

Alexandre Panov

The Foreign Policy Priorities of Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

The article analyses the political and philosophical views of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the role and the place of Japan in the contemporary system of international relations, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the implementation of these views in the foreign policy of Japan.

The author evaluates the process of adaptation of the Japan-US alliance to the processes of restructuring of the regional power in the Asia Pacific region, as well as the reaction of the United States, China, Russia, the ROK and the DPRK to the new developments in Tokyo's course of implementing the right of collective self-defense.

Perspectives of Japan-Chinese and Japan-Russian relations are highlighted in the context of the new trends in the development of the Japan-US military alliance.

Keywords: Japan-US military alliance, Constitution of Japan, Japanese military doctrine, collective self-defense, «historical revisionism», «Chinese threat», Russia and Japan.

Valery Kistanov

Japan in East Asia: Current Problems of Political Relations

Currently, political relations between Japan and a number of East Asian countries remain strained, despite some positive developments in this relationship in 2015 or early 2016. The statement of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II was a symbol of the ongoing mutual hostility and deep confrontation between Japan and China. The stated confrontation is intensified by the territorial conflict between Tokyo and Beijing in the East China Sea. In the policy of Japan in respect of both South and North Korea, there are a number of intractable problems that weaken Japan's position in North-East Asia. In South-East Asia the conflict in Japan-China relations is also growing. Abe is forced to pursue a policy of balancing between West and Moscow, hoping to resolve the territorial dispute in the relationship with Russia.

Keywords: Japan, China, South Korea, North Korea, Russia, World War II, Abe Shinzo, Xi Jinping, the «comfort women», Unit 731, UN, military potential, territorial disputes, maritime confrontation.

Olga Dobrinskaya

Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security: its Global, Regional and National Significance

The legislation on peace and security which was adopted in September 2015 substantially changes the format of the overseas activity of the self-defense forces. It also affects the principles which have shaped the development of the post-war Japan. The globalization of the US-Japan alliance and enhanced participation in the collective security measures increase Japan's global and regional influence but at the same time pose new risks of involvement in overseas conflicts.

Keywords: Shinzo Abe, security, self defense forces, U.S.-Japan alliance, peacekeeping, East Asia.

Elena Leontieva

The Economic Policy of Shinzo Abe Cabinet under Globalization

Abe Shinzo administration came to power in the late 2012 strongly determined to stop deflation, to contain the outflow of capital and to put the economy on track of steady recovery. Three and a half years later, not all targets were met. The economy is widely exposed to external uncontrollable conditions. The policy of negative interest rate was launched by the Bank of Japan and unintendedly provoked revaluation of the yen. A victory over deflation was lost. Private consumption performs weakly. The big businesses prefer to internationalize their operations across multiple locations along global supply chains. Major social actors, corporations and households, are hampering implementation of the government's reform agenda.

Keywords: deflation; excessive savings; budgetary deficit; negative interest rate; revaluation of the yen; quantitative and qualitative easing; global value added chains.

Andrey Belov

One-and-a-Half Centuries of Russo-Japanese Trade Relations: How to Overcome "Path Dependence"?

For more that 150 years trade between Japan and Russia was strongly influenced by political dynamics, individual shares of bilateral trade were extremely low, and Japan mostly supplied manufactured goods in exchange for Russian raw materials. These characteristics of Japan–Russia trade restricted the options for further economic development, and thus can be considered as an example of path dependence. The study argues that the initial years of the 2010s have brought significant changes to the traditional model of trade. Namely, market forces have appeared as the primary driver of trade, and Japan's investment in the Russian energy sector and participation in automotive manufacturing have provided the capital and technology for high value-added production in Russia.

Keywords: path dependence, Japan, Russia, international trade, shadow economy.

Alexander Meshcheryakov

Well Educated Confucian Thinker Nishikawa Joken (1648–1724) Tells about Poorly Educated Buddhists

Outstanding Confucian thinker Nishikawa Joken (1648–1724) wrote many treatises. The most popular of them was «Choninbukuro». He thought that Buddhist teaching was wrong and truly educated man had to reject it. At the same time he argued that faith in paradise and hell was instrumental for commoners to follow true social behavior and in that sense it was helpful in implementing social order in Japan.

Keywords: Japanese history, Tokugawa period, Nishikawa Joken (1648–1724), «Choninbukuro», Buddhism, Confucianism.

Yoshikazu Nakamura

First Japanese Envoy Enomoto Takeaki (1836–1908) and Russia

The article «First Japanese Envoy Enomoto Takeaki (1836–1908) and Russia» presents a brief biography of Takeaki Enomoto – outstanding historical figure and one of the most educated persons of Meiji era. Particular attention is paid to the life and work of Enomoto during his stay in St. Petersburg as the first Japanese envoy in Russia (1874–1878). The author uses the letters and diaries written by Enomoto in this period which reflect his impressions about Russia, evaluations of different events, the problems he faced in everyday life. This approach gives the article a special color filling it with many interesting details.

Keywords: Enomoto Takeaki, Russian-Japanese relations, the first Japanese envoy to Russia, stay in St. Petersburg, journey to Siberia.

Vasily Molodyakov

Colonial Policy and Japanese Image Making: Taiwan in 1900–1930

The article by V. Molodyakov «Colonial Policy and Japanese Image Making: Taiwan in 1900–1930» deals with main English-language publications of the 1900–1930s on colonial administration at Taiwan (Formosa) as a part of the official image-making of Japan. Books by Japanese and foreign authors about success of Taiwan modernization, control of opium-smoking and «pacification» of aborigines, which Japan used to prove «civilizing mission» of its colonial policy, are the main subjects of this study.

Keywords: Japan, Taiwan (Formosa), modernization, colonization, aborigines, opium-smoking.

Evgeny Yakovkin

The Role of Japanese Military Mission in Harbin in Defining Ideology for the Russian Immigrants in Manchuria (1932–1945)

This article deals with the problem of the interaction of the Japanese military mission and the Russian emigration in Manchuria. Particular attention is paid how Japanese military attempted to define ideology for Russian immigrants during the Second World War in the frame of «Great East Asian sphere of common prosperity» concept.

Keywords: Russian emigration, Manchuria, Manchukuo, Japanese military mission, the Kwantung Army, Japan.

Seda Markaryan

The Independent Diplomacy of Ichiro Hatoyama

Joint Declaration by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan has been signed at Moscow in October 1956. The head of the Japanese government at that time Hatayama Ichiro made his best to achieve this result. The article briefly describes his political biography, analyses his activities in Diet and government, his views on Japanese domestic and foreign policy.

Keywords: democracy, parliamentary system, liberalism, anticommunism, occupation administration, purge, restoration of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Soviet Union, fishery agreement, peace treaty.

Evgeny Baksheev
Sister's Sacred Spiritual Power *Seji* as a Part of Traditional Ryukyuan Culture

The paper examines traditional Ryukyuan *Onarigami*-belief which is the belief that a sister's sacred spiritual power called *Seji* guards her brother from danger. It is regarded as the basis of Ryukyuan kinship system and the core of the local religion which is supposed to derive from ancient Japanese religion (worship of *kami*). It also had a deep implications on Ryukyuan social and political culture. Basic sources on the issue (*Omoro So:shi*), Japanese and Western research and the Author's field research data are used. The article is illustrated with original photos by the Author.

Keywords: Ryukyu/Okinawa, Ryukyuan kinship, social and political systems, Ryukyuan religion, *Onarigami*-belief, female sacred spiritual power (*Seji*), priestesses' cult of sacred groves (*utaki*), state (court) rituals.

Maya Gerasimova

Folk Craft Theory by Yanagi Muneyoshi

In the 20s of the XX century in Japan Yanagi Muneyoshi (Soetsu), later became famous as a philosopher and collector of traditional crafts products, began to develop a theory, which is considered to be the first aesthetic theory in Japan. This theory, named *Mingeiron* (Folk crafts theory), became the theoretical basis for the widely ensuing Folk Craft Movement (*mingeiundō* the echoes of which still can be heard not only in Japan, but also far beyond it, but the theory itself, despite the ambiguous attitude of the researchers towards it, has many supporters not only in Japan, but also in the West, especially in England and the United States of America.

Keywords: folk craft, traditional crafts, insight into beauty, Yanagi Muneyoshi (Soetsu).

Elena Katasonova

A Samurai with the Russian Soul

Kurosawa Akira is regarded as one of the prominent filmmakers in the history of cinema. In his illustrious career he directed three films that were based on the works of the Russian writers: «The Idiot» by Fyodor Dostoevsky, «The Lower Depth» by Maxim Gorky and «Dersu Uzala» by Vladimir Arsenyev. But the motifs from Russian literature are evident throughout many Kurosawa's works. He grew up reading the Russian classics, he loved Russian culture, Russian nature and had many friends among our actors and filmmakers. He was greatly respected in Soviet Union and even now there is hardly anyone in Russia now, who doesn't know the name of Kurosawa and his films.

Keywords: Kurosawa Akira, Fyodor Dostoevsky, cinema, Russian classic literature.

Yuri Kuzhel

Sculptural Images of Yakushi Nyorai

Yakushi Nyorai figures form the central theme of the present work, which introduces superb creations of Asuka, Nara, Heian sculptors that survive in our days in the temples of ancient capitals of Japan. Here are such celebrated works

as majestic Yakushi Triad at the Yakushiji, Yakushi Nyorai at the Golden Hall Horyuji, the Head of Buddha (butsuto, Kofukuji). Mainly Yakushi has the small jar of medicine in the left hand and is often represented in the company of the two Bodhisattvas Nikko and Gakko, who are his assistants in bringing relief from suffering and in protecting the Buddhist law. Sometimes Yakushi is surrounded with Twelve Godly Generals. The bronze pedestals on which the images of Yakushi rest are the masterpieces among works of its kind.

Keywords: mandorla, iconography, jar of medicine, attendant, butsuto, unpainted wood, pedestal.

Mariya Toropygina

The Legends of Traditional Japanese Poetry: Rokujo Poetry School in the 12th Century

The history of Japanese poetry in the 12th century is associated with a confrontation between two poetical schools: Rokujō and Mikohidari. Three generations of Rokujō poets (the founder of the school Akisue, his son Akisuke, and grandchildren Kiyosuke and Kenshō) are main characters of the article. Legends connected with these poets circulated in Japanese poetic society for centuries. Main sources of the legends are *karon* texts by poets of the 13th–15th cc. and *Kokonchomonjū* and *Jikkinshō* – two *setsuwa* collections of the 13th c. Some poems of Rokujō poets are cited in the publication. Illustrations by Ooishi Matora are taken from the book *Hyakunin isshu hitoyogatari* first published in 1833.

Keywords: Japanese poetry, 12th century, poetic school, imperial anthology, poetry contest, *setsuwa*, legend, *Kokonchomonjū*, *Jikkinshō*.

Konstantin Sarkisov

Comparative Analysis of the Identities of Russia and Japan (1905–1917)

In the period between after the Russo-Japanese war until the collapse of Tsarist Empire all elements of identity as state, society, ideology and religion in both countries developed in a quite different way. While in Russia this development was marked by the end of Czarist autocratic regime, in Japan all repercussions to its identity were connected with strengthening of the grounds of Meiji state system.

Keywords: identity structure, comparative analysis, nationalist and socialist ideologies, anarchism, geopolitics.

Konstantin Sarkisov

Comparative Analysis of the Identities of Russia and Japan (1917–1945)

Identities made a sharp turn: in Russia toward the «proletariat dictatorship», then to the «Stalinist regime», in Japan – through the devaluation of Meiji constitution to the militarism. Attempts to create a new system of values were significant. However, in crucial moments geopolitics prevailed over ideology. The analysis discovers many similarities in functions of state and even in state ideology.

Keywords: militarism, totalitarianism, intervention in Siberia, Japan's war with China, Pact of neutrality.

Dmitry Streltsov**Russian and Japanese Identities in the Postwar Period (1945–1991)**

It is difficult to conduct a comparison of postwar identity of the USSR and Japan in the postwar period, as there can be a lot of criteria of identity. The author analyses various aspects of Soviet and Japanese postwar identity in the period from 1945 till 1991, such as the historic memory of the WWII, the system of political power, the priorities of social development, as well as «the new patriotism» which was not associated with the military past but was rooted in postwar achievements that enabled both countries to position themselves on the global scale.

Keywords: victimized consciousness, «new patriotism», «winner nation», «homo soveticus», japonism.

Sergey Chugrov**The Identities of Russia and Japan after the Cold War (1991–2015)**

The article analyzes the points of intersection between the Japanese and Russian social and cultural realities directly linking to national identity. The analysis is based on the opinion polls, representing different views of the Japanese and Russians on themselves and on the outside world. The author marks an inclination towards conservative values in both identities. The events in Kiev, Russia's reunification with the Crimea, the civil war in the South-East of Ukraine have defined the contours of Russian identity much more precisely, unlocking the archetypal layers of historical memory of the Russians. By 2015, new features started to shape in the Japanese consciousness. There is a growing belief in the uniqueness of Japanese society, the Japanese are increasingly wary with media and are increasingly respectful towards the Emperor, while failing to demonstrate a reliable historical memory.

Keywords: Russia; Japan; identity; traditionalism; conservatism; adaptation; values.

Sergey Grishachev, Dmitry Streltsov**Russo-Japanese Relations in the Prerevolutionary Period: from Severe Competition to the Militar Alliance**

The article provides a critical analysis of the monograph of Konstantin Sarkisov «Russia and Japan. One hundred years of mutual relations (1817–1917)». A special attention is given to the historical circumstances that preceded the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905, and to the following rapprochement of the two countries, which reached its peak in 1916, when Moscow and Tokyo entered a full-fledged military alliance. The relevance of the monograph is linked to the present rise in Russian-Japanese relations, which increases interest in the positive historical experience accumulated in the course of their development.

Keywords: Russo-Japanese relations, Shimoda Treaty, St. Petersburg Treaty of 1975, Russo-Japanese war, the Izvolsky-Motono Convention, World War I.