

Sustainable Society and Japanese Language Education :
Long-term vision of tertiary level

Устойчивое общество и преподавание японского языка :
Перспективы развития преподавания в вузах



持続可能社会と日本語教育

—長期的なビジョンに立った大学の日本語教育を考える—

発表報告書



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「持続可能社会と日本語教育—長期的なビジョンに立った大学の日本語教育を考える—」
発表報告集

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**Steady Trace for 300 Years of Japanese Studies
in St. Petersburg, Russia: St. Petersburg State University etc.**

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Japanese studies in Russia originally started in St.Petersburg as early as the beginning of the 18th century. A brief explanation of the process should be mentioned as a long and steady trace of Japanese studies took place in St.Petersburg. It started due to the royal wish of Russian tsar Peter the Great, who provided a real push for oriental studies in Russia to promote international relations. A stimulus was given by the occasional appearance of native Japanese Dembei, shipwrecked in the Far East and delivered to the tsar presence in 1702 (in belief to communicate with Japan in future). Japanese schooling for Russians was prescribed by tsar, a notice of establishing such a school in St-Petersburg at 1706 by monarchial will is well-known. Though the fact could not be verified until the 3rd decade of the 18th century – when teaching materials and dictionary were prepared by Gonza, known as the 1st teacher in Japanese school, which was founded in St-Petersburg, Russian Science Academy in 1736.

It was a major step from obtaining information on Japan from Europeans to the firsthand and direct contacts with native Japanese in St.Petersburg even at the beginning of the 18th century. It was an impact to the rather profound Japanese studies and to the origins of Japanese art collections in newly created Russian capital. European illusions (formerly created from Marco

Polo to Dutchman factory staff) on Japan thus became weaker in Russia, giving a chance for more correct information. Probably, the best known in Japan (among such visitors of St-Petersburg) was Daikokuya Kodayu (1751-1828), who spent 11 years in Russia. He had even been granted an audience by Catherine the Great in 1791. One year later he had got a chance to return to homeland with Russian mission. Tales about foreign experience and impressions, spoken in the shogun's presence – had been written in “Hokusa-bunryaku = Some rumors of North side” records by Katsuragawa Hoshu. Moreover, later appeared “O-Roshia-oku suimudan = Dreams of Russia” manuscript too. In the latter part of the 20th century an appearance of the book and the film of the same title had promoted significantly the image of Kodayu. In the mid. of the 18th century the Japanese school was moved to Siberia (city of Irkutsk) upon the reason to be closer to Japan. Nevertheless, due to “national isolation” there was no chance for relations with Japan. Irkutsk school was finally closed for budget limitations in 1816.

Oriental and Japanese studies originated in the trail of Peter the Great politics. Three inseparable spheres (museum, science and education needs) were all promoted in St.Petersburg. Kunstkamera, the oldest museum in Russia was founded in 1714; Academy of Sciences in 1724 (as a triple-complex with Academic University and Academic Gymnasium-school). After some weak phase in oriental studies following Peter the Great, the next step was realized in 1819 by the creation of the Asiatic Museum on the base of Kunstkamera.

St.Petersburg University had been renewed in 1819 (with cathedrae [=departments] for Orient, i.e. Muslim and Bible studies), thus added to 4 universities established theretofore in Russia (1755 Moscow, 1802 Dorpat [*or Dörpt, now Tartu*], 1804 Kazan, 1804 Kharkov). However scientific intentions further weakened along with the strengthening of practical needs for oriental languages' interpreters and translators. It was marked in 1854-55 by the appearance of the Faculty of Oriental Languages at St.Petersburg University. At the beginning Japanese

studies started just occasionally since 1870-s inside the rank (=department) of Chinese-Manchurian-Mongolian studies. Even originated from 1898 the cathedra for Japanese language and letters had started properly 10 years later (KOSTYLEV Vasily added to staff, the author of 1st scholarly publication – “Essays on Japanese History”, 1888). Later, St.Petersburg University staff had been delegated for promotion of the Oriental Institute in Vladivostok (cornerstone of Oriental studies in the Far East, est. 1899). To the beginning of the 20th century among other oriental institutions in St-Petersburg were also Asian department of Foreign Ministry, Asian Museum, Public Library (eldest in country, est. 1795, opened 1814).

Hard times for Japanese studies had come upon the start of the Russian revolution in 1917 and the Civil War that had followed. First of all, profound staff had been wrecked due to various reasons such as emigration to other countries etc. Second point was overwhelming intensions to never-ending reforms of scientific and educational institutions. Newly established universities in Russia had changed dozens of names and abbreviations in 1920-30-s. Even to describe educational reorganizations in St.Petersburg it should be mentioned such names as: 1919 FON at the 1st Petrograd univ., 1920 LIZhVYa, 1925 YaMFak, 1929 FIL, 1930 LILI, 1933 LIFLI (later included in 1936 to some University faculties). Reforms took effect not only to Japanese language studies, but to cultural and historical research too. The only place for Oriental education from 1938 was Philological Faculty at the University. Besides it, scholarly research was supposed to be held in the Soviet Academy of Sciences’ Institute for Oriental studies (est. in 1930 on the basis of the former Asiatic Museum; later, from 1950 been moved to Moscow with a large part of book collection). Political repressions in the late 30-s had seriously damaged a lot of people, involved in the Japanese studies too. It was followed by the hardship of the 2nd World War. Leningrad blockade with 3 years of incredible famine, suffering and sorrow had left yet one more severe trace on the scientific community.

The restoration of the Oriental Faculty had occurred only in 1944. Next innovation of 1949 was concluded in junction with cultural and historical studies of Orient; previously it was held in 1930-40-s at the Faculty of History. Thus, comprehensive complex integration of Japanese studies had resulted in effective scholarly success until the collapse of the USSR. Between 1950-90s steady development and advanced early planning had provided possibilities for wide-range profound publications on language, culture and society of Japan at a high scholarly level. During that period the disappointment for St.Petersburg researchers was due to an obvious lack of language and cultural experience, as there was almost no chance to visit Japan.

Time-shift traces, “wind of change” on the way from USSR to Russia at the end of the 20th century had its positive and negative points. Outflow of personnel, financial and budget problems were accompanied by the newly emerged occasions for language-training. The amount of published materials on Japan had grown incredibly, though the quality of printed matter had declined. Some hopes for improvement had place at the turn of the century, but further irresistible chain of reforms in the education and scholarly spheres had come in turn. Nowadays trend is shady and ambiguous: including transitions in secondary, higher school and even on the level of researchers’ scholarly degrees. Though optimistic dimensions include emergence of secondary schools with Japanese courses for children (Municipal schools ## 583, 83, 631 and 27), even the recently appeared universities as well. Besides ‘Oriental department’ at the St-Petersburg State University and ‘Academy of Culture’ there are some private universities like Oriental Institute, Russian Christian Academy of Humanities (RHGA), University of Trade unions etc. There are also a number of training courses for Japanese language, starting from ‘Russia-Japan Friendship Association’. Scholarly institutions include a number of institutions with a long history and traditions, e.g. State Hermitage Museum, Kunstkamera Museum, Russian National Library (RNB), Academy of Sciences Library (BAN), and Institute of Oriental Manuscripts (IVR).

Japanese studies community in St.Petersburg is of rather high level and secure yet, though some personnel lack can emerge due to financial reasons or search for stability. The specifics of Japanology education in St.Petersburg can be described as of well-balanced classic level, showing upgrading trends due newly available training possibilities. St.Petersburg State University includes different aspects of Japanese language lessons, such as modern and old grammar, variety of texts, conversation, translating and interpreting practice (with native Japanese professors as well). Also, wide-range cultural subjects are also included in curriculum (history, geography, ethnography, economics, political institutions, source studies etc.).

Vision of sustainable society should include some transition models for long-history applicability. The evolution process of Japanese studies in St.Petersburg demonstrates this feature distinctly enough. In spite of social turns and temporary trends – more than 300 years of Japanese studies in St.Petersburg could be described as a constant and steady move of successive generations of scholars and university professors, who had tried to do their best for the progress of Japanology.

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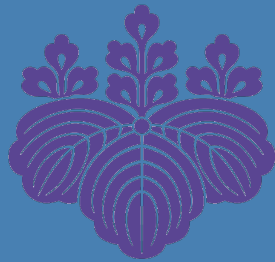
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