

Editor's Note

Erdal Küçükyalçın

Dear Readers,

I am proud to be finally able to present you the second issue of Global Perspectives on Japan. Following our inaugural issue which we had the opportunity to launch during the Lisbon EAJS meeting in 2017, together with the rest of the world, we had to face varying levels of local and global crises, both economic and political in nature. Although taking the shape of the new Coronavirus pandemic, hard times do continue to linger in 2020, thanks to the generous support of Toshiba International Foundation, our journal has gained new momentum, and we are publishing two consecutive issues together. The Year of the Rat, the first year of a new twelve year cycle, known for its new beginnings in all areas of life, has indeed brought us new livelihood.

The second issue of GPJ is titled "Japan's Interaction with the Turkish and the Muslim World". We are featuring five important papers on a variety of interesting topics ranging from Japan's interaction with Qajar Iran, Egypt, Ottoman Empire, and Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin.

In the first article, titled "Shoes and Modern Civilization Between Racism and Imperialism: The 1880 Yoshida Masaharu Mission of Meiji Japan to Qajar Iran as Global History", Selçuk Esenbel from Boğaziçi University, introduces *Kaikyō Tanken Perusha no Tabi* (The Expedition to the Islamic World: The Journey to Persia), a travelogue written by Yoshida Masaharu giving an account of his travel as the head of a diplomatic mission dispatched by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to Qajar Shah Na-

sir al-Din's court in 1880. The travelogue was published four years later in Tokyo. Esenbel then focuses on a minor crisis caused by Yoshida who rejected to abide by the protocol rule requiring him to take off his shoes during his audience with the Shah and elaborates on the significance and the deeper meanings contained within this symbolic attitude.

The second article by Renée Worringer from University of Guelph, is titled "Meiji Japan, Ottoman Egypt, and the British Occupation: A Turn of the Century Colonial Triangle of Non-Western Modernity and Anti-Colonial Egyptian Nationalism". Worringer, underlining the impact of Japan's dramatic victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 on the Egyptian nationalist elite, raises some important questions: "Could an "Eastern" nation such as Japan, which served as an exemplary nation-state for other "Easterners" to emulate, also be acknowledged as colonialist? Or was colonialism at this time only understood as a by-product of Western imperialism to suit the needs of Egyptians, allowing them to deploy the Japanese model rhetorically, with knowing regard for Japanese colonial endeavors in East Asia?"

Third article "Ethnographic Essay of the Japanese Turkologist Okubo Koji as a Historical Source about the Life of the Turkic-Tatar Community in Harbin" is a contribution by Larisa Usmanova from Marjani Institute of History, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan. In her paper, Usmanova draws our attention to a particular essay published by Okubo Koji, one of the leading figures in Japanese Turkology, in 1924. Koji, was an active advocate of the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin between the years 1922-24 and had an in-depth knowledge on cultural, linguistic, religious and political characteristics of Turkic-Tatar people. Usmanova argues that Koji had a significant (and underestimated) role in supporting Tatar emigres in the Far East.

Next is "In His Father's Footsteps? Ahmed Münir İbrahim's 1910 Journey from Harbin to Tokyo as a Member of the First Ottoman Student Delegation to Japan" by Ulrich Brandenburg from the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies, University of Zurich. Brandenburg's focus in this article, is Ahmet Münir, the son of famous Abdürreşid İbrahim, the author of the well-known travelogue *Alem-i İslam ve Japonya'da İntişar-ı İslamiye* (World

of İslam and Spread of İslam in Japan) and a leading figure in Turkish-Japanese relations. His father's pompous deeds and writings had largely overshadowed Ahmet Münir's activities in Japan. The paper takes on the visit of a group of Ottoman students including Münir and two other companions to Japan in December 1910 and the brief, serialized travelogue published by him in the Kazan newspaper *Beyanüillhak*. The travelogue gives important insights into yet unknown and mundane aspects of Turkish-Japanese exchanges behind the idealizing visions of pan-Islamism and pan-Asianism.

Finally, the only article in Japanese in this issue, a paper by Iku Nagashima from Waseda University titled "Ottoman Military Organization and the Japanese Military Reports (1878-1908)" sheds new light on the deficiencies in organizational structure of Ottoman Army between Russo-Turkish War to the Young Turk Revolution, as seen by the Japanese military observers. Based on contemporary, first-hand witness accounts, and archival material, Nagashima draws a detailed picture of the Ottoman military structure with personnel numbers, and deployed units, argues that the Ottoman Army was heavily suffering under coordination and organizational problems as well as an absence of a commander-general capable of taking independent decisions.

I am deeply indebted to the authors of the second issue for their valuable contributions. I would also like to thank our partner, the Japanese Studies Association (JAD) for their effort in making the application to the TIFO Grant, and to Toshiba International Foundation (TIFO), for their generous support, which made this publication possible.

The readers of these lines are most welcome to contribute to our future issues. With your kind assistance, GPJ will continue its healthy growth.

Best Regards from a sunny Istanbul

Shoes and Modern Civilization Between Racism and Imperialism: The 1880 Yoshida Masaharu Mission of Meiji Japan to Qajar Iran as Global History

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Abstract

This paper discusses the nineteenth century Meiji Japanese self-reflection on modernity, civilization and identity that was compelled to negotiate between Racism and Imperialism. The Meiji vision of a global world was made up of a hierarchy of nations according to their level of enlightenment and civilization using the West as a benchmark. The study of Yoshida Masaharu's travel account *Kaikyō Tanken Perusha no Tabi* (The Expedition to the Islamic World: The Journey to Persia) (Tokyo: Hakubunka, 1894) shows this attitude. Yoshida's book is also quite valuable as the first-hand account of the Japanese interaction in 1880 with Persia of the Qajar dynasty in Iran as an entry into the Muslim world. Sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Mission was a small-scale version of the famous Iwakura Mission to learn about the West earlier between 1871-1873, as an investigation expedition to study the Muslim Middle East-Islamic affairs. The Japanese Mission of seven members including an Army officer representing the newly established *Sanbō Honbu*, the Japanese General Staff, and five businessmen, were headed by the envoy Yoshida Masaharu, a liberal Constitutionalist from Tosa domain whose views colored his interpretation of Qajar Iran and Shah Nasir al-Din's reforms using Western know-how. The Yoshida Mission's experience shows us some of the enduring perceptions as well as stereotyped images among the general Japanese public even today classifying Islam as an alien religion and the Middle Eastern world as a strange geography: exotic but alien, fascinating but also unfamiliar.