia. https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Indo-Pacific/Quad- should-work-with-ASEAN-Europe-Middle-East-and-Africa-Motegi.

Abe's government as the initiative making it possible to retain the US attention towards the region and, at the same time, to compensate for the risks caused by the possible reduction of American influence in the region by forming the network of like-minded states standing against the excessive increase of China's influence. Positioning Japan as a leading global player, Abe Shinzō initiated "diplomacy that takes a panoramic perspective of the world map" and tried to enhance Japan's leading positions in the world through this initiative. The *Quad* acquired special role in the context of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision proposed by Abe in 2016. First, it may be called a construct enabling Japan to build up its political presence over the vast territory from Asia and the Pacific to the coasts of Africa. Second, the importance of the *Quad* for Japan is defined by the opportunities that open in the case of multilateral infrastructural cooperation, which might allow putting forward a powerful alternative to the *One Belt One Road* initiative. Japan already cooperates with the *Quad* countries in the bilateral and tripartite format; relevant efforts within the *Quad* would significantly enhance this interaction and make it more ambitious.

The Biden Administration's attention towards the *Quad* allows to consider it as a key element of the US policy in the Indo-Pacific, which is in Japan's interests. The *Quad* is, in many respects, a continuation of the Japanese-American alliance efforts; it strengthens its regional role – in the sphere of non-military security as well (for example, humanitarian cooperation, healthcare, and environmental protection). Since its agenda covers the areas that are not directly connected to the US or Japan's opposition to China, it mitigates the concerns of the other *Quad* participants and partners who try to avoid confrontation with Beijing.

The *Quad* format is one of the links in the wide global network of Japan's interaction with the states sharing its concerns about China's growing influence. It strengthens the Japan-US alliance as well as opens prospects for establishing cooperation with like-minded countries that are interested in the power balance in the Indo-Pacific, based on the

alliance and, to a wider extent, on the *Quad* per se. The importance of the *Quad* as a platform of enhancing cooperation rather than an isolated club of a few countries will enable Japan to implement its foreign policy strategy aimed at the soft containment of China.

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Transformation of Japan's Relations with Southeast Asia in the Second Half of the 20ᵗʰ – early 21ˢᵗ Centuries: Russia, Take Note

E. V. Koldunova

Abstract. In the 20ᵗʰ century, relations between Japan and Southeast Asia experienced several dramatic ups and downs. Japan was the first non-European country that in the late 1930s presented its own vision of the regional order in Asia. The consequences of its implementation proved to be painful both for Japan itself and for its neighbors. After the Japanese defeat in World War II, the historical memory of Japan as an aggressor became part of political and social consciousness of many states of the region. However, in the second part of the 20ᵗʰ century, Japan managed to transform radically this perception in Southeast Asia, turning itself into a leading macro-regional power. This transformation did not come without difficulties but eventually resulted in a successful overcoming of the World War II legacy and made Japan one of the most welcomed alternative forces amidst the rising Sino-US contradictions. A new wave of proactive relations between Japan and Southeast Asia took place against the background of China's economic rise and was connected with the advancement of the Japanese version of the Indo-Pacific as a reaction to China's rise. This article argues that Japan's success in its relations with Southeast Asia had several reasons. The first one was the reassessment of the Japanese structural role in the region (from a militarist force imposing a hierarchical regional order into a power which managed to organize regional development based on the network type of connections).

Others included the progressive dynamics of institutional interaction with ASEAN and targeted cooperation in the areas where Japanese interests coincided or were significantly close to the interests of Southeast Asian states. Despite the fact that Russia can hardly repeat Japanese success in developing its relations with Southeast Asia, certain elements of it are well worth taking note of.

Keywords: Japan, Southeast Asia, USA, China, ASEAN, regional order.

Introduction

The relationships between Japan and Southeast Asian countries have gone through several dramatic ups and downs in the 20th century. Japan was the first non-European country that forwarded its own vision of the regional order for Asia in the late 1930s; yet the consequences of its implementation proved to be painful for Japan itself and its neighbors. After the Japanese defeat in World War II, the historical memory of Japan as an aggressor became part of political and social consciousness in many states of the region.

Japan's rejection of war as a means of conducting foreign policy, recorded in the 1947 Constitution, the success of the Japanese economic miracle in the 1960s and the transfer of many Japanese production facilities to Southeast Asia in the 1980–1990s changed Japan's position in the region dramatically. Yet, the Asian financial crisis of 1997, which gave the economy a strong blow, newly deconstructed the role of Japan, this time as an expected economic leader in the region. The latest round of reinvigoration in the relationships between Japan and Southeast Asia took place in the period when Prime Minister Abe Shinzō was in office (2006–2007, 2012–2020); it was related to the development of the Japanese view of the Indo-Pacific concept.

Despite the non-linear relations between Japan and Southeast Asian countries in the second half of the 20th century, the fact is that Japan successfully overcame its negative image of the World War II times and became one of the most acceptable alternative forces in the backdrop of Sino-Japanese contradictions' aggravation. Unlike China or South Korea [Streltsov 2020], Southeast Asian countries are to a much lesser extent ready to remember the dark pages of the past in their relations with Japan. It is noteworthy that, according to the estimate of the Singapore Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, the 2019–2020 Japan was still the country which was trusted most among all external partners in ASEAN and whose efforts of peace and security support in the region were appreciated as most adequate compared with those of other leading states [Seas et al. 2021, p. 3; Tang et al. 2020, p. 3; Tang et al. 2019, p. 29].

Contemporary local and foreign sources provide a thorough analysis of various historical and current aspects of interaction between Japan and Southeast Asian countries as well as institutional cooperation of Japan and ASEAN [Sudo 1992; Lam 2013; Streltsov 2015; Lang 2020]. Multiple publications are devoted to the history of various aspects of these relations, Japan's economic role in the region, evolution of official development aid, and other areas [Katzenstein & Rouse 1993; Mishchenko 2019; Hatch 2010]. However, the fundamental transformation of Japan's role in Southeast Asia and its perception by other countries of the region has not yet been comprehensively evidenced in research papers.

As this article argues, Japan's success was based on several factors. Among them are re-envisioning Japan's structural role in the region (from a militaristic force imposing a hierarchical regional order to a power organizing the economic development of the region on the basis of networking), progressive evolution of institutional interaction with ASEAN, and committed enhancement of cooperation in the fields where the interests of Japan and Southeast Asian countries coincided to the greatest degree or were very similar.

As a result, Japan, along with the EU, has confidently occupied the niche of the most preferable third force by the end of the first quarter of the 21st century against the backdrop of aggravated China-US

contradictions and growing importance of the problem of choice for Southeast Asian countries. Although Russia will hardly be able to repeat Japanese success in developing its relations with Southeast Asia, certain elements of it are well worth taking note of.

Transformation of Japan's Role in the Region: Historical Context

The short period of Japanese colonialism in Southeast Asia had some important consequences for the region. On the one hand, it demonstrated what the regional order could really be if one Asian state was the only domineering force [Acharya 2012, p. 83]. A situation like this never repeated after World War II, while any return to it was regarded as very undesirable in the region. On the other hand, Japanese activities in Southeast Asia promoted the development and enhancement of self-consciousness for several national liberation movements.

A closer acquaintance with the Japanese approach to reformatting the regional order showed that the likely opportunities for further development proved to be not so bright for Southeast Asia, though, before World War II, some political leaders, Thailand's Prime Minister Plaek Phibunsongkhram among them, had considered Japan as a model to follow.[1] Others, like, for example, Burma's national leader General Aung San [Won 1978, p. 249], placed their hopes on Japan as the force that could confront European colonialism in Asia. The idea of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere went through several stages in its development [Meshcheryakov 2020, p. 259]. The unity of peoples "released by Japan" was demonstrated by representatives of participating

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[1]   Japanese education and economic success are indirectly presented as attractive in Thai classical literature, particularly in Kulap Saipradit's famous novel "Behind the Painting" published in 1937, where the main character leaves Thailand to study in Japan.

Manchukuo, China, Thailand, Burma,[2] the Philippines, and India at the conference in Tokyo in November 1943, while the occupied Indonesian territories had been regarded as part of Japan's empire even prior to the conference [Meshcheryakov 2020, p. 261].

Yet, the main contradiction between the expectations regarding Japan nurtured by Southeast Asian peoples and Japan's aspirations was that Japan arrayed its activities in the region proceeding from the hierarchal understanding of the Asian peoples' harmony. This scheme of coordinates assigned Japan a major role while subordinate countries were, first, to be politically, economically, and culturally reoriented towards Japan, and, secondly, all territories under its control were assigned specific functional tasks. It was planned to set up an industrial complex in China, Korea, and Manchuria while the countries of Southeast Asia were to become suppliers of resources [Booth 2007, p. 148].

A less known consequence of Japan's activities in the region at that time was the heritage of Japanese training of military and bureaucratic personnel of Southeast Asian countries that became an "effective force of revolution and modernization", as American researcher Joyce Lebra-Chapman aptly observed [Lebra-Chapman 2010, p. 2]. Assigning an official status to national languages (Burmese, Malay, and Tagalog, specifically) and support of nationalistic semi-military youth groupings did, in fact, lay down foundations for the organized struggle for independence in a number of Southeast Asian countries [Booth 2007, p. 151] and became a paradoxical result of the Japanese occupation period.

Restoration of Japan's regional role – but on different grounds – began after the success of the Japanese economic miracle, which turned Japan into world's second largest economy, and the formalization of the Fukuda Doctrine in 1977. Japan's foreign policy principles in relation to Southeast Asia formulated by then Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo

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[2]   Hereinafter, the name "Burma" is used for the period before 1989, and "Myanmar" – for the period after that.

laid down foundations of the country's image in the region. It should, however, be noted that the region had had a high degree of distrust towards Japan only several years before the proclamation of the Fukuda doctrine, which became the first explicit Japanese foreign policy strategy in relation to Southeast Asia during the entire post-war period. Anti-Japanese manifestations accompanied Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei's visits to Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines in January 1974.[3] Japan's economic policy in the region aroused discontent, as it was perceived as a peaceful variant of the Japanese military expansion in the times of World War II, and so did Japan's reliance on the Chinese community in its economic advancement in the region without any significant investments in the development of the local human capital [Lam 2013, p. 11].

Ending his tour of Southeast Asian countries in Manila in August 1977, Fukuda Takeo indicated three principles of Japan's policy in the region that were united into the notion that was later called the Fukuda Doctrine:

1) regarding its relations with the region, Japan commits that it will not return to the military power status;

2) Japan will build its relations with Southeast Asian countries on the basis of mutual trust and with regard to a wide variety of issues;

3) Japan will interact with the ASEAN countries as well as with the states of Indo-China.[4]

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[3] Halloran R. Tanaka Sees Thai Students who Denounced his Visit. The New York Times. January 11, 1974. P. 2. https://www.nytimes.com/1974/01/11/archives/tanaka-sees-thai-students-who-denounced-his-visit-assurances-; Diplomatic Bluebook. 1974. Review of Recent Developments in Japan's Foreign Relations. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1973/1973-3-1.htm#Section%201.%20Prime%20Minister%20Tanaka's%20Visits%20to%20Various%20Countries

[4] Diplomatic Bluebook. 1977. Review of Recent Developments in Japan's Foreign Relations. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1977/1977-3-1.htm#Section%201.%20Promotion%20of%20Relations%20with%20Other%20Countries

The last thesis implied Japan's wish to serve as a bridge between communist and capitalist countries of the region. Although Japan failed to implement this function fully because of the uneasy relationship between the ASEAN states and Vietnam caused by the Cambodian problem's emergence and evolution in the late 1970s–1980s, this wish clearly paved the way for the appearance of Japan's networking approach towards interaction with Southeast Asian countries.

In the practical implementation of the Fukuda doctrine, the emphasis was laid on the methods of economic diplomacy. Back in the 1960s, Japan already transferred simple assembly plants to Southeast Asia. Yet, revaluation of the Japanese yen after the 1985 Plaza Accord transformed Japan's structural role. Japan turned into one of the largest capital exporters in the second half of the 1980s, while the retardation of Japan's economic growth in the early 1990s made Japanese companies look for ways of raising their competitiveness in the world market by moving more complex car making and electronic equipment production facilities to Southeast Asia – the region with cheaper and relatively skilled labor force.

American researcher Walter Hatch cites the following statistics: Japanese car makers made 405 investments into the economy of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines in 1962–1997 but 55 percent of them were made between 1991 and 1997 [Hatch 2010, p. 79]. Apart from the transfer of facilities and investment cooperation, Japan became a major source of official development assistance (ODA) to countries in the region. By 1997, 20 percent of Japan's ODA was channeled to the ASEAN countries, while Indonesia was the second largest recipient of Japanese assistance (after China, which occupied that position since the start of economic reforms in the late 1970s), and Thailand was the fourth, followed by the Philippines and Vietnam.[5]

5   Relationship between Japan and ASEAN. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. December 1998. https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/asean/pmv9812/relation.html

In the 1980-90s Japan virtually took on the role of a driver of industrialization in most ASEAN founding countries (incidentally, in the 1990s thanks to Japanese car assembly plants Thailand even received the name of "Eastern Detroit" [Lim 2017, p. 178]). Moreover, Japan tried to reduce its industrial production costs and became one of the key countries in organizing regional *de facto* integration [Hiratsuka 2006]. This is the term researchers began using to denote the regional system of economic interdependence developed in the region not through the implementation of a targeted integration project (as it was done in the European Union) but in the course of segmented transfer of assembly plants owned by transnational companies to various Southeast Asian countries. Thus, in the 1980s and 1990s, Japan's military hierarchical approach of the World War II times was replaced by political and economic networking interaction, which structurally established Japanese positions in Southeast Asia on quite new grounds. Yet, the 1997 Asian financial crisis interrupted the trend of growing Japanese influence in the region. Having experienced considerable negative impact of this crisis on the national economy, Japan failed to provide assistance to the countries of the region in the required amount, thus devaluing its position of the evident macro-regional economic leader.

Dialogue Cooperation Between Japan and ASEAN

Alongside bilateral cooperation with particular countries, Japan began establishing relations with ASEAN from the 1970s on. It established non-formal relations with the Association in 1973; they were further formalized as dialogue partnership in 1977 during Prime Minister Fukuda's tour of some countries of the region. Researchers identify three periods in the relationship between Japan and the ASEAN countries [Lim 2017, pp. 177–183]. The first covers the late 1970s–1980s: it was associated mainly with the resource and economic agenda. The late 1970s witnessed the establishment of the ASEAN-Japan forum on synthetic rubber production.

The second period covers the turn of the 1990s–2000s. It was important for Japan's relations with ASEAN for a number of reasons. The period witnessed a drastic turn in Japan's security policy that began to be practically implemented in the process of peaceful settlement in Cambodia. The International Peace Cooperation Law adopted in 1992 permitted the Japanese Self-Defense Forces' servicemen to participate in the UN peacekeeping operations [Panov, Sarkisov & Streltsov 2019, p. 305].

In addition to Japan being considered a major financial sponsor of the reconstruction process, eight Japanese peacekeepers were sent to Cambodia in 1993, where the UN transition administration was set up based on the 1991 Paris Peace Agreements. As the settlement of the situation in Cambodia was a milestone for ASEAN's establishment as a regional player, the early 1990s became momentous for cooperation between Japan and the Association member states as well. By that time, both parties had been able to gain considerable experience of formal and informal interaction in the course of preparation for the Tokyo Conference, which was held in June 1990 preceding the International Paris Conference on Cambodia [Takeda 1998, pp. 553–568].

The process of settlement in Cambodia was also important for Japan, as it enabled it, without displaying its approach openly, to gradually improve its working relations with Indo-Chinese countries that were not ASEAN members yet, and inside Cambodia – with all the forces involved in the political settlement process.[6] Japan later tried to apply the same approach to Myanmar settlement with several sides of the internal conflict that is still not abating in this country. After Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999 joined ASEAN, Japan provided financial support to the initiatives

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[6] Sek S. Reinvigorating Japan's Twin Track Diplomacy in Cambodia. The Japan Times. April 8, 2019. https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2019/04/08/commentary/japan-commentary/reinvigorating-japans-twin-track-diplomacy-cambodia/

aimed at adapting new participants to ASEAN integration processes [Shiraishi 2009].

In 2004, Japan acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia; it was the first among all the Association's dialogue partners to appoint its permanent representative in ASEAN.[7]

The above-mentioned Asian financial crisis became the milestone for the second period of relations between Japan and ASEAN. Prior to the crisis, Japan had mainly interacted with ASEAN countries within the existing dialogue partnership frameworks (ministerial meetings and senior official's meetings) and put forward unilateral initiatives for further financial and economic macro-regional integration (for example, setting up the Asian Monetary Fund). The 1997 crisis promoted the development of the new multilateral format of ASEAN+3, providing for participation of Japan, the PRC, and South Korea. Japan incorporated into the ASEAN+3 format quite successfully, yet it lost its position of a promising and absolute economic leader of the entire East Asia.

Meanwhile, China's economic rise strengthened the elements of Japan-China competition in the region and resulted in the appearance of the network regionalism phenomenon [Rathus 2011]. It implied gradual emergence of a whole series of projects related to trade and economic liberalization in East Asia that were put forward by China and Japan in reply to each other's actions. They included the project of the ASEAN+3 free trade area (FTA), the response to which was ASEAN and China's FTA, followed by the idea of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), supported by Japan with the purpose to prevent the growth of China's unilateral influence in the region.[8]

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[7]   Overview of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations. June 14, 2021. https://asean.org/wp- content/uploads/20210614_Overview-ASEAN-Japan-Relations-full-version.pdf

[8]   Kawashima, S. Japan's Painful Choice on RCEP. The Diplomat. August 03, 2020. https://thediplomat.com/2020/08/japans-painful-choice-on-rcep/

The ASEAN+3 format became the basis of many initiatives in the field of macroregional financial and economic management both after the 1997 crisis and after the 2008 global economic crisis. It is, first of all, the agreement of ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers on the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization, that previously had developed mainly as a network of bilateral swap arrangements – this laid the foundation for creating a regional fund of currency reserves. The agreement took effect in 2010. The regional fund combined financial contributions of all ASEAN+3 format participants and amounted to $120 billion at the time of founding.[9] The year 2011 saw the establishment of a macroeconomic research office (ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office, AMRO); it was to exercise macroeconomic surveillance, ensure assistance for implementing the Chiang Mai initiative, and provide technical support to its participants. By 2021, the fund had increased to $240 billion.[10]

It is the ASEAN+3 format that made it possible to ensure long-term interaction of rising China, Japan, and South Korea, while their attempts to advance the cause of economic integration in Northeast Asia were not successful despite positive expectations at the turn of the 2010s–2020s [Suslina 2012]. Meanwhile ASEAN held informal discussions on the desired balance of power of extra-regional states in Southeast Asia; active presence of three countries was considered as such – China, Japan, and India. Their involvement at that time looked as quite sufficient for keeping up the adequate balance in the region [Acharya 2001, p. 168].

The third period of relations between Japan and ASEAN is associated with changes that took place in the geopolitical and geo-economic situation in the region when China occupied the position of the second global economy after 2010. As a result of its rapid economic rise, China ceased to be part of the "flock of flying geese" – by the vivid expression

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[9]   The Joint Ministerial Statement of the 13th ASEAN+3 Finance Minister's Meeting. May 2, 2010. https://aseanplusthree.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/JMS_13th_AFMM3.pdf

[10]   ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office. https://www.amro-asia.org/about-amro/who-we-are/

used by Akamatsu Kaname, a 1930s Japanese economist – or the system of the above-mentioned regional *de facto* integration that ensured involvement of new industrializing countries in the orbit of the Japanese technological leadership by transferring Japanese industrial facilities there. Moreover, back in 2013, China already presented its own region-organizing initiative *Maritime Silk Road* (as part of the *Belt and Road* Initiative) regarding Southeast Asia. It did not formally compete with ASEAN-centric institutes in any way; nevertheless, it created quite a different regional context when implemented in practice, as it re-oriented at least part of ASEAN members (Laos, Cambodia, and, to a certain degree, Myanmar) towards China from the economic standpoint. As a result, the rise of China made Japan and ASEAN look for strategic response to the new situation.

The third period also entailed invigoration of the dialogue cooperation between Japan and ASEAN along several tracks – in the field of politics and security, economic and humanitarian interaction. Responses to new security threats (war on terrorism and transnational crime, threats in the field of information security and sea crimes) had become a significant sphere of cooperation of dialogue partners by that time.

Japan held a steady position of the Association's key economic partner (second largest investor and fourth trade partner of ASEAN as of 2019); it intensively developed humanitarian ties with Southeast Asian countries. Of special note in this connection is Japan's JENESYS program, launched in 2007 and aimed at the intensification of student and youth exchanges. Nearly 37 thousand people from Japan and countries of the region participated in the program during the period of its implementation.[11]

As a whole, it is important to note great achievements made by the Japanese cultural diplomacy. Large-scale programs in this sphere

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[11] Overview of ASEAN Japan Dialogue Relations. June 14, 2021. https://asean.org/wp- content/uploads/20210614_Overview-ASEAN-Japan-Relations-full-version.pdf

highlighting intra-Asian ties and Japan's belonging to the region did not only promote Japan's penetration into all spheres of Southeast Asian life from industry and finance to culture, fashion, and tourism [Ben-Ari & Clammer 2000] – they became a key instrument for changing Japan's image in the region.

Current Invigoration of Japan's Policy in the Region: Key Areas

With the overall positive evolution of ASEAN-Japan dialogue partnership its main focus in the past decade was on seeking the ways to converge Japan's and ASEAN's Indo-Pacific strategies. Active promotion of the Indo-Pacific idea in Japan's foreign policy is associated with Abe Shinzō's second term as Prime Minister (2012–2020), though this framework appeared in his earlier speeches, specifically, one in the Indian Parliament in August 2007. Developing the Japanese version of the Indo-Pacific, Abe also had to re-invigorate Japan's foreign policy towards ASEAN. Initially Japanese Indo-Pacific concept did not particularly mention the role of ASEAN,[12] inevitably raising the question of the extent to which Japan was prepared to support the idea of the ASEAN's centrality for regional cooperation.

However, this flaw was later corrected: Japan's concept of the Indo-Pacific specially underlined the ASEAN's centrality and the Association has, from that time, been mentioned in all explanations of Japan's Indo-Pacific strategy, and especially those targeted at the audience of Southeast Asian countries.[13] In 2019, ASEAN issued its own document devoted to the Indo-Pacific in response to the exponential growth

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[12]   Diplomatic Bluebook. 2017. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. P. 26. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000290287.pdf

[13]   A New Foreign Policy Strategy: "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy". https://www.asean.emb- japan.go.jp/files/000352880.pdf

of Indo-Pacific strategies pursued by various international players.[14] The ASEAN approach to the Indo-Pacific was of a more inclusive character, it was aimed at socio-economic development and less concentrated on regional antagonisms.

In November 2020, the 23rd ASEAN and Japan Summit gave rise to the Joint Statement on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.[15] It highlighted four areas of interlinking between Japan's and ASEAN's Indo-Pacific approaches: maritime cooperation, enhanced interconnection, attainment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and economy.

More specific areas of joint efforts were indicated in addition to the four basic areas. Both partners agreed to maintain maritime security, struggle with the pollution of the world ocean with plastic litter, interlink the Japanese initiative on quality infrastructure and the Master Plan on ASEAN connectivity, develop digital economy and seek joint responses to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan had also voiced its support for the ASEAN project of smart cities.[16]

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan proved to be a reliable partner for the countries of the region by undertaking the obligation to channel $50 million to the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases, the decision to establish which was taken in November 2020.[17]

With the general multi-vector cooperation between Japan and ASEAN continuing, some key countries should be indicated, as relations

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[14] ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. June 23, 2019. https://asean2019. go.th/en/news/asean-outlook-on-the- indo-pacific/

[15] Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. November 12, 2020. https://www. mofa.go.jp/files/100114942.pdf

[16] Ibid.

[17] 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit held online. November 13, 2020. https:// www.asean2020.vn/xem-chi-tiet1/-/asset_publisher/ynfWm23dDfpd/ content/23rd-asean-japan-summit-held-online

with those have, for a variety of reasons, acquired special importance for Japan. The first country to refer to in this context is Vietnam.

Vietnam is the major regional antagonist of China, a prospective participant of the extended format of the quadrilateral dialogue of Australia, the USA, Japan, and India on security (*Quad+*), and a backbone country in the *China+1* strategy providing for a gradual transfer of some Japanese production operations from China to third countries, subsidized by Japan's government. The implementation of the strategy had started prior to the new coronavirus's global spread; yet the pandemic strengthened the trend simmering from the middle of the previous decade. By late 2020, 37 out of 81 Japanese firms financially supported by the Japanese government relocated their factories to Vietnam, and another 19 – to Thailand [Teo 2021, p. 6].

Special focus in Japan's 2020 Diplomatic Bluebook, which highlighted major achievements and areas of the Japanese foreign policy, was made on Indonesia, the largest country of the region and a participant in global governance club mechanisms.[18] It was to Vietnam and Indonesia that Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide, who replaced Abe Shinzō in 2020, made his first visits.

Japan's and ASEAN's positions on the situation in Myanmar proved to be close. Accepting Myanmar in the late 1990s, the ASEAN countries bore in mind the necessity to restrain it from fully sliding into China's orbit [Cribb 1998]. Japan followed the same rationale, initiating various economic and infrastructural projects in Myanmar such as, for example, construction of an industrial cluster in the Dawei Special Economic Zone [Paramonov 2021]. Despite the appeals of Western countries to impose sanctions on Myanmar, Japan took a very cautious position regarding the country's new leadership as it did not want to limit international space for Myanmar's maneuver after the Myanmar military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government on February 1, 2021.[19]

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[18] Diplomatic Bluebook. 2020. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Pp. 59–60. https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100116875.pdf

[19] Heijimans Ph., Tan K.W.K. Japan's Refusal to Sanction Myanmar Undermines Biden's Strategy. Bloomberg. June 20, 2021. https://www.

Japan's gratuitous transfer of military machines and equipment to some Southeast Asian nations has become a relatively new area of its cooperation with the region's countries during the last few years. The transfer became possible due to amendments to the Self-Defense Forces Law enacted in June 2017. These amendments, notably, enabled Japan to hand over several training planes and helicopter spare parts to the Philippines in 2016–2018[20]. Several Philippine pilots underwent training at the Tokushima air force base in the same period.

However, despite the overall positive attitude to Japan in the region, its policy is not devoid of internal contradictions. Some researchers note that it is aimed at shaping a "hybrid regional order"[21] and implies the support of macro-regional formats like ASEAN-centric institutes and RCEP, which is positively perceived by all ASEAN countries, as well as mini-lateral forms of cooperation – *Quad*, *Quad+*, various situational coalitions like arrangements with China on the implementation of joint initiatives in some Southeast Asian countries under the guise of Japan's contribution to the execution of projects within the *Belt and Road* initiative.[22]

While Japan was sometimes characterized as a country unwilling to assume a leadership role in the 1990s [Stubbs 1991], in the 2020s, it was endowed with the epithet of a "silent" leader [Teo 2021]. This characteristic was brought about by the fact that, during Donald Trump's

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bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-06-19/japan-s-refusal-to-sanction-myanmar-over-abuses-undermines-biden-s-strategy

[20] East Asia Strategic Review 2019. http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/english/ publication/east-asian/pdf/2019/east- asian_e2019_04.pdf

[21] Pajon, C. Japan's Indo-Pacific Strategy: Shaping a Hybrid Regional Order. War on the Rocks. December 18, 2019. https://warontherocks.com/2019/12/ japans-indo-pacific-strategy-shaping-a-hybrid-regional-order/

[22] Japan opens the way to cooperation on China's Belt and Road Initiative. East Asia Forum. July 10, 2017. https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2017/07/10/ japan-opens-the-way-to-cooperation-on-chinas-belt-and-road-initiative/

presidency, Japan played the role of a more politically mature partner in the US-Japan alliance, one consistent in its efforts, and a responsible player in Southeast Asia. Yet, with the arrival of Joe Biden at the White House, who expressed his intention of demonstrating a more proactive approach to Southeast Asia (the region was visited by the US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Vice-President Kamala Harris in the period of July and August 2021 alone), more and more analysts [Teo 2021; Koga 2021] began expressing concerns that Japan runs the risk of playing second fiddle again.

Conclusion

The analysis presented above allows drawing the conclusion that in the decades after World War II Japan has managed to transform its role drastically in Southeast Asia and, at the same time, induced spectacular changes in the perception of its image by the countries of the region.

Japan's position in the region has also undergone changes over the past period due to geopolitical and geo-economic shocks and upheavals. The economic stagnation at the turn of the 1980s–1990s, the Asian financial crisis, and China's rapid rise prevented Japan from becoming an indisputable macroregional economic leader. Yet, its technological leadership in the 1980s–1990s, key positions in the regional economic interdependence system, impressive results of cultural diplomacy, and the experience accumulated in formal and informal ties with Southeast Asian countries determined Japan's special political and economic role in the region for a long time ahead. Moreover, China began to strengthen its positions in the region, relying on the *Belt and Road* initiative, when many Southeast Asian countries had already gained experience of economic growth enhanced by the transfer of Japanese production facilities and the use of Japanese technologies. This suggests that it will not be easy for China to draw the countries of the region into its orbit unconditionally, and Japan will remain one of the most

preferred "third forces". It is probably the very fact that Japan has not had a single opportunity of projecting its unlimited influence during the entire postwar time and has had to make arrangements with the countries of the region and other leading powers that made it so attractive for the elites of Southeast Asian states.

Whereas Japan's leading role in the region was determined by its technological leadership in the 1990s, there have currently appeared new elements of Japan's interaction with Southeast Asia that imply movement towards limited military-technical cooperation. The Fukuda doctrine did not address regional security directly; but now Japan tries to take up distinctive positions in the region in this sphere as well.

Unlike mid-20th century, the need to include Japan as a structure-forming force into the transforming regional order hardly raises any questions in any of the ASEAN countries now. There is still a quite evident contradiction present in its policy. On the one hand, Southeast Asia is an area where Japan can naturally apply its foreign efforts. On the other hand, Japan's dependence on the USA still holds true – the country partially remains a vehicle of American interests and initiatives in the region. As a result, Japan is regarded as a country that is still unable to express its leadership ambitions explicitly and implement them independently from the USA, which implies that it depends on the fluctuations of successive US administrations' foreign policy.

Nevertheless, Japan's experience proves that a consistent and comprehensive foreign policy may dramatically change the image of a country even after grave upheavals and temporary retreats, which Russia should bear in mind in its relations with Southeast Asia.

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Functionalist Approach
to Explain Russian-Japanese Relations
under Abe and Putin Administrations

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Abstract. Russian-Japanese relations present one of the most interesting cases of international relations with a perplexing historical background and a complex set of factors influencing contemporary dynamics of Russian-Japanese interaction. The relations are claimed to have improved under Putin and Abe administrations, introduction of the Eight-Point Cooperation Plan and establishment of a unique post of a Minister for Cooperation with Russia. This article analyzed the specific period of Russian-Japanese relations between 2016 and 2019. Improved bilateral relations created a historical precedent that is important to understand in light of contemporary deteriorated relations between Japan and Russia. However, Russian-Japanese cooperation in this period is complicated by a complex historical legacy and other factors and is set to be locked in a Kurilian stumbling block. International relation theories traditionally applied to analyze Russian-Japanese relations fail to suggest the way out and the mechanisms to improve Russian-Japanese relations. The present article explores the theoretical apparatus traditionally applied to Russian-Japanese relations and investigates the potential of a functionalist approach to explain Russian-Japanese relations between 2016 and 2019. Functionalism describes the way to improve relations of countries with adversarial relations by moving away from high-politics issues and *quid pro quo* logic and focusing on the problem-solving approach. The spill-over effect occurs when cooperation established in one field expands to other areas.

The article concludes by arguing that, in contemporary Russian-Japanese cooperation, there is a hybrid spill-around effect.

Introduction

Russian-Japanese relations present one of the most interesting cases of international relations with a perplexing historical background and a complex set of factors influencing contemporary dynamics of Russian-Japanese interaction. It is important to understand the character of bilateral relations between these two powerful states, with their significant political and economic influence. Russian-Japanese relations shape the political environment and stability in the Northeast Asian region with "one of the world's most complex security environments, [with] three nuclear weapon states, great-power rivalry, multiple territorial conflicts" [Brown et al., n.d.], and complex historical relations, but also the wider international community. Russian-Japanese relations particularly come to the forefront when taking into consideration Russia's deteriorated relations with the West, Japan's urge for greater independence particularly pronounced under the Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzō administration, the positioning of the USA, the strengthened place of China in contemporary international relations (IR), instability in North Korea and other tensions shaping world dynamics.

The climate of Russian-Japanese relations have improved under the former Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzō and Russian President Vladimir Putin's administrations and the cooperation between Russia and Japan has increased in practically all fields. The situation is claimed to have changed since 2012 with the 'new approach to the Russian issues' proposed by the former Prime Minister Abe Shinzō. There is an intensification of Russian-Japanese cooperation in almost all fields

of bilateral relations [Pustovoyt 2019]. The potential for cooperation was highlighted by Russian and Japanese administrations.

Moreover, with regard to the development of relations with Russia, there was a unique position created within the Japanese government specifically for dealing with this: the Minister for Economic Cooperation with Russia; this position is currently held by Seko Hiroshige. Eight-Point Cooperation Plan[1] (hereinafter 8PCP), so-called roadmap for Russian-Japanese cooperation was introduced. The 8PCP can be referred to as a roadmap for the technical cooperation between Japan and Russia in different social and economic fields. It is said to be designed to focus on economic and technical variables of cooperation while setting aside political matters.

The present article focuses on the period from 2016 until 2019. The start, September 2016, was marked by the introduction of the 8PCP initiative by Japan to Russia and the end of the period, December 2019, marks the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly affected all international relations, especially at the early stages. This article refers to the term of former Japanese Prime Minister Abe

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[1] Eight-Point Cooperation Plan for innovative reforms in the industry and economy of Russia as a leading country with favourable living conditions. It was proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Abe to Russian President Putin in 2016 at the Sochi Summit. It is "a concrete plan to unleash the potential of the highly promising Japan-Russia relationship". This plan was offered within the 'new approach' to the bilateral relations policy. It is referred to as a will to "combine Japanese technology with Russian wisdom". The 8PCP promotes cooperation for the development of eight respective areas of the socio-economic development of Russia and are as follows: 1. Extending healthy life expectancies, 2. Developing comfortable and clean cities that are easy to reside and live in, 3. Fundamental expansion of medium-sized and small companies' exchange and cooperation, 4. Energy, 5. Promoting industrial diversification and enhancing productivity in Russia, 6. Developing industries and export bases in the Far East, 7. Cooperation on cutting-edge technologies, 8. Fundamental expansion of people-to-people interaction.

(term in office December 26, 2012 – September 16, 2020) and Russian President Putin (assumed office on May 7, 2012).

However, the prospects for wider Russian-Japanese cooperation remain unclear with the issues of the lack of a peace treaty, and the contested territories among other factors. There is a wide amount of scholarly literature highlighting the role of the territorial dispute and its hampering effect on the cooperation of the two countries. Scholars see the Southern Kuriles/Northern Territories as a stumbling block in the bilateral relationship [Miller 2004] and the research on Russian-Japanese relations focuses mostly on its ideological and historical contexts, highlighting the likelihood of continued adversarial relations unless the territorial dispute is resolved.

Russian-Japanese relations remain ambiguous with the unresolved territorial dispute over the Southern Kuriles/Northern Territories, the absence of the post-Second World War peace treaty, continuous historical mutual distrust, as well as significant influence of other states involved in shaping the dynamics of Russian-Japanese relations. Bilateral relations of the two neighbours "tell a story of geopolitical illusions and frustrations, geo-economic promise and failure, and increasingly divisive historical memories that, to date, overwhelm pragmatic diplomacy" [Rozman (ed.) 2016].

There is frustration from scholars (for instance, [Rozman (ed.) 2016]) at the constant state of ambiguity between Russian-Japanese relations and inability of IR theories previously applied to this case to propose a strategy for the normalization of bilateral relations. The present article investigated different theoretical approaches traditionally used to explain Russian-Japanese relations and suggests that the theoretical approaches traditionally used to analyze Russian-Japanese relations, although applicable to describe the state of Russian-Japanese relations and the problems preventing the full-fledged cooperation between the two, have failed to suggest ways out of the territorial stumbling block. These theoretical approaches are iterated prisoner's dilemma, neorealism, neoliberalism, two-level games, constructivism, and the challenger state – target state approach to bilateral relations of countries with adversarial relations.

Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma

According to the prisoners' dilemma [Snyder 1971], states' interactions are games with insufficient information about the counterparts and states competing for maximal competitive gain acting as rational actors. The prisoner's dilemma is used to describe how two parties decide in a condition of insufficient information. The gain can be achieved when both states cooperate. The traditional prisoner's dilemma describes the decision-making process taking place once. The later theoretical developments refer to the iterated (repeated) prisoner's dilemma when the decisions are made for an infinite number of times.

"In either case, if the game is only played once, then each player gets a higher payoff from defecting than from cooperating, regardless of what the other player does. However, if both players defect, they both do worse than had both cooperated. If the game is played repeatedly (the Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma, or IPD), there is greater room for cooperation" [Axelrod & Dion 1988]. The counterparts follow a *quid-pro-quo* logic making a reciprocal act of repeating the counterpart's move made in the previous occasion on the next occasion. Thus, "a repeated prisoner's dilemma in which mutual cooperation can be sustained as an equilibrium outcome with a strategy of punishing defection should it occur" [Powell 1991] or, on the contrary, praising the counterpart.

As it was explained by scholars reviewing Russian foreign policy in general, prisoner's dilemma can be a mechanism explaining Russian decisions about international relations in the Northeast Asian region in particular and in the world in general. "Russia, as a rational egoist, cares only about its own gains and not about the gains of losses of the United States, Japan, China, Korea, thereby making cooperation more likely" [Hopf (ed.) 1999]. Thus, the motivation to cooperate with Japan, for example, can be dictated by similar considerations. With the lack of trust and absence of the common government, Russian willingness to "cooperate in building security mechanisms is seen as means of minimizing the negative effects of cheating in the prisoner's dilemma situation coming from regional anarchy" [Hopf (ed.) 1999].

Iterated prisoner's dilemma has some potential in explaining Russian-Japanese relations, particularly when explaining the complicated advancement of the cooperation. However, it lacks the capacity to accommodate the complexity of Russian-Japanese relations embedded in a set of external, internal, economic, historical, social, political factors shaping their dynamics. Nevertheless, it is important to understand prisoner's dilemma as it lies at the core of the neorealist and neoliberal approaches to international relations discussed below.

Neorealism

The dynamics of Russian-Japanese relations are often explained through the neorealist lens. Neorealists explain the world order as an anarchy with no central regulation leading to the distrust of the countries and seeing other countries as enemies [Baldwin (ed.) 1993]. The states therefore are perceived as self-concerned IR actors worried about the survival [Baldwin (ed.) 1993]. Thus, the primary function of interstate relation is security competition [Streltsov & Lukin 2017]. The cooperation can be based on security considerations about the counterparts and the potential of the effect of this cooperation projected on other states in the anarchic environment. The competitive self-centred behaviour is normalized within the neorealist approach as the path of an actor and the other actors' behaviour is supposed to be shaped by the same logic.

Following the debate on the necessity of decreasing Japan's reliance on American security provisions and the development of military potential of Russia, there is a mutual interest for the cooperation. Another factor in favor of cooperation is the need to protect remote Far Eastern territories and economic underdevelopment of the region versus the potential of Japanese technologies. Furthermore, the immediate proximity of North Korea and its missile development is also in favor of the Tokyo-Moscow dialogue [Streltsov & Lukin 2017]. The abovementioned can serve as factors pushing neighbours to cooperate and merging the interests of Russia and Japan.

Moreover, Russian-Japanese cooperation can be explained through the neorealist logic taking into account the role of other countries, particularly USA and China. The potential of Sino-American rapprochement informed the motivation of the former USSR and Japan to cooperate and the same pushes contemporary Russia and Japan towards each other.

Some scholars point on the strengthening of a realistic trend in contemporary international relations, based on the cult of strength, on military power, on the values characteristic of the diplomacy of the 19th and 20th centuries. This is especially true in Asia, where the language of power works much better than the language of words. It is believed that the Cold War has always continued in Asia, and, after the end of the bipolar period, it continues now; there is an arms race, and power expresses true intentions more effectively than words and helps to achieve foreign policy goals [Gribkova 2016].

At the same time, despite the considerations stated above, both Japan and Russia prioritize their traditional partners, USA and China, over cooperation with each other. Moreover, the categorical approach of the neorealist school to the competitive and security-based character of international relations shapes the relations in rigid terms. It does not allow to accommodate the complexity of other factors influencing cooperation. The neoliberal approach gives room for more flexible considerations.

Neoliberalism

The proponents of the neoliberalist school of thought are congruent with the neorealist perception of the international system as anarchy [Jervis 1999]. At the same time, the adepts of the neoliberal school see countries not as enemies but as rivals, thus there being more room for cooperation. The potential for cooperation is based on the actors' interest in military prowess, economic power, and other strengths [Baldwin (ed.) 1993].

An important factor that can intensify cooperation is interdependence of countries. The depth of this interdependence can serve as a factor ensuring the potential of cooperation between states. Depending on it (the depth), neoliberals identify interdependence and interconnectedness [Barbieri 1996]. The interdependence occurs when international transactions between the states are extensive and frequent, covering various economic, political, and military fields and lead to high-cost effects for both parties. On the contrary, the interconnectedness occurs when the interstate transactions are less extensive and diverse and, more importantly, do not have substantive effects for the parties. Scholars refer to the low economic interdependence of Japan and Russia identifying it as a possibility to easily replace the economic cooperation with the counterpart state by that with any other state [Kireeva & Sushentsov 2017].

Neoliberalism has significant potential for explaining contemporary Russian-Japanese relations. Russia is interested in attracting Japanese investments and obtaining access to Japanese advanced technology, particularly for the development of the socio-economically deteriorated Russian Far East [Akaha 2016]. On the other hand, Japan is interested in accessing Russian military prowess, especially considering the logic of limiting the dependence on American military protection. It should be mentioned that, from the neoliberal perspective, the military interest is not a security issue, but another asset just like economic or political aspects.

The neoliberal prism draws a positive perspective on the development of Russian-Japanese relations. At the same time, the neoliberalist school fails to explain the reasons behind there being neither interdependent nor intense character of contemporary Russian-Japanese relations. One of the possible explanations might be the inability of the neoliberal theory to accommodate a complex character of the history of Russian-Japanese relations as well as the deeply rooted distrust and the role of adversarial relations in building national identity.

In other words, the Russian-Japanese relations cannot be fully explained either from a neorealist or a neoliberal perspective due to

the main criticism that was already formulated as being "not structural enough: that adopting the individualistic metaphors of micro-economics restricts the effects of structures to state behaviour, ignoring how they might also constitute state identities and interests" [Wendt 1995].

While the neoliberal-neorealist debate is an established debate in the realm of international relations (IR), the exploration of the dependence of the game theoretical prisoner's dilemma and two-level games' theory presents a relatively unexplored field of IR theorization.

Two-Level Games

The theory of two-level games emphasizes the connection between international relations and internal politics. According to the proponents of this approach, the negotiations of two countries are in fact not one but two games:

1) international negotiations themselves;

2) internal ratification of negotiated decisions.

"At the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests by pressuring the government to adopt favourable policies, and politicians seek power by constructing coalitions among those groups. At the international level, national governments seek to maximize their own ability to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments. Neither of the two games can be ignored by central decision-makers…" [Putnam 1988].

The significant part of the two-level games' theory is a winset category. The winset is the spectrum of possible agreements that are both accepted by negotiators[2] (level 1) and by their internal stakeholders (level 2). Considering internal stakeholders, or powerful interest groups, is important since whether a negotiated agreement is ratified or not depends on their approval. Thus, a potential of possible outcomes

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[2]   Usually, country leaders or other officials.

of negotiations is determined by the width of the winset spectrum: the wider it is the easier the negotiation process. The stronger negotiator here is that who has the narrowest width of the options that will be internally accepted. It is assumed that the parties engage in negotiations with the knowledge of their counterparts' level 2 positions.

Two-level games theory has significant potential in explaining the character of contemporary Russian-Japanese relations. On the one hand, the main negotiators, Putin and Abe, are perceived as strong leaders with significant electoral support. Thus, it is expected that they can push the ratification of negotiated agreements.

On the other hand, it is believed that high bureaucratic institutions in Japan are not favorable towards intensified cooperation with Russia [Streltsov & Lukin 2017]. Russian citizens, on the other hand, demonstrate uncompromising positions regarding the status of disputed territories, although the situation improved over the last years, with 74 percent of Russians being against giving two islands to Japan.[3] At the same time, the power of public opinion in Russia should not be overestimated, and there are other factors influencing Russian-Japanese relations. While the two-level games theory provides explanation for the lack of success in bilateral relations despite the potential, it fails to explore the way to improve the relations. Moreover, akin to neorealism and neoliberalism, the explanatory potential of two-level theory is not enough for analyzing the complex picture of deep-rooted factors.

Constructivism

The approach best suited to understanding the complex dynamics of the diverse set of factors influencing Russian–Japanese relations and allowing to read between the lines is the constructivist approach to international relations.

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[3] https://www.levada.ru/2018/11/30/17-rossiyan-skoree-podderzhali-by-ideyu-peredat-yaponii-neskolko-ostrovov-kurilskoj-gryady/

As opposed to neorealism and neoliberalism, constructivists claim that anarchy is what states make of it [Wendt 1992]. The outcome of the world order in such anarchies lies in practices and decisions made by states. History, as a set of rooted practices, is a significant factor shaping these decisions and the emergence of new practices, with the first interaction between two parties being of particular importance.

The constructivist school focuses on "a concern with how world politics is 'socially constructed', which involves two basic claims: that the fundamental structures of international politics are social rather than strictly material…, and that these structures shape actors' identities and interests, rather than just their behaviour…" [Wendt 1995, p. 71]. It should be mentioned that these structures exist only as a process and are constantly reaffirmed based on the interaction with other actors. "To analyse the social construction of international politics is to analyse how processes of interaction produce and reproduce the social structures – cooperative or conflictual – that shape actors' identities and interests and the significance of their material contexts" [Wendt 1995, p. 86]. Constructivism has strong explanatory power [Streltsov & Lukin 2017] in analyzing Russian-Japanese relations. The historical events and agreements are interpreted differently by two countries and their interpretation is deeply rooted in time and its challenges.

Moreover, the first Russian-Japanese interaction left a bad perception of Russians as dangerous barbarians and the following interactions were not positive either [Streltsov & Lukin 2017]; later this image transformed into a relatively stable concept. "The first social act creates expectations on both sides about each other's future behaviour: potentially mistaken and certainly tentative, but expectations nonetheless… The mechanism here is reinforcement; interaction rewards actors for holding certain ideas about each other and discourages them from holding others. If repeated long enough, these "reciprocal typifications" will create relatively stable concepts of self and other regarding the issue at stake in the interaction" [Wendt 1992, p. 405]. This concept then influences the perception and all the following interactions between the states. The actors' decisions here are informed by culture, which is a subset of social

structures. It "confronts actors as an objective social fact that constrains and enables action in systematic ways, and as such should generate distinct patterns" [Wendt 1999, p. 184].

Furthermore, the perplexed history and Japan's othering of Russia [Bukh 2009] and the USSR for the purpose of shaping its national identity is another factor. On the other hand, the attempts of contemporary Russian government to construct its identity as a victorious nation [Streltsov 2016a, Streltsov 2016b] and the course towards unification complicate cooperation with Japan.

The biggest criticism against constructivism, however, is its inability to suggest solutions to social problems and the ways of escaping such adversarial relations. Moreover, "the analysis from the constructivist perspective ignores the possibility that economic cooperation can construct a political system among nations [...] and the need for technological cooperation among states, sometimes affects politics significantly" [Watanabe 2016].

Challenger State – Target State Approach

As has been described above, the aforementioned theories fail to investigate and suggest how to improve the character of Russian-Japanese relations. At the same time, Russia and Japan do not present a unique case of a pair of countries with disputed territories. Therefore, it is important to investigate the approaches to bilateral cooperation of states facing similar problem. For this one can refer to the challenger state – target state theoretical considerations [Wiegand & Powell 2011b].

It is argued that states intentionally link activities in the economic field to political actions through the choice of timing [Wiegand & Powell 2011b]. Research addresses the cooperation of countries with territorial disputes demonstrating that "conclusive settlement of a territorial dispute is not necessary for bilateral cooperation to occur" [Wiegand & Powell 2011b, p. 211]. Many countries cooperate while having contested

territories, such as Argentina and the UK, Guatemala and Belize, Bahrain and Qatar, and others.

The challenger state – target state theory is used to describe the dyad relationships of countries with contested territories cooperating on other issues. The authors identify the roles of two states in territorial dispute resolution: a challenger state and a target state. A challenger state is a state that makes territorial claims, while the target state is a state currently possessing the territory, from which the challenger state is attempting to take territory [Wiegand & Powell 2011b]. By referring to the vocabulary of challenger states and target states it is demonstrated how challenger states are making territorial claims, willing to cooperate with target states, i.e., the states from which they are attempting to take territory. Challenger states promote cooperation with target states in areas seemingly unrelated to the territorial dispute and use this cooperation to decrease mutual distrust and improve dyadic relationships.

In such case, rival states start cooperation on issues seemingly unrelated to the territorial issue and further use improved economic relations to push for the resolution of territorial disputes. By analyzing the territorial dispute and the cooperation of Argentina and the UK, scholars present "a theory that portrays bilateral cooperation on other issues as a form of CBMs, which challenger states use in order to influence planned settlement attempts regarding the sovereignty of the disputed territory" [Wiegand & Powell 2011b].

Baking up their findings with an empirical analysis of the Argentina-UK cooperation connected to Malvinas/Falklands islands for over 20 years, they demonstrate how "cooperation on other bilateral issues is not only feasible but also likely for states involved in a dispute over such a salient issue like territory" [Wiegand & Powell 2011a,]. The logic of bilateral cooperation of the states with contested territories and the way it can be applied to Russia and Japan is schematized below.

Factors determining bilateral cooperation of states with contested territories[4]

	Target state	**Challenger state**
Territory	UK (Russia) Currently possesses	Argentina (Japan) Claims the right to
Strategy choice	States choose previously successful strategies of dispute resolution expecting subsequent success	
Timing choice	N/A	Challenger states link the timing of various economic incentives to the date of the official meetings where territorial issues are discussed
Confidence building measures	The need is highlighted	N/A
Foreign direct investments	N/A	Challenger states can threaten to withdraw or withhold foreign direct investments as a bargaining tool

As can be observed from the table above, the approach developed by Wiegand and Powell [Wiegand and Powell 2011b] enriched with the analysis of the cooperation of countries with unresolved territorial disputes can serve as a theoretical framework for the research if further developed.

This is applicable to the certain extent to the Japanese-Russian case with the Japanese Eight-Point Cooperation plan linked to the territorial dispute resolution. At the same time, this kind of research would require quantitative analysis of the massive data focusing on the number of meetings of the two countries, the timing of meetings, the number and very basic description of the agreements concluding. All of this could become an interesting research direction. However, while being

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[4] Sources: Wiegand & Powell 2011a,b; Asada 1988; Lee & Mitchell 2012.

promising quantitatively, such research does not have enough potential to explain the complex set of factors determining the nations' decisions. More importantly, the abovementioned approach does not provide any solutions on how to promote the relationship, focusing on describing only the timing considerations.

Functionalist Approach to Interstate Cooperation

There is general agreement in the literature discussing Russian and Japanese relations that any bilateral cooperation is contingent on the resolution of the territorial dispute unless there is excessive economic interdependence of the countries as, for instance, is the case between Japan and China. At the same time, there are many examples of bilateral cooperation of countries with disputed territories having no such intense economic interdependency.

More importantly, theories traditionally applied to Russian-Japanese relations' analysis are insufficient to address the frustration and move the focus away from Kurilian knot. Although these theories have a lot of explanatory potential to analyze Russian-Japanese relations, they are unable to contribute to the understanding of how to improve adversarial relations of these two countries.

On the other hand, functionalism is one of the most prominent theories describing the trajectories of bilateral and multilateral relations of countries in conflict and proposing a new model of peace. Developed during WWII by David Mitrany as a response to an inefficient static model of peace, a new social view of peace was proposed. Addressing common social problems was supposed to bring nations actively together [Mitrany 1994]. Further developed, the interest towards functionalism revived and developed into neo-functionalism by scholars like Haas and Schmitter. The heyday of neo-functionalism was in the 1970s and later the application of this theory to international relations decreased again. However, despite the fact that "functionalism is a largely forgotten approach to international relations" [Steffek 2011] it remains relevant

and provides significant insights for the present research and the investigation of the possibilities for cooperation of a large number of countries with disputed territories.

Functionalism also has strong liberating potential since "functional neutrality is possible, where political neutrality is not" [Mitrany 1948, p. 358]. Moreover, the level of engagement can be rather flexible: "countries could take part in some schemes [of cooperation, for example, transport, etc.] and perhaps not in others, whereas in any political arrangement such divided choice would obviously not be tolerable" [Mitrany 1948, p. 358].

Compared to much contemporary research, proponents of functionalism move the relations of disputing countries away from the bargaining realm towards search for cooperation opportunities and propose a solution for otherwise unsolvable claims of conflicting states. Functionalists invite us to explore the potential of shifting the "cooperation among specialists in particular policy fields [that] would delegitimate the diplomatic practice of political horse-trading and shift the negotiation mode from 'bargaining' to 'arguing'" [Steffek 2011, p. 17]. "Questions would become discussed 'on their merits' rather than in the framework of a *quid pro quo*" [Steffek 2011, p. 17]. This is possible through addressing the issues separately and disconnecting high politics from technical issues.

Functionalists claim that "human affairs can be sliced into layers, that the concerns of man are so stratified that economic and social problems can, in a preliminary fashion, be separated from political problems and each other" [Nicholas 1965, p. 98]. The present article claims that Russian-Japanese relations under the Putin and Abe administrations are framed in functionalist terms: the new approach to Russian-Japanese relationships is proposed, 8PCP oriented to the provision of welfare to Russian citizens is launched and the problem-solving orientation is highlighted.

Functionalism works from the perspective of a particular problem and the relations to it, promoting functional cooperation among countries unrelated to political areas. There is the least number

of disagreements among nations, and these areas include but are not limited to economic, social, and other technical areas [Groom 1974]. Once non-political problems are separated from political issues, the need for the concentration on very limited, technical issues urges cooperation.

"Functionalist arguments also stress that joint problem solving gives rise to an increase in mutual dependence transnationally and a related tendency of technical self-determination of cooperation – as noted: 'form follows function'" [Kiatpongsan 2011, p. 78]. It seems to be a strategy used to move Russian-Japanese relations away from the deadlock by cooperation, first, on issues unrelated to high politics and through establishing "beneficial relations in various senses, without affecting the problem areas and politics through a functional approach" [Nelson & Stubb 1994, p. 312]. There is a need to put "maximum emphasis on active forces and opportunities for cooperation, while at the same time attempt to avoid controversial issues that may cause disagreement" [Nelson & Stubb 1994, p. 312].

According to functionalists, cooperation is required to solve non-political problems in the areas where and since "a government cannot meet the demand of providing welfare for its citizens by remaining in isolation" [Mishra 2015, p. 3] and "institutions based on function, not territory, would be appropriate for solving basic social and economic problems" [Mitrany 1994, p. 37]. There is an indication of two major themes, as follows: the welfare-enhancing output of governance and the organizational form that brings it about, and they can be interlinked [Steffek 2011]. Therefore, the establishment of international agencies with limited jurisdiction, set of functions, and specific powers is the key approach of functionalism. Functional international organizations operate in a narrowly defined field, they perform organized international activities related directly to economic, social, technical, and humanitarian matters – in other words, 'non-political'[5] problems.

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[5]   https://www.crcpress.com/The-Prospects-for-a-Regional-Human-Rights-Mechanism-in-East-Asia/Hashimoto/p/book/9781138901469

The activities that should be covered within such functional cooperation are to be chosen specifically and should be organized when there is the greatest need for them at a particular moment. These features can give all the freedom for practical changes in the organization of several functions [Nelson & Stubb 1994, p. 312]. This cooperative problem-solving approach by function-specific organizations allows to switch from power-oriented goals to welfare-oriented goals. Cooperation in governmental and non-governmental setups is expected to promote welfare and technological advancement.

Another important element of functionalism is the role of experts in performing functional activities. According to Ernst B. Haas [Haas & Schmitter 1964], the maximum authority should be exercised by technicians and administrators dedicated to the commonwealth. The cooperation is the most promising in organizations authorized to perform highly specialized, technical tasks where the technical competence of the staff and membership is prioritized over political ambitions.

Therefore, the "building blocks of what one may call a 'functional legitimation' are a focus on problem-solving as a task of international governance; the creation of functionally designed international organizations; the paramount role of administrators and experts; the possibility, and absolute necessity, of centralized planning" [Steffek 2011, p. 18].

There is a strong focus on the creation of "specialized international institutions with technical administrative structures and procedures to which certain functional missions would be transferred from national governments" [Mishra 2015, p. 4]. These institutions are expected to evolve their distinctive structural patterns, procedural system, and areas of competence following the inherent requirements of their functional missions.

Within the process of the implementation of the 8PCP, the set of working groups to deal with each of the eight points were established. Overseen by respective ministries and companies in Russia and Japan, these working groups serve as such expert organizations.

According to proponents of the functionalist school of thought, the way they (institutions) perform their activities will change the attitude of the recipient groups and will be followed by spill-over effect – improvement of overall international relations following effective problem-solving. In other words, cooperation that began from solving technical problems can create a positive experience which then can be transferred from one functional area to another.

The Spill-over Effect

The spill-over effect is an important concept and it is necessary to address it in more detail since, in the end, it can be seen as a goal of any functional cooperation. Suggested by Mitrany, it was, however, only partly described in his work and a deeper reflection and further study of the spill-over effect and the conditions of its occurrence were done by neo-functionalists. According to them, "spill-over amounts to a (positive) feedback mechanism stressing the possibility of self-supporting social processes that start modestly, gain dynamics and may over time produce dramatic outcomes" [Gehring 1996, p. 44].

Moreover, it is not only limited to positive feedback but also, "spill-over refers [...] to the process whereby members of an integration scheme – agreed on some collective goals for a variety of motives but unequally satisfied with their attainment of these goals – attempt to resolve their dissatisfaction either by resorting to collaboration in another, related sector [...] or by intensifying their commitment to the original sector [...] or both" [Schmitter 1969, p. 162].

This is relevant since it removes the automaticity of the spillover effect and points to the active role of participants of the cooperation. In fact, "neo-functionalism also draws attention to the relevance of subnational actors for this process, be they citizens or interest groups" [Gehring 1996, p. 44]. This is largely forgotten in the present literature applying a functionalist approach to international relations where the automaticity of the spill-over effect is presupposed, and it is presented

as something vague and unmeasurable. This may be partly because most of the contemporary scholarship is applying functionalism in the European realm to discuss European integration.

The spillover process consists of two key elements: "the sectoral (functional) spill-over, which involves the expansion of integrative activities from one sector to another" [Moga 2009, p. 798] and the political spill-over, "which implies increasing politicization of sectoral activity" [Moga 2009, p. 798]. Following this logic, cooperation will extend to more and more functions to the point that a "web of international activities and agencies" will "overplay political divisions" [Mitrany 1994]. This kind of expectations of the spill-over effect are equally applicable to international relations of states and not only integration processes.

Thus, two factors are contributing to the expansiveness of the spill-over process: "the underlying interdependence of functional tasks and issue arenas, latent or ignored in the original convergence, but capable of being mobilized by aroused pressure groups, parties, or governmental agencies whose interests become affected; the creative talents of political elites, especially the administrators of regional institutions, who seize upon frustrations and crises in order to redefine and expand central organizational tasks" [Mitrany 1994].

Developing functionalist theory, Schmitter comes up with three other phenomena apart from spill-over. These are spill-back, self-encapsulation, and spill-around. Spill-back is the process "whereby the new central organizations lose previously acquired capacity to act in determined areas". Self-encapsulation is a syndrome when regional actors confine themselves to their originally assigned tasks and stop reacting to perturbing external forces. Spill-around is a hybrid of spill-over and self-encapsulation syndromes. It is characterized by a proliferation of independent efforts at regional coordination in distinct functional spheres – an expansion of the scope of regional tasks without the establishment of a collective body, without an increase in the level of regional decision-making or wider sense of community loyalty.

In the existing body of literature, the functionalist approach is mostly used for the description of multilateral international relations through already established international organizations based on a regional basis, mostly for European cooperation [Assetto 1988] but also for regional cooperation in other areas [Tripathi 2012; Melegoda & Padmakumara 2018]. There are still few analyses using the functionalist approach for bilateral cooperation. Therefore, the present article contributes to the development of functionalist theory and revitalizes the widely forgotten approach.

Addressing Criticism for Using Functionalism for Bilateral Relations

An important consideration to make regarding the applicability of the functionalism theory to the description of bilateral relations is the traditional perception of functionalism as an integration theory. This perception was established and is relatively stable due to the traditional application of the functionalism theory to the description of the European Union establishment and the reasoning behind other multilateral institutions. Indeed, one can see that the number of scholarly articles applying functionalism to other fields is very limited.

At the same time, although integration potential of the functionalism was acknowledged by Mitrany and later Haas, their discourse was never limited to integration only. On the contrary, early functionalists highlighted the advantage of functionalism over competitive nationalism, bringing the comparison "between full-fledged and comprehensive government and equally full-fledged but specific and separate functional agencies" [Mitrany 1948, p. 360]. In other words, it is not an ultimate choice between anarchic versus international world government systems but a much larger range of opportunities.

Moreover, the integrative potential of functionalism was much more emphasized by the neo-functionalism development of the theory. However, even in this case, the perception of integration was never that

rigid. In fact, Haas was distinguishing between two levels of integration depending on their intensity, the built-in (1) and negotiated (2) integration.

"Built-in integration takes place on the basis of a firm schedule for the rate and amount of dismantling of obstacles to factor movements. Exemptions from the schedule are administered by the central authority, not national governments… The opposite mode of integration (negotiated integration) features a much looser institutional structure which avoids the notion of supranationality in explicit intent as well as in fact. The timetable for dismantling is flexible; each step must be negotiated anew; exemptions and escape clauses flourish, and their administration is decentralized" [Haas 1964, p. 713]. Such approach allows certain room for much more flexible cooperation.

In other words, the potential of the functionalist approach is not limited to integration, but, more importantly, can provide a wider contribution to the establishment of, if not friendly, at least stable and unrivalled relations.

Moreover, one should remember that functionalism is different from a neoliberal approach. The latter puts great importance on the interdependence of actors, including economic interdependence. However, here, again, the stance of functionalism is different: "what is important here is not the absolute military power or industrial capacity of the participants but relative weight of these features in the specific functional context of the union" [Haas 1964, p. 714]. Thus, a relatively low level of economic interdependence between Russia and Japan does not make functional cooperation between these two states impossible.

Conclusion

The present article made an attempt to theorize Russian-Japanese relations under the Putin and Abe administrations in the period between 2016 and 2019. It has demonstrated that the theories traditionally

used to describe Russian-Japanese relations do not manage to suggest a path for improving the dynamics of contemporary Russian-Japanese relations. More importantly, Russian-Japanese relations remain stuck in the deadlock of the territorial dispute, *quid pro quo* logic, and insufficient economic interdependence. There is a need for an alternative theoretic approach that has potential and suggests a path for developing bilateral cooperation for countries with contested territories and other internal and external factors, including deep rooted distrust and other socio-psychological parameters hampering the cooperation.

It has claimed that Russian-Japanese relations under Putin and Abe administrations were framed in functionalist terms, where 8PCP served as the roadmap to tackle specific problems of Russia with the help of Japanese technology and know-how.

At the same time, it is too early to talk about the spill-over effect in Russian-Japanese cooperation. Rather, one can observe the spill-around with a proliferation of independent efforts at regional coordination in distinct functional spheres in Russia, with the 8PCP initiatives, although claimed as systematic and comprehensive, in fact focusing on specific fields and lacking a wider sense of community loyalty.

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Space and the Gods of Space
in Japanese Myths

L. M. Ermakova

Abstract. This article focuses on the concept of space and two different structures of space in the mythological chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*. It considers two main invisible divine gods of space, probably connected to Chinese mythology and appearing in the mythological chronicles first – *Ame-no-minaka-nushi* and *Kuni-no-tokotachi*. It traces their evolution in history and also deals with obtaining by some of Japanese gods, within the Buddhist worldview, a fantastic appearance and the key role in cosmogenesis. It also deals with the connection of the first verbal descriptions of the appearance of the Japanese lands as a living creature or a symbolic thing seen from above with the ritual of "viewing the realm" (*kunimi*), and also with a technique of Chinese-Japanese painting wherein an object is portrayed as seen from above (for the purpose of which, in the cases of indoor scenes, a building is depicted without a roof), etc.

Keywords: space, *kami* deities, *kunimi* ritual, map and *vajra*.

In the 8th century, when the groups of *literati* began to compile mythological chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, as well as the local gazeteers *Fudoki* (*"Reports on customs and features of various lands"*), they started with a primary categorization of space and the fixation of the stages of its exploration.

This type of activity – classification of space of the universe – probably is the common starting point of any mythological narrative. The first act of creation of the cosmos from chaos is the division of the indefinite-being into heaven and earth, after which the creation of separate elements of the world begins. This action means nothing other but filling undefined space with proper nouns, if we view the process from the point of constructing a narrative. These names, first, theonyms, and then toponyms, appear in Japanese mythological texts as such, without characteristics or descriptions, that is, their mythological meaning is represented by these names themselves. And these first lexemes can be considered simultaneously proper nouns and common nouns, as, according to the meaning of the parts of the name, they provide a description of its bearer, in other words, provide a brief story about him; a name per se becomes a wrapped-up, an embryonic form of narrative about the personage.

Many of these proper nouns combine the functions of both theonyms and toponyms, that is, the name of a deity and the name of the place which the deity occupies can coincide. According to Yamaori Tetsuo, "spatialization" (空間化, *kūkanka*) of deities becomes, in the course of time, a general tendency. For example, in *Engishiki*, one can see such naming method as a "god dwelling in Asuka," "god dwelling in Sumiyoshi", etc. "Instead of a mythological plot about the inner essence of a deity, we have here spatial distribution, or spatial unfolding of gods" [Yamaori 1999, p. 83]. It is a known fact that space, generally speaking, is explored by humans earlier than time. Accordingly, we can see that in many world languages words connected to temporal dimension often use spatial characteristics, such as "long", "short", or, in Japanese, *nagai* and *mijikai* (about time). Meanwhile, in Japan, the mythologemes of topoi, the names of places have always had increased significance and frequency.

First of all, let us mention two rather abstract deities, who, in both mythological chronicles, are more astrological symbols than specific types of gods, even if they appear in the chronicles first. These gods and concepts were definitely borrowed from Chinese books. But this is not so important, as the authors of the chronicles composed the

cosmological ideas and mythological narratives known to them into a certain composition, satisfactory for their time, and they deemed it necessary to not only include these gods in the cosmological history of both chronicles, but also to begin with them. As we know, borrowing is, generally speaking, not a vice, but, rather, a general law of existence of motives, stories, and texts. For example, the story of Izanaki and Izanami, as well as many others, was also not invented in the Japanese Islands; it can be encountered in many areas, even though, in every culture, they obtain their own peculiar characteristics.

Thus, both the first deity whose name is mentioned in the *Kojiki* and the first deity in the *Nihon Shoki* have it as their goal to define a spatial area or an important point in the world. In *Kojiki*, this is Ame-no-Minaka-nushi, or, as B. M. Chamberlain translated it in the first edition of his translation of *Kojiki* in 1882, Deity Master-of-the-August-Centre-of-Heaven.[1] The next translation, by Donald L. Philippi (1969), has it just as "Heavenly Awesome Lord Deity".[2] In *Nihon Shoki*, the first one is Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto, or, as translated by W. G. Aston,[3] Land-eternal-stand-of-august-thing.

It seems rather important to trace the zone where these two deities are born/become/appear into the world. It is here, it seems, that one can observe one more substantial difference between the spatial structure of the world in *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* (by saying "one more", we mean that, for example, in the works by Kōnoshi Takamitsu, the fundamental differences between these two chronicles have already been postulated – such as the difference in their cosmologies; in *Kojiki*, there is *musuhi*, the birthing life force, and, in *Nihon Shoki*, it is *yin* and *yang* [Kōnoshi 1995]).

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[1] [Chamberlain (trans.) 1932], https://www.sacred-texts.com/shi/kj/index.htm. For Russian translation, see [Kodziki 1994, Vol. 1]. [Kodziki 1994, Vols. 2-3].

[2] [Philippi (trans.) 1969], The Kojiki: An Account of Ancient Matters: vdoc.pub

[3] [Aston 1896], https://archive.org/details/nihongichronicl00astogoog For Russian translation, see two volumes of [Nihon Shoki 1997].

There is, however, evidence to suggest that the two chronicles differ in their concepts of space as well.

The first god from the *Kojiki*, Ame-no-Minaka-nushi, the Deity Master-of-the-August-Centre-of-Heaven, is born in the Takama-no-hara, i.e., the Plain of High Heaven.[4] Both the name of the god and the name of the plain use the word *ama/ame*, "heaven", which is denoted by the character 天. After that, the text says that all later gods up to Izanaki and Izanami appeared consecutively following Ama-no-Minaka-nushi. One has to assume, therefore, that all of them started their activities in the same place, the Plain of High Heaven, as there are no other indications. Moreover, there is no other place for them to appear, as, at this point, Izanaki and Izanami have not yet been introduced in the narrative, that is, have not gone around the pillar, and have not created Onogoro-shima yet. Moreover, we have to accept that even the gods with such earth-like sounding names as Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto – Earthly-Eternally-Standing-Deity, Uhijini-no-kami – Deity Mud-Earth-Lord, and, following him, Suhijini-no-kami – Deity Mud-Earth-Lady; after her, Tsunugui-no-kami – Germ-Integrating-Deity, and, after him, Ikugui-no-kami – Life-Integrating-Deity; after her, Oo-tonoji-no-kami – Deity Elder-of-the-Great-Place, etc., that all these gods had came into existence before Izanaki and Izanami created the solid earth, that means their connections with Heaven.

Such is the case in *Kojiki*, while, in *Nihon Shoki*, Takama-no-hara plays no special role and can only be encountered once or twice, not even in the main narrative, and in *Kogoshūi* it is only mentioned incidentally. In *Nihon Shoki*, we can observe not a dual, but a triple spatial structure. So, where, according to *Nihon Shoki*, was Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto,

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4   Some scholars suggest that Takama-no-hara is a real place. The variants of its location are: 1) one of the mountains of the Yamato country near Nara; 2) a mountain in Kyushu, in the Takachiho area of the Miyazaki Prefecture, where Ninigi-no-mikoto descended to earth; 3) also Kyushu, but an area in the present-day prefectures of Fukuoka and Kumamoto; 4) Mount Fuji, etc.

the bearer of the first proper name in this text, the August-thing standing eternally on a certain foundation (*toko/soko*) of the country, born? It turns out that, in the passage dedicated to him in this chronicle, he is born not in heaven and not on earth, but in a certain space between these two, 天地之中. The main narrative of *Nihon Shoki* about the beginning of space-time says: "It is said that when the opening [of Heaven and Earth] (開闢) began, the land/soil floated about like a fish on the surface of the water. And at this time a certain thing has appeared between Heaven and Earth. Its form was like a reed-shoot. Now the thing became transformed into a God. His name is Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto." [Nihon Shoki 1997, p. 115].

The sixth variant of the same narrative about the beginning of the world in *Nihon shoki* mentions this third, intermediate space between heaven and earth twice: "In one writing it is said: '…when Heaven and Earth first separated, a certain thing went in existence. It resembled a reed-shoot. It was born in the Void [between Heaven and Earth] (於空中). This thing changed into a God, who was called Ama-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto.' […] And one more thing existed. It resembled floating oil and was born in the Void [between Heaven and Earth] (於空中). The thing transformed to God, by the name of Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto." [Nihon Shoki 1997, p. 116] That is, these two deities, who represent, respectively, Heaven and Earth, were both born in this third sub-space, in the void between Heaven and Earth. In *Kojiki*, this sub-space is absent.

These two spatial gods, Ame-no-minaka-nushi and Kuni-no-tokotachi, were for a long time not used in culture, remaining abstract concepts. In *Engishiki Shimmeichō*, a register of the names of gods of the *Engishiki* code, a shrine of Ame-no-minaka-nushi is not mentioned, and neither is one of Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto, even though scholars are trying to reconstruct the location of its shrine. However, centuries later, Ame-no-minaka-nushi becomes a popular object of folk worship, and this is how it happens: in Tang China, the Daoist cult of the Ursa Major constellation and the Pole Star was incorporated into Buddhism and linked to the Bodhisattva

Myōken-bosatsu,[5] who is named the Bodhisattva of the Pole Star in the Chinese translations from Sanskrit of the 4th–5th centuries. These beliefs reached Japan as early as in the 7th century, under Emperor Tenchi. In the Heian period they were banned for some time, and later, in the Edo era, Hirata Atsutane identified Myōken-bosatsu with Ame-no-minaka-nushi. In the Meiji years, during the establishment of the State Shinto, all Buddhist temples of Myōken-bosatsu became Ame-no-minaka-nushi shrines. Therefore, a millennium and a half after the written fixation of its name, this deity gained a place of worship for the first time, and, in the State Shinto of 19th century, it started to symbolize the centrifugal principle of the cosmos.

As for Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto, he started to be worshipped much earlier, in the Kamakura era, as a part of the Shinto-Buddhist intermixture of *kami* deities and buddhas. He is not merely a name and an abstract designation of a place, but, in *Nihon Shoki*, he even gives birth to several deities. In the medieval times, he unexpectedly obtained a key role in the act of first creation, as well as a surprising appearance. The Muromachi era Buddhist text "Excerpts of Dust and Thorns" (塵荊抄, *Jinkeishō*, 1482, Scroll 6) says: "A question: who is called the seven generations of heavenly gods? – Answer: The first [god] is Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto. He is also called Awanagi-no-mikoto. A deity who has three faces, six hands, and six legs, of blue-black color and akin to a deity-dragon 竜神" [Hara 2017, p. 273]. According to *Sumiyoshi-engi*, he has eight heads, eight hands and legs, and he looks like a giant serpent and is called the first of the heavenly deities (天神). Generally speaking, in medieval texts the deities from mythological chronicles undergo striking metamorphoses. In the Buddhist treatise "True Record of Noble Names" (日諱貴本紀, *Nichiiki Hongi*, 14th century), gods are given physical characteristics, sometime fantastical ones – for example, some have several hands, or three eyes and six fingers. Amaterasu turns out to be an androgyne: she has two sets of organs (具), and she combines

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[5]   Sanskr. Sudarśana. He is attributed the connection with one of the brightest stars of the Ursa Major, named Alkaid, or Benetnasch.

in herself a man and a woman. All of this is said against the background that, in the mythological chronicles, all these deities have no appearance and can, in fact, be considered invisible. Yamaori Tetsuo writes: "The gods figurating as personages in the mythological part of the chronicles *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* are given names, but not bodies. These names are highly significant, but gods have no individuality. Even if some have it, it happens very rarely and in the weakest form" [Yamaori 1999, p. 85]. He adds that this feature of the Japanese gods becomes even more obvious, if compared with the gods of Ancient Greece, who have a certain appearance and individual attributes.

There is one more interesting aspect to this. In the same treatise *Nichiiki Hongi*, the information about the height of various deities is given. In particular, it is said that Susanoo-no-mikoto is 9 *shaku* 6 *sun* tall [Hara 2017, p. 273], that is, two meters or more, depending on the specific value of these units of length (originally Chinese). And it seems quite remarkable that the same height is mentioned by Sima Qian in his *Shiji* (*"Records of the Grand Historian"*) as that of Confucius. It is said that "Confucius was nine *chi* and six *cun* tall, he was called a giant and he was different from other people". (孔子長九尺有六寸，人皆謂之「長人」而異之。)[6] The similarity of the height of Susanoo in a medieval Japanese treatise and Confucius in Sima Qian's work has not been noted in academic literature yet, but I think it to be significant and not at all accidental.

The above-said quotations testify about the fact that in the new historical context the invisible Japanese gods began to acquire an appearance, in some cases the fantastical one. And they soon proceed to the next stage – to obtaining a new role in the renewed world creation myth.

In the *Keiran shūyōshū* (渓嵐拾葉集, *"Collection of Leaves Gathered by Storms in the Valley"*, 14th century), a treatise of enormous length, one can find the following story about the beginning of the world: Kuni-no-tokotachi dipped his sacred spear in the primordial water but found no

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6   Shiji: 世家: 孔子世家 – Chinese Text Project (ctext.org)

country (land) there. Then he started to grope in the water with his spear and, on the very bottom, found 三輪 – three rings emitting golden light [Hara 2017, p. 274].

The *setsuwa* collection *Shasekishū* (沙石集, *"Sand and Pebbles"*), composed by Buddhist monk Mujū in the period between 1279 and 1283, also speaks about the discovery of Buddhist symbols on the bottom of the sea in its first chapter, *"On the Affairs of the Great Ise Shrines"* (太神宮 御事, *Daijingū-no onkoto*). According to it, it is not Izanaki and Izanami who searches for land in water with a spear (as we know from *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki),* but goddess Amaterasu, and she finds there a Buddhist omen. This also happens in the very beginning of times, when solid earth has not formed in the ocean yet. Moreover, in this story, Amaterasu saves Buddhism from the evil demon of the sixth heaven Mara (Japanese – *Temma*), who always tries to prevent people from obtaining Buddhist enlightenment and who appears to undermine the establishment of the law of the Buddha in Japan even before the country was created.

This remarkable story about a direct contact between Amaterasu and a representative of the Buddhist pantheon goes as follows: "In the middle of the Kōchō years[7], one priest who was on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the great goddess explained why, in this shrine, the words "Three Jewels"[8] are forbidden, and Buddhist monks never approach the sacred hall and do not make pilgrimages there. This is how it happened: in the times when this country did not exist yet, [having learned that] on the bottom of the great sea there is a seal with the sign of Dainichi,[9] the great goddess dipped a spear [into water] and stirred with it. And when the drops from this spear became like dew [apparently this means that they dried and became solid – *L. E.*], the king-demon of the sixth heaven looked about the expanse and said:

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[7]   1261–1264.

[8]   A reference to the Buddhist Triratna: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

[9]   This seal of Dainichi (Mahavairocana), according to other texts of the same time, has the appearance of three rings.

"This drop will become a country, there, the teaching of the Buddha will spread, and, from this, human morality, life, and death will grow." And then he descended to obstruct [the goddess] and prevent it from happening. And the great goddess faced him and said: "I will never even pronounce the words "Three Jewels". And they will not approach me. Now, you shall immediately return to the heaven." And she started to do [the creation of the country], and he returned to the heaven. "From now on, this promise shall not be broken," – the goddess ordered. [Since that time,] Buddhist monks do not approach this shrine, and no sutras can be seen on the altar, and the words "Three Jewels" are not pronounced. And the Buddha is called here *tachisukumi* ("he who is standing still"), sutras – *somegami* ("dyed paper"), monks – *kaminaga* ("long hair", or "long-haired ones"), a Buddhist monastery – *koritaki* ("smoking incense"). Thus, even though, on the outside, [the great goddess][10] is separated from the Buddhist law, on the inside, she worships the Three Jewels, and so it is clear that, in our country, the Law of the Buddha is flourishing due to the patronage of the great goddess.[11]

In this extraordinary story, it turns out that even the prohibitions on all things Buddhist in the Ise shrines were, it turns out, established by goddess Amaterasu in the name of Buddhism. Besides, Amaterasu is pronounced the demiurge god who created Japan in the middle of the primordial ocean.

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[10] We made this conjecture because the verb in this phrase is accompanied by the polite auxiliary verb tamau, which can apply either to the emperor, or to gods.

[11] https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/item/rb00012949#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv =3&r=0&xywh=-1%2C-141%2C5162%2C4424, images 4-5.
     In English, this text exists as a commentated translation by Robert E. Morell (1986), in Russian by N. N. Trubnikova (2017), but for the present study we used a manuscript version of the Japanese source, which is currently stored at Kyoto University library and which has several differences from both translations.

However, from the myths of *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, we know that it was neither Kuni-no-tokotachi nor Amaterasu who searched about with a spear in the primordial ocean, but the ancestor gods Izanaki and Izanami. As we see, within the new, Shinto-Buddhist worldview, they were, for some reason, not suitable, and their roles in the act of creation were given to Kuni-no-tokotachi-no-mikoto and Amaterasu. Therefore, in the Buddhist era, Kuni-no-tokotachi, who was initially quite abstract, took Izanaki's role in cosmogenesis; thus, the gods who were mere abstractions at the cosmological stage of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, unexpectedly gained leading roles in the pantheon of *kami* deities.

The fact of Japanese deities obtaining fantastic forms is no less notable. It can probably be explained by the fact that Buddhism in itself carries old elements of Brahmanism and Hinduism. In this relation, one can recall the features of the key gods of Hinduism. For example, Brahma had four heads, four faces, and four hands, and his skin was red; Vishnu was also portrayed with four hands, with blue or black skin; Skanda, the leader of the divine army and the god of war in Hinduism, was portrayed as a young man, often with six heads and twelve arms and legs. Shiva in the form of Ardhanari is portrayed as hermaphroditic, which, it seems, expresses the idea of duality and wholeness, comprehensiveness. One can assume that depictions of this kind reached Japan via China and, in the medieval period, were rethought and transferred to the Japanese gods of the ancient times, even if without corresponding narratives.

Speaking more concretely, one can hypothesize as a possible source the borrowing of frescos of the Dunhuang caves, in particular, Cave 285. There, a depiction of Maheshwara is preserved, dated 5th–8th centuries, and, as scholars believe, this depiction is evidence of the early process of incorporation of Hindu gods in the Buddhist pantheon of Central and East Asia. A constant feature of the iconography of Maheshwara are three different heads: the left one – with a fierce expression on the face, and the right one – a female one, with all three having different color. Besides, it has six hands – the upper two hold the sun and the moon, the middle two hold a bell and an arrow, and the two lower ones are folded on the chest. All these features reflect, in the opinion of researchers,

the Shiva iconography of Northern India [Gallo 2013, pp. 4, 19]. The depictions of Maheshwara with three or five heads can also be found in the Yungang caves (Cave 8), in the Hotan oasis, and in Kizil.

As far as fantastical appearance is concerned, one must also mention the thousand-handed Manjushri on the northern wall of cave 14 in Mogao (the depiction is dated mid-9th – early 10th centuries), as well as the forty frescoes of Dunhuang with the thousand-handed Avalokiteshvara [Wang 2016, p. 82–84]. The name Manjushri, or *Monju-bosatsu* in Japanese, became important in Japanese culture quite early. In one of the medieval treatises on poetics it is even connected to the origin of Japanese *tanka* poetry: the treatise says that the 31-syllable *tanka* song genre was first created under Prince Shōtoku (the legendary propagator of Buddhism in Japan), when Bodhisattva Monju-bosatsu was manifested in Japan [Ermakova 2020, pp. 270–271].

The borrowing of an image motif from the frescos of Dunhuang and similar stops on the Silk Road is not a unique event in Japanese cultural history. One can recall, for instance, a legendary pair – the God of Wind and the God of Thunder with characteristic features. The God of Wind has a scarf on his shoulders, which produces wind (an obvious remnant of the function of the Homerian "bag of winds"). The God of Thunder has a hoop, to the edges of which many small drums are attached in a circular fashion. It is believed that an image of a deity with a bag of winds reached Japan as early as the Nara period, while, in the Kamakura period, wooden statues of the God of Wind and the God of Thunder with the same attributes were added to the interior of the *Sanjūsangen-dō* (*"Thirty-Three Ken Hall"*) in Kyoto. Many Japanese art history scholars believe that the statues of the God of Wind and the God of Thunder in this pavilion are a comical remake of the frescos of Dunhuang Cave 249.[12]

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[12] One can see the image of a god of wind with a bag on the reliefs in the Tower of the Winds in Athens (1st c. BCE). Similar images can also be seen in other areas on the way east: in the Hellenic statues of Gandhara, on the coins of the Kushan Empire, and, finally, on fresco in the Dunhuang Cave 249. s.

It would be far from surprising if it turned out that the cave frescos of the same Buddhist monastery in the mountains of Dunhuang also became the example for the construction of the appearance of pre-Buddhist Japanese deities. Incidentally, the images of the gods of wind and thunder were borrowed approximately at the same time when the depictions of ancient Japanese gods with fantastic features appeared.

In other words, as the spirit of the time was changing and as Buddhism and its iconography were increasingly adopted, tradition was changing as well. As B. Faure remarked wittily, though referring to a different subject, but also speaking about the mutations of Japanese gods in the Buddhist contour, "Through Chinese cosmology, irremediably intertwined with Indian, Buddhist, Chinese, and Japanese mythological elements, the basic spatio-temporal structures of the Chinese worldview have served for the creation of a thoroughly Japanese culture, showing, once more, that any tradition implies a forgetting of its origins." [Faure 2005, p. 88].

Now, let us return to the 8th century, to the narratives of the mythological chronicles, and take a look at what happened to space during the next stages of creation after the seven generations of the first invisible gods. We know that Izanaki and Izanami, standing on Onogoro-shima Island, created the country-solid earth: first Awaji Island, then, Toyoakizu-shima, or The Abundant Dragonfly Island, that is, Honshu, then, Iyo Island, or Shikoku, and, after that, Tsukushi, that is, Kyushu. Further on, both chronicles mention other islands, in particular, the islands of Oki and Sado; they are located in the Sea of Japan and denote the furthermost northern border of the realm, a mythological and a political one. According to *Engishiki* and *Shoku Nihongi,* these islands were the place of exile of conspirers, and Sado Island was the place to which demons of illnesses were expelled during exorcist rites. This is the first description of the territory that was being created and explored, and here, at the end of this episode, a mega-toponym appears for the first time – The Great Country of Eight Islands.

It is notable that the order of creation of the first islands, as well as the meaning of the parts of their names offer meanings on several levels.

First, this is pure cosmogony and cosmology, that is, the description of creation step-by-step of the world and its properties.

Second, this fragment states the direct correlation between the act of creating the lands, as well as the lands themselves, with human body, or a living creature, which is quite a widespread phenomenon in myths of various regions. As *Nihon Shoki* says, Awaji is a placenta island; Iyo Island is called *Iyo-no-futana* in *Kojiki*, which means "Iyo Island With Two Names", and it is said about it that the island is one in body, but has four faces. About the birth of the islands of Oki and Sado, *Nihon Shoki* says: "Then they gave birth to twins – Oki-no Shima and Sado-no Shima. It happens that regular people give birth to twins, and precisely [the birth of these islands] became an example [for the people] [Nihon shoki 1997, p. 118]." The same correspondence with a living organism is mentioned by *Izumo Fudoki*: "The large body of the province lies with its head to the east and its tail to south-west [Popov 1966, p. 17], and the parts of Izumo country are pulled by a spade, "wide and flat, like the chest of a girl" in the same way as "a fish-spear is plunged into the gills of a big fish" [Popov 1966, p. 19].

Finally, the third level is the created mythological text itself, which is a verbal map or a verbal geographical model. It approximately matches actual geography; the most rational choice of a point of view on the country is the view from above, akin to aerial photography. The idea of the view from above naturally leads us to the famous mythologem of *kunimi*, the rite of "viewing the realm" from the peak of a mountain, the goal of which is the interaction with the "soul of the country," *kuni-no mitama*, and securing plentiful harvest and prosperity.

In the *norito* prayers, the definition of Yamato is "the country that Amaterasu is viewing in four directions" (*sumegami-ga harukashimasu yomo-no kuni*), and, after that, it is told in detail to which fantastically far limits she can view the country. And the first *kunimi* in mythological chronicles and the description of what exactly a ruler can see from above can be found in *Nihon Shoki*, but its meaning is not very clear: the mythical first emperor Jimmu ascended a hill, viewed the realm, and said: "Ah, what beautiful country I have received! Even though this country

of paper mulberry is narrow, it looks like a curved dragonfly," and this is where the name *Akizu-shima*, or Dragonfly Island comes from. Izanaki-no-mikoto, when naming the country, said: "'Yamato is a country of calm bays, a country of a thousand narrow spears, verily an excellent country of stone rings,'" so he said. And god Oo-ana-muchi-no-oo-kami said: 'This is a country within a jade fence'" [Nihon shoki 1997, p. 194]. Here, like in the beginning of time, we can see the depiction of the country as a living creature, in this case, a dragonfly, or like a certain object, in the not quite clear shape of stone rings, narrow spears, etc.

The view from above – from a mountain or an imaginary height – as a method of visual art is known from as early as pre-Tang China, and, later, in Japan it becomes a habitual instrument of depicting the visible world. Such are the interiors of dwellings with roof removed in *emaki*, for example, in Kamakura era *Ishiyamadera Engi Emaki* (*"Picture Scrolls Telling the Origin of Ishiyamadera Temple"*), where practically all depictions, either of landscapes or of processions of nobles, on screens or in scrolls, are given as seen from above. The view from above persists for a long time, and even now one can see the maps of routes or territories of shrines for pilgrims, so called 絵図, *ezu*, which existed as a genre since the 11th century. In them, there are mountains, shrines, bridges, paths, and human figures moving as seen from a great height. Metaphorically speaking, such map becomes a graphical representation of *kunimi*.

The ancient idea of the country as a living creature or an object is represented in later periods as well. For example, Kamakura era treatises tell us that the legendary Gyōki drew the map of the country as an object, but this time it was a Buddhist object – a *vajra* (独鈷, *dokko*). A map of the country in the shape of a vajra has been already mentioned by L. Dolche, and a map in the shape of a mandala – by E. K. Simonova-Guzenko [Simonova-Guzenko 2018]. Even though, of course, the dating of this map by Gyōki in Kamakura books is not to be believed, the legend itself is notable. In the *Keiran shūyōshū* treatise, the concept of Japan as a vajra is explained by the fact that the three rings found on the bottom are a seal of Dainichi, therefore, the country has the shape of a single-pronged vajra. The treatise corroborates this as follows:

Question: Why is our country said to have the shape of a single-pronged vajra?

Answer: [...] The bodhisattva Gyōki [...] wandered around Japan, determined the boundaries of the country, and opened up fields. [...] At that time he drew what he saw. The shape [of the country] was the shape of a *vajra*. [Dolce 2007, p. 272].

That is, Gyōki not merely took the form a vajra and composed the parts of the country known to him in its shape. He composed them as he had seen them, and a vajra was produced by itself. L. Dolche comments it as follows: "Both the *Keiran Shūyōshū* and the *Bikisho* attempt to distinguish Japan from the other two Buddhist countries by appealing to the hallowed nature of the country. Japan is presented as the emblem of Buddhist practice and in this way it is deemed to have more relevance than India and China: Japan is called the country of the *kami* (*shinkoku*). India is the country where the Buddha was born. China is the country of the Buddha [A]mi[da]. Because Japan is the country of the *kami* therefore this is country where the *kami* lead people in the Buddhist path." [Dolce 2007, p. 277].

Interestingly, in the vajra-shaped maps of Japan provided in the above-mentioned study by L. Dolce, one can see two types of spatial orientation. If the vajra is placed vertically, the orientation towards the east is used, and then, for example, Ise Bay is to the right of the vajra-shaped country's territory. In the horizontal vajra, orientation towards the south is used, and, in this case, Ise Bay is at the top, in the upper part of the vajra shape.

Most likely, the orientation towards the south is caused by Chinese influence. A. V. Podosinov, referring to A. L. Frothingham, writes that, in China, the southern orientation was prevalent, while the left hand (side) was dominant over the right one, and was considered benign, honorable, and bringing luck and flourishing. According to J. Needham, compass, which was known to the Chinese since the Han dynasty, pointed with its needle not to the north (as was later the case in Europe), but to the south. The compass itself was called a "south-pointing needle," and this, in the opinion of A. V. Podosinov, supports and explains the conclusion

about the dominance of the southern orientation in ancient China [Podosinov 1999, pp. 57–58].

The choice of the eastern side is, it seems, universally and obviously connected to the sacralization of the east as the direction where the sun rises; this direction has a special place in various palace and folk ceremonies both in China and Japan, especially in rituals connected to matchmaking and marriage. Here, it seems fitting to provide the story of the marriage of Izanaki and Izanami. The chronicles say that, in order to marry, they built a pillar on Onogoro-shima Island and started to go around it towards each other. As a result, they united, but they gave birth to a leech-child. Then they ascended to heaven, and there, heavenly gods explained their failure by the fact that, during the meeting, the woman spoke first. Following the Heavenly gods' directions, Izanaki and Izanami corrected the mistake in the ritual, after which they started to give birth to islands and the rest.

The motif of going around a pillar, or circular movement in a certain direction, can be encountered in many other regions, for example, in Slavic marriage rituals, in cosmogonic myths of the various ethnoses of India, or in legends of other regions of Asia. Ritualistic movements of the groom and the bride from the left to the right, that is, according to the movement of the sun (which was called *posolon'* by Slavs), had a cosmic and magical meaning, and their violation was dangerous. In one of the parallel narratives, the same motif of a primordial couple going around a pillar (or a mountain) can be found in the myths of the Khakas, as well as the Ungin Buryat peoples. There, the union of the primal ancestors also ends up in failure, but for a different reason: they went in the wrong direction in relation to the sun.

Interestingly, Japanese chronicles have no set opinion regarding who should go in the direction of the sun, and who should go against it, and there is even discrepancy regarding this. *Kojiki* says: "Then Izanagi-no-mikoto said: 'Then let us, you and me, walk in a circle around this heavenly pillar and meet and have conjugal intercourse' After thus agreeing, [Izanagi-no-mikoto] then said: 'You walk around from the right, and I will walk around from the left and meet you'". In the main

variant of a similar narrative, *Nihon Shoki* says: "So they made Onogoro-jima the pillar of the centre of the land. Now the male deity turning by the left, and the female deity by the right, they went round the pillar of the land separately."

The direction of movement of the bridal couple in these quotes coincides. However, the first variant of this plot provided in *Nihon Shoki* (一書に曰く) says: "They made a vow to go round the pillar of Heaven, and the Male God said: you go round from the left, while I will go round from the right.'" [Nihon shoki 1997, p. 118].

It is difficult to consider the mentions of going around the pillar from the left or from the right accidental, as they are to be found both in *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, while, in the latter text, this is mentioned twice, with variations. This leads us to assume that they are remnants of a certain proto-narrative, where the cardinal directions played an important role. It is obvious, however, that the magical aspect of going around the pillar in Japanese chronicles is already waning and weakening, and it is for this reason that, in the texts, there are discrepancies about the direction of movement and about who goes from the left or from the right. In the written variants of the story, the birth of an unsuccessful first-born is explained not by a mistake in the orientation of the primordial couple by cardinal directions, but by the fact that the woman, and not the man spoke first. In other words, there was a violation not of a cosmic, but of a social structure and gender hierarchy, which had been already established by the 8th century.[13]

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[13] Here, we leave aside the hypothesis that, in the yet deeper layer of the narrative about the marriage of Izanaki and Izanami and about the birth of the unsuccessful first-born, there might be hidden a myth of the great flood, with the marriage itself being incest of a brother and a sister, the only surviving people in the world. As a result of incest, their first progeny is flawed, and new, proper children are born only after the couple, following the gods' instructions, performs certain rituals. For more details, see [Ermakova 2020, pp. 93–95].

The archaic, in its nature, importance of orientation of a character and its movement in relation to the movement of the sun is nevertheless not lost in Japanese written mythological texts. The relevance of a personage 's position in relation to the sun can also be seen in other contexts. Take, for example, a story, which is, *mutatis mutandis*, contained in both chronicles and which tells about the connection between success in battle and a warrior's orientation in relation to the sun. In *Kojiki*, v. 2, Itsuse-no-mikoto, the elder brother of Emperor Jimmu, says: "I am a child of the Sun deity, so it is not right for me to fight facing the sun. This is why my arm is hurt, and the wound was inflicted by a slave of low birth. Now I am going to turn around and attack having the sun at my back". [Kodziki 1994, v. 2, p. 34]. The *Nihon Shoki* says: "The sovereign became sad and, thinking in his heart about various miraculous methods, said thus: 'I am a son of Heavenly gods, and I fight my enemy with my face to the sun. This goes against the Way of Heaven. I should better turn around and retreat, show that I am weak, praise the Gods of Heaven and the Gods of Earth, and, from my back, the Sun Deity will give me strength, and I shall attack, stepping on my own shadow. Thus, even without drawing blood with my sword, I shall certainly prevail over my enemy" [Nihon shoki 1997, p. 179].

The direction of the sun or the eastern direction as a prioritized one is also present in the poetics of *Man'yōshū*: a look directed towards the rising sun, the dawn, or the east, was usually denoted by the verb "see" (*miru*). A look in other directions was denoted by other lexemes: a look at the sunset or moonset – by compound verbs *kaerimiru*, or even *furisakeru* ("to look back", "to turn"): "On the eastern plain The purple dawn is glowing, While looking back I see The moon declining [to the west]." – *himukashi-no no-ni kakiroi-no tatsumiete kaerimi-sureba tsuki katabukinu* [The Man'yōshū, 48]. In this way, the ideas of priority of the east and the south, presented in the orientation of the vajra, are verbally manifested in epic myths and early poetry.

* * *

In mythological chronicles, immediately after the act of creation of the islands, a new period starts – connections between specific toponyms are established by means of drawing verbal routes. The establishment of routes in the mythological narratives is a topic deserving separate treatment. Here, I shall note an interesting fact, which characterizes the narrative of *Nihon Shoki*: we know that, in different variants of the same story, personages, mythological motifs, etc. can vary. It turns out that in *Nihon shoki*, in different versions of the same story, the routes of characters can vary as well. Even the very first route – the road Izanaki takes after his escape from the land of darkness Yomi – can serve as an example for this feature, because versions of this story in *Nihon shoki* ("one book says...") contain various routes and mention different toponyms.

We can probably suggest that all routes of all the personages depicted in the mythological chronicles, together with the toponyms mentioned, create a network of verbal maps which can produce mythological narratives. This network covers the newly created land and the passages to the other world, which are also subject to exploration and demarcation. In other words, we begin to deal with a separate level of narrative, one of toponymic space as a separate autonomous text.

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From the Art of Victory to the Art of Keeping Peace: The *Dao De Jing* and Early 17th Century Tokugawa Bakufu Military Strategy

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Abstract. Using the material of a crucial Tokugawa era normative document, the *Laws for the Military Houses* (*Buke Shohatto*) in its first edition (1615) and the *Hereditary Book on the Art of War* (*Heihō Kadensho*, 1632), composed by Yagyū Munenori (1565–1646), a prominent statesman and fencing teacher of the first three Tokugawa shoguns, this article considers the influence of the *Dao De Jing* on the military-political doctrine of Tokugawa *bakufu* of the first half of the 17th century. The analysis of these sources gives us reason to believe that the concept of government in accordance with the Dao, stated in the *Dao De Jing*, which permitted the use of armed force only as an extreme measure of defense, was widely discussed by the Japanese elite in the first half of the 17th century and played a significant role in determining the administrative and military policies aimed at securing peace in the country. This strategy eventually resulted in a series of measures aimed at preserving the dominance of the military-feudal class, strengthening the *bakufu* control over the *han*, quantitative and qualitative reduction of armed forces, the reduction of military education of the samurai to classes at private martial arts schools, which did not prepare the troops for large-scale action. Eventually, this significantly contributed to Japan having two and a half centuries of peace despite the formal dominance of the military.

Keywords: Taoism, *Dao De Jing*, Tokugawa Bakufu, *Buke Shohatto, Heihō Kadensho*, *heihō*, samurai.

During the wars of the 15th and 16th centuries, during the endless civil strife and struggle against popular uprisings, Japan witnessed the final establishment of the dominance of the samurai military class. It became numerous, covering almost a tenth of the entire population (counting family members), and, within it, a complex hierarchical structure of suzerain-vassal relations formed.

After fierce struggle between the most powerful military houses, in the early 17th century, the Tokugawa clan came to power in Japan, with its leader, Ieyasu (1543–1616), defeating his enemies in the war of 1600 and becoming shogun in 1603. In 1614–1615, he crushed the anti-Tokugawa opposition, which had formed around Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615), and finally established firm peace in the country.

The final unification of the country under the rule of the Tokugawa shoguns faced them with the necessity to determine the strategy of developing the state during the new, peaceful period. The most important tasks of the Tokugawa shoguns were firmly securing supreme power in their hands, keeping, despite the end of wars and the nation moving to peaceful life, the historically established dominance of the military class as the basis of the *bakuhan* ("Bakufu – domains") system, suppressing and preventing any attempts of rebellions within the country, which posed the greatest danger to the Tokugawa regime, given the absence of real external threats. To address these tasks, the new rulers had to, first of all, establish a firm hierarchy of feudal dominance, to determine the status and the social role of the samurai class, to guide its development in the desired direction, so that, under the new historical circumstances, it could transform from a constant threat to peace and order, from soldiery obsessed with ideas of personal glory, used to maneuvering, betraying, and defecting to the victorious side, into a firm basis of the regime, an obedient instrument of its power. A whole complex of measures was used to address these tasks. The ideological basis of the regime played a significant role among these.

For a long time, Confucianism, primarily, the Zhu Xi school of Neo-Confucianism was pointed out as the source of the Tokugawa Bakufu ideology (see, for example: [Nagata 1991, p. 59]). However, in

recent decades, historians point out that this statement is an unjustified simplification and that, for the ideology of the Bakufu, the rich military and political experience accumulated by Japanese feudal lords during the previous centuries, as well as the theories of military art, or *gungaku* (literally "military science") [Maeda 1996, pp. 1–3] played no lesser role. In particular, an American scholar John Rodgers' thesis "The Development of the Military Profession in Tokugawa Japan" [Rogers 1998] persuasively showed that the basis of the Tokugawa *bakufu* ideology was laid, under the first three shoguns, not by Confucian scholars, but by high-ranking *bakufu* officials and the *gungaku* specialists serving it, who drew their ideas not only from Confucian texts, but also from a much wider range of Chinese thought, including China's seven military classics and Daoist texts, in particular, the *Dao De Jing* [Rogers 1998, pp. 64–116].

Rogers demonstrates the influence of the *Dao De Jing* on the *bakufu* ideology by using the example of the *Hereditary Book on the Art of War* (兵法家伝書, *Heihō Kadensho*, 1632)[1] by a famous fencing teacher Yagyū Munenori (1565–1646) [Rogers 1998, pp. 85–86]. The researcher shows how, proceeding from a quote from the *Dao De Jing*, Munenori elaborates a concept of, on the one hand, maximum limitation of the use of armed violence, and, on the other, of preserving the military regime in peaceful times.

Rogers attributes the establishment of this concept to Yagyū Munenori himself [Rogers 1998], thus completely ignoring the fact that the same quote from the *Dao De Jing* can be found in the first edition of the *Laws for the Military Houses* (武家諸法度, *Buke Shohatto*).

The *Laws for the Military Houses*[2] was a cornerstone normative document of Tokugawa Bakufu. Its first edition was announced on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month of the first year of Genna (1615), when Ieyasu, after the defeat of Toyotomi Hideyori and the fall of the Osaka castle, gathered the daimyo lords in his Fushimi castle. The day

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[1]   This book was translated into Russian by the author, see: [Gorbylev 2010].

[2]   For Russian translation, see: [Knyazheskii kodeks… 1960].

the *Laws* were announced, first, the shogun's advisor Honda Masazumi (本多正純, 1566–1637) spoke to the daimyo about the reasons for their introduction, and then another prominent advisor of the shogun, Zen monk Konchi-in Sūden (金地院崇伝; Ishin Sūden 以心崇伝, 1659–1633), recited the text of the *Buke Shohatto*. After that, the announcement of such an important document was celebrated by a splendid nine-part Noh performance [Ono 1968, p. 3].

Being similar in its composition to *Goseibai Shikimoku* (*Jōei Shikimoku*, 1232) and *Kemmu Shikimoku* (1336), the *Laws* included 13 articles. It is believed that it was based on a three-point oath that Tokugawa Ieyasu made the daimyo, who gathered in Kyoto on the occasion of the intronization of Emperor Go-Mizunoo, sign in 1611 [Prasol 2017, p. 395]. To the existing three, ten more articles were added, developed by monk Ishin Sūden, who is believed to be the author of the *Buke Shohatto*.

Article 1 of the *Laws for the Military Houses*, which is of interest for us and which contains a hidden quotation from the *Dao De Jing*, says:

一、文武弓馬の道、専ら相嗜むべきこと。

文を左とし武を右とす古よりの法なり。兼ね備えざるべからず。弓馬はこれ武家の要枢なり。兵を号し、凶器となすは已むを得ずしてこれを用う、治めて乱を忘れず、何ぞ修練を励まざる事あらん [Ono 1968, p. 3].

1. – Literature (文, *bun*), *arms* (武, *bu*), *archery and horsemanship* (弓馬の道) *are, systematically, to be the favourite pursuits.*

Literature (*bun*) *first, and arms next to it, was the rule of the ancients. They must both be cultivated concurrently. Archery and horsemanship are the more essential for the Military Houses. Weapons of warfare* (兵) *are ill-omened words to utter* (凶器, *Japanese – kyōki, Chinese – xiongqi); the use of them, however, is an unavoidable necessity. In times of peace and good order* (治) *we must*

not forget that disturbances (乱) *may arise. Dare we omit to practise our warlike exercises and drill?*[3]

The character 兵 (Japanese – *hei*, Chinese – *bing*) is translated here as "weapons of warfare", while other translations, like "soldier", "troops", "warfare", seem equally viable. Our choice here is defined by the fact that most translators of the *Dao De Jing* use the word "weapons" for the character 兵. It should, however, be noted, that, in this case, it is not to be understood in the narrow meaning and should be treated as a synonym for "warrior", "army", or "warfare".

The phrase 兵を号し、凶器となすは已むを得ずしてこれを用う, which is translated by Hall as "weapons of warfare are ill-omened words to utter; the use of them, however, is an unavoidable necessity," is a quotation from Chapter 31 of the *Dao De Jing*, which, in the Chinese variant, looks like this: 聖王號兵爲凶器、不得巴而用之.

There are several translations of the *Dao De Jing*, where this passage is borrowed from, into English. For example, R. Henricks translates it as:

As for weapons – they are instruments of ill omen.
And among things there are those that hate them.
Therefore, the one who has the Way, with them does not dwell.
When the gentleman is at home, he honors the left;
When at war, he honors the right.
Therefore, weapons are not the instruments of the gentleman –
Weapons are instruments of ill omen.
When you have no choice but to use them, it's best
to remain tranquil and calm.[4]

Article 1 of the Laws for the Military Houses shows that weapons, as well as army and armed force, are an extreme measure to be used out of

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[3] Translation by John Carey Hall. https://web.archive.org/web/20071027103105/http://www.uni-erfurt.de/ostasiatische_geschichte/texte/japan/dokumente/17/tokugawa_legislation/index_files/buke_shohatto_1615.html

[4] From [Boisen 1996]. For the source of the translation, see [Henricks 1993].

necessity, when peaceful measures are obviously of no use. The primacy of peaceful measures over the military ones is expressed in the text of the article by, first, a double placing of "literature" (or "civilian sciences") before "arms", and, second, by the phrase in the first sentence of the commentary, which can be literally translated as: "to the left – "civilian sciences" (*bun*), to the right – warfare – this is the rule of the ancients." It is known that the left side was considered more important than the right one, and this is the reason the Minister of the Left was higher than the Minister of the Right. Therefore, *Buke Shohatto*, addressing the heads of the military houses (*buke*), dictates them to study "civilian sciences" first and warfare second.

Arguably, an educated reader who was well familiar with the text of the *Dao De Jing* could easily reconstruct the context from which this quote was borrowed and had to note Laozi's words that a ruler who has the Way, that is, Dao, as well as a gentleman, "does not dwell" with the weapons and that the use of weapons and military force is only permissible under extreme circumstances and must be done while remaining "tranquil and calm".

This educated reader also had to know that, in the *Dao De Jing*, the paragraph from which the author of the *Laws for the Military Houses* borrowed this quote follows one of the most well-known sayings of Laozi[5] about the destructive consequences of war (Chapter 30):

> Those who assist their rulers in the Way,
> Don't use weapons to commit violence in the world.
> Such deeds easily rebound.
> In places where armies are stationed, thorns and brambles will grow.

In other words, even though the Laws urge to make, among other things, "arms" one's "favorite pursuits", it requires the daimyo and the

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[5] In this paper, we will not touch upon the discussion about the authorship, date, and authenticity of the *Dao De Jing* and, when speaking about Laozi, we will mean the author of the *Dao De Jing*, whom the tradition believes to be the above-mentioned thinker.

military houses (*buke*) in general to, generally, abandon "committing violence in the world" and to move on to ruling with civilian methods while keeping arms as the last resort. This requirement is all the more obvious given that the first article, considered here, is the only one in the *Laws* which has ideological contents, while other articles are devoted to specific practical issues of behavior and government of the domains.

The main requirement of the 1615 *Buke Shohatto* was further developed and justified in the 1632 *Hereditary Book on the Art of War*.

Heihō Kadensho is one of the most well-known works of the martial arts tradition. There are its translations into English [Sato 1985; Wilson 2003] and Russian [Yagyū 1998], including its translation by the author of this article [Gorbylev (trans.) 2010]. Usually, this text is seen as a fencing manual of the Shinkage-ryū school, which is explained by Yagyū Munenori being widely known as a fencing master who taught the first three Tokugawa shoguns. This, however, does not take into account other facts of Munenori's biography, who, for his service to the Tokugawa house, was given the rank of a daimyo.

Tokugawa Jikki, the official chronicle of the Tokugawa house, reports that Munenori entered the service of Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1594 as a fencing teacher. As a vassal of the Tokugawa house, he fought on their side in the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 and the Osaka campaigns of 1614–1615. Since 1601, he was appointed the fencing teacher of Hidetada, and since 1623 – of Iemitsu. Under the third shogun, Munenori became a daimyo and between 1632 and 1636 was one of the four inspectors general (*sōmetsuke*), that is, he was a prominent statesman. *Tokugawa Jikki* characterizes him as a man who "knew not just of strategy, but was well versed in the state of the realm", who "realized new principles...which he applied to governing and thus was held in Iemitsu's highest trust" [Rogers 1998, p. 87].

Approximately at the same time when Munenori was appointed inspector general, he, according to *Tokugawa Jikki*, presented to

Iemitsu a certain treatise on strategy [Rogers 1998, p. 87]. It seems that this refers to *Heihō Kadenshō*, the opus magnum of Munenori.

It should also be noted that Yagyū Munenori constantly conversed with the political and cultural elites of Edo. It is to him that Zen monk Takuan addressed his famous work *Fudōchi Shinmyōroku* (不動智神妙録, *The Mysterious Record of Immovable Wisdom*).

The *Hereditary Book on the Art of War* is divided into two parts. The first one consists of one scroll, authored by Shinkage-ryū founder Kamiizumi Hidetsuna. He gave this scroll to his best disciple, Yagyū Muneyoshi, who gave it to his son, Munenori. *Shinkage-ryū Heihō-no Sho,* according to Munenori, presents, in general, a *mokuroku*, a catalogue of techniques, which "is to be given to each disciple who has reached a certain level in studying our school's art of fencing as a sign of transferring the teaching to him" [Yagyū 1972, p. 342].

The original title of this scroll was *Shinkage-ryū Heihō-no Sho* (新陰流兵法の書, *The Book of Sword Fencing of the Shinkage-ryū School*). But Yagyū Munenori gave it a new title, *Shinrikyō* (進履橋, *The Shoe-Offering Bridge*). According to his own explanation, this name is a reference to an anecdote from the history of the Chinese Former Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE): "I named this scroll *The Shoe-Offering Bridge* in memory of Zhang Liang once offering a shoe to [Huang] Shigong, who taught Zhang Liang the Way of war (兵道, *heidō*), after which, due to Zhang Liang's plan, Emperor Gaozu pacified the country and the Han family ruled it for four centuries... Use this scroll as a bridge and, with its help, walk the Way of the art of strategy (*heihō-no michi*)" [Yagyū 1972 p. 306].

In other words, Munenori presents the family school of *heihō* as akin to that shoe, as if hinting that this book can also help to establish firm peace in the country.

The second part of the book includes two scrolls. The first is named *Setsunintō* (殺人刀, *The Killing Sword*), another one – *Katsuninken* (活人剣, *Life-Giving Sword*). These names are borrowed from Zen literature, probably, from the classical *kōan* collection *Biyan Lu*

(Chinese; Japanese – *Hekiganroku*, *The Blue Cliff Record*).[6] Their meaning is explained by Yagyū Munenori himself: "A Killing Sword is to bring tranquility and order into this chaotic world. But once tranquility and order are established, should not this killing sword turn into a life-giving sword? It is this meaning that I put into the titles of the two scrolls" [Yagyū 1972, p. 343]. Here, Munenori says that, once peace is established, it is necessary to abandon aggression and transform martial arts, military profession, military organization in general from tools of destroying the enemy into tools of maintaining peace.

At the tactical and technical level, this idea is realized by Yagyū Munenori as a concept of waging war "as a second", which is expressed in the formula "provoke the enemy to strike first, and you will win" [Yagyū 1972, p. 313]. Being physically, technically, and psychologically ready to parry any attack and to deliver a crushing counterstrike while not attacking first – this was the Shinkage-ryū ideal, which was taught by Yagyū Munenori to his disciples.

However, in the *Hereditary Book on the Art of War*, Munenori does not limit himself to issues of fencing and pays attention to governing the country as well. This means that the Book addressed, first and foremost, rulers, and not common samurai. This is confirmed by the society where the copies of the Book circulated, which included the leaders of the Japanese elite – the disciples of the Yagyū family fencing school. For example, copies of *Heihō Kadensho* were received by Tokugawa Iemitsu, Tokugawa Ietsuna, the future fourth shogun of the Tokugawa dynasty (ruled in 1651–1680), and several prominent daimyo, for example, Nabeshima Motoshige (1602–1654).

Addressing these representatives of the elite from the position of their teacher and a major authority in the field of "strategy", sword fencing, and martial arts in general, Munenori presents his own concept

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6   Composed in China in the 12th century. In the Muromachi era (1338–1573) it served as a standard textbook for monks from the system of monasteries of the "Five Mountains", Gozan (in particular, those from the Zen school of Rinzai).

of the role of *hei* (兵) – army, warfare, martial arts in general, which has as its starting point the same words of the *Dao De Jing* that were earlier used in the Laws for the Military Houses: "There is something said of old: "Weapons are instruments of ill omen; it is the Way of Nature (*tendō* 天道, *Heavenly Way*) to dislike them. To use them only when it is unavoidable is the Way of Nature."[7]

According to Munenori, using weapons brings death, which is fraught with the anger of the Heaven. It is a testimony to the abandonment of the Heavenly Way. Meanwhile, the absence of the necessity to use violence is, vice versa, an indicator of following the Heavenly Dao, the virtuousness of the ruler, the correctness of governing the country, and also the condition for the benevolence of the Heaven.

These ideas have direct parallels in the *Dao De Jing*. N. I. Chuev, who specifically studied the issue of Laozi's attitude to war, persuasively demonstrated that the author of the *Dao De Jing* was against war in principle because "any war demonstrates the absence of Dao in the country", but, if the war was inevitable, justified defensive war [Chuev 1999, p. 106]. Chapter 46 of the *Dao De Jing* says: "When the world has the Way, ambling horses are retired to fertilize fields. When the world lacks the Way, war horses are reared in the suburbs." In other words, the use of arms and armies is a sure sign of the lack of Dao.

Heihō Kadensho, therefore, presents an important step in the promotion of the idea that a ruler and a warrior should be deemed truly great not when they are able to defeat any foe, but when they are able to maintain peace in the country without resorting to the force of arms. In this, Munenori also follows the *Dao De Jing*, which says (Chapter 68):

> Therefore, the one who is good at being a warrior doesn't make
> a show of his might;
> One who is good in battle doesn't get angry;
> One who is good at defeating the enemy doesn't engage him.

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[7]   Translation by T. Cleary. https://terebess.hu/zen/mesterek/Munenori.html

The influence of the *Dao De Jing* can also be glimpsed in Munenori's borrowing of Laozi's ideas about chaos and order. Following the *Buke Shohatto*, Munenori stated: "Not to forget about disturbance (乱; Japanese – *ran*, Chinese – *luan*) when times are peaceful – this is an art of war (*heihō*). To see the dynamic of the state and discern when there is likely to be disruption, and to heal the disturbance before it happens – this is also an art of war."

Characteristically, Yagyū Munenori speaks not of war here (戦; Japanese – *sen*, Chinese – *zhan*), but about "disturbance". In *Dao De Jing*, the character 亂 (used eight times) has the meaning of the state of disorder, strife, war inside the country, while the character 戦 is used (six times) only in the meaning of the verb "to fight". Meanwhile, the character 亂 is juxtaposed by the character 治 (Japanese – *chi*; Chinese – *zhi*), which literally means "order" and, when referring to the state, its orderly and peaceful state. Apparently, with no serious external military threats, Yagyū Munenori, as well as other representatives of the Japanese elite of his times, was more worried by the problem of keeping peace within the country. Hence their receptiveness to the ideas of Laozi, who, during the Warring States Period (403–221 BCE) was also reflecting about ending internal strife and restoring order and peace in the Middle Kingdom. Simultaneously, Munenori extends the notion of strategy so that the leaders of the Tokugawa regime could believe themselves to be masters of this art should they be able to protect the country from disorder without resorting to arms.

Like Laozi, Munenori, even though he believed war to be evil, recognized the necessity of using armed force for defense and maintaining order. He did not urge the elimination of the military-feudal system and the samurai class (even though, later, there appeared scholars calling for the majority of the samurai to be returned to the land) and did not reject the right of the state to use violence. The state had to maintain sufficient power to be able to punish anyone who commits "evil" and to put an end to "disturbances" and "disorder". He wrote: "People may take advantage of events to do evil, but when that evil is done, it is attacked. That is why it is said that using weapons is also the Way of Nature. It may happen

that a multitude of people suffer because of the evil of one person. In such a case, by killing one man a multitude of people are given life. Would this not be a true example of the saying that 'the sword (*katana* 刀) that kills (殺人刀) is that sword that gives life (活人剣)?'"

One can say that Yagyū Munenori used his authority of a recognized expert in martial education and strategy to urge the leaders of his time, such as Tokugawa Hidetada and Tokugawa Iemitsu, as well as several influential daimyo (Date Masamune, Hosokawa Tadaoki, Hosokawa Tadatoshi, Nabeshima Katsushige, Nabeshima Motoshige, Mori Hidenari, and others) to focus not on building up their armed forces, but on securing due administration of the country in peaceful times.

Therefore, we can assume that the concept of governing the country in accordance with the Dao, which was stated in the *Dao De Jing* and which permitted the use of armed violence only as an extreme defensive measure, was widely discussed by the Japanese elite in the first half of the 17th century and played a significant role in determining the administrative and military policies aimed at maintaining peace in the country.

Eventually, this strategy resulted in a system of measures aimed at maintaining the dominance of the military feudal estate, increasing the control of *bakufu* over the domains, qualitative and quantitative reduction of the armed forces, the reduction of military education of the samurai to classes at private martial arts schools, the curricula of which did not prepare the troops for large-scale action, etc. It appears that this policy played a substantial role, giving Japan, despite the formal dominance of the military, two and a half centuries of generally peaceful life, even though it made the country extremely vulnerable to the external military threat in the 19th century.

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Connecting Fantasy Worlds and Nostalgia: Miyazaki Gorō's Animation Movies

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Abstract. In the particular context of post-Cold War Japanese animation, the name of Miyazaki Gorō 宮崎 吾朗 (born 1967) is mostly related to the name of his illustrious father, Miyazaki Hayao 宮崎 駿 (born 1942). Professionally speaking, Miyazaki Gorō is a landscaper (construction consultant in the planning and designing of parks and gardens) as well as an animation director of two animation movies and one TV animation series. This paper focuses on the two animation movies released by Studio Ghibli under Miyazaki Gorō's direction: *Tales from the Earthsea* (ゲド戦記 Gedo senki, 2006) and *From Up On Poppy Hill* (コクリコ坂から *Kokuriko-zaka kara*, 2011). Miyazaki Gorō's two animation movies are described and analyzed, both as ideological manifestos continuing and, from a certain point onward, transcending what might be called the "Ghibli paradigm" and as aesthetical masterworks combining the "Ghibli paradigm" with fresh visions of employing animation as a medium, exploring, absorbing and integrating influences from beyond geographical boundaries and striving to break the "Japanese" limitations of the artistic language utilized in his approach to animated expressive modes.

Keywords: Miyazaki Gorō, Japanese animation, animation movies, nostalgia, science-fiction, progressive animation.

1. Introduction: Japan's cultural consumption
and entertainment industry

In the particular context of post-Cold War Japanese animation, the name of Miyazaki Gorō 宮崎五郎 (born 1967) is mostly related to the name of his illustrious father, Miyazaki Hayao 宮崎駿 (born 1942), who has turned throughout decades into the most representative figure of Japanese animation – and, more largely, of Japanese cultural consumption and its entertainment industry, with its corporative structure and very powerful establishment. Professionally speaking, Miyazaki Gorō is a landscaper (construction consultant in the planning and designing of parks and gardens) as well as an animation director of two animation movies and one TV animation series. In this paper, I shall focus primarily on the second aspect of his career, but, before delving into that, I shall refer to Miyazaki Gorō's achievements prior to trying his hand in the field of animation.[1] To this purpose, his involvement in the design

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[1]   The cel-shaded computer-animated TV animation series *Ronja, the Robber's Daughter* (山賊の娘ローニャ *Sanzoku no musume Rōnya*), consisting of 26 episodes and the result of co-production between Polygon Pictures and Studio Ghibli, which was aired between October 11, 2014 and March 28, 2015 on NHK BS Premium, is not part of this analysis. *Ronja, the Robber's Daughter* is based on the eponymous children's fantasy novel by the Swedish author Astrid Lindgren (1907–2002), first published in 1981, and tells the story of Ronja, the only child of a bandit chief, who grows up among a clan of robbers living in a castle in the woodlands of early-medieval Scandinavia [Clements & McCarthy 2017, p. 521]. When Ronja grows old enough she ventures into the forest, exploring and discovering its wonders and its dangers like the mystical creatures that dwell there, while learning to live in the forest through her own strength, with the occasional rescue by her parents. Ronja's life begins to change, however, when she encounters a boy of her own age named Birk, who turns out to be the son of the rival clan chief. In time, she discovers several dimensions of her pathway through life, from the special bond she shares with her father and his subordinates

and construction project of the Ghibli Museum in Mitaka (opened in 2001) and his contribution to planning and designing the Satsuki & Mei's House on the AICHI EXPO 2005's site in the city of Nagakute in Aichi prefecture, are briefly outlined. Both the Ghibli Museum and Satsuki & Mei's House were part of a marketing strategy striving to familiarize the visitors with the real universe of the animators' life, consisting of long and strenuous work hours throughout extended periods of time, this being particularly valid in case of the "Ghibli phenomenon".

Miyazaki Gorō was the driving force behind the architectural design of the Ghibli Museum (carrying the official name "Mitaka Forest Ghibli Museum" 三鷹の森ジブリ美術館 *Mitaka no mori Jiburi bijutsukan* [Miyazaki 2004, pp. 25–44]). Belonging to Studio Ghibli and located in the Inokashira Park in Tokyo, the Ghibli Museum was opened in October 2001, after several years of negotiations and preparations, with Miyazaki Gorō serving as its director from 2001 to 2005. Like the subsequent Satsuki & Mei's House, Ghibli Museum belongs to the same practical project meant to expand the Ghibli enterprise in the public perception. Ghibli Museum is composed of three main exhibition areas besides a homey cinema for exclusive short-movies by Studio Ghibli and the main hall called "The Principal". It combines features of a children's museum, a technology museum, and a fine arts museum, while being intrinsically dedicated to the art and technique of animation. Additional special features include a replica of the Catbus from *My Neighbour Totoro* (となりのトトロ *Tonari no Totoro*, 1988), a café, a bookstore, a rooftop garden, as well as a restaurant.

The Ghibli Museum recreates in smallest details the atmosphere and the setting of the Ghibli animation works, and it transfers into reality their magical worlds. While providing technical information on the three main production phases – pre-production, production, and post-production – of animation works, Ghibli Museum also aims at familiarizing the visitors with the real universe of the animators' life,

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through the sense of friendship she develops towards those outside her immediate clan to the increasing awareness of her own identity.

with its endless, exhausting work hours throughout extended periods of time. In opposition to the quite technical and distanced space of the Ghibli Museum, Satsuki & Mei's House is rather a poetical emergence into the nostalgic world of childhood [Grajdian 2008, p. 79].

Still, Satsuki & Mei's House appears as an extension of the Ghibli Museum with its Catbus displayed in one of the secondary rooms – kids being allowed to play with it – and with its giant robot built on the roof, which comes directly from the steampunk universe of Miyazaki Hayao's 1986 animation movie *Laputa: The Castle in The Sky* (天空の城ラピュータ *Tenkū no shiro Rapyūta*). The exuberant vegetation and the beautiful view from that roof remind of the plain and familiar miracles of nature and are, at the same time, a direct address to the clearly nostalgic re-construction of childhood memories as represented in Miyazaki Hayao's 1988 animated blockbuster *My Neighbor Totoro*: the identical, life-sized replica of Satsuki & Mei's House on the Aichi EXPO 2005's site.

Indeed, as part of this marketing strategy, in 2005, 17 years after the release of *My Neighbour Totoro* in 1988, on the site of the world exhibition in Aichi (March-September 2005), or Aichi EXPO 2005, an identical, life-sized replica of the family house from the animation movie *My Neighbor Totoro* was included among the international and corporate pavilions. More than previously estimated, this inclusion resulted in the creation of an absolute visitors' favorite, booked-off months in advance during the EXPO 2005. After the EXPO 2005, the entire EXPO site eventually became a huge sanctuary for the preservation of nature with Satsuki & Mei's House as a pilgrimage space in the center. Ironically, though, around the memorial EXPO 2005 park, housing projects and emerging shopping malls increasingly suffocated and gradually eliminated the natural habitat, in a blatant contrast with the motto of EXPO 2005, "Nature's Wisdom", and the EXPO's mission, which gathered national and corporate pavilions expressing the themes of environmental co-existence, renewable technology, the wonders of nature, and living in harmony with nature. Still, Satsuki & Mei's House, as the life-large replica of the family house from the animation movie *My Neighbor Totoro* was named, continued to attract millions of tourists and locals every year,

so holidays and weekends are always booked-off weeks in advance, while working days are running in average at up to 97 percent capacity.

Years later, Miyazaki Gorō, as the person most deeply involved in expanding the Totoro brand beyond its animation-connected relevance, made the following statements on the emotional impact of the project which had brought to life the EXPO 2005's Satsuki & Mei's House:

夕暮れ時、完成した「サツキとメイの家」の茶の間に座っていると、映画の中にいるようでもあり、今はなくなってしまった祖父母の家にいるようにも錯覚します。懐かしさと新鮮さが同居する不思議な気分で、もしかするとマックロクロスケ（真っ黒黒助）が暗がりからこちらを見ているのではないかと空想してみたりするのです.
[Miyazaki 2012, p. 4]

"When I sit in the twilight-bliss in the living-room of the recently finished 'Satsuki & Mei's House', there is both the feeling of [directly] immersing into the movie, and the hallucination of being [again] in the house of my grand-parents, which has been demolished. Within the mysterious mood incorporating both nostalgia and freshness, I fantasize that, who knows?, maybe the 'pitch-black assistants' [*makkuro-kurosuke*] are observing me from the darkness."

What Miyazaki Gorō means is the fact that nature and the nature-surrounded family house were a space of escape by means of nostalgic reproduction as the main catalyst within the environment. Family and their lodging place appear as a micro-cosmos of encounters and initiation journeys, as experienced by Satsuki and Mei in the animation movie. It is a gate between universes, not only the human and the animal or the verdant world, but also between reality and dream, the possible and the probable, the necessity and the desire. The broken bucket and the archaic water-well become tools enabling the rediscovery of one's childhood, more often than not experienced as merely the product of a merchandized interaction between what Julia Kristeva called "the imaginary chaos and the symbolical order preparing the self for the confrontation with the real" [Kristeva 1974, pp. 44–57, 73–79].

The three main elements – nature, escapism, and nostalgia – emerge as main parameters in the process of reconstructing the past as a repository of emotional energy and socio-cultural role-models, beyond economic-political compulsions, transcending the limits of time and space.

In this train of thought, it becomes obvious that the "imaginary" and the dynamization of its interaction with the "symbolical" and the "real" play fundamental roles in the creative re-negotiation of identity as an individual choice within the framework of socio-cultural discourses in late-modern Japan (see [Kristeva 1974, p. 28–54; Kristeva 1989, p. 53]). Socio-cultural integration is consequently conceptualized as a historic-geographical construction by which the revitalization of the past via cultural artefacts praising nature, human bonding, and the afterworld creates historical cohesion and mutual acceptance among individuals living in late modernity.

As if the completion of these two projects might have guaranteed a specific level of maturity to allow him to direct his own animation movies, one year after the construction – and the huge success – of Satsuki & Mei's House, in 2006, Miyazaki Gorō released his first animation work, *Tales from the Earthsea* (ゲド戦記 *Gedo Senki*, literally, *Gedo's War Chronicles*), followed five years later by a highly contrastive animation movie *From Up On Poppy Hill* (コクリコ坂から *Kokuriko-zaka kara*), both produced by Studio Ghibli. In the following lines, Miyazaki Gorō's two animation movies are described and analyzed, both as ideological manifestos continuing and, from a certain point onward, transcending what might be called the "Ghibli paradigm", and as aesthetical masterworks combining the "Ghibli paradigm" with fresh visions of employing animation as a medium: they explore, absorb and integrate influences from beyond geographical boundaries and strive to break the "Japanese" limitations of the artistic language employed in Miyazaki Gorō's approach to animated expression modes.

2. *Tales From the Earthsea*:
Re-Imagining Science-Fiction

Released in 2006, *Tales from the Earthsea* (ゲド戦記 *Gedo Senki*) is Miyazaki Gorō's debut animation work, more precisely defined as an animated fantasy movie. *Tales from the Earthsea* combines plot lines and characters as well as dramatic elements from the first four books of Ursula K. Le Guin's *Earthsea* series: *A Wizard of Earthsea* (1968), *The Tombs of Atuan* (1970), *The Farthest Shore* (1972), and *Tehanu* (1990). Additionally, narrative structures and ideas from Miyazaki Hayao's manga (comics) publication *The Journey of Shuna*, released in 1983, are visible. Together, they contribute to creating an original artistic work, which moves away from the initial science-fiction literary works while attempting to outline its own universe [Clements 2018, p. 72; Lamarre 2018, p. 132].

Critical observers have repeatedly pointed out *Tales from the Earthsea*'s alleged lack of consistency and depth, which might result, on the one hand, from the characters' apparent struggle with their own construction, which seems, at first sight, unconvincing and unrealistic, and, on the other hand, from the dark, pessimistic atmosphere, which finds itself in strong contrast with the hopeful tones of social engagement and praise of life as the most valuable asset one possesses and could ever possess, which are often found in other animation works released by Studio Ghibli.

The plot could be summed up as follows. The movie starts with the display of the crew of a war galley which are up against a storm, when suddenly two dragons appear fighting above the clouds, with the result of the White Dragon being killed by the Black Dragon. As one of the crew members mentions in horror, this occurrence is believed to have been impossible for centuries. In another cut, news of the kingdom declining and silence over the whereabouts of Prince Arren trouble the King of Enlad, once famous for its tranquil prosperity. The wizard Root speaks of dragons and men once being "one", divided at some point by their particular desires – respectively, freedom and possessions –

which is the cause of the world's increasing loss of balance and gradual weakening. On his way to private quarters, the King is fatally stabbed in a dark corridor by his own son, Prince Arren, who steals his father's sword and flees the castle into a self-imposed exile, while his father perishes. Once in the desert, hungry and scared, Prince Arren is rescued from dire wolves by the incredibly powerful top-level archmage Sparrowhawk. Together they travel to Hort Town, where Prince Arren saves a young girl named Therru from slavers during his solitary exploration of the town, but is later captured by the same slave master, Hare, with his sword being discarded in the sea. Sparrowhawk rescues Prince Arren from the slave caravan and takes him to a farm run by Sparrowhawk's oldest and greatest female friend Tenar, who lives with Therru.

But Sparrowhawk's intervention against Hare's slave caravan angers Lord Cob, a very strong dark wizard and the ruler of Hort Town, who wants the archmage brought to the castle. Before resuming his search in Hort Town, Sparrowhawk tells Prince Arren that he seeks a way to restore the upset balance, and, once there, he buys Arren's sword from a merchant's stall and manages to detour Hare's efforts at capturing him whilst learning about Cob's castle secrets and nefarious mechanisms.

Subsequently, the plot develops into revealing the characters' true motives and desires on their ways to fulfilling destinies they become aware of in the process of confronting them. Arren's positive shadow and true self "Prince Lebannen" appears in contrast to Lord Cob and his archenemy, Sparrowhawk, both driven by equally powerful aspirations to control or, respectively, to release the negative tension in the world. Similarly, Therru is Tenar's younger and, possibly, more innocent shadow correspondence, as the two female characters in a storyline violently dominated by tormented male characters [McQuail 2012, p. 421; Fuller & Goffey 2012, p. 114].

Within the power balance between the good and the evil, the latter seems to hold the upper hand indiscriminately, therefore allowing for little hope as to the salvation of the world. It is from this prevalent

lack of hope, with its accompanying dark tones of nihilist struggles and their increasing absorption of positive forces into the arsenal of negativity that the overall tone of *Tales from the Earthsea* shows up as disturbingly in line with late-modern apocalyptic fears of loss and irreversible destruction.

Moreover, the movie itself starts off on an unusual premise: the Oedipal topic of patricide, in which the young and obviously confused Arren mortally stabs his own father. It is a highly shocking beginning in an ideological world which praises respect towards ancestors – particularly towards male ancestors – as fundamental within any possible hierarchy of values [Peterson 1999, p. 21; Bauman 1991, pp. 85–87].

The original patricide comes to haunt the young prince in various shapes of male encounters, and he must learn the bitter lessons of self-discovery resulting from fulfilling one's destiny. Interestingly, eventually, as Therru reveals herself as the Black Dragon and therefore immortal, her feminine entity appears as the key to Arren's redemption and self-creation, thus inversing the mythological topos of the male instance starting off on a complicated and dangerous journey of initiation to rescue the female protagonist [Turner 1968, pp. 26–32]. In the climactic moment of despair, as Lord Cob seems to have won the battle which brings the world under his despotic control, Therru turns into the messenger of salvation, and delivers the final liberating solution.

What distinguishes *Tales from the Earthsea* among other animation productions released by Studio Ghibli and by various Japanese studios is its atmosphere of hopelessness and darkness which is slowly, gradually transcended into a message of faith and hope. Miyazaki Gorō experiments with ideas of adult friendship and juvenile attraction while mixing in questions of existential meaningfulness and morbid thirst for power [Thomas 2012, p. 31; Takahata 2013, pp. 52–55].

Sparrowhawk is not the ideal archmage able to find solutions to all problems; Lord Cob is not the absolute evil dictator, spreading his poison on everything and everyone for unlimited control.

In fact, they are side-characters to Arren's quest for self and individual identity in a world which has lost its balance – very much like the contemporary world, with its unlimited resources of distractions, but with little to non-existent models of love and belonging. The movie received altogether generally bad critique; not even the gorgeous, New-Age-like soundtrack composed by Terashima Tamiya 寺嶋 民哉 (born 1958) could contribute to a more positive perception of its overall qualities.

3. *From Up on Poppy Hill*:
The Power of Imagined Nostalgia

From Up On Poppy Hill (コクリコ坂から *Kokuriko-zaka kara*) was released in 2011 as Miyazaki Gorō's second animation movie. It is based on the 1980s serialized eponymous Japanese comics in the category of *shōjo* manga (namely, comics targeted at female teenagers) illustrated by Takahashi Chizuru 高橋 千鶴 (unknown birth-year) and written by Sayama Tetsurō 佐山 哲郎 (born 1948). The plot is set in 1964 in Yokohama: the 1960s are a highly symbolical period of time in postwar Japan, as they saw an escalating increase in student activism and campus revolts in Japan as well as in other parts of the world against wars and the prevalent patriarchal social order.

Miyazaki Gorō adheres to this ideology, a soft reminder of the main topos of his previous animation movie *Tales from the Earthsea*, by swiftly building the story-line of *From Up On Poppy Hill* on the premise of paternal absences [Suzuki 2018, p. 125; Suzuki 2008, p. 91]. In the movie, the main female character Matsuzaki Umi's 松崎 海 father was killed when his supply ship was sunk by mines in the Korean War (1950–1953); the male character Kazama Shun's 風間 俊 biological father died aboard a repatriation vessel after the end of the Second World War.

Instead of historically faithfully depicting the details of the mid-1960s city of Yokohama, Miyazaki Gorō insisted on the emotional

realization that simply re-enacting something in its time is not real enough, and additionally would not be necessarily beautiful, so that he decided to show the location as "shimmering and bustling with life" from the viewpoint of the characters involved in the story. In accordance with this directorial vision, the design and the architecture of the "Quartier Latin" is an amalgamation of clutter and dirt in the house's many rooms; it is supposed to serve as a remembrance of one's own college years. The clutter and filthiness naturally accompany such an age and are uniquely associated with the enthusiasm and vitality of those years: their dreams, their joys, their unlimited faith in life and the universe [Sugimoto 2013, p. 162; Ōtsuka 2004, p. 81]. It is precisely this pure-hearted, melodramatic atmosphere of *From Up On Poppy Hill* as a youth movie, full of period details which bring that era into a nostalgic but realistic foreground, that makes viewers wonder at their own disenchanted attitude towards existence and society and question the passage of time as well as their perspective of the world, self, and others. *From Up On Poppy Hill* functions somewhat like a time-machine, displaying dreams of a not-so-distant past; it is a sweet and honestly sentimental story, with the "Quartier Latin" appearing as an almost fantastic entity: the respect and politeness among characters, even among teenage protagonists, is a far cry from what goes on in schools and on college campuses in this day and age (particularly, since the 1990s).

The plot follows the daily life of Matsuzaki Umi, a sixteen-year-old student attending Isogo High School and living in "Coquelicot Manor", a boarding house overlooking the port of Yokohama. Her mother, Ryōko, is a medical professor studying abroad in the United States of America. Umi runs the house and looks after her younger siblings, Sora and Riku, and her grandmother, Hana. College student Hirokōji Sachiko and doctor-in-training Hokuto Miki also live there. Each morning, Umi raises a set of signal flags with the message "I pray for safe voyages". One day, a poem about the flags being raised is published in the school newspaper by Kazama Shun, a member of the journalism club, who had been witnessing the flags from sea as he was riding his father's tugboat to school.

At Isogo High School, Umi meets Shun when he participates in a daredevil stunt for the newspaper, leaving Umi with a negative first impression. Umi later accompanies Sora to obtain Shun's autograph at the "Quartier Latin", an old and dilapidated building housing Isogo High School's clubs for extracurricular activities. Umi learns that Shun publishes the school newspaper, along with Mizunuma Shirō, Isogo High School's student government president, and eventually she ends up helping on the newspaper. Later on, Shun convinces the other students to renovate the building after a debate on the future of the "Quartier Latin", which may be demolished, and at Umi's suggestion, the female student body cooperates with the other students. Subsequently, the plot unfolds as a typical high-school drama reminiscent of the 1990's nostalgia: students unite for a greater good despite individual differences. Against this background, personal stories and conflicts arise and develop, with a particularly bitter-sweet denouement: the power of friendship and of an honest, open attitude towards life's challenges.

From Up On Poppy Hill is an impactful allegory for two reasons: firstly, it embeds what might be labeled "imagined nostalgia" in a thick structure of quotidian happenings and emotional configurations. Umi and Shun are not plainly high-school students coming of age in an era of sociopolitical reconstruction. They are symbolical individuals reminding audiences of past mistakes and the grievances resulted from those mistakes, as well as of the necessity to learn from mistakes and move forward [Davis 1979, pp. 32–37; Luhmann 1996, pp. 24–33; Lamarre 2009, p. 15].

The Tokyo Olympics of 1964 were an important sign of cooperation and forgiveness. The hope and faith connected to the gesture of assigning the first Asian Olympics to Japan were part of a larger historical attitude to employ the past as a repository of lessons to be learnt from and to transcend the past into legacies for the future. From the disenchanted, hopeless Japan of the early 2010s, with its confusions and lack of orientation, the mid-1960s seemed even more of a deep fountain of meaningfulness and insight into its own historical trajectory.

Secondly, it re-designs school life as a preview of society. It has often been said that high-school backyards and college campuses are clear, unmistaken previews of the upcoming society, as they contain the representative citizens of tomorrow in the process of becoming those very citizens, able – or not able – to contribute to their respective social environments. While this preview function of educational institutions has long been inadvertently filtered through overtly optimistic glasses, last decades have been proving that particularly negative aspects of school and college life are those which would become relevant within the society a few years down the road [Fuller 2007, pp. 158–162; Giddens 2020, pp. 13–19; Grajdian 2019, p. 94]. In *From Up On Poppy Hill*, the idealization process is surpassed by a more realistic view, which focuses on the normality of the individuals, on their everyday existences, while pushing into the shadow their symbolical functions as representatives for a specific social stratum or group. Both Umi and Shun are regular high-schoolers, with inevitable emotions and confusions, and are doing their best to come to terms with the requirements coming from those around them.

Overcoming the symbolism commonly attached to characters in artistic works with the simultaneous embedding of "imagined nostalgia" within the conglomerate of the flow of history: these are the two major factors which turn *From Up On Poppy Hill* into a quiet masterpiece to display, both non-judgmentally and self-critically, an era of particular struggles, which would metamorphose later on into a site of ardent remembrance.

4. Conclusion:
The Transcendence of Inherited Legacies

As briefly mentioned at the beginning of this paper, Miyazaki Gorō's presence in the landscape of Japanese animation comes accompanied by two main special ad-notations: for once, he is the elder son of the highly praised Miyazaki Hayao. Furthermore, he is not a professional

animator or director of animation movies, but a trained landscape planer and architect. During his involvement in various endeavors related to his father's activities, and possibly inspired by his mother's Ōta Akemi 大田　朱美 (born 1938) profession as an animator, Miyazaki Gorō gained insight into the industry of Japanese animation, as well as into its awes and perils [Fielding 2008, p. 51; Eagleton 2003, p. 76]. From this perspective, one might say that his animation movies so far reflect a rather skewed vision of what an artistic product might – or should – be. On the one hand, it serves as a powerful tool to address issues plaguing the world at a specific point in time and to raise awareness on those very facts, a gesture ideally followed by clear-cut actions to correct or to extrapolate that very specific situation. On the other hand, it impacts the awareness itself of given circumstances, without judgments of value or discrimination, so that the precious precedent of "creativity in freedom" is set [Condry 2013, p. 52; Wells 1998, pp. 51–78]. Either way, the creative act appears as the reflection of a so-called "responsible freedom", which besets the individual in his/her commitment to the truth at the bottom of any functional society – or any over-individual human community, for that matter, too.

Based on the two animation movies released so far, it is still premature to assess whether Miyazaki Gorō's legacy is one of epigonic splendor or one of visionary back-to-the-past and its eternal lessons. What can be evaluated at the moment is his ability to compress into images – and the fluid sounds accompanying, enhancing, transcending them – solid ideals of repentance and redemption, respectively, joy and faith [Nye 2004]. Be it in alternate universes based on science-fiction literary works or in the half-mythical era of the 1960s with their equally half-mythological legends of rebellion and social change, Miyazaki Gorō's animated works talk of a human space filled with hope in oneself and in others, with radical bolts of transgression and the subsequent awakening or punishment, with intransigent rules to be implemented and followed without any exception [Foucault 1969].

In addition, what raises Miyazaki Gorō's animation movies above the average product of the Japanese entertainment industry is their

adherence to a strict moral code – of hard work, persistence, and perseverance, compounded by a healthy dose of humility and idealism – which transcends the volatility and, more often than not, the resentment of fellow-artists and audiences.

That being said, in *Tales from the Earthsea*, Miyazaki Gorō constructs a complex world, somehow related to ours with its conflicts and power struggles, but simultaneously distant with its fantastic creatures and unchartered geographical landscapes. Ursula K. Le Guin's *Earthsea* series and his father's manga work serve as narrative pretext to expressing some of his own questions about the meaning of life and the unknown elements of coming-of-age in an era seeming to offer everything minus the challenges which might have contributed to strengthening individual character and willpower in the past [Miegel 2005; Bauman 2001a; Castells 1997]. The initial patricide appears as an unusual plot-twist, delivering impactful undertones of loss and emotional devastation in an ideological context of mental self-sufficiency which hardly allows for confusion or hesitation.

Based on that same initial gesture of symbolical liberation, Arren must find his own way in a crumbling world and learn to cope with various male figures of domination, so that, eventually, he attains the key to salvation in Therru's magical (re-)transformation into the Black Dragon and restores the world to its necessary state of balance. Despite the movie's convoluted composition, it is one of the few artistic works in Japanese culture – one of the other major ones being Murakami Haruki's 2002 novel *Kafka on the Shore* (海辺のカフカ *Umibe no Kafuka*) – which addresses the issue of overcoming past models by intrinsically removing them from one's existence (hence the "symbolical killing") and of finding one's own identity by means of self-discovery and the subsequent self-creation [Bourdieu 1979; Bauman 2001b; Butler 1993]. Arren, in this reading, is more than a plain male protagonist, obviously disturbed and lacking a clear pathway in life; he becomes a powerful model for the ideal of individual self-stylization so prevalent in late modernity with its focus on individual responsibility as a fundamental premise to freedom and self-transcendence. In Arren, many viewers can find their own confusion

and sense of loss mirrored and transformed as part of a larger map of meaning, which moves forward from collective mindlessness towards individual awareness.

Miyazaki Gorō seeks answers in *Tales from the Earthsea*; he also strives to find the proper questions, so that, possibly, valid answers result from the questions themselves. He explores various levels of human significance as individual actors on the socio-political stage, able to resist corrupt powers of destruction and annihilation. His conclusions, as they appear in *Tales from the Earthsea*, are not necessarily encouraging or positive; however, he opens the gate for further explorations and questioning and highlights the necessity of courage and honesty in dealing with one's own hang-ups, fears, and pains [Clements 2018, p. 56]. As his next movie *From Up on Poppy Hill* shows, there are multiple answers to the same (old and new) questions, and they all depend both on the individual looking for them and on the circumstances in which the questions are asked. Often, it seems that this interplay of open-mindedness and half-way wit characterizes Miyazaki Gorō's approach to arts and the existential message expressed through them, while delivering powerful insights into the flexibility and vitality of humans, with their idiosyncrasies, joys, and lovely spikes of optimism.

In *From Up On Poppy Hill*, though, Miyazaki Gorō resists the almost compulsive tendency to idealize the past (as "imagined nostalgia") through the automate comparison with present times within the process of ripping main characters of their common symbolical configurations. In *Tales from the Earthsea*, the science-fiction setting allowed him to move beyond any historical constraints and to create a world of desolate scarcity in which humans – or human-like entities – pursued their battles for power and domination [Odell & Le Blanc 2009, pp. 104–106].

In *From Up On Poppy Hill*, the clearly defined historical background "forces" him into specific narrative structures, with coherent characters' inner architectures and transparent story-lines. Then, again, his creative freedom as director allows him to re-create the original manga-work, and thus to deliver new levels of significance above the core plot of a boy-meets-girl-story amidst Japan's glorious postwar recovery.

I would argue that precisely this "glorious postwar recovery" finds itself sliding at the center of Miyazaki Gorō's animation movie, as well as its questioning in light of the realities of the early 2010s and their heartbreaking challenges.

Along several decades, the 1960s had been turning from an era of chaos and revolts against the patriarchal system of chained freedoms and submissive warfare into the memory of the fight for change and for the individual's right to self-fulfillment in itself [Ōtsuka 2004, pp. 92–101, Takahata 2013, pp. 72–79]. However, while the disenchanted 2010s debuted on a rather grave note of despair in face of corruption, incompetence, and the repeatability of history, the relation to the 1960s had deepened, social actors trying increasingly harder to re-construct an idealized era in the face of apparently insurmountable adversities and self-induced delusions.

Miyazaki Gorō's mastery appears in *From Up On Poppy Hill* less in the form of re-inventing the past, and rather as the effort to orchestrate the past as a highly individualized endeavor, without the usual nostalgic pretext: neither Umi nor Shun are symbols of their social class or of their age group. They live according to the historical time-frame in which they are born, and face similar problems and complications as millions of other teenagers throughout times and spaces. Simultaneously, though, they are highly individualized teenagers, who look for solutions to their highly individualized crises against the background of their very specific historic-geographical context [Turner 1968, pp. 94–99].

In doing so, in carefully avoiding the generalization so often so typical for such artistic works, Miyazaki Gorō allows for a straightforward narrative attitude, in which past, present, and future flow into each other and contribute equally to the complementary consolidation of individual pathways in life as such. I would say that this choice of individualization of human experiences against the background of highly idealized historical eras is what confers the movie *From Up On Poppy Hill* its particular charm and its power as a didactic tool to teach lessons about history and people who lived in the past in a manner which encourages curiosity, empathy, and joy, instead of annihilating the emotional

connection to those events which have, after all, pushed historical development towards what we have come to identify as our present.

It has often been argued that much of Miyazaki Gorō's success and acknowledgment comes from being the son of his famous father. This is a very slippery slope. To be sure, the positive side of being born in a family with two wildly gifted and committed animators, of whom at least one has been experiencing tremendous success on the professional road, is a huge advantage when talking about the hereditary – and dynastic – tendencies of history. There is nothing new about it. From the perspective of the media-released reports and critical comments, Miyazaki Gorō comes indeed from a privileged background which delivers him huge benefits over those born in regular families or from disadvantaged backgrounds [Žižek 1989, p. 52]. They must fight their way forward, learn for long and arduous years the bitter lessons of technical practices and of pushing against hardships and heavy competition. Again, there is nothing new about this dynamics of the world, which has existed since times immemorial. However, with this same heritage – that is, being born in a "brand family" with its specific expectations and regulations – comes an immense pressure, which does not allow for compromises or failures: this is the less visible dimension of achievements and accomplishments brought about by the former generation. The children born under such circumstances often live with tremendous tension to be at least as competitive and competent as their illustrious parents, and the cases of ill-deliveries are much more frequent than one would like to acknowledge [Žižek 1989, p. 55]. In addition, the hostility and the (hidden or not so hidden) common inter-generational resentments add to the imbalance of power and creativity occurring in such family configurations.

This danger, however, is handled with elegance and subtlety by Miyazaki Gorō throughout his entire career: without ever turning into competition with his well-known father, he delves into the depths of the human psyche, its desires and its anxieties, its uncanny abilities to repress and to process, and allows them to come forward in haunting images of symbolical patricide as the dramatic premise of his first movie or in lofty narrative lines of a by-gone era with its soft quotidian intrigues

and common solutions. We cannot talk, in Miyazaki Gorō's case, of the larger-than-life symphonic structures from *Princess Mononoke* (もののけ姫 *Mononoke-hime*, 1997) or *Spirited Away* (千と千尋の神隠し *Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi*, 2001): there is something ineffably intimate in the wild disgruntled forces of *Tales from the Earthsea* with its pre-historical living habits and flying dragons. Likewise, there is something intrinsically solemn, almost intimidatingly cerebral, in Umi's daily ritual of raising the flag – and in her prayers for a safe journey and a joyful return of sailors and travelers.

In this train of thought, Miyazaki Gorō does not seek for the simplicity of entertainment – like in his father's *My Neighbour Totoro* (となりのトトロ *Tonari no Totoro*, 1988) or *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea* (崖の上のポニョ *Gake no ue no Ponyo*, 2008) – or aesthetic-ideological experiments – like in *Howl's Moving Castle* (ハウルの動 城 *Hauru no ugoku shiro*, 2004) and *The Wind Rises* (風立ちぬ *Kaze tachinu*, 2013). Rather, he attempts to harvest and to observe those unique features which make each individual his or her own master, which confer him or her a specific type of ingenuity able to transcend the biological limitation, and thus to attain immortality. Arren and Therru live in times of unpredictability and terror, but they also possess their own spirit to help them move beyond those very times; by the same token, Umi and Shun are confronted with shadows of the past, but perspicacity and genuine love push them to quest for the truth, relentlessly.

Miyazaki Gorō's teenage characters struggle with finding a clear sense of self in a world which, more often than not, does not deliver answers to questions or solutions to problems. They must create their own templates for life, against the background of extremely different lifestyles and historical circumstances. What these life stories have in common, though, is the incessant curiosity to move forward as well as a specific vitality: alternatives do not emerge by themselves, but they are found within the inner worlds of the protagonists, who face the challenges with courage and integrity. The truth does, indeed, make them free, without breaking them apart in the process.

Throughout their journeys of initiation, Miyazaki Gorō's characters encounter alternative self-identities – a plurality of *alter ego* structures from parallel lives – and the possibility to alter their current course for more convenient, more accessible futures; they choose the truth, difficult to view and to address, but also enticing in its promise of unlimited freedom and individual expansion.

By learning the value of responsibility which fuels any authentic project of self-discovery and self-fulfillment, the protagonists envisioned by Miyazaki Gorō understand the value of vulnerability and of personal accountability, of acceptance and of permanent progression, while simultaneously grasping the importance of allowing the others to be themselves in their "radical otherness", as Emmanuel Lévinas famously pointed out decades ago, and to strive towards a community based on perennial hierarchies of values such as hard-work, persistence, humility, as well as compassion and the willingness to cooperate. In doing so, Miyazaki Gorō brings to life a world of "profound humanity", impactful and attainable, able to transcend ideological apprehensions.

Miyazaki Gorō fulfills a multi-layered task of expressing his own creativity and of bringing forth potential worlds of love and light without denying *a priori* the existence and the importance of darkness and pain as pre-conditions for the good to emerge. At the same time, he does not engage in a self-destructive competition with his father, not even as a passive-aggressive endeavor, and moves, confidently, smartly, genuinely, towards those levels of his possible legacy which consist of authenticity and wisdom.

In the process, he delivers powerful lessons in humility and self-acceptance, which eclipse the volatility of cultural consumption and immerse into the welcoming abysses of human knowledge and experience – both vertically, on the historical axis, and horizontally, on the geographical one.

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