Japan’s Interaction with the Turkish and the Muslim World
Scope

“Global Perspectives on Japan” focuses on developing a global perspective on the study of Japan and Asia. The journal promotes innovative, interdisciplinary, inter-regional and transnational approaches to Japanese Studies.

The journal aims to be a venue for scholarship in E.M.E.A. region with a special focus on Turkey and neighboring regions. It especially encourages scholars from the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia and the Mediterranean but also welcomes scholars from other parts of the world.

GPJ invites papers in the fields of history, humanities, and social sciences including topics of the past and the present. In addition to articles, the journal publishes occasional article size translations, book reviews, and surveys of current trends in Japanese and Asian Studies.
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON JAPAN

Issue No. 2

Japan’s Interaction with the Turkish and the Muslim World
# Table of Contents

**Editor’s Note**

Erdal Küçükyalçın .................................................................................................................. 9

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

Selçuk Esenbel .......................................................................................................................... 12

**Ethnographic Essay of the Japanese Turkologist Okubo Koji as a Historical Source about the Life of the Turkic-Tatar Community in Harbin**

Larisa Usmanova ......................................................................................................................... 48

**Meiji Japan, Ottoman Egypt, and the British Occupation: A Turn of the Century Colonial Triangle of Non-Western Modernity and Anti-Colonial Egyptian Nationalism**

Renée Worringer ......................................................................................................................... 69

**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**

Ulrich Brandenburg ..................................................................................................................... 106

**日本陸軍将校の見たオスマ ン陸軍とその実態**

Ottoman Military Organization and the Japanese Military Reports (1878–1908)

Nagashima Iku 永島 育 ........................................................................................................... 127
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 emigrees 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’daki İntihar-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 Münnir’s activities in Japan. The paper takes on the visit of a group of Ottoman students including Münnir and two other companions to Japan in December 1910 and the brief, serialized travelogue published by him in the Kazan newspaper Beyanülhak. 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

Selçuk Esenbel
Department of History, Boğaziçi University

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.
This paper argues that the Yoshida travelogue actually reveals to us the complex cultural and political layers with which Yoshida saw Qajar Iran and provides an instructive journey into the mind of a nineteenth century Meiji Japanese elite who still carried their Edo cultural background as well as the more obvious Westernism of the new regime in order to decipher the global context of Iran. In turn, the Yoshida Mission’s impact on Iranian intellectuals and their subsequent 1906 Constitutional Revolution shows the global influences and connections between the history of two so-called Non-Western worlds in the process of adapting Western forms and ideas in their respective reformist agendas.

**Keywords:** Yoshida Masaharu, Qajar Iran, travelogue, Sanbō Honbu, Shah Nasir al-Din, westernization

**Introduction**

On September 27, 1880, a minor debacle occurred between the envoy of the Japanese Empire, Yoshida Masaharu (1852-1921) who led the first official Mission of the Meiji government to the Muslim polities of the Western hemisphere and the Persian Chief of Protocol of the Qajar dynasty of Iran. Before the Japanese Mission could make an entrance into the great hall of the Iranian Palace to have an audience with Shah Nasir al-Din (1831-1896), the Qajar ruler and “Pivot of the World” as he was known to his subjects, the Persian chief of Protocol had politely instructed the Mission about etiquette. He first whispered to the ear of the interpreter who subsequently descended the stairs to whisper again to the ear of Iran’s Foreign Minister to tell Yoshida and the other Japanese that they need to take off their shoes before entering the royal audience. Yoshida stood below the stairs leading up to the audience hall, next to Mirza Aga Ibrahim Khan, the new Foreign Minister of the Iranian monarchy, stubbornly insisting that he would not take off his shoes, even though this was the customary etiquette in the Persian court for anyone including foreign diplomats who were to enter into royal audience. Yoshida reminds us of Great Britain’s Lord George Macartney (1735-1806) who had defied the Chinese court in 1793 more than a century ago by refusing to adhere to the age-old ritual of nine pros-
trations acknowledging the supreme status of the Son of Heaven above all other sovereigns, the Qing Emperor Qianlong (1711-1799) in audience. In the name of “Western equality to China” Lord Macartney had insisted on paying his respect to the Chinese Emperor only according to the Western norms, meaning the customary British courtly ritual of kneeling on one knee in front of a monarch. 1 Just as Lord Macartney had defied the Chinese court of a century ago by refusing to kowtow to the Qing Emperor in the audience, in a small-scale and probably quite more ironic manner, Yoshida caused a minor protocol problem. In defying the “whisper message” that Yoshida should take off his shoes before entering the audience hall, Yoshida was the epitome of the Europeanization claim of Meiji Japan in the public sphere.2


Yoshida even claims to have responded with the following tirade on the demerits of taking off shoes. “Since I had dressed in my ceremonial attire, I could not take off my shoes.” Yoshida had carried the formal European attire including the shoes and top hat across the Iranian plains in an excruciatingly difficult journey on horseback along the Caravan route. “So, I answered that in Japan it is etiquette that in the Palace one wears shoes in the presence of the Throne and to see the Throne with unclad feet is considered to be of the greatest disrespect”. If we are to believe Yoshida, his speech, or tirade overshoes, carried a bit of a cautionary, undiplomatic tone. We do not have the Iranian records to confirm whether Yoshida really continued to add what today would be considered extremely discourteous: “If the Persian court does not want to accept the propriety in our country in their court, which means that we will commit disrespect for this one occasion, then this might make any kind of disrespect possible…”

Distressed as to what to do, the Persian Foreign Minister could not answer the irate Japanese envoy. The astute Protocol Officer, however, saved the day. Smiling gently, he again whispered down the row passing the message via the interpreter to Yoshida that “an exception will be made today on his behalf”. So, Yoshida and the rest of the seven-member Mission proudly had their audience with the Shah, keeping their shoes on. Later Yoshida was in a self-congratulatory mood when the British Minister in Tehran proclaimed that this was a cause for celebration. Yoshida as a newcomer had broken away the old customs of the court which for years required that diplomats could only have an audience with the Persian Throne without shoes. Yoshida is the pure, new Meiji elite of “civilization and enlightenment”, the bunmei kaika of Westernism as he pompously narrates the incident in his travel account, Kaikyō tanken: Perusha no tabi (The Expedition to the Islamic World: The Journey to Persia) that was published in 1894. Yoshida claims that he does not want to brag but explains that “instigating a newcomer to break the practice of old customs is a well-known method of old veteran diplomats because they need to avoid fighting to install proper practices and not notice the displeasure in front of one’s eyes in order to remain close to the sensibility of an alien and old entity”.

---

3 Yoshida, Perusha, pp. 141-142.
4 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 142.
Yoshida’s firsthand account has been criticized by some Japanese scholars of the Middle East who were critical of Yoshida’s prejudiced Westernist approach to the Muslim world—i.e. the shoe debacle. In hindsight Yoshida’s travel account can be recognized as having formed the frame of Japanese stereotyping of the Middle East and the Muslim world in a negative light by stating that it was not modern like the West or Japan. The Yoshida account does reveal to us some of the enduring perceptions as well as stereotyped images among the general Japanese public even today depicting Islam as an alien religion and the Middle Eastern world as a strange geography: exotic but alien, fascinating but also unfamiliar. Still, the Muslim world is seen as not quite compatible with the modern ideals of Japan and yet close to it as part of Asia displaying the dilemma of “Westernism” and “Asianism” in the Japanese psyche. But the travel account should not be simply seen as a foundational text of Japanese attitudes toward the Muslim world.

This paper argues that the Yoshida travelogue reveals to us the complex cultural and political layers with which Yoshida saw Qajar Iran and provides an instructive journey into the mind of a nineteenth century Meiji Japanese elite who still carried their Edo cultural background as well as the more obvious Westernism of the new regime. The Yoshida travelogue starts with the political agenda of the Meiji government in this Japanese Mission to the Muslim Hemisphere that contrasts with the earlier 1871-1873 famous Iwakura Mission to the West. This later mission to the “Muslim West” did not necessarily bring back know-how for modernity that could be adapted for Japan’s reforms, but it brought back crucial knowledge about contemporariness of global conditions and particularly an assessment of global politics. One can also detect the roots of Japan’s strategic perception of the Middle East and the Muslim World as an arena in the global rivalry between the Great Powers but also as a potential region for Japan’s entry as a new commercial interest and possibly a friendly contact zone.

Despite this “shoe and civilization” mode of Yoshida’s attitude toward

Iranians, the analysis of the travelogue helps us decipher the Japanese anguish over civilized behavior and survival amidst the global order forged by the Western imperial powers during the nineteenth century. Thus, by focusing on Yoshida’s account of another “non-Western” country such as Iran, this discussion exposes an instructive and picturesque journey that emancipates the reader from the binary of looking at modern Japanese experience solely via how the Japanese contrasted their situation with the “Western” world. Yoshida’s Persia interpretation thus forms a tertiary perspective on the Meiji Japanese anxiety in forging a new Japanese modern identity shifting between Europe and Asia that enriches our understanding of the self-reflection of being a Meiji Japanese person in the midst of the nineteenth century.

The travel account will show that Westernism initially colored Yoshida’s perception of Persia and the Shah’s reform attempt. But, in the course of his engagement with this alien new world of Muslim Persia, Yoshida groped for explanations of the dilemmas that faced Meiji Japan via his Persian experience. The Persian encounter taught him about the contemporary challenges in the international order threatened by the rivalry between the British and Russian empires. Yoshida’s excruciating attempt to decipher the culturally and geographically alien surroundings of the Persian world led him to create a new Chinese character-based vocabulary. In sum, the journey into the heart of the Persian Middle East instigated new political, social, and linguistic understanding of his contemporary global world.

**The Anguish of Civilized Behavior**

Read today, Yoshida’s “incident” surfaces as crass, at least from the perspective of the Iranian court and particularly Yoshida’s hunger to get the approval of the Western, i.e. British envoy in Tehran makes one cringe. The mini-crisis must have looked simply as unmannerly to the sophisticated bureaucrats of the Persian court whose etiquette traditions they thought had pretty much formed the basis of civilized courtly behavior in the greater East Mediterranean ever since the days of Alexander the Great in antiquity. It certainly was the case for the Muslim world since medieval times.
To our eyes today, the event appears particularly pathetic as Yoshida came from a culture where until recently taking off shoes indoors in a formal audience was the ancient courtly tradition. Only a few years ago, that one could not have an audience with the Shogun with shoes on showed how quickly the Meiji leaders had “discarded the old ways” and adopted a strict Western public image, particularly in the international arena.

But it was not a pathetic event in the context of the day, for during the nineteenth century, formal dress and courtly ritual of European monarchies, particularly the French tradition of “civilized” norms in etiquette and diplomacy, dominated the international system, and the practice and knowledge of the European elite practices had become very important as symbols of power and prestige. The Gaimushō particularly prided itself on the ability to speak and practice European culture. 6

For the Non-European powers, who adapted to European norms in various degrees, European dress and adaptation of courtly rituals became part of the material performance of a government’s intentions vis-à-vis the degree of adopting Western know-how and methods. Non-European polities which accepted European methods and know-how for reforms represented their new policies in the change of dress and manners as part of the larger transformation of the environment in European style architectural forms and artistic aesthetic. The Meiji government in 1872 had already passed a law that had made Western attire the requirement for all male public officials. The Meiji leaders intended to enhance the public image and authority of Emperor Meiji in the European monarchial tradition by the adoption of court rituals and ceremonies. In his well-distributed photograph, the young Meiji Emperor had his portrait taken in a European military uniform with lavish gold tassels and embroidery, although he clearly did not look very happy for the occasion. This was the official image of the new Japan that had chosen to accept Western civilization.

Yoshida was a product of this new image of blending into the Western norms of dress and etiquette that became part of the Rokumeikan 7 diplomacy. The name Rokumeikan, Deer Cry Pavilion, comes from a Chinese clas-

---


7 Rokumeikan diplomacy. The name Rokumeikan, Deer Cry Pavilion, comes from a Chinese clas-
macy involving cultural politics in treaty-revision that Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru had greatly fostered to convince the Western diplomats and residents in Tokyo of Japan’s modernity. The high elite’s “obsession” with European dress and airs was the brunt of the vehement critique of the press as an imitative, superficial copy of European ways.

At a higher psychological plane, we can understand the dilemma of Yoshida as a version of Norbert Elias’s “civilizing process” which had entailed the change in public etiquette and manners in the making of modern Europe that spread forth beyond the geographic frontiers of Europe in the West to the so-called “Non-Western” societies, irrevocably part of the global project for taking European know-how. Reforms in the “East” also involved the adoption of “European” dress, and the practice of public rituals, and manners. One can surmise that the shift was a doubly “tension-ridden” experiment for the Ottomans, the Persians, and the Japanese, as well as other peoples who had to change themselves by giving up “old ways”, sometimes totally. But that is an issue that is not directly relevant to understanding Yoshida’s dilemma in 1880, although it might explain why he was so nervous about the topic of shoes.\textsuperscript{8}

The Qajar Court, in the person of Shah Nasir al-Din and his high bureaucrats also adopted the attire of the European high elite on formal occasions and the new Iranian palaces were a combination of European and Iranian aesthetic, though, in comparison to the Ottoman court, the Iranian court kept more faithfully the traditional practices as seen in this case of “taking off shoes” in the imperial audience as a sign of deference to the Shah. The photographs and the paintings of the era show the Shah and the Iranian elite dressed in a European formal attire with a Fez like headgear or a high astrakhan top hat, but they are also shown in traditional Persian attire as well. A few months later, Yoshida was not to be required to take

off his shoes in Istanbul when the Japanese Mission was to meet with Abd- 
 dulhamid II and his high officials.

Yoshida’s attitude contrasts the “traditionalism” of the Iranian or the 
 Ottoman elites who, strongly aware of Muslim constraints and cultural 
 identity, incorporated a unique headgear such as the Fez or the Astrakhan 
 cap for men and the women’s veil over European dress. Yoshida’s attitude 
 represented the specific type of eclecticism that the Meiji elite had chosen 
 to incorporate western dress, rituals, etiquette, and manners into the civ-
 ilizing process in conjunction with the reform milieu of the age by clearly 
delineating the boundaries of a dual and separate ‘pure Western identity’ 
 versus a ‘pure Japanese one’.

But all of this was a little early to explain Yoshida’s reaction in 1880. 
For Yoshida, the public appearance of a Japanese envoy in the Qajar court 
 had to reiterate the ‘pure’ Western credentials of Japan. We do not know 
 whether the Persian court really changed their ritual by no longer re-
 quiring diplomats to take off their shoes in the presence of the Shah after 
 Yoshida or had they simply shown a momentary tolerance to this ner-
vous Japanese diplomat whom they did not consider a political threat and 
 wanted to make him at ease—which was more likely the case.

The Yoshida Mission Journey

In 1880, Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru, who was forced to resign after 
 the virulent crisis over treaty revision in 1887, had decided to send Yoshi-
 da Masaharu (1851-1921) of the Ministry as the head of the first official 
 Japanese mission to visit Qajar Persia and Ottoman Turkey. Known as a 
 liberal constitutionalist, Yoshida Masaharu was from a samurai family of 
 Tosa domain, one of the coalition domains that had orchestrated the Meiji 
 Restoration. The first son of Yoshida Toyo Masaaki, the Chief executive of 
 the Tosa clan who was assassinated in 1862, he studied English and law 
 in Tokyo. Yoshida’s patrons were Gotō Shōjirō, Itagaki Taisuke and Prince 
 Iwakura Tomomi, all major protagonists of the Meiji Restoration. Prince 
 Iwakura had had close relations with Yoshida’s father. In 1879, Yoshi-
da entered the newly founded Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had been
promoted to the highest rank of junior officials, which was a factor in his choice as the leader of the expedition.\(^9\)

Known as the Yoshida Mission, the ostensible purpose of this first Japanese expedition into the Middle East was to inquire about the possibility of concluding commercial treaties and collect first-hand extensive information about the conditions in these countries as possible markets for Japanese export products. But the real motive was to become the investigation of the Great Power rivalry between Britain and Russia over Persia and Ottoman Turkey and collect as much information as possible on the existing networks and conditions of politics, culture, and society in the “Muslim hemisphere”, Kaikyō ken. Compared to the focused intention of the Japanese who visited Ottoman Istanbul and Egypt earlier in 1873 to find out about the legal rights of Europeans under Consular courts, the Yoshida Mission, thus, had a more general agenda. This picturesque journey into the heartland of Persia was to be a tanken, an expedition to transmit the whole Muslim world’s state of affairs to Japan. This was the first official contact of Meiji Japan with the sovereign governments in the region. It was also the first time that the Meiji Japanese travelled directly from Japan to the Middle East by sailing into the Persian Gulf, bordering today’s Iran and Iraq.

The journey of Yoshida Masaharu and his team took a little over a year to complete. The Mission took off in March, Meiji 13, 1880 and ended sometime at the end of May, Meiji, 1881 when Yoshida returned to Japan. After they crossed the Indian Ocean and arrived in the Persian Gulf in the middle of the summer, (Yoshida arrived in May 20, Furukawa and Yokoyama on June 29, the rest arrived with the Japanese naval frigate Hiei on July 9) the Japanese Mission of seven members including an Army officer representing the newly established Sanbō Honbu, the Japanese General Staff, and five businessmen, settled in the little port-city of Basra, known as Bushehr, the sea-port town along the Iranian coast of the Gulf. Yoshida and a small group sailed up the Tigris river into Bagdad and toured the ancient Roman sites of Hebron. On July 25, the group finally embarked from Bushehr on horseback with a mule caravan that would traverse across the Iranian highlands up to the capital Teheran north. Bushehr, the

long-standing post of the Dutch East India Co., and later the British East India Co., was a town which served historically as the main seaport for oceanic trade. The Iranians had surrendered the port to the British in 1856 and it had become the site for the British empire’s political influence in the Persian Gulf. In their official status as the special guests of the Iranian monarchy, the Japanese team proceeded to take the traditional caravan route further into the deep hinterland of Persia, usually staying in the Iranian government’s Caravan Inns. They were hosted by the local governors of Shiraz and Isfahan. After they arrived in Teheran on September 7, the Yoshida Mission stayed about 120 days in Teheran during which time on September 27 they had important audience with Shah Nasir al-Din, the reformer of Iran. In the meantime, the mission tried to form some local contacts by showing off sample wares of Japanese export items such as porcelain, tea, silk, and lacquerware to the local bazaar merchants in the presumable hope of attracting export business, an important objective of the mission. Leaving on December 31, 1880, the group travelled extensively through the Russian territories of the Caucasus and the Black Sea, from which they sailed on February 12, 1881, into the Ottoman capital, Istanbul. In contrast to the three-month stay in Iran, the Yoshida Mission’s stay in Ottoman Turkey was quite short. The Japanese envoys had two audiences on March 12, and March 21, with the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II, who was an avid admirer of Japan, the Grand Vizier Said Pasha, and the Ministers. On March 22, the Yoshida Mission finally left Istanbul by boat, moving on to Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria whereupon the members separated and returned to Japan on their own at different times throughout the summer.¹⁰

The Yoshida Mission’s experience can be interpreted as a small-scale Iwakura Mission, that famous Meiji government’s mission headed by Prince Iwakura, which visited the major capitals of the West between 1871-1873, hoping to revise the “unequal” treaties of 1858 and to attain an equal status for Japan amongst the Western powers in international law. The Mission’s goal failed in the face of a haughty refusal in the major capitals of the West. But the Iwakura Mission members were also set out

to investigate the conditions of the modern ‘civilized’ world. The latter objective succeeded as the Mission brought back an immense amount of reports that would help inform the reform effort at home. The Yoshida Mission succeeded in investigating the conditions in the Muslim polities, namely the Ottoman empire and the Qajar Monarchy between Europe and Asia, and brought back information that formed the Meiji political elite’s general view of Islam as a civilization. One could suggest that the Yoshida Mission formed the basic tenets of future Japanese foreign policy toward the countries and peoples of the Middle East.

Before departure, the objective of the Yoshida Mission had already expanded way beyond the initial purpose of seeking commercial markets to a much larger charge of investigating practically everything about the world of Islam in this region. Like the Iwakura Mission whose huge piles of reports and documents formed the foundation of the Meiji leaders of the Western world, Yoshida and Captain Furukawa Nobuyoshi who represented the Sanbō Honbu, left the first detailed records of this journey. Both reports and materials, which were subsequently submitted to the authorities in Japan, became major sources of information about Qajar Persia and Ottoman Turkey in the upper echelons of the future Japanese government.

We understand that the merchant members also wrote diaries and travel accounts, but they have not been found yet. Later both Yoshida and Furukawa published modified versions of the material in book form. Noteworthy is the fact that Yoshida’s book, that constitutes the primary material of this paper, was published on the eve of the 1895 Sino-Japanese War, and was geared toward the general public not only to inform them about Iran but also to warn the public about the Great Game between Russian and British imperialism in Central Asia. The book is said to have had a particular impact among Japanese diplomats and educated readers. Furukawa’s book published by the Sanbō Honbu General Staff in 1891, was not for sale and obviously had limited circulation. The two works have formed the basis of the Meiji elites’ understanding of the Ottoman and Persian worlds for a long time.11

The Harrowing Caravan Expedition

The Yoshida Mission was a harrowing experience that marked the lingering “negative” impression of the Middle East as an alien environment for many Japanese in the future. During 1871-73, the large Iwakura Mission of 48 members were in pursuit of enlightenment and civilization to be transferred from the West and had enjoyed the “modern” comforts of Western cities and the efficiency of railroad travel in their three-year sojourn. In 1880, a decade later, the Yoshida Mission had to learn about the Muslim world literally the hard way by travelling to the Persian Gulf in the middle of the summer (one wonders why they would make such a horrible mistake) and then taking the Caravan route to the Persian capital Teheran up north on horseback, using camel and mule caravans under the harshest climates ranging from burning heat in the desert to the icy cold of the mountain ranges. The physical hardship in itself determined much of the negative impressions formed by the group of the region. In his introduction to the travel account, Yoshida notes that they had the opportunity to experience every single kind of geographic topography that one only reads about in geography books. 12

Travelling in Iran along the caravan route from Bushehr to Isfahan, Shiraz, Persepolis, and finally Teheran, between July 25 and September 7, during the hottest season in the region, the Yoshida Mission survived a very hard journey crossing the high mountains and the deserts along the way that contributed to their generally negative view of the Muslim Persian world. During the very difficult land trek, they faced an extraordinary number of problems from bandits, lack of clean water, and the harsh climates of the desert and highlands of the Iranian interior. The Japanese group faced radical changes of not only of weather from scorching heat to freezing ice-cold conditions, but periodic dangerous encounters with wild beasts and bandits. Yoshida’s graphic account describes the hard journey of the Japanese group who were quite unprepared to travel, literally hopping about in their saddles on horses and mules. Unlike the legendary Persian horses that the Tokugawa greatly admired, Captain Furukawa also notes that the caravan animals were skinny and haggard. 13

In an interesting literary analysis of Yoshida’s text, Sugita notes that Yoshida, who was not shy of using a prolific amount of embellishment in his narrative, was consciously using classical Chinese compound adjectives, which make the text particularly hard to read today. But he was trying to create a unique language in sound and shape that would convey the fantastic geographical environment that they encountered for the first time. In the same vein, Yoshida tells us vividly that they “crushed underfoot” the highlands and the desert when travelling overland. The experience was like “flying above the clouds” and then descending from the Equator to the Arctic Ocean.\footnote{Yoshida, Perusha, p. 64.}

Although up to now, the Japanese had enjoyed the hotels and offices recommended by their Dutch and British contacts during stays in Basra and Bagdad, they now had to go “local” along the journey up to Isfahan and then on to Teheran which added to their chagrin. The Japanese Mission stayed in the Chapar, the station hostels of the Persian government which was actually relatively better abodes assigned for the travel of officials and visitors along the way compared to the depravity of the manzil, ordinary caravan inns for regular folk. Although this was the more comfortable and faster route of travel, Yoshida complained that there was no proper food or bedding. At some point during the journey, the Mission split, as the Japanese merchants who had to carry a large amount of sample wares had to join the regular Caravan travelers, which were slower and endured worse accommodations in the manzil according to their account.

This first encounter between the Japanese and the farmers and tribes in the hinterland of Persia must have been unforgettable and quite unlike the “grand tour” excursions of many travelers in the Middle East that usually was restricted to European and Mediterranean urban sites. Since the locals thought that foreigners were capable of providing medical help, Yoshida gave carbonated soda to an ailing person and helped with minor health problems of the locals who appear to have greatly appreciated the gesture.\footnote{Yoshida, Perusha, pp. 66-68; Okazaki, “Meiji no nihon”, p. 76.} One of the members, Tsuchida, almost died as he fell off his mount and was lost in the desert where he was found by local farmers who carried him to the inn nearby and gave him bread and yogurt. He
is said to have brought that bread back home to Japan and placed it on a Shinto shrine. Despite Yoshida’s own reasonably well-prepared clothing and supplies, at least he seems to have read up on the travel accounts of British travelers to the region, surprisingly, most members of the Japanese mission were unprepared with uniforms for this difficult journey ahead and found themselves quite insufficient in terms of specifically suitable clothing. Yoshida himself had a Persian traveling bag which contained one outfit for everyday use and another one for ceremonial purposes, the famous shoes included, a medicine box, a kitchen knife, a couple of spoons, a brass dish, and a water glass. For self-defense, he carried a sword and a small pistol. The Persian cook was entrusted with the cooking, canned goods, meat, and powdered milk.

Some of the Japanese dressed in Iranian style clothing, procured in the region, others in European attire. Only Yoshida and the military members of the mission such as Captain Furukawa knew how to ride horses, and that created a problem for the rest of the group. The merchants apparently had great difficulty staying on their mounts. Since the Mission mostly travelled during the night in order to avoid the scorching heat, this was to be a serious problem for fear of losing some of the members. Some of the Japanese merchants carried old-fashioned short Japanese swords clasped to their waist as if they were in the Tokugawa period. Yoshida notes that this was probably their first time since the Meiji Restoration, harkening back to the old days during New Year visits, when merchants would be allowed to wear short swords as part of their formal attire. He also acknowledged that the merchant members of the group were simply not used to this kind of hardship, travelling under very difficult physical and climatic conditions, and to make do without food or water at times until reaching a station.

The travel account is peppered with this complaining tone about the alien social culture which was made more unbearable with the harsh conditions of travel, mostly on horse and mules. When the Japanese group came to Teheran a few days after Yoshida with a caravan, they were

---

constantly complaining that this was nothing like what they had imagined when they set out from Japan. Yoshida seems to have felt bad about the situation that he could not ameliorate. He says they had no color in their face, the difficulties were so great. With sickly faces, having travelled for 42 days with soiled clothes, their hats all warped, eyes glaring and beards shabby on withered faces, they just talked on about the horrid difficulties from Isfahan. The whole trip was hard on the nerves. Yoshida confesses that there were problems within the Japanese mission from the beginning. The merchants were inexperienced and often lost patience. Blaming himself for being quite unprepared for the job of keeping everybody in a reasonably satisfactory state of mind, Yoshida is particularly grateful to Yokoyama who already had experience in travel that frequently helped compensate for his deficiencies. But Yoshida notes that everybody turned around in the end since the “Japanese temper has a sense of integrity and responded to my encouragement and went about in every direction in this fierce land.”

The Royal Audience

After arriving in Teheran, Yoshida was greatly disappointed that Foreign Minister Mirza Hosein Khan (1827-1881), who was known for his progressive reforms, and had been the original contact person of the Gaimusho to prepare for the visit, suddenly fell out of favor in the face of conservative opposition from the ulema, the scholastic class. Mirza Hosein Khan who had become prominent in the Foreign Service and had been the Ambassador in Istanbul, was the major reformist Prime Minister of Nasir al-Din Shah. He was responsible for the Shah’s decision to visit the Ottoman Empire and the West including the trip to Russia that had led to contacts with the Japanese government. During his time, Hosein Khan’s reforms were controversial because he gave an extraordinary concession to the British subject Baron Julius de Reuter, of the famed agency, with exclusive rights to railroad, streetcar, mineral extraction, national Bank, industrial and agricultural development projects in lieu of a modest loyalty. Even Lord Curzon had thought that the concession was too extreme. But the plan fell through due to strong Russian pressure and local opposition that accused

20 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 126.
21 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 124.
the Minister of selling out the assets of the country. He died of mysterious circumstances in 1881 the year that the Yoshida visit took place.22

The Japanese visitors had to wait for the appointment of Mirza Aga Ibrahim Khan for the official audience with the Shah. After the new Minister was appointed, in a few days, the Yoshida mission was escorted into the Palace grounds by the Persian government’s Cossack brigade who was attired in brilliant uniforms with Astrakhan hats, and were settled into one of the palatial villas. Yoshida’s alienation from this environment is particularly obvious here when he even interprets what actually was a gesture of ceremonial courtesy in negative terms. When the Cossack brigade accompanied the Japanese who were riding in the midst of the entourage on the specially saddled horses sent from the Shah into the palace gates, Yoshida says “We must have looked like live captives to bystanders”. He is also annoyed that the Persian government assigned two guards outside of their residence who did little more than just expect tips (bahshesh) or that he had to spend so much time drinking coffee and tobacco with minor officials or the Foreign Ministry’s interpreter (who became the inter-mediatior for everything), and so on. In the meantime, Yoshida and the group displayed the sample wares that they had brought with them in the European style inn where they stayed which they still thought much preferable to the Palatial residence that the Shah had specially allocated for them. Concerned about the reception of their wares by the local officials, Yoshida, who was aware of the innovative reformist personality of Shah Nasir al-Din in pioneering new trends, sent some samples to the palace that he heard had pleased the potentate.23

The Yoshida mission’s official audience (when the shoe crisis occurred) on September 27, 1880, with Shah Nasir al-Din is of particular interest because it reveals the astute questions of the Shah which were probably prepared in conjunction with his bureaucrats, who were quite intent on finding out about this new Japan. Yoshida’s careful answers are interesting because they represent the official portrait that Meiji Japan diplomatically preferred to present to this Near Eastern monarchy.

---


23 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 144.
In the text, Yoshida is obviously pleased with the formal courtesy with which the reception takes place at this point. The day before the planned audience, Yoshida and the son of the new foreign minister, and the interpreter Mirza Ali who accompanied Yoshida ever since Bushehr, went over the details of the protocol to be followed in the audience. The Japanese mission was saluted with a presentation of arms inside the Palace gate. Throughout the journey, Yoshida would look at the Iranian officials with a condescending air, except for his good friend Mirza Ali and a few others whom he would befriend by the end of the 120-day long residency in the country. Yoshida preferred to associate with Iranians who had European education and disdained ‘pure Persian types’ that reinforced the cultural dichotomy in his negative view of Persian society. Just before the audience, the new Iranian Foreign Minister Ibrahim and his son came to explain the ceremony about the imperial audience with the Shah. The Minister annoyed Yoshida by asking whether he could also kindly put in a good word to the Shah by praising the fact that the government officials have been quite diligent and that there was no negligence in the treatment of the Japanese guests, which was essentially true. After all, the problems that Yoshida faced regarding the discomforts of travel generally plagued the Iranians as well. Even his account reveals that he was received with courtesy in all of the major stops along the way. But Yoshida finds this new request to put in a good word for the bureaucracy an affront to his personality, as he would “neither complain in an imperial audience but nor would he stoop to such flattery”. But then, he adds, the Minister who is a “pure Persian” would not understand the principle even if he explained it to him.\(^{24}\)

Yoshida is, however, very pleased that he could get all the Japanese merchants included in the audience, a rare event in any country. He speculates that the consent might have been because the Iranians wanted to see at firsthand what the Japanese looked like as a specimen of humanity or was it truly because of the Shah’s magnanimous gesture? Yoshida’s obsession with race permeates the text.\(^{25}\)

Quickly and vigorously going up the stairs after solving the ‘shoe crisis’, Yoshida entered the audience hall where the Persian officials were on


their knees in a deep bow with their heads bowed. The Shah was seated in a big chair attired in a majestic uniform studded back and forth with real precious stones. Yoshida performed a deep bow and turning toward the Shah he gave the official speech on behalf of the Japanese government “…desirous of the prosperity and august health of the Sovereign and thanking him profusely for having kindly originated the friendship between the East and West of Asia which will magnify His Majesty’s benevolence, friendship and justice.” The official report that Yoshida submitted to the Foreign Ministry later included the full text of Yoshida’s address that was quite long and began with a very flowery praise of the Shah’s reforms as “…one glorious light after another with every passing year. Such a performance has no comparison in the history of Asia”.26 Both Yoshida and the Shah posited the relations between Japan and Persia as the shared geography of the East and West of Asia, reminiscent of the notion that Asia is one emerged before Okakura Tenshin’s famous essay, The Ideas of the East which argued the cultural idea of Asia as one and was published in 1903. The Shah refers to Japan as an Eastern government like Persia and states that even if there is a great distance between Japan and Persia, “we both inhabit the same Asian continent, therefore, our spirit is the same as that of the Japanese Emperor.”27

The Shah proceeded to ask pointed questions about Japan’s level of technology, Europeanization, and political system. Lamenting the lack of railways in his own country, but expressing the intention to build them, the Shah asked whether “foreigners build the railways and provide the machinery for Japanese railways”, to which Yoshida pointed out that “the national government builds the railways and only the tools for the railroad are imported, the rest are domestically manufactured”. The whole tone of the conversation concerns the Shah’s particular interest on whether Japan’s new modernizing effort is primarily foreign-inspired or national in character. Yoshida assures the Shah that although foreigners were used quite extensively earlier, now the Japanese have taken over.28

27 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 141.
28 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 149.
When the Shah asks whether the Japanese Emperor presides personally over matters of state or delegates to ministers, Yoshida’s careful response portrays the Meiji Emperor as a monarch totally in charge and as an autocrat who personally undertook all matters only to be assisted by the cabinet ministers. The Shah’s question about the constitution of Japan meaning the political system and the recent changes over the traditional bifurcated form of the Japanese monarchy with the division of power between the Emperor and the Shogun shows him to be well-aware of the political changes as a result of the 1868 Meiji Restoration. Yamada explained that the Shogun’s office which was simply an administrative custom is now abolished. Furthermore, he stresses that Japan’s constitution has been based upon the unbroken line of sovereigns over 123 generations and spanning 2541 years. Here, Yoshida’s response emphasizes the extraordinarily durable strength of the constitutional nature of Japan which has remained unchanged despite the new administrative edicts and laws, assuring the Shah of the absolute power of the Japanese monarch. This was in keeping with the official ideology of the Meiji monarchy which ascribed the “unbroken succession” of the Japanese Imperial line to the Throne as the backbone of Japan’s “modern myths” in Carol Gluck’s terms rather than his own personal advocacy of a Constitutional monarchy with rights and liberties.²⁹

The dialog proceeded about how the mission sailed to the Persian Gulf with Yoshida making the point that the Japanese naval battleship Hiei was used and that the journey took only 60 days in total, although with a speedy vessel it should be accomplished in 45 days. The Shah asked about the military strength of Japan’s Army in comparison to that of China, in terms of European-style training.³⁰

The general tone of the conversation is quite candid about ascertaining the European style reforms of Japan with emphasis on its national character. The Shah asked Yoshida to introduce the members of the mission one by one and paid personal attention to each. He also asked point-blank whether they have come to investigate the commercial conditions

in Persia and whether the Mission will return back to Japan directly or visit European countries as well. The lengthy conversation ended with the Shah expressing his desire to open the way for close relations between Persia and Japan and that commerce can pave the way for this purpose. The ceremony ended with the presentation of royal decorations to Yoshida, Yokoyama, and Furukawa.  

Yoshida included the full text of his address and the conversation with the Shah to Foreign Minister Inoue in a report dated October 16, 1880. The Shah’s response was delivered to Yoshida on a later date, in a “fair copy written in that country’s language with and English translation on a thick paper of gold paint” that remains in the Gaimusho Diplomatic Record Office to this day.  

Despite the extraordinary flowery language of Yoshida, the historian Nakaoka finds the Shah’s response friendly but vague. The Qajar court was possibly concerned about Japan’s true intentions. The Shah considered the Emperor of Japan akin to that of a well-beloved brother and sufficed by “wishing” for friendship and amity. The procedure for the audience was arduous. Yoshida spoke in Japanese, Yokoyama translated it into English, Mirza Ali Khan interpreted the English into Persian.  

Still, the audience was a great success. Yoshida and the mission were barraged with invitations and courteous visits by officials and diplomats in the days that remained. The eruption of a Kurdish rebellion in the countryside made the second audience impossible, but the Japanese Mission enjoyed the hospitality of the Shah and made frequent trips around the country.  

On December 30, at 9 o’clock in the morning, the mission departed after a lively series of farewells and banquets from the Persian officials who had been hosting them for more than three months! The diplomatic community in Tehran also contributed to the festivities. The Russian Minister provided the letters to go through the Caucasus territories, now under Russian authority. On 30 December, 1880, the English translator and guide Mirza Ali Khan Atabak from the Foreign Ministry, by now a very good friend, and the Minister of Commerce, accompanied the Yoshida

31 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 149.  
Mission to outside of the city gates. Mirza Ali gave one of the businessmen, Tsuchida, the copy of “Tarikh-e Wassaf” (The History of Wassaf), the classic work of the famous historian of the medieval Ilhanid Mongol court which was written around 1332, as a present. Much later the Tsuchida family donated the work, with other materials that Tsuchida had brought, to Tokyo University where it has been only very recently discovered.34

With the letters of the Russian minister for the Khanates in the Caucasus along the way, Yoshida tells us that the return trip to Istanbul was much more comfortable.35

Civilization and Enlightenment Faces Racism

Yoshida’s critical commentary on Iran revealed the Japanese adoption of European racism as an ideological fact, racializing countries according to their ‘civilizing’ mission for modernity.36 The Meiji discourse on civilization and enlightenment, or, bunmei kaika, also was wrought with the conceptualization of a racialized global hierarchy of nations. The nineteenth century idea of the enlightenment in Meiji Japan was much more of an urgent reformist agenda that was forged under the global context of Western imperialistic hegemony. Enlightenment was necessary for the sake of survival, rather than as a universal aspiration. As Sebastian Conrad notes, the Japanese Meiji intellectual discourse on the enlightenment in such figures as Fukuzawa Yukichi, was part of the nineteenth century global history of Enlightenment discourse beyond Europe and reflected in this combative mission to adopt Western civilization in order to protect oneself against Western imperialism.37

The Yoshida narrative is also like a confessional narrative about what it precisely meant to be a Meiji Japanese -Westernized or Europeanized as the term was coined back then- and developing a new sense of being Japanese by striving for enlightenment and civilization while facing the contemporary world in the midst of racism, imperialism, and cultural

34 Yamanaka, “Meiji nihonjin”, p. 127.
35 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 178.
alienation. Yoshida’s record of entry into the alien world of the Gulf and beyond starts off with exclamations of serious physical discomfort soon after their arrival in Bushehr, the port of entry into Persia. But there was also severe psychological duress caused by physical hardships. While in Bushehr, the Japanese visitors suffered under the blinding sunshine and heat, which was made worse with platoons of mosquitoes and flies. Yoshida says that the merchants were constantly complaining and just wanted to pack their goods and leave.\(^\text{38}\)

The trip from Bombay on an English steamship had been no better. The terrible experience had been a micro-level exhibition of racist rudeness-typical of nineteenth century European colonial behavior. The English captain who appears to have been a cruel maniac severely mistreated the Indian staff on the ship. Yoshida notes “as was the practice of the English in India”, which disturbed all onlookers including the Japanese. Worse was the humiliation in the hands of the captain. Yoshida comments that as we “did not have the appearance of White men” he treated us in the same rude manner as the Indian passengers. The captain screamed and shouted at the ship orderly even went to the extent of kicking the poor servant over the taste of the food and even threw knives at him, totally impervious to how the passengers were aghast. So horrible was the mood on the ship, that as the steamer approached Bushehr all the passengers and the Japanese group who were so tired of the Captain’s crazed pomposity literally ‘abandoned ship’ in a rush and went on land.\(^\text{39}\)

The Persian authorities were waiting in Bushehr for the Yoshida Mission. The interpreter of the local foreign affairs bureau of the Iranian government and the special team of horses sent by the Persian governor transported the Yoshida Mission to the house of a local Armenian merchant and settled them into a “dusty room with shoddy chairs scattered about”. Though rescued from the taunts of the English captain, this time it was “culture shock” that plagued the group. The Persian interpreter who was trying to make the Japanese group comfortable had lunch ready in the room but the “oily smell of pure Persian food pierced our nostrils making

\(^38\) Yoshida, Perusha, pp. 16-17.
\(^39\) Yoshida, Perusha, pp. 16-17.
us wish we were back in the ship where we were rudely treated.” The rest of the time, Yoshida met with the governor preparing for the trip to Tehran. The group which was introduced to the local merchants through their interpreter spent time in the local bazaar just getting some impressions of the conditions for foreign trade. They had to change their lodgings three times for fear of scorpions because none of the inns had high beds. Rescued by the Dutch, the Japanese Mission was finally happy with the kind help of Mr. Holtz and rented the second floor above his store.\(^{40}\)

Although the Japanese group’s attitude toward the local Arab and Iranian natives was distanced and not particularly friendly, Yoshida’s self-reflections about how they must have appeared to the locals, reveals the self-examination that was prevalent among the educated Japanese about their modern identity as a person and as a people that still survives to this date. Anchored in the classic dilemma of whether the Japanese are culturally Asian or European, and whether they are part of Eastern or Western civilization, Japanese men and women have continued such self-questioning about their national identity and modernity in temporal and spatial terms. After first living in Persian style, when the group moved on to live with the Dutch, Yoshida saw the cultural implications of this simple shift. The choice was obviously Yoshida’s preference for being part of the modern European world in the alien Middle East, in addition to the comforts of a high bed away from scorpions. But one comes away with the sense that of all the Europeans, Yoshida’s group particularly preferred to form friendly intimacy with the Dutch, who were the European cultural community that the Japanese had known since the Tokugawa period.

Yoshida’s comments contain the awareness that everyday habits constituted the benchmarks of one’s affiliation to different civilizing worlds. Yoshida wonders what the locals must think of the Japanese both racially and culturally. This was a question which was probably not that important for the Europeans in the Gulf who went about living their own lives in contained environments within the local community and knew themselves to be “Frenk” or foreign anyway.

\(^{40}\) Yoshida, *Perusha*, pp. 16-17.
When the Arab and Persian customers in the Persian style inn saw the Japanese faces, Yoshida felt “we could credulously be mistaken for Indian or an Arab people”. But, when they noticed how the Japanese could also sit upright on carpets like the locals and that they similarly liked to eat rice, these were signs of cultural affinity. Yoshida notices that the locals began to be at ease and actually started to like the Japanese because they were mild-mannered, unlike the brash Europeans. The demarcation line was eating habits, however. The locals called the habits of the Japanese “Frengistan” considering them to be like the Europeans when they preferred to use knives, forks, and spoons. The Japanese also drank alcohol and ate pork, shellfish, and beef, which Yoshida says Muslims did not eat. The other local guests in the Persian style inn started to invite the Japanese to share their meals. However, the Mission members did not want to go as the locals and “use their fingers as natural chopsticks”. They made sure to always use some kind of a wooden stick as a temporary chopstick to eat. Finally, when the Mission started to live with the Dutch, the Japanese group appeared happy to be able to resort to the European ways of living.⁴¹

Yoshida wonders how this shift of cultural habits and abode must have appeared to the local people, who initially would have thought that the Japanese visitors were like them. Now that the Japanese preferred to live with the Dutch and followed “Frengistan” manners, the locals must have been greatly surprised at “the revelation of this dark inner identity” like the inner lining of one’s stomach (tachimachi kokutohi wo roken suru ni itari).⁴²

Yoshida’s evaluation of Qajar Iran designates it to be at the level of the semi-enlightened polities of the Orient, tōyō, like Qing China to which he makes frequent analogies pursuing the trail of Fukuzawa’s argument about the hierarchy of nations as “enlightened” and “semi-enlightened” countries. Yoshida concludes that the reforms of the Shah in introducing European education are still underdeveloped. The Holy Koran overwhelmingly dominates law and the educational system.⁴³ The Persian military system is laughable, consisting of a collection of tribes similar to the Eight Banner

---

⁴¹ Yoshida, Perusha, p. 16-21.
⁴² Yoshida, Perusha, p. 21 for stomach.
⁴³ Yoshida, Perusha, p. 170.
Army of China. The provincial system of administration and military forces are again similar to that of China with provincial governors having a high degree of local autonomy over the life and death of the inhabitants. Since the orders of the ruler have to be completely obeyed, the people can only protect their prosperity if they can get the governor on their side.

But there are moments when Yoshida develops a comparative perspective that explains the Persian environment in the context of past Japanese history, and which globalizes Japanese and Persian experiences with respect to each other without the West. Yoshida uses early Japanese Buddhist history in a novel manner to explain Persia to Japanese readers. He explains the Shia Islam religious tradition of Persia and the historic conflict with the Ottoman Sunna tradition by an analogy to the conflict between the Lotus Sutra sect, Hokkekyō, of the Nichiren order and the True Pure Land Sect, the Jodōshinshu, during the Warring States period of the 16th century, as they fought in the Honganji temple in Kyoto. He claims that Persia is in an Age of Degeneration of Buddhism, Mappō, when the energy of worship of God is in decline. The Persian soldiers saunter about with rifles slinking onto their backs, counting prayer beads and mumbling soft prayers from their lips as if they are diligently hoping to see the beautiful virgins in Heaven rather than hoping for the honor of battle to smite evil as the Islamic motto demands.

There is also a contemporary lesson to be learned from the pitfalls of the Persian monarchy in “imitating” the West, through Yoshida’s criticism of Persia’s European-style reforms. Explaining the recent modern history of Persian reforms, Yoshida notes that during the tea parties of the few foreign residents of Teheran, he overheard their conversations criticizing the Persian government’s “imitation” of foreign countries and its political and diplomatic blunders. Yoshida learned a lesson from this situation, remembering how foreigners were acting in a similar light in Japan, ridiculing Japanese reformist trials and errors. The tone is the need for the preservation of national dignity. Yoshida argues that it is a nation’s

44 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 166.
45 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 175.
46 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 171.
47 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 171.
duty to see to it that the native country does not lose its particular characteristics despite European-style reforms. Yoshida describes the recent history of Nasir al-Din Shah’s visits to European countries, which became occasions for introducing modern reforms including highways, postal services, European-style education and military training, or granting Russia and Britain concessions for the construction of railways, telegraph lines and mining rights as well as using Austrian officers for training the new army. But for Yoshida, the bravery of the Persian forces that amazed the world had declined. The vigor of the people had weakened.  

Yoshida uses this criticism of the Persian experience as a lesson for today’s Japanese at the date of the publication, 1895, at the onset of the Sino-Japanese War, who ought not to follow the mere imitation of Europe and yet should make use of European civilization for the country’s benefit, which probably reflects the increasingly patriotic-nationalist discourse at the end of the nineteenth century in Japan that overshadowed the liberal revolutionary pro-Western enthusiasm of the early Meiji years. Yoshida notes that although it is good that each country should make use of the merits of others and make up for one’s own deficiency, Persia had discarded its own merits before adopting those of others, to the degree that there remained only the demerits.  

**The Fight Between Tigers and Dragons**

At the end of his book, Yoshida makes a strategic analogy to the situation present in Afghanistan and Central Asia in 1894, roughly ten years after the 1880 journey, to argue that Western imperialism threatens the future of Japan by having invaded Central Asia. The British, though “defeated in the hands of the brave Afghan warriors who were deft in the use of the long sword”, had proceeded to put up a puppet regime in Afghanistan. On the other hand, Russian forces had killed “all the best soldiers of the Turkoman tribes in Merv”. and were making trouble for China in the Kulja frontier, to which the Chinese governor of Gansu was incapable of sending an army to stop Russian activities. He likens this situation to

---

the fight between “tigers and dragons”. The Persian government’s nimble steps and vacillations against both, which he had observed back in 1880, made him worry whether the same situation might now occur in the Far East. He implies that Persian-style vacillation by Japan against the threat of the Western imperialist powers would be disastrous.50

Yoshida also submitted a Seiryaku, his strategic evaluation of the Mission’s experience in Iran to the Foreign Ministry which was an in-depth political analysis of British and Russian activities in the Middle East and Central Asia. Analyzed by Nakaoka in full detail, the Seiryaku fully reveals that the political objectives of the mission primarily had been to study the British and Russian competition for influence in the region.

It looks as if the Japanese positive response to the Shah’s invitation that was ostensibly desirous of beginning direct relations, had been instrumentally used as a cover-up. The Yoshida Mission had used the opportunity of their official stay in Teheran and the subsequent two-month-long trip to Istanbul, actually, to conduct a careful study of the Russo-Iranian and the Russo-Ottoman border areas. Nakaoka notes that Yokoyama, as the Vice President of Ōkura Holding and the head of the London Branch, played an active role in purchasing munitions in London in preparation for the expected war against China over Korea- this would make it 14 years before the war broke out with China over Korea. Nakaoka argues that the real objective of the Mission was to monitor Russian activities in view of the pending conflict that Russian southward expansion over the Korean peninsula would inevitably create between Japan, China, and Russia. This may have been the case, but the inclusion of the Japanese merchants in the Iran leg of the mission indicated the government’s parallel interest in investigating the traditional Dutch market for Japanese goods as a step to expanding the global markets for Meiji consumer exports.51

In the Seiryaku, Yoshida makes frequent allusions to a “Persian Gentleman’s” opinion which one strongly suspects was the excellent English interpreter Mirza Ali. He summarizes past British interventions in the region and the recent Russian territorial advances into the traditional realm

50 Yoshida, Perusha, p. 189.
of the Persian empire to indicate that both powers are gaining ground in Central Asia. For Yoshida, Britain played a game in the Near East as it always stood by Persia in territorial and political conflicts with the neighboring Ottoman empire. British tactics “served to generate antagonism between them from establishing a special relationship based on their common Islamic religion” which is again a novel interpretation on the part of Yoshida about the historic sectarian divide between the Sunna and Shia that emerged ever since the Ottoman-Iranian War in the seventeenth century. For Yoshida, imperialist interests in this region had prevented the two traditional empires from solidarity. But the fight over the territories of the Ottoman and Qajar polities also provided great opportunities for Britain and Russia in their rivalry with each other.  

Yoshida also has an opinion on the connections between imperialism and ethnic politics. He had witnessed the Kurdish rebellion in July and August of 1880, that had erupted against high Persian taxation when they were in the Gulf area. He concluded that it had been British induced. For Yoshida, the large Kurdish population who inhabited the frontier between the Ottoman and Qajar realms were Great Britain’s bulwark. Supporting the cause of Shaykh Abdullah, the Amir of the region, the British Minister in Tehran personally had praised to Yoshida the qualities of the Kurds compared to the Persian government. But the Russians who moved closer to the Qajar monarchy in recent years, had supported the Persian government in suppressing the Kurdish rebellion. 

Yoshida explains that Central Asia too was the prancing ground for British and Russian rivalry. The British moved into the Herat region in Afghanistan, which the Persian government claimed. While cooperating with Persia against Russian advances into the Merv area, Britain also supported the local powerful warlord Abdulrahman Khan in Afganistan, as a bulwark against Russian penetration. 

Yoshida saw the recent demotion of the Western-educated anglophile Foreign Minister and the mysterious death of Hosein, who had been their initial contact, as a reflection of the shift in the Shah’s government toward

Russia, to counter British hegemony. Yoshida has a “Persian Gentleman” explain that the former Foreign Minister Hosein had secretly kept in touch with Great Britain and had tried to introduce progressive reforms. But the present-day conservative circles who had him ousted were under the shelter of the Russians. Yoshida also considered the Shah to be an important leader who would have been successful had his senior officials not been so uncooperative. But he was an autocrat. Having visited Europe after the French Revolution, the Shah was seriously disturbed by the recent rise in French type Republican ideas and tried to protect his wealth and honor through despotic oppression. From the account of Yoshida, one can surmise that the Persian Gentleman is Mirza Ali Atabak, the excellent English-speaking translator who had been educated in Malta, and had accompanied the Yoshida Mission throughout their journey.\footnote{Nakaoka, “The Mission”, pp. 223-224.}

Nakaoka notes that Yoshida sensed a “latent danger” in the great enthusiasm of the Shah for opening trade relations with Japan. His conclusion was that there was no urgency in opening trade or expanding relations with Persia that might embroil Japan in such a troublesome spot of British and Russian rivalry. Therefore, Yoshida’s conclusion was political, rather than economic, in the end.

**Assessment**

Still, although the Yoshida team found it difficult to “penetrate” into the alien world that, for them, was not like the civilized West, they were amazed at the great alien cultural world. Sprinkled with images of great beauty and austere monuments unfolding in front of them as they travelled along the ancient Silk Road into the hinterland of the Persian empire, subsequently followed by their comparatively brief sojourn in Ottoman Istanbul, Yoshida duly described this as the most beautiful construction of the Creator.\footnote{Yoshida, *Perusha*, pp. 1-2.} The long expedition formed the basis of their general impressions of the Muslim world as a combination of the amazing, beautiful, and ancient sites with a complex cultural mix that this mission appears to have not been prepared to penetrate. The months’ long experience of the Mission participants in the region, and their official status, which enabled
direct access to the rulers and bureaucrats in both governments. provided firsthand information between these two so-called “Non-Western” polities in Asia. Both were dealing with the common hegemonic influence of the Western world in their own pattern, though the Japanese surfaced as having made more strides in adopting Western forms and notions of power.

The Yoshida Mission also says something about the Tokugawa legacy of foreign relations in modern Japan as well. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs chose to make the Mission’s entry into the Middle East through Iran, which is geographically the closest part of the Muslim Middle East to Japan. The point of entry into Iran was chosen to be the Basra region using Bushehr port in the Persian Gulf, which was the gate to the Silk Road route, leading to Tehran, the capital of Persia. The Japanese appear to have acted in line with the Tokugawa understanding of Muslim geography that derived from their centuries-old interaction with Holland, which had ascribed importance to Basra as the main depot of the Dutch East India Company. Members of the Mission had read accounts of Persia in the famous book of the Tokugawa age, Seiyō Kibun (Records of Things Heard from the West) from 1715, written by Arai Hakuseki, the advisor of the Shogun in foreign affairs. The central location of Iran on the traditional trans-Asian commercial route to Europe in the Tokugawa map of the world was the legacy which had initiated the Japanese economic interest. The Dutch had always sold Japanese Arita-yaki porcelain to Iran and the Yoshida Mission Japanese merchants had followed in Dutch footsteps to bring such wares themselves.

**The Global Aftermath**

The Yoshida Mission to the Muslim Hemispheres began official contacts between the Meiji government and the Muslim polities of the region and initiated the Meiji Japanese into an unknown civilization. The Meiji Japanese had become accustomed to looking at the contemporary world through the lenses of the West and had accepted in large measure its self-image as the world of progress and enlightenment. Keeping the West as the benchmark of modern civilization, Yoshida gazed with a jaundiced eye at this micro-level encounter with Western presence in the Middle
East and Central Asia as *the fight of tigers and dragons*. He also critically judged Iran according to the standards of Western modernity. The opinions of the Yoshida Mission portray a mixture of Western Orientalist assumptions with some original observations, serving as an instructive and picturesque journey into the Japanese perception of the nineteenth-century world. The Mission confirmed Fukuzawa Yukichi’s opinion that Qajar Persia and Ottoman Turkey, though sovereign powers that were also reforming through the adoption of Western civilization, were troublesome spots and not quite in the center of modern civilization. Contemporary scholarship today agrees with the consensus that the Yoshida Mission was instrumental in the formation of the mainstream Japanese perspectives which included much of the prejudices about the Islamic world as backward and not part of the modern world.

Significantly, the actual impetus to open relations had initially come from the Iranian side, which was interested in expanding trade and friendly relations with young Japan, perhaps to gain some space to maneuver globally from the relentless pressures of Russia and Britain. Yet the Yoshida Mission had concluded that the political rivalry between Britain and Russia and probably the very recent leaning of the Shah toward Russia made this venture into “globalization” unwise. The Shah too, in the end, had kept his ardor for Japan vague enough to ascertain Japan’s real intentions.

In hindsight, however, Yoshida’s visit suggests the roots of the importance that Iran carries in Japan’s foreign policy today toward the Middle East and Central Asia. Yoshida noted that Persia, today’s Iran, occupies a point of strategic importance in a region where there is strong rivalry among the outside major powers especially between Great Britain and Russia. 57

At the moment, Yoshida and Furukawa’s verdict was negative in terms of the difficulties in penetrating the Persian market, but in time the global trade links would work favorably.

As for the Persian record of the visit, the court historian Mohammad Hasan Khan, the Etemad al Saltaneh, the trusted servant of the court, wrote in elegant Persian prose the Yoshida visit in an entry of his history of the

---

era. For Mohammed Hasan Khan “The government of Japan, one of the Oriental states which is located in Asia dispatched the Mission... in order to request the opening of communications as well as to establish a friendship with the Persian government”. The historical record narrated that “The government officials of Bushehr welcomed them in a suitable, respectful manner... the officials (in Shiraz) performed a ceremony in honor of the special envoy and fellow travelers”. We find out that they were lodged in the Bagh-e Il-Khani, (The Ilhanid Garden Palace) one of the blessed Imperial Palaces, under the complete care of the government officials. Unlike Yoshida, the whole tone is a very positive, respectful notation of this visit. 58

Although Iran and Japan did not, in the end, sign a treaty even though the Minister of Commerce and Mirza Ali and the Shah himself appear to have been quite enthusiastic, this investigative visit set the stage for contacts in the future. Most importantly, the Yoshida Mission began the Iranian intellectual engagement with Japan’s Constitutional modernity as a model for Iran. The Iranian Constitutional Revolution in 1906, the first Constitutional monarchy in the region after the 1876 Ottoman Constitution had been “shelved” by Abdulhamid in the neighboring Ottoman Empire, (both were based on the Belgian Constitution), took the Japanese Constitution as an inspiration. Later the former Prime Minister of Iran, Atabak Azam Amin al-Saltaneh (1858-1907) visited Japan in 1903 after his resignation from the office with Mehdigoli Hedayat (1864-1955) during their world tour. An eminent writer and historian, Hedayat continued a prominent political career and held important posts in the Iranian government including the Prime Ministry (1927-32) during the reign of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi Shah. 59 They stayed in Japan close to a month and met with important Japanese leaders such as Katsura Tarō Itō Hirobumi, Ōkuma Shigenobu, and Komura Jūtarō. The Iranian visitors were treated as official dignitaries. Hedayat, who was educated in Germany, wrote an account of their trip Safarnama ye Makkeh (Book of Travels to Mecca) which actually was mostly about China and Japan, and that discussed at length

the modern reforms of the late Meiji era through his observations of Japanese society. Like many of the Muslim writings on Japan at the time, the account idealized Japan as the epitome of modernity.

The trip profoundly affected the world view of the two Persian political figures. Hedayat later on is said to have shaped the first Parliament of Iran inaugurated in 1906 with the example of the Japanese Diet in mind. Hedayat wrote in his memoirs that Atabak’s interviews with Japan’s Prime Minister Katsura Tarō and Marquis Itō Hirobumi had changed him. Without any doubt, Atabak after the trip was not “what he used to be before in his politics”.  

The trip profoundly affected the world view of the two Persian political figures. Hedayat later on is said to have shaped the first Parliament of Iran inaugurated in 1906 with the example of the Japanese Diet in mind. Hedayat wrote in his memoirs that Atabak’s interviews with Japan’s Prime Minister Katsura Tarō and Marquis Itō Hirobumi had changed him. Without any doubt, Atabak after the trip was not “what he used to be before in his politics”.  

The trip profoundly affected the world view of the two Persian political figures. Hedayat later on is said to have shaped the first Parliament of Iran inaugurated in 1906 with the example of the Japanese Diet in mind. Hedayat wrote in his memoirs that Atabak’s interviews with Japan’s Prime Minister Katsura Tarō and Marquis Itō Hirobumi had changed him. Without any doubt, Atabak after the trip was not “what he used to be before in his politics”.  

The story of the Yoshida expedition also tells us something about the global public relations network. In this case, progressive Muslim Iranians were aptly used by the Japanese authorities to make sure that the message of Japan as a friend of Iran got through to the general public via their contacts with Iranians in Istanbul. The Persian language Journal *Akhtar*, a newspaper published by an Iranian merchant in Istanbul between 1880-1896 that was widely read by Persian speakers in the Ottoman territories, Iran, India, Egypt, and Europe, and a major outlet for progressive and modernist ideas, started to publish many articles on Japanese reforms of education including the translation of the Meiji education edict of 1872, military, the press, world fairs, industry and many other topics.  

On March 23, 1881, the newspaper published a report of the Yoshida Mission, whose members had briefly stopped in Istanbul on their way back to Japan from the official visit to Iran. The newspaper presented an Asianist vision for the future progress of all Asian peoples including Iranians if only Asian peoples would rise to action and zeal from their inertia. The report gave the example of the Japanese who showed zeal to learn as much as possible from the West, whereas the Ottomans and the Persians had been reluctant. The article begins with an impassionate appeal for Asian unity and advises the Asian countries to conclude “treaties of peace

---


and friendship which will unite them against European “lions”. The author of this report warned readers to beware of allowing the Europeans to control modern transportation, and this appears to allude to the political crisis in Iran over the Reuteur concession and which also contextualizes Shah Nasreddin’s pointed questions to Yoshida about whether the Japanese railroads are built by the government.

The question of the Japanese as a “heathen” people was diplomatically circumvented at the end of the report by the secular vision: “Our last obligation is to approve of all requests for sincerity and to unite the foundations for happiness, progress, and peace in the whole of Asia, so that there will be no incompatibility based on religious affiliation…”

Whether the Japanese “report” in question was directly based on Yoshida’s report as the paper claimed is not clear. Yoshida’s report on Iran to Tokyo certainly did not contain such avid advocacy of Asianist aims, but this was the propaganda image that he and the members of the Mission chose to impart to the Iranian public through the Akhtar. The journal was going to be quite influential behind the tobacco boycott of the Teheran on the eve of the 1906 Constitutional Revolution. The report probably relied on notes given by Yoshida, Yokoyama, or Furukawa, the three members of the Mission who had taken time out to contact the Iranians living in Istanbul. The Iranian editor may have also made use of the conversation of the Yoshida group to support his own opinions. The Asianist orientation of the article was quite novel for the time. Neither merely anti-Western nor simply pro-Western, it combined Westernism and anti-imperialism into a single real-politic pragmatic vision. The article noted two major ideas: first; “the importance of learning from the West and using the experiences of others”, and second; “the importance of guarding against Western dominance”.

Iran and Japan still had to wait until the late twenties and particularly the thirties when Japanese business activities in the Middle East established mostly for importing oil and exporting textiles and other inexpensive goods that competed with British domination in the local markets.

63 Anja, “Progress”, p. 124.
64 Anja, “Progress”, p. 126.
The trade surge also provided the economic background for the strong Japanese interest to be much more active in the region and in Islamic affairs. Both countries instituted formal diplomatic relations in 1926 under Riza Shah Pahlavi who had just toppled the Qajar and established his dynasty. Known as one of the autocratic modernizers of the era, the Pahlavi government signed a Treaty of Amity with Japan in 1939 and, until the Russian and British occupation of the country during the Second World War, he appears to have courted German and Japanese relations.65

As for Yoshida, he went on to accompany Prince Itō Hirobumi on his journey to Europe to prepare the Meiji Constitution that was promulgated in 1889. His previous visit to Persia must have matured his opinion of the West as a modern civilization, which simultaneously was the “fight between the dragon and the tiger” that threatened the Far East. Yamanaka suspects that Yoshida’s Persian experience probably affected Yoshida’s vision of how Japan should take its place in the modern world. The journey to the Persian Gulf and the Persian Muslim world had revealed the underside of the modern West with disturbing instances of racism and imperialistic ambition. For Yoshida, Great Powers’ ambitions made the prospects for reform ever more difficult for the troubled sovereign autocracies in the Muslim world which were squeezed between perennial Western pressure and domestic demand for participation in politics. The trip to Persia had become the source of information about British activities and Russia’s advance toward the East. It showed the difficulties of autocratic governments that tried to reform their countries without functioning constitutions.66 But some of the intellectuals who encountered Yoshida were to accomplish the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906 with popular support that paved the way for the global moment of Revolutions – the 1908 Young Turk Revolution in the Ottoman empire and the 1911 Chinese Revolution that toppled the Qing dynasty.67

67 See special Issue on Constitutional Revolutions in Iran, Ottoman Turkey, Russia, Japan. Divan, Volume 13 No. 24 and 25 (2008-1, 2008-2) issues.
Abstract

The article tells about the ethnographic essay “On the Life of the Turkic People in Harbin”, written and published in 1924 in the Japanese magazine “Tōyō” (東洋) by the Japanese Turkologist Okubo Koji (大 久保 幸 次), who later became the founder of Islamic and Turkic academic research in Japan.

This essay is considered to be among the first essays in Japanese Turkology regarding the Turkic peoples of Russia. It provides valuable information about various aspects of the lifestyle of the Turkic-Tatar emigrant community in Harbin during the period from the beginning of the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway until 1924. It illustrates Okubo as a mediator in the Tatar-Japanese (Turkic-Japanese) relations in the pre-war period and allows us to draw conclusions about Okubo’s views on the Turkic-Tatar people and their national movements. The essay consists of seven parts: 1) Turkic-Tatars as a nation, 2) the gradual advancement of the Turkic peoples to the East and their appearance in Manchuria, 3) national organs of the Turkic-Tatar community, 4) racial stereotypes, 5) Turkic language, 6) religion of Turkic-Tatars, 7) daily life of the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin. This essay highlights the important, yet underestimated and little-known role of Okubo in supporting Turkic-Tatar emigrants in the Far East. It is alleged that this essay prepared the Japanese reader to accept the Turkic-Tatar people as a possible political ally in the future.

Keywords: Okubo Koji, Harbin, Russia, Japan, Turkey, Turkic studies, Islamic studies, Turkic-Tatar emigration
**Koji Okubo – one of the First Japanese Turkologists**

When we talk about contacts between countries and cultures, summarizing the long-standing experiences and relations between the two, we must not forget that these contacts are usually carried out by specific individuals, whose bright characters and fates are worthy of being described not only in scientific articles but also in fiction. In Russian-Japanese, Tatar-Japanese, and Turkic-Japanese relations, there are such heroes and mediators, who played the main roles in the establishment and existence of intercultural contacts. One of such names forgotten in Japan, Russia, and Turkey is the name Okubo Koji (大 久保 幸 次 , 1887-1950), who was a pioneer of Turkic and Islamic studies in Japanese academic science.

According to his biography, Okubo was initially interested in European culture, primarily German. In 1910, he entered the German language department of the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages. After graduating with honors in 1913, he enrolled as a student in a special course at the Faculty of Eastern History at the same school. Perhaps, while studying German culture, he developed his interests in Muslim culture through the work of European scholars. In particular, in his articles on Turkic peoples, he refers to the works of French and German anthropologists.¹

In 1915, along with publications and translations from German, he publishes his first article on the Quran. In 1921, he follows with the publishing of his translation of the Turkic tale of Khoja Nasreddin. It was the first Japanese translation of a Turkic folklore story. In 1923, he became a teacher at Sotosyu University (later known as the Komazawa University). This period of his life coincides with political and ideological changes in Turkey. The creation of the Republic of Turkey becomes a turning point in his academic and personal biography.

Professor of the Toyo University, Misawa Nobuo and researcher of the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Education and Science of Japan, Osawa Hirootsugi, worked on research of Okubo Koji’s work. They believe that K. Okubo completely devoted himself to Islamic and Turkic studies after 1922, shifting from his former specialization in German language and German literature [Misawa: 3]. Undoubtedly, his interest in the

¹ In the essay to which this article refers, Koji Okubo cites the work of the French scientist Deniker Joseph and the German scientist Bihan.
Turkic-Tatar emigrants in the Far East was caused by his scientific interest in Turkey and the Middle East. Most likely, he met with the first Turkic-Tatar emigrants during their settlement in Japan in 1922-1924. Okubo independently studied both Turkish and Tatar languages. His interaction with the Turkic-speaking emigrants gave him the possibility to expand his knowledge and practice. According to his ethnographic essays in which he describes in detail his experiences of interaction with the first Turkic-Tatar emigrants, he presumably even lived within the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin in 1924.

In the 1930s, as a unique specialist in the field of Turkology and Islamic studies, Okubo attempted to establish an academic department of Turkic and Islamic studies in Japan. His intentions were even supported by the state officials. In 1936, Okubo was sent to Turkey on behalf of the Association of Japanese-Turkish Relations. His mission was to attend the third congress of the Turkish Linguistic Society [Misawa: 7]. Ultimately, as part of the congress, he was invited to an official reception with the President of the Republic of Turkey, Kemal Ataturk. After the reception, Okubo became the first Japanese who received an audience with Ataturk without being a state or diplomatic official. Upon his return to Japan, he printed many articles in the Association’s newsletter. He was very thankful for having received such an opportunity, which made him feel obliged to the Association and especially to its leader, Prince Iemasa Tokugawa (1884-1963).

In 1938, Okubo created the Islamic World Research Institute (回教圏研究所 Kaikyoken kenkyusho), which contributed to the development of Islamic studies before the start of World War II. In 1939, he founded the Department of the History of Islamic Culture at Waseda University. With his assistance, in the same year, the subject of the “History of Islam” was included in the curriculum at the University of Tokyo [Usmanova 2015: 746]. From 1925 to 1941, he taught a class on the principles of Islamic culture at Komazawa University and Waseda University from 1939 to 1949.

Okubo’s name is often mentioned in the documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, newspaper articles of Japan and Manchuria, as

2 Iemasa Tokugawa (03.23.1884, Tokyo - 02.18.1963, Tokyo) - Japanese politician. The 17th head of the Tokugawa clan (1940-1963). In 1937-1939, he was the ambassador of Japan to Turkey.
well as in the Tatar periodicals, which prove his close involvement with the Turvic-Tatar emigration. In 1935, he was present at the opening of the first mosque in Japan, which was constructed in the city of Kobe. He even wrote an introductory essay for the specially released collection of writing published for this event [Okubo]. He was a well-respected and fairly famous Japanese within the Tatar emigrant circles. He appears in numerous photographs of the Tatar emigration, where he stands among the leaders of the community [see photo 1]. Okubo also participated in the establishment of an organization that supported the independence of the Idel (Volga)-Ural Turkic Tatars in Kobe and Tokyo. He attended organizational meetings in Japan, in 1934, and Manchuria, in 1935 [Usmanova 2005; 2007].

Additionally, in 1919, Koji Okubo personally met Gayaz Ishaky when he came to Japan to obtain a European travel visa. Ishaky described his first meeting with Okubo in his diaries. On May 6, 1919, he wrote:

Today we will visit the American and English visa centers. First of all, in the morning, we are visited by one Japanese. Oddly enough, this Japanese speaks Turkish, his name is Koji, and his surname is Okubo. He understands Turkish. Now, he is a German teacher at school. [...] He had learned the Turkish language from books. He was helped by one Armenian and one Turk who lived here. Now, he speaks Turkish fluently. He himself graduated from university. He was especially interested in Turkic history and, therefore, became one of the first researchers of Turkology among the Japanese. To a great extent, he studied Turkology from a philological side. With him, I discovered that the Turkish language has a lot of words in common with the Japanese language. For example, in Tatar, “su” [water] - in Japanese “sui”, while “kara” [black] - could share common roots with the Japanese word “kuri”.³

---

Okubo was also involved in the Muslim politics of Japan (回教 政策 kaikyō seisaku), which were carried out by the Japanese government, the army and pan-Asian activists, as well as the Muslim Association of Great Japan (大 日本 回教 協会 Dai Nippon Kaikyō Kyōkai). In the postwar period, as a result of his connection with the Islamic policy, his name was forgotten and for a long time was not mentioned in the academic circles of Japan.

After the end of the war, Okubo was removed from teaching and publishing. He also was unfortunate to lose his house during extensive fires in 1945, which altogether put him in serious financial distress. As a gratitude for the friendship and support that he had shown during the war towards the Turkic-Tatar emigrants, they helped him to acquire a new house in the Yoyogi-Uehara region, not far from the Tokyo mosque. “Yana Milli Yu” magazine devoted an entire article to Okubo Koji 4, where he was praised for his activities and his exceptional interest in Turkic-Tatar emigrants of Japan.

In recent years, ideological stands in Japan, Turkey, and Russia have changed, resulting in the possibility of reassessment of earlier forbidden topics of the Muslim politics of Japan in the 1930s. However, as noted by Japanese researchers, it was rather difficult to collect information about those activities [Misawa]. For example, it is still not clear when and under what circumstances Okubo became interested in Turkic and Muslim studies. His original intentions for the establishment of close contacts with the Tatar emigrants are unknown. Due to his early death following the end of World War II, many questions remained unanswered.

**Ethnographic essay about the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin**

In 1923-24, Okubo wrote three articles on Turkic-Tatar emigrants [Misawa]. In addition to the essay on the community in Harbin, he wrote two essays on the stay of the Turkic Tatars in Japan: “Kurban Beiram in Japan” [nihon no kurbansai]5 and “Russian Muslim Refugees Arriving at Japan” [nihon e kita roshia no kaikaikyōto hinanmin nitsuite]6. His close acquaintance with the Turkic-Tatar emigrants most likely happened in these years.

---

5 Kokusai chishiki, September 1, 1923, No. 3-9, pp. 114-122.
6 Kokusai chishiki, February 1924, No. 2-3., pp. 108-119; No. 4, pp. 96-108.
Ethnographic essay “The life of the Turkic people in Harbin” [Harubin ni okeru toruko minzoku no seikatsu] (ハルビンに於けるトルコ民族の生活) was published in the Japanese journal “Tōyō” (East, 東洋). It was composed in Japanese on October 25, 1924, as evidenced by the signature at the end of the essay: [大正 13年10月25日]. This essay is valuable due to its content that describes in detail the ethnographic and historical senses of Turkic-Tatars of the Volga-Ural region. It is also the ultimate source of information about the life of the immigrant community of the Turkic-Tatars of the Volga-Ural region in Harbin at the beginning of the twentieth century. In this essay, Okubo narrates to the Japanese reader the history and cultural traditions of the Turkic peoples and the Tatar people of Russia. The most remarkable thing is that he analyzes the Tatar national ideology of the early twentieth century, noting the possibility of Japanese interaction with the Turkic-Tatar nation in the future. Such interaction, indeed, took place later in the 1930s. Undoubtedly, we can say that during this period Okubo was one of the few, if not the only specialists in the field of nascent Turkology and Tatar studies in Japan. Presumably, the objectives of his articles were not only scientific and ethnographic but also political. The ethnographic essay is 42 pages long and it touches upon the important aspects of Turkic-Tatar emigration in the Far East. The essay consists of seven parts: 1) Turkic Tatars as a nation, 2) the gradual advancement of the Turkic peoples to the East and their appearance in Manchuria, 3) national organs of the Turkic Tatar community, 4) racial stereotypes, 5) Turkic language, 6) religion of Turkic Tatars, 7) daily life of the Turkic Tatar community in Harbin.

1) Turkic Tatars as a nation

In the first part of the essay, Okubo thoroughly explains to the Japanese reader who the Turkic peoples and Tatars are. He writes about the history of the formation of the Turkic nations from Genghis Khan to Kemal Ataturk. Referring to the works of the French scientist Joseph Deniker (6.03.1852, Astrakhan - 03/18/1918, Paris)7 and the German scientist Bihan, he gives the following classification of the Turkic-speaking peoples of the world:

---

7 Deniker created the classification of human races.
A. Eastern Turkic peoples (Sharky Türkler):

1) Yakuts (Yakutlar),
2) Altai (Altaylar),
3) various groups of Siberian Tatars (Sibiria-Tatarlary),
4) Turkic peoples of Western China (Tarachylar);

B. Central (Central Asian) Turkic peoples (Orta Türkler):

5) Kyrgyz (Kyrgyz Kazaklar),
6) Black Kyrgyz (Kara Kyrgyzlar),
7) Kipchaks (Kypchaklar),
8) Karakalpaks (Kara Kalpaklar),
9) Uzbeks (Üsbekler),
10) Sarts (Sartlar),
11) Idel (Volzhsky)-Ural Tatars (Idil (Volga)-Tatarlary), including Kazan, Ufa and Astrakhan (Kazan-, Ufa-, Astrakhan-Tatarlary),
12) Mishars (Misherler),
13) Tiptyars (Tipterler),
14) Bashkirs (Bashkurdlar),
15) Nogays (Nugaylar),
16) Crimean Tatars (Krym-Tatarlary),
17) North Caucasian (Shimaky Kafkaz Tatarlar) Tatars,
18) Chuvashs (Chuwashlar);

C. Western (Garyby Türkler) and southern (Jenuby Türkler) Turkic peoples:

19) Turkmens (Türkmenler) living in Russian Turkistan (Türkistan) and Iran (Iran) and Afghanistan (Afganistan),
20) Azerbaijanis (Azerbeijanlylar) of the South Caucasus (Jonuby Kafkaz),
21) independent Turkic peoples (Türkler) or “Ottomans” (Osmanlılar).

---

8 The author’s original spelling is given in parentheses.
According to his observations, Harbin is mainly populated with the representatives of Turkic peoples, especially from Idel (Volga)-Ural Tatars, including Kazan, Ufa, and Astrakhan, Mishars, Tiptyars and Bashkirs. He notes that a small group of Ottoman Turks also lived in the region.

Okubo considers it necessary to draw the attention of the Japanese reader to the fact that the Turkic Tatars of Harbin are not the so-called “Dattan” Tatars (韃靼), known in Japan from the history of the Mongol Empire. He explains the origin of the term ‘Tatars’ from the ethnonym ‘Dattan’, emphasizing on the fact that the Mongolian and Turkic peoples are different, despite being close neighbors. The Turkic-speaking people made up one of the military units of Genghis Khan’s army called ‘Dattan,’ which resulted in the mixing of local peoples with the troops of Genghis Khan. Therefore, the appearance of Turkic-speaking descendants in Eurasia and Manchuria under the name ‘Tatars’ was natural.

2) The gradual advancement of the Turkic peoples to the East and their appearance in Manchuria

In the second part of the essay, Okubo talks about the Turkic-speaking people in Manchuria. He writes that their number exceeded a thousand people, residing in the cities of Mukden, Harbin, Pogranichnaya, and Manchuria. Mostly, they were representatives of the Turkic-speaking peoples from the south-eastern part of Russia, such as Kazan, Ufa and Astrakhan, the so-called “Volga-Ural Tatars”. The presence of Orenburg Tatars, Mishars, Tiptyars, and Bashkirs was also recorded. Okubo notes an interesting fact that although geographically Siberia is closer to Manchuria, the first Tatars to arrive in Manchuria were not the Siberian, but the Volga-Ural Tatars. According to Okubo, their appearance of Russian Turkic Tatars in Manchuria was primarily because of their ease of movement (動性). Because of that quality, they have always played the role of pioneers. Russians have always relied on this national feature of the Turkic Tatars, especially during the period of Russian development and expansion to the East.

The Tatars appeared in Manchuria even before the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway began, arriving on horses and camels through Siberia and the Gobi Desert. When the construction of the road began in
1896, they came to Manchuria as entrepreneurs and traders. Okubo subjectively claims that “Russian Tatars love to trade. Even if they do not have capital, they start trading because of interest.” Tatar merchants mostly specialized in the sale of fur products. Okubo explains the reason for the formation of these entrepreneurial abilities, linking them with the history of the existence of Turkic-speaking peoples in the Russian Empire. He writes that the Tatars, who once were the masters of Russia, cannot forget their historically deserved honor and dignity. Despite being under the yoke of the Slavic peoples for the past 400 years, they still preserved their culture, faith, and blood ties. Being currently in the position of a victim, they still retained their love of culture, educating the upcoming generations with love for their nation. They moved to Manchuria with the idea to build their own paradise along with a new place for national growth and entrepreneurship.

Okubo noted the peculiar features of national entrepreneurship among the Turkic-speaking peoples of Manchuria. Since they followed Islam, they traded according to Muslim rules (according to Sharia). In their lifestyles, they combined religious traditions with ordinary life; in trade, they complied with commercial ethics.

According to Okubo, entrepreneurship requires great physical effort and fitness, which the Turkic Tatars had. Since they could be proud of their rich history and were assured of their belonging as descendants of a large nation from antiquity, they were highly motivated to revive their former glory. Okubo cites the example of the struggle for independence that Indian Muslims had experienced, noting that to create a stable economic base and escape from the harsh pressure of the Russian authorities, the Tatars took the same strategy as the Indians and Jews.

Okubo presents to the Japanese reader a detailed picture of the recent history of the national revival of the Russian Turkic Tatars. He highlights two stages of the revival, the first being after the first Russian revolution of 1905 and the second after the February revolution of 1917. He calls the names of famous Tatars, leaders of the national movement, such as Okubo Koji. “Harbin ni okeru toruko minzoku no seikatsu” (Life of the Turkic People in Harbin)/// Touyou, 1924. No. 12. pp. 45-87. ハルビンに於けるトルコ民族の生活、東洋12、大正13年10月25日- p. 52.
Ethnographic Essay of the Japanese Turkologist Okubo Koji

Ahmed Agaev (Ahmed Agaif)\(^{10}\), Yusuf Akchura (Yusuf Akchura Ogly)\(^{12}\), Ismail Gaspinsky (Ismail Bek Gasprinsky)\(^{13}\), Gayaz Ishaky (Ayaz Ishaky)\(^{14}\), Fatih Karimi (Fetkh Kerimi)\(^{15}\), Umer Teregulov (Umer Tirikol)\(^{16}\), Sadri Maksudi (Sadri Maksudi)\(^{17}\). He calls them by the Japanese term “Onjin” (恩人), which in Japanese culture means a person to whom you are indebted. Therefore, Okubo notes that the impact of these people on the lives of Turkic-Tatar people was so crucial that it is impossible to forget.

Okubo writes that during this time the ideas of “Turkism” (トルコ主義、‘Türklük’ - as written by Okubo) and “Pan-Turanism” started to develop in the Turkic-speaking world.\(^{18}\) According to him, the Turkic-Tatars of Harbin were politically oriented. As an example, he cites that during the Friday sermon, the Harbin imam Giniyatulla\(^{19}\) called for the support of Atatürk\(^{20}\) and the establishment of the new Turkish Republic.

In the second part of his ethnographic essay, with a particular historical interest, he provides a detailed description of the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin. According to his notes, the first Tatar settlement was

---

10 The spelling of the names is modern, but the author’s spelling is given in brackets, referring to the original essay.
11 Ahmed Agayev (1868 - 1939) - an Azerbaijani statesman, journalist, and Turkologist.
12 Yusuf Akchura (2.11.1876, Simbirsk - 1935, Istanbul) - Tatar writer, publisher, historian, and an ideologist of Turkish nationalism.
13 Ismail Gasprinsky (03.08.1851 – 09.11.1914) - Crimean Tatar enlightener, publisher of the sole Turkic-language newspaper in Russia called “Tarjeman” (1883-1918), the founder of Jadidism and Pan-Turkism.
14 Muhammetgayaz Gilyazetdinovich Iskhakov (Ğayaz İsxaqıy) (02.23.1878, Yaushirma village - 07.22.1954, Ankara) - an outstanding figure of the Tatar national movement, writer, publicist, publisher, and politician.
15 Fatih Karimi (03.30.1870, Bugulma – 09.27.1937, Moscow) - Tatar writer, teacher, journalist. He was shot in the USSR in 1937.
16 Gumer Teregulov (1883, Ufa - 1938) - lawyer, Tatar public figure.
17 Sadri Maksudi (07.23.1878, Kazan - 02.20.1957, Istanbul) - Russian and Turkish lawyer, statesman and politician.
18 Pan-Turkism (Pan-Turanism) was a political movement of the late 19th-early 20th century, pursuing political unification of all the Turkish-speaking peoples of the Ottoman Empire, Russia, China, Iran, and Afghanistan. The movement began among the Turks of the Crimea and the Volga region of Russia, who initially sought to unite with the Turks of the Ottoman Empire. [Britannica Online Encyclopedia. Date of access on June 3, 2018. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pan-Turkism].
20 Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal (1881 – 11.10.1938) - Ottoman and Turkish statesman, reformer, founder of the modern Turkish state and the first president of the Republic of Turkey.
founded in the Staryj Gorod (Old Town). Their first shops appeared on the streets near the city garden. Among them were the fur shops of the Agishev (Agishef) brothers, who participated in trade in various regions from Mongolia to Japan. The mixed assortment stores of Virgazov (Wirgazof), Haji Agiev (Haji Agiev), Tiniev (Tinief), and Abdulla Tairov (Abdul Haira Tairof), who also owned shops in Transbaikalia and Nercinsk, were also located near the city garden.

Okubo gives detailed information about the most successful Turkic-Tatar entrepreneurs in Harbin, which were the Agishev brothers Umer and Ali. They traveled a lot due to commercial matters in the period between 1902-1911, eventually settling in Harbin. One of the two sons of Umer Agishev, Hussein, currently resides in Russia and works in the field of commercial affairs between Kazan and Moscow. Umer’s second son, Zeidullah, owns a store in New York. After the death of Umer Agishev, his brother Ali Agishev, along with his son Abidulla Agishev (Abidullah Agishev), and Amrullah Agiev opened a store in the Novyj Gorod (New City), Harbin.

Turkic-Tatar shops are located on the Kitaiskaya and Konnaya Streets in Harbin. Okubo calls this region the region of the Turkic-Tatar bourgeoisie. He lists the names of Turkic-Tatar businessmen: Umer Agishev, Abidulla Agishev, Amrulla Agiev, Abdul Hakim Tairov, Haji Agiev, and the Deushevs. In 1914, when the first war actions began in Asia, Turkic-Tatar merchants traveled to Japan and Shanghai. In 1919, the emigrant businessmen appeared in Harbin. Among them were the Yaushev brothers, who owned manufacturing mills and shoe stores in Tashkent, Troitsk, and Chelyabinsk. At the same time, Agafurov arrived from Yekaterinburg and Shafiullin from Irkutsk.

In 1920, the Turkic-Tatar community of Harbin was populated by 807 people. Merchants created their large joint venture called “Idel(Volga)-Ural”. Muhammedlatif Yaushef became the leader of the facility. The had several goals they wanted to achieve with their trade. The primary goal of this organization was the revival of the Turkic-Tatar national trade, focusing on the trade of fur products, natural resources, leather goods,
and retail. Their other goal was to expand their trade geographically from Mongolia to Turkestan, as well as from Harbin to Japan.

According to Okubo, the reason for the union of Turkic-Tatar merchants in Harbin was the change in the living conditions of the community. The increase of Turkic-Tatar refugees in Harbin, among whom were not only merchants but also teachers, imams, scientists, poets, artists, military servants, students, and others, led the community to experience difficult times. “They were capitalists, but indeed became victims,” wrote Okubo in the conclusion of the second part of his essay.

3) National organs of the Turkic-Tatar community

In the third part of the ethnographic essay, Okubo studies and analyzes the organization of the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin. In 1924, the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin exceeded one thousand people. At 33 Artilleriyskaya Street, a multitude of civic agencies were developed. They included a mosque, an elementary school, the community house, and a self-government office - the National Board of the Turkic-Tatars of Harbin (Harbin Turk-Tatarlarynyn Milli Idaresi; Harbin Musslmanlarynyn Milli Idaresi), created in 1906.

Until 1912, the community was governed by an elected leader, but starting in 1912, the community began to choose a Board of 7-8 people, which functioned as the governing body of the community. In 1922, the board included 9 people. The general meeting consisted of 45 people, and it was held every week on Thursdays. Amrulla Agiev was the head of the Board. The second highest authority was Imam Giniyatullah who was well respected by all residents of Harbin.

The community had a system of contributions, depending on income: from 5 yen to 300 yen. Those days, about 20-25 thousand yen was required to implement the plans and support the activities of the community. Funds were directed towards maintaining the library, helping the poor, improving student dormitories, education, and school maintenance (about 150 people study there). The community did not take money from poor families for basic living needs, therefore, the education for their children was free. A two-story civic building houses not only a school but also a student
dormitory, rooms for rent, and a mosque. In Turkish, mosques are called “jami”, while in Tatar they called “mechet”.

The first mosque of the Turkic-Tatars in Harbin was built in 1906. In 1922, there was the 1000th anniversary of the adoption of Islam by the ancestors of the Turkic Tatars of the Volga Bulgaria. In honor of this event, the community decided to build a new mosque that emphasized the continuity of the Islamic tradition of Russian Turks, carried by the Turkic Tatars of Harbin. On July 8, 1924, a communal meeting on this subject was held. As a result of the meeting, the Board announced that 20 thousand yen were needed for the construction of the mosque. It was decided that until the completion of the mosque, a large hall of the national school would be used as a prayer hall.

Imam Giniyatulla Ahmed arrived in Harbin in 1907. On April 8, 1923, he visited Japan. During his stay, he held the first Muslim preaching in Japan. He was also the director of the Turkic-Tatar Muslim elementary school in Harbin. The school was called “Mekteb Inayat”, named after the principal. It was a six-year-long program for both boys and girls above the age of seven. Along with secular subjects, religious subjects were incorporated into the curriculum. Classes taught at the school included: faith (Din), reading of the Koran (Kuran), and native language (Ana Tili)- which was Tatar (Tatarcha). During their third year of study, the Russian language (Ruscha) was introduced to the students. Since the Turkic-Tatars of Harbin were subjects of Russia, they felt obliged to study Russian. The classes were taught by Imam Giniyatulla himself, along with teacher Munir, poet Husein Abdushof, and a former military officer Kemal. Tatar as a native language and English were taught by Abdul Aziz (Abdul Aziz), while Medina taught Russian. After graduating from the national school,
children entered Russian gymnasiums in which they receive a profession within three years of study. Twice a week, “Ginayat” schoolteachers conduct special topic classes about religion, mother tongue, and national history (Milli Tarichy) for the community members. The importance of the national movement that started in 1905 was especially stressed during these classes. Also, they emphasized on the significance of such figures (yolbashchylar) as 1) Ismail bey Gasprinsky, in honor of whom the school had hosted a memorial event on September 24, 1924, 2) a playwright Gayaz Ishaky, who had visited Japan for a few years before moving to Berlin, and 3) a Tatar poet Gabdulla Tukay.²³

The school had its own library which was located to the left of the entrance. The library contained books in Tatar, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, and Russian languages. The collection was expanded with the new books arriving from Russia and Turkey. The community also periodically published on its own. An example of community publishing is the weekly Tatar newspaper “Yerak Sharek” written in Arabic script.²⁴ The first issue of the newspaper was released on January 25, 1920. The community also had women’s and youth gathering clubs which were founded on cultural and traditional principles. The youth gathering (Yashlar Uyushmasy) was led by the brother of Imam Giniyatulla, Keshaf²⁵, while the women’s gath-

²³ Gabdulla Tukay (04.14.1886, Kazan - 02.04.1913, Kazan) - an outstanding Tatar folk poet, creator of the Tatar literary language.

²⁴ The magazine was published in Harbin from 1921 to 1925 under the name “Yerak Shәryk” (“Far East”) and reflected on the position of Turkic-Tatar emigration to the Far East in the first half of the 1920s.

²⁵ Selikhmetov (Ahmed), Keshaf (11.18.1892, Penza - 01.14.1963, Istanbul) - a businessman and a brother of the Harbin imam Giniyatulla Selikhmetov (Ahmed). He arrived in Harbin in 1914. He moved to Shanghai in 1932. From 09.07.1934, he became the founder and chairman of the board of the cultural society of the Volga-Ural Turkic-Tatars of Shanghai. He was also a delegate of the First Far Eastern Congress (Kurultay) of the Volga-Ural Turkic-Tatars from the
ering (Khanunlar Uyushmasy) was led by the wife of Imam Giniyatulla, Zahide.

4) Racial stereotypes

In the fourth part of the ethnographic essay, Okubo talks about different views on the phenotype of the Turkic peoples: among them were blondes with a European appearance and brunettes of a more traditional Turkic appearance. Harbin was a unique place because all of its citizens carried their own distinct traits, resulting in all phenotypes of the Turkic nation to be presented in one region. From Okubo’s records, for example, the Sarts from Turkestan looked very similar to the Japanese. Bashkirs also looked similar to Asians, but taller and with a lesser presence of a yellow tint in the color of their skin. Tatars of Idel-Ural and Mishars, in turn, despite having an Asian component in their blood, shared more similarities in their appearance with North Europeans. Two distinctive types were distinguished among them: “sary” - the individuals with blond hair and “kara” - the individuals with black hair. Okubo came to the conclusion that the Idel-Ural Tatars were a mixed type of Asians and Europeans since they lived in the territory where both Asians and Europeans lived. Despite their European appearance, they differed from European people in their internal way of living and their unique perception of the world and traditions rooted in their rich history and culture. Okubo calls them “the eastern people” (東洋人).

5) Turkic language

In this section of the essay, Okubo writes about the system of Turkic languages. In his opinion, since there were a lot of dialects of the Turkic language and the difference between them was small, the Turkic individuals from different regions speaking different Turkic languages still were capable of understanding each other. Due to this unique quality of mutual understanding, the ideology of Turkism emerged naturally, uniting the entire Turkic-speaking people throughout various territories. Okubo believed that due to the unity of Turkic peoples, the study of Turkic-Tatar community of Shanghai. In 1949, he moved to Turkey.
languages and their culture was necessary from a political point of view. He noted that at the beginning of the twentieth century there was a recorded attempt to create a single language based on two Turkic dialects: the Tatar spoken in Kazan, Russia and Turkish, spoken in Istanbul, Turkey. Okubo conducted a grammatical analysis of those dialectical changes, providing a detailed overview of the Turkic language, highlighting various aspects of their linguistic system. His overview touched upon the topics of 1) pronunciation and intonation, 2) grammar, 3) common speech, 4) simplicity, and 5) alphabet.

6) Religion of Turkic-Tatars

In the sixth part of the ethnographic essay, Okubo captures the religious life of the Harbin Turks. He writes that representatives of Islam from two different ethnic groups prevailed in Harbin. These were the Chinese Muslims and Turkic Muslims. Although they had a common religious foundation, they were ethnically different, which resulted in the differences in their daily social lives.

In this section of his essay, Okubo tells the history of the adoption of Islam by the Bulgars, who were the direct ancestors of Tatars. He writes that officially, Islam became the state religion of the Volga Bulgaria on May 15, 922. He notes that particularly in honor of this event, the Harbin Tatars decided to build a new mosque in 1923, which again illustrated the desire of the Harbin Turkic-Tatars to express their continuity with the Russian Turks and their long historical and cultural background.

Okubo also briefly introduces the Japanese reader to the two main branches of Islam: Shiite and Sunni. The Turks in Harbin were Sunni. He also talks about other religions that are widespread among the Tatars. For example, there were Kryashen Tatars, who practiced Christianity because they were baptized in a certain period of Russian history. Okubo, additionally, explains the structure of Muslim communities called mahallas, Muslim rituals, and religious holidays. Okubo also talks about the characteristics of names. He notes that because Tatars are the citizens of Russia, their last names use the endings like “-ev,” “-ov” [-ef, of], while the
middle names use the ending “-vich” [witch], inherited by the influence of the Russian language.

7) **Daily life of the Turkic-Tatar community in Harbin**

The last section of the ethnographic essay - “Everyday Life” - has sparked great interest in the historians who work on the Turkic-Tatar emigration. In this section, K. Okubo describes the daily life features of the Turkic-Tatar community of Harbin during the 1920s.

Turkic-Tatars of Harbin wore modest clothes of European cut. Elder men wore long shirts; younger generations wore shorter ones. The style of the shirts was similar to Russian folk-wear. On the streets and in public, they wore European hats, while at home and in the mosque, they wore national “skull-caps”, called “kepech” (for Mishars), and “kalyapush” (for the Kazan Tatars). On Fridays, religious tutors would wear a turban.

The clothes of Tatar women were not very different from the clothes other women wore at that time in Manchuria. Young girls did not leave fashion trends behind, also dressing in European clothes and hats. Popular headdresses that women wore at that time were scarfs (yaulyk in Tatar) and shawls. Girls sometimes also wore the Tatar national hat called *kalfak*.

The diet of Tatars was primarily based on bread, rice, vegetables, meat, butter, cheese, and milk. Being Muslim, they preferred lamb, beef, poultry, and rarely fish. All food had to be halal; no pork allowed. Alcoholic beverages were also prohibited. There was no place for alcohol in the homes of Tatars. They drank kvass, plain water, and tea. Okubo lists several dishes from the Tatar national cuisine: 1) *shurpa* (soup), 2) *pilmen* (dumplings), 3) *Pylaow* (pilaf of rice), 4) *belish* (meat and potato pie), 5) *peremyach* (meat pastry). Tea for the Turkic-Tatars of Harbin was the dish number one. Okubo repeatedly compares the customs of the Turkic Tatars - Kazan Tatars - with the Ottoman (Turkish) Turks. However, unlike to the Ottoman Turks, the Turkic Tatars of Harbin did not drink black tea or coffee.

In Tatar culture, tea is brewed in a samovar and always ready to be served from morning to evening. Tea is served with sugar, lemon, milk, a lot of sweets such as various pastry, bread, chuck-chak, halva, jam, cheese, butter, honey, and Montpensier candies. In Tatar households, food is served
three times a day. Tea-drinking starts at about 3 p.m. On holidays, guests are invited for a celebration and feast. Men and women eat separately during Muslim holidays. After dinner, concerts or performances are often held.

Civic and domestic architecture of Turkic-Tatars looked European. Homes were furnished with European furniture as well. In Harbin, Turkic-Tatars mainly occupied the Kitaiskaya and Artilleriyskaya streets, along with the area from the Pristan (Quay) to Nakhalovka. According to the Muslim tradition, in the mosque, Tatars sit on the floor, which is also similar to Japanese customs.

According to Okubo, the Tatars, in comparison to other citizens of Harbin, were less rarely involved in crimes. Okubo believes that this was due to the upbringing and the importance of family for the Tatars. They cherish their family, children, and relatives by always putting them first. Okubo calls their lifestyle “home life” (katei seikatsu). Being domestic and appreciative of your family is a Muslim tradition. Okubo cites the proverb “paradise under the feet of mothers” as an example of the attitude of the Turkic-Tatars towards their mothers, being pleasantly surprised by the relationships between mothers and children. Turkic-Tatar women are calm and quiet, yet they have equal marriage rights with men. In this sense, the lifestyle of Tatars is similar to Japanese traditions.

In this section of his essay, Okubo also describes Tatar cultural traditions. Harbin is a city full of art, and the Turkic-Tatars never miss to seize the opportunity to be involved. They love music, dance, and theater. Tatars have many beautiful and unusual songs; moreover, different Turkic-occupied regions had their own unique melodies. Okubo mentions several old songs such as “Kara Urman” (Dark Forest), “Taftilyau”, “Ashkadar”. He notices that the lyrics of most loved Tatar songs happened to be taken from the poetry of Tatar writer Gabdulla Tukay. The songs mainly have piano accompaniment.

Another modern tradition of the Turkic-Tatars is their interest in theatrical production. Mostly they performed the plays from the Russian repertoire. However, this year, on August 30th, at 9 p.m., the plays performed at the theater were works of Tatar playwrights. “Young People” written by Galimjan Ibragimov (Alim Jan Ibrahimi) (two acts), and the work of
Abdullah called “Actor” (one-act), were presented. The performance was played by actor Husein Uteshov (Husei Uchishof) and his wife, along with Husain Abdyushev and another 10 young individuals. The performance ended at midnight. Then, the youth started a concert accompanied by dance.

At the end of his ethnographic essay, Okubo draws the following conclusion:

I have been writing for quite some time about the life of the Turkic people in Harbin and its great past. In the Far East, they have been trying to maintain the past greatness of the Turkic people. Also, as Eastern people, as Asian people, they have special respect and love towards us, the Japanese. Simply said, these are healthy and productive people. However, moving from the West to the Far East, they have different qualities and advantages compared to the people who have lived in this region from the very beginning. They follow their national destiny, being intermediaries between East and West. Here, in the Far East, they can fulfill this historical mission. Therefore, if the Japanese and Turkic peoples prolong the opportunity to interact with each other in the future, I believe, they [Turkic-Tatars] will be able to fulfill of a bigger, wider regional role.26

26 Okubo Koji. “Harbin niokeru toruko minzoku no seikatsu” (Life of the Turkic people in Harbin)// Touyou, 1924. № 12. pp. 45-87. ハルビンに於けるトルコ民族の生活、東洋12、大正13年10
Conclusion

The ethnographic essay of the Japanese Turkologist Koji Okubo, “On the Life of the Turkic People in Harbin,” written and published in 1924 in a Japanese journal in the Japanese language, is perhaps the first publication in the Japanese scientific world that speaks about the Turkic-Tatars of Russia as a whole and their community in Harbin. The topics that Okubo explores in this essay raise both ethnographic and historical interest. According to Okubo and his analysis of the Turkic-speaking peoples of the world and their peculiarities, as well as their comparison with each other and with other nations, including the Japanese, a positive conclusion of political cooperation between the Japanese and the Turkic-speaking peoples has been made. Moreover, in the end, Okubo concludes that in the future the Russian Turkic Tatars could be able to perform their inherent historical role of mediators on a regional scale, particularly in the Far East. Therefore, it can be argued that this essay prepared the Japanese reader to see and accept the Turkic-Tatar people as a possible political and regional ally; in other words, proposing the likelihood of their mutual relationship in the future.

References


Okubo Koji. “Harbin ni okeru toruko minzoku no seikatsu” (Life of the Turkic people in Harbin) // Touyou, 1924. № 12. pp. 45-87. ハルビンに於けるトルコ民族の生活、東洋12、大正13年10月25日

---------. The Effects of the National Movement in the Republic of Turkey // The Kobe Muslim Mosque. A souvenir booklet issued in

Meiji Japan, Ottoman Egypt, and the British Occupation: A Turn of the Century Colonial Triangle of Non-Western Modernity and Anti-Colonial Egyptian Nationalism

Renée Worringer
Department of History, University of Guelph

Abstract
The independent Japanese nation-state of the late 19th century, with its modern institutions and its enlightened officials, became a powerful role model for other non-Western societies who struggled to acquire the trappings of modernity they often associated with the West – parliamentary constitutionalism, universal compulsory education, and patriotic love of homeland, for example. Under British occupation since 1882, Egyptian nationalists in late Ottoman Egypt looked to this Japanese example in formulating their anti-colonial resistance ideologies. After Japan’s dramatic victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the pages of the Egyptian nationalist press were full of articles arguing for a British withdrawal in order to facilitate independent Egyptian nationhood. The authors of these anti-colonial demands used the Japanese example as a discursive tool to highlight their particular strategies for liberating Egypt. But a question arises: 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?

Keywords: Meiji Japan, Ottoman Egypt, modernity, nationalism, imperialism, colonialism
With the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the Japanese islands tucked away in East Asia broke out of relative isolation to soon become a major player on the international stage. The independent Japanese nation-state, now with its modern institutions and its enlightened officials, also became a powerful role model for other non-Western societies in the late 19th century who struggled to acquire the trappings of modernization they often associated with the West. Like many of their Ottoman brethren, whether reforming members of the Young Turk movement or Arabist “proto-nationalists” in the provinces, Egyptian nationalists also looked to the Japanese example. Egyptians persistently referred to modern Japan and its people as a model nation-state whose constitutional government and universal, compulsory education system had been established through the perseverance of its elites – statesmen and intellectuals who were seen to be motivated primarily by a profound sense of patriotic love for the homeland. For late Ottoman Egypt, modern Japan was the country to emulate in order to achieve national liberation.

Egyptian discourse on Japan differed from that of their Ottoman counterparts, however, due to their experience of direct resistance against the British occupation. British forces had arrived in Egypt in 1882 to suppress Egyptian army Colonel Ahmad ‘Urabi’s rebellion against the hereditary Ottoman Khedive Tawfiq and the country’s reliance upon European advisors. The British exiled the rebellion’s leaders to Ceylon and assumed control of the administration. Several international and domestic events served to solidify Egyptian anti-colonial resistance to the British presence in Egypt, which endured far into the 20th century. As one British expatriate later recalled, Japan’s dramatic victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, and the Ottoman-British military confrontation over administrative control of the Sinai Peninsula in 1906, were compounded by the

1 See Renée Worringer, *Ottomans Imagining Japan: East, Middle East, and Non-Western Modernity at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 219-250.
British-Egyptian incident at the village of Dinshaway in the same year, which resulted in the controversial execution of several Egyptian peasants. For at least a decade after those clashes took place, the pages of the Egyptian nationalist press were full of articles arguing for a British evacuation in order to facilitate independent Egyptian nationhood. The authors of these anti-colonial demands for British withdrawal used the Japanese example as a discursive tool to make their point, with individual writers focusing upon different aspects of the Japanese nation to highlight their particular strategies for establishing an independent Egypt in the future. Ultimately, however, they all shared in their aspiration to achieve self-determination, free of British control.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were eras informed by widely accepted ideas of Social Darwinism, an ontological division in the world between monolithic categories of “East” and “West,” and the hegemonic belief in a hierarchy of racially distinct nations whose abilities in the realm of civilization depended upon the character and morality of their respective peoples. In addition, many colonized peoples of the East, Egyptian nationalists included, were drawn to the intellectualized notions of Western progress and civilization in the early 20th century. These principles were believed to be the most fruitful of instruments for enabling power – political power to rule as entitled elites, to modernize and to reform, to steer the masses, as well as national power to establish and preserve sovereignty and to gain international recognition as an independent country. In this early phase of Egyptian anti-colonial nationalism, the signifiers of modernity – those attributes of the modern nation-state that were recognizable as the instruments of power for a particular nation, that guaranteed its independence, its ability to defend itself forcefully or to conquer another – were still overwhelmingly understood by nationalists as originating in and cultural possessions of “the West”, to be borrowed and applied accordingly by “the East.” In other words, at the turn of the 20th century, the West dictated the measure of modernity; Eastern nations had to conform to these standards while not losing what was considered

---

their unique “essence,” or else be denied a place in the world of modern nationhood altogether. Rejecting these hegemonic conceptions of progress and civilization proved an insurmountable task while under the twin pressures of European imperial might combined with Western claims of rational scientific superiority.

Implicit in this historical moment was a paradox: for those peoples directly experiencing occupation by European empires, such as Egypt under British occupation, both Western-inspired progress, as well as colonialism, were perceived as the preserve of the West. For Egypt, to diminish this conflict between the West serving as a pattern for modernity as well as being the colonizers (whether France or Britain for example), Meiji Japan functioned as an “Eastern mediator”. The Japanese had accessed this modern progress. They had seemingly accomplished the task of modernizing along Western lines while preserving their indigenous Japanese heritage. In one sense Meiji Japan delivered a way out of this colonial dilemma for Egypt, though it would not be without an increasingly obvious contradiction in the nationalist discourse.

The various Egyptian anti-colonial nationalist perspectives which evoked the model of modern Japan were further complicated by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 which had bound the two island nations of Britain and Japan together militarily. Egyptian nationalist writings idealized Japan on the one hand, while simultaneously demonizing Meiji Japan’s ally, the British occupier, on the other. The question must be posed: could an “Eastern” nation such as Japan, which served as an exemplary nation-state for other “Easterners,” also be recognized as colonialist at this time?

This nexus of Egyptian nationalists, British occupation in Egypt, and Egyptian idealization of Meiji Japan generated what I regard as a “colonial triangle” which calls into question the meaning of anti-colonialism for non-Western peoples striving to achieve national liberation in the early 20th century. Within the understanding of modernity as overcoming obstacles such as colonial occupation to reach independent nationhood, there was not yet a form of “universalized anti-colonialism” at this time (I define universalized anti-colonialism ideally as a resistance which disregards an imperial overlord’s race, ethnicity, or religion). Was colonialism
only understood as a by-product of Western imperialism to suit the needs of Egyptians at the time, in order to rhetorically deploy the Japanese model, with knowing regard for Japanese colonial endeavors in East Asia? To answer this question, Egypt’s historical experience of foreign invasions, their effects upon Egyptian identity, and nationalist discourse on modern Japan all inform our understanding of Egyptian anti-colonial views of modernity and colonialism in the early 20th century, as well as Egypt’s perceived place in the world.

**History and Egyptian Identity to the 20th Century**

Egypt’s historic role as a center of Islamic culture and learning since the early Arab conquests connected it to the lands and peoples of Muslim Asia just as geographic proximity to Europe as a North African territory on the Mediterranean linked Egypt to the trajectory of Western civilization and thought. With the Ottoman conquest of the Mamluk Sultanate in 1517, the lands of the Nile were incorporated into the Ottoman state as a province vital to the economic well-being and political stability of the Empire. In the aftermath of Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798, the Ottoman Albanian official Mehmet Ali was dispatched to Cairo to restore order. As a Francophile modernizer, Mehmet Ali undertook a radical development program in the first decades of the 19th century which advanced Egypt as a socio-economic entity more distinct from and sometimes rivalling the Ottoman Empire. In the mid-19th century Mehmet Ali was able to secure political autonomy and the right to the hereditary governorship of Ottoman Egypt for his descendants, the consequences of which shaped Egyptian national identity immeasurably in the 20th century.4 The Ottoman ruling elite in Egypt thus came to consist of Turco-Circassian, Armenian, and other non-Egyptian minorities that were sufficiently alienated from the Egyptian Arab populace to cause army officer ‘Urabi and his native Egyptian cabal of followers to attempt to overthrow the Khedives (the royal “Egyptian” family, Mehmet Ali’s descendants) in 1879.5 The British occupation

---


which ensued in 1882 after the failed coup was a measure initially intended as a short-term policy to stabilize the countryside and protect the Suez Canal, the strategic waterway built with French investment and opened in 1869 which facilitated British access to its colonies of India, Australia, and New Zealand. The occupation remained the reality in Egypt however until the final departure of British forces in 1956.

Consequently, Egyptians in the late 19th and early 20th centuries developed a national consciousness quite specific to Egyptian heritage and geography that was unlike identity in the other Ottoman Arab provinces. As was typical of most organic nationalist movements influenced by European Romanticism at the end of the 19th century, a people’s “natural” bond that defined them as a nation required both a clearly delineated antiquity as well as a continuity of shared cultural experience from that ancient beginning. There was a recognition among local Egyptians that Egypt had been subject to frequent waves of invasion and colonization by foreign elements throughout ancient, medieval and modern history. The Egyptian nationalists’ ethos, derived from this historical narrative of repeated alien occupations, evolved into one bound up in the local peasantry, the *fellaheen*, the true Egyptians who spoke an indigenous Arabic dialect, not Turkish, French or English as a native language. They were the living testament to Egypt’s continuity through the ages: the people who had always inhabited Egypt, the tillers of Egyptian soil who became the repository of Egyptian national identity in the 20th century. They had lived and worked the lands along the Nile; they became a metaphor of Egyptian authenticity, a symbol employed by anti-colonial Egyptian political activists who demanded the immediate evacuation of British occupation forces in a bid

---


7 Starting with Persian, Ptolemaic (Greek), Roman, and Byzantine antiquity, subsequent occupiers along the Nile Valley included the conquering Muslim armies from Arabia, the later Shi’i Fatimid dynasty that emerged first in northwest Africa, then the famous Muslim Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin, a Kurd) who settled in Egypt while continuing to battle Crusader armies in the Levant. His Ayyubid descendants maintained control in Cairo in the 12th -13th centuries until their Turkic military slave commanders assumed the throne for themselves and founded the Mamluk Sultanate around 1250; the Ottomans, Napoleon, and the British were the final foreign intrusions.
or Egyptian self-determination. Most significantly, Pharaonic blood, it was claimed, ran through their veins. They were the direct descendants of the greatest genius Egypt had ever known: the Pharaohs of Egypt, whose sophisticated civilization of previous millennia was physically preserved in the enduring structures of the pyramids that towered above the Cairo horizon, serving daily to remind Egyptians of their nation’s former glory as “mother of the world” (umm al-dunya). For local Egyptians whose religious affiliations were either Sunni Muslim (the majority) or Coptic Christian (a minority), the Pharaonic past provided a pre-Islamic, non-sectarian national antiquity, which, in combination with the belief in an “uninterrupted” Egyptian existence in the Nile Valley, reached across religious boundaries to produce relative unity in and dedication towards the newly conceived modern Egyptian nation.

Egyptian national identity at this time was thus internalized as being distinct from “Ottoman” or “Arab.” Following the failure of the ‘Urabi revolt, the British occupation made Ottoman political authority in Egypt obsolete, though Egypt was still considered an Ottoman province. Among Egyptians, the pan-Islamic connection to the Ottoman state remained, though it was little more than a symbolic alternative to foreign imperial control that did not contradict territorial Egyptian identity. This attitude toward the Ottoman Empire had even less to do with an affinity among Egyptians for their Arab brethren in Ottoman lands. Egypt had been


9 Egyptian intellectual Rifa’a Rafi al-Tahtawi (1801-1873) was among the earliest writers to essentialize ancient Egyptian heritage in this manner and used the phrase cited above (Gershoni and Jankowski, Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, 11). See Gershoni and Jankowski, 164-190, for a thorough analysis of what they call “Pharaonicism” in Egypt’s post-1919 era; Donald M. Reid, “Nationalizing the Pharaonic Past: Egyptology, Imperialism, and Egyptian Nationalism, 1922-1952” in James Jankowski and Israel Gershoni (eds.), Rethinking Nationalism in the Arab Middle East (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 127-149; Donald Reid, Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

10 The voluminous discourse on Japan produced by Syrian Muslim and Christian émigrés in Egypt is not explored here. See Worringer, Ottomans Imagining Japan..., 235-250.


12 Gershoni and Jankowski, Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, 5-6.

13 Gershoni and Jankowski, Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, 15.
defined as a particular nation within the Ottoman polity and had been forcibly detached from it by British occupation. Egyptian nationalists merely disagreed with one another as to what would be Egypt’s future political relationship with the Ottoman state. For Mustafa Kāmil’s Watanī Party, the Ottoman Sultan and state were considered capable of liberating Egypt from its colonial shackles in a show of pan-Islamic solidarity; for Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid’s rival Umma Party, Egypt’s interests were best served by a territorially conceived secular nationalism that would include Muslims and Copts in its conception and that rejected an Islamic connection to the Ottoman Empire as a basis for political action.

Their Egyptian Arab identity already firmly entrenched, discourse produced by Egyptian nationalists was a dual exercise aimed at dislodging what was believed to be the greatest obstacle standing in the way of Egypt’s emergence as a progressive nation-state – the British occupation – as well as determining the appropriate state-building measures or societal organizing principles as a strategy for achieving an independent Egypt. Aspiring to recapture former Egyptian greatness, this time in the modern era through a new synthesis of East and West, the model for Egyptian nationalists in this process was Meiji Japan (as it was for many Indian nationalists).14

**Japan and Eastern Modernity**15

Ottoman Turkish and Arabic newspapers started to run columns on Japanese history, politics, culture, and international relations occasionally in the 1870s and 1880s. Interest in the Japanese nation noticeably spiked with the onset of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894 and continued after the surprising victory of Japan over its much larger adversary, China, in 1895.16 As tensions rose in Asia over Japanese and Russian competition

---

for control of Manchuria at the turn of the 20th century, Ottoman Turkish and Arabic newspapers seized the opportunity to indulge readers in every aspect of Japanese life, whether that of the Emperor and his modernizing statesmen, their reform initiatives, the foundations of the Japanese constitutional monarchy, the moral and spiritual character of the Japanese, the so-called responsibilities of the nation’s women, or the upbringing of its next generation of patriots, Japanese children. News of the impending conflict with Russia, the Ottomans’ most unrelenting enemy from the late 17th century onwards, provided additional impetus to study Japanese foreign policy and involvement with European powers to glean ideas on how to combat Western encroachment in Ottoman lands. During the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, countless newspaper and journal articles, books, pamphlets, and poetry were published that represented Japan as an exemplary Eastern nation which had successfully preserved both its sovereignty and its indigenous customs while assimilating from the West the knowledge and technology necessary to become a modern nation-state. Japan, it was often reiterated, could now deliver modernity to the less fortunate Eastern peoples of the world. Meiji Japan and the Japanese were examples to be emulated by Asians and Africans everywhere: an Eastern trope of modernity, the awakened Japanese nation was metaphorically denoted as “the Rising Sun.” Each writer assigned their own set of meanings to Japan to legitimate their views of how to become modern, regardless of Japanese historical realities or contrasting arguments made by others who similarly used Japan as a referent for modernity.

What made the metaphor of modern Japan so appealing? Elites in the Ottoman Empire, including Egyptian nationalists, were not immune to the radical social climate of the day in which European intellectual influences such as Comptean Positivism (with its rationalizing, secular conceptions of history), Social Darwinism (emphasizing the evolutionary processes in human society), or Ernst Renan’s ideas on the intrinsic inferiority of Semitic (Arab) peoples (of course excluding ancient Egyptian civilization!) underpinned the understanding of a linear progression into a secular,
Western-style nation-state. Gustave Le Bon, who traveled at the behest of the French government throughout Asia on horseback to study civilizations and subsequently wrote positively of Arab civilization in his La Civilisation des Arabes [The Civilization of the Arabs, 1884], was another European polymath whose writings on social psychology were tremendously influential. His Les lois psychologiques de l’évolution des peuples [The Psychological Laws of the Evolution of Peoples, 1894] and Psychologie des foules [Psychology of Crowds, 1895] were translated into Arabic and Turkish and were widely read in the region. Both Le Bon and Renan argued that cultural determinism created a global racial hierarchy of societies that were superior (Indo-Europeans), average (Turks, Chinese, Japanese), inferior, or primitive (Africans). This hierarchy was relatively widely accepted in the Ottoman world, although many Ottoman and Arab intellectuals employed Herbert Spencer’s Darwinian philosophy of the differentiation of species to dispute the permanency of the present rankings and argued that their current subordinate status was not only alterable, but possibly completely reversible as well. In any case, Le Bon’s theoretical framework goes far in explaining why the Japanese were an attractive symbol within the prevailing Zeitgeist of the late 19th and early 20th century:

Character is formed by the combination (...) of the different elements (...) by the name of sentiments. Among the sentiments playing the most important part, perseverance, energy, and the power of self-control, as faculties more or less dependent on the will, must more especially be noted. We would also mention morality among fundamental elements of character...by morality we mean hereditary respect for the rules on which the existence of a society is based (...) the greatness of peoples depends in large measure on the level

17 See Gershoni and Jankowski, Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs, 101-102, and Vatikiotis, Modern Egypt, 184 on Egyptian journalists’ introduction of these ideas through the press.
20 Worringer, “‘Sick Man of Europe or Japan of the Near East’,” 207-230.
of their morality (...). The character of a people (...) determines its historical evolution, and governs its destiny.\textsuperscript{21}

For Eastern peoples, Japan represented the highest state of moral evolution possible, according to a set of standards defining national behavior that were predicated upon Western intellectual thought. The Japanese, in the eyes of Asian (and non-Asian) onlookers, had seemingly preserved their samurai ethical code, the \textit{Bushidō}, and their \textit{Shintō} ancestral rites, transforming these into a contemporary national morality that successfully guided Japan in all its endeavors. They were believed to have retained their cultural essence as they joined the ranks of the European powers.\textsuperscript{22}

Additionally, the Russo-Japanese War and Japan’s defeat of Czarist Russia in 1905 had an immense impact on the entire world, whether among the colonized nations of Africa and Asia who now felt their liberation was at hand,\textsuperscript{23} or among those Western imperial powers who anticipated that the emerging Japanese Empire was a ‘Yellow Peril’ that would soon rival and perhaps even threaten their own colonial and economic might in the Orient.\textsuperscript{24} The impact of Japan’s victory over Russia in 1905 was threefold: most importantly for colonized peoples, as a challenge to the accepted schemes of racial hierarchy that predominated in the world at this time, Japan had overturned the assumption that Indo-European races were superior to the “average races” of the East. Some Asians argued their Eastern morality had actually raised the Japanese above the West and had

\textsuperscript{21}Le Bon, \textit{The Psychology of Peoples}, 31-33.


\textsuperscript{24}See Thomas Eich, “Pan-Islam and ‘Yellow Peril’: Geo-Strategic Concepts in Salafi Writings prior to World War I,” \textit{The Princeton Papers Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies}... on the genesis of the expression “Yellow Peril” and Worringer, “Japan’s Progress Reified...,”(same volume) for an Arab journalist metaphorically inverting this phrase.
initiated the process of reversing the civilizational hierarchy. Second, Japan’s war victory was symbolic of the power of independent nation-states over antiquated, multi-ethnic, multi-religious empires (the Russian and Ottoman). Finally, the results of the war reinforced the ideological lessons of the French Revolution for non-European elites: Russia’s loss and subsequent spiral into revolution in 1905 represented the defeat of autocracy by constitutionalism and parliamentary government, the twin pillars of prosperity. In a speech in Alexandria, the ardent Egyptian nationalist Mustafa Kāmil enthusiastically characterized Japan’s battle with Russia as that of truth, justice, progress, and patriotism against absolutism and injustice, as well as a lesson for the East in perseverance, action, and unity. Chinese, Indians, Filipinos, and Persians were all said to have been inspired to demand constitutionalism. An article of his also claimed Japan was now actively calling on the Afghans and the Ottomans to institute constitutional regimes. Meiji Japan, it appeared, had revived the East and proven its potential; soon it would be Egypt’s turn at revival.

Japan’s self-image was transposed after the renegotiation of the Unequal Treaties with Western Powers in 1894 and Japan’s victory in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. The threat of Western occupation and colonization had plagued the Japanese for decades after Commodore Perry first forcibly opened the country in the 1850s. But by the late 1890s, Meiji officials were exuding an attitude of Great Power confidence and imperial entitlement commensurate with a nation that was now “leaving Asia” to “enter Europe,” in the famous locution of Japanese intellectual Fukuzawa Yukichi. Japan had remained independent, promulgated a constitution, and rapidly modernized the country. Its military, retrained and retooled, proved itself a worthy opponent against much larger foes, allowing Japan to acquire its own colonial possessions (Liaotung Peninsula and Formosa

26 Mustafa Kāmil speech at the Zizenia Theater on 8 June 1904. In Awrāq Mustafa Kāmil: al-Khutub (Cairo, 1982), 267.
28 Fukuzawa Yukichi editorial, “Datsu-a-ron” [Escape from Asia], Jiji Shinpo (March 1885).
[Taiwan] from China, 1895). With these achievements, the Meiji ruling oligarchy increasingly began to situate Japan at the apex of non-Western peoples, and to actively promote its stature in the world. Meiji Japan assumed the mantle of a superior whose “benevolent” civilizing mission in the East consisted of both delivering modernity to the less advanced races, and rescuing Asians from colonization by direct military challenges to the imperialist West. Success against Russia in 1905 confirmed to Japan and others its abilities in the latter regard, and set the global stage for a later confrontation with the West in the Pacific War of the mid-20th century. With Japan’s annexation of the Korean Peninsula in 1910, Koreans appeared quite alone in the world in their national resistance to what many Western and non-Western observers alike understood to be Japan’s active participation in the protection and modernization of a backward Asian country.

The Russo-Japanese War and Occupied Egypt

Egyptian elites and non-elites were captivated by Meiji Japan in the first decade of the 20th century despite Japan’s newfound official accord with Egypt’s British occupiers in 1902. Mustafa Kāmil, the editor of the Watanī Party mouthpiece, the prominent newspaper al-Liwa’, once wrote to a friend in Paris that it was not this alliance but the Entente Cordiale of 1904 between France and Britain that had sealed Egyptians’ fate as a colonized nation. When the Russo-Japanese war broke out in 1904, the Egyptian cabinet in Cairo publicized their official policy on warring parties in their waters in al-Waqā‘ī’a al-Misriyya, the Egyptian state newspaper. The

29 Stefan Tanaka, Japan’s Orient: Rendering Pasts into History (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993) analyzes Japanese redefinition of themselves vis-à-vis China. Continental China, Chugoku, was refigured in the modern era as an inferior country Japan now called Shina.
30 The Japanese self-view as protectors of East Asia was often published in the Arabic press. In “Ra‘īs Wuzara’ al-Yābān,” al-Liwa’ (14 July 1904), 1, Count Katsura explained Japan was not a war-monger; this was not a war of religion or domination, but a conflict between political states.
31 “Misr wa Kūriyā,” Misr al-Fatāt (21 August 1910), 1 describes annexation apologetically: Koreans did not care enough about their country, so Japan took matters into its own hands.
32 Letter to Juliette Adam, dated 9 June 1905. Mustafa Kāmil wrote that “it is not the Anglo-Japanese Alliance that put an end to my country’s independence, but rather the accord between treacherous England and France.” In Awrāq Mustafa Kāmil: al-Murāsalāt (Cairo, 1982), 224.
declaration, encouraged by the British authorities, was meant to abide by international law and to emphasize Khedival Egyptian neutrality during the conflict at the same time that it subtly restricted the Russian fleet’s movements through the Suez Canal on its way to confront the Japanese further east. This position would significantly impact the outcome of the war in Japan’s favor.

In contrast to the discretion exhibited by the Egyptian administration, however, the general Egyptian population and the nationalist press were overtly jubilant at the prospect of a Japanese victory over the Czar’s forces, what it implied for the Ottoman Empire, for the downtrodden and colonized peoples of the East, and particularly for Egypt. For the average Egyptian, the Japanese victory was a newsworthy event that came up in daily conversation among the locals in Cairo. Schoolchildren memorized and recited aloud odes written by Egypt’s most famous poet of the day, Hāfiz Ibrahim, who eulogized the Japanese in works such as “Ghādat al-Yābān” [The Japanese Maiden], in which a Japanese woman is so dedicated to her nation that she decides to go to the war front to battle Russians herself, or “al-Harb al-Rūsīyyā al-Yābānīyya” [The Russo-Japanese War].

33 British policy during this conflict was to remain neutral unless another power joined Japan’s enemy, as was stipulated in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. See Philip Towle, “British Assistance to the Japanese Navy during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5,” The Great Circle, 2:1(April 1980), 44-54.

34 Japanese ships had no reason to pass through the Mediterranean and Suez Canal during the conflict and thus remained unaffected. See original Egyptian cabinet memos in Arabic and French: Majlis al-Wuzarāʾ, Nizārat al-Khārījiyya: Maḥfazah 5, Mutafarriqa Khāss bi’l-Khārījiyya, Majmūʿa 15 Khārījiyya, March 1904, Documents 6/1-6/6, “Bī Sha’n Muʿāmalāt al-Sufun al-Harbīyya al-Rūsīyya wa’l-Yābānīyya fīl-Miḥāl al-Bahriyya al-Misriyya” (National Egyptian Archives, Cairo). Public announcement in “al-Qism al-Rasmi, Nizārat al-Khārījiyya: Iqrār min Qowādān al-Safinah al-Harbīyya al-Tābi’a li Ihda al-Dawlatayn al-Mutahārribatayn Matlūb bihi Akhādh Fahm min Thaqfīr min al-Thughūr al-Misriyya,” [Official Section. Foreign Ministry: Acknowledgements from the Warships Commandant Subsequent to a Request by One of the Two Warring States concerning Egyptian Harbors,” al-Waqāʾiʿa al-Misriyya (10 February 1904), (12 February 1904). According to documents 6/3 and 6/4, another decision was published in the 2 March 1904 issue of al-Waqāʾiʿa al-Misriyya, but I was unable to confirm whether it differs from the earlier one. See also the Ottoman Archives, BBA YA.HUS 467/96, 27 February 1904. The Egyptian cabinet and the High Commissioner Ahmed Muhtar Pasha made clear they would defer any changes in policy to the Ottoman center.

War], both of which were initially published in the local newspapers and literary journals. The Egyptian press stimulated mass enthusiasm for Japan with their regular reportage of the Russo-Japanese war and their nationalist interpretations of events, which became the frequent topic of discussion and story-telling at the local coffeehouses and reading salons. The British occupation coupled with the foundations of Japanese independence and patriotism generated anti-imperialist, pan-Asian political consciousness among Egyptians everywhere who anticipated their own national “renewal”.

Mustafa Kāmil was the most vocal of Egyptian nationalist activists who used Japan continually in his rhetoric to express opposition to British rule. One historian credits him with restoring to Egyptians their self-confidence after the failed ‘Urabi revolt and the occupation, as well as with introducing the religious element of pan-Islamism into Egyptian patriotism. His Watanī Party, over which he presided until his unexpected death in 1908, officially demanded from the British government a constitution, parliament, and a compulsory education system. From 1903 onwards front-page articles in his al-Liwā’ and in other Egyptian papers (including Shaykh Ali Yusuf’s Islamist al-Mu’ayyad, the most widely read Cairene paper at the turn of the century), frequently emphasized Japan’s conflict with Russia in the Far East as part of the larger civilizational struggle between East and West, the outcomes of which determined Eastern nations’ status as independent countries or as European colonies. In 1904 he published a book on modern Japan called Bilād al-Shams al-Mushriqa [The Rising Sun].

37 In Yuwāqīm Rizq Murqus’ Siḥāfat al-Hizb al-Watanī, 1907-1912 (Cairo, 1985), 80, he refers to the Arabic daily newspaper, Diya’ al-Sharq, as describing the Egyptian preoccupation with colonialism and with Japan as inspiring Egypt’s awakening.
that also appeared in a serialized version in *al-Liwa’*. For Kāmil and other journalists, Russia was the aggressor in East Asia and on the Ottoman frontier. Japan represented the ability of the East to withstand the European colonial onslaught, to confront the West, to triumph over imperialism, and to adhere to international law.

Egyptians were compelled to identify with a larger Eastern world. Mustafa Kāmil’s newspaper rallied to the cry of “Asia for the Asians.” The British, he wrote, obviously encouraged Egyptians to support a British ally. Egyptians were obliged to show solidarity with Japan despite this alliance because “a victory for Japan is a victory for the Yellow Race,” which included not only seventy million Chinese Muslims, but eventually (in pan-Islamic, pan-Asian terms), the Muslims of India, Turkistan, Afghanistan, and Persia, all of whom would embark on a path toward modern civilization that could soon challenge Western hegemony. Overcoming ignorance and oppression in its own lands, the Japanese were now capable of effecting this worldwide by reversing the attacks of the ‘White Race’ upon Asians in what Kāmil called a “revolution” based upon the “solidarity of the Yellow Race”; he naively claimed Japanese objectives in Korea and China were to generate such cohesiveness.

41 *Bilād al-Shams al-Mushriqa* (Cairo: *al-Liwa’*, 1904). Laffan’s “Mustafa and the Mikado” cited earlier explores Kāmil’s monograph in more detail.


44 In “al-Harb al-Hādirah wa’l-Islām,” *al-Liwa’* (18 February 1904), 1 and “Misr wa’l-Islām wa’l-Yābān,” *al-Liwa’* (6 November 1904), 1, Kāmil wrote that the Far East war would take on a new role in determining the course of events in the Near East, affecting the lives of Muslims everywhere. According to “Min Jāwā ila al-Liwa’,” *al-Liwa’* (2 June 1904), 1, Javanese Muslims were inspired by Japan’s victory to rise up against their Dutch colonial overlords.

Kāmil did not explicitly include Middle Easterners in this racial category, he noted that “we are naturally inclined to [support] Japan’s victory in this war” because “this youthful, vibrant country’s soldiers fight out of love of homeland,” and because the conflict would distract Russia from making war on the Ottoman Empire, thus providing the Turks an opportunity to build up resistance against future European imperialist activities.\(^{46}\)

To circumvent the issue of Japan being a pagan, non-Muslim nation, the rumor was persistently spread in news editorials composed by Kāmil as well as other journalists in Egypt and elsewhere that the Japanese Emperor and his people were on the verge of converting to Islam at any moment, merging pan-Islamism and pan-Asianism into an ultimate fantasy of the return to Eastern global pre-eminence led by a Muslim Meiji Japan (The Tatar Muslim exile and political activist from Russia, Abdürreşid İbrahim, had much involvement in propagating such rumors). Authors emphasized the congruity between Japanese cultural traits and Islam in an effort to make Japanese conversion plausible, and a Conference of Religions convened in Tokyo in 1906 spurred on the belief that Japan was seeking out a new religion that suited its special character.\(^{47}\) Such speculation emanated mostly from Cairo.\(^{48}\)

**The Nation: Egyptian Identity, Japanese Uniqueness**

How did Egyptians deploy the Japanese example to argue specifically for establishing a sovereign Egypt? Egyptian nationalist writers were generally mesmerized by Japan’s indigenous “national spirit” – supposedly the secret of Japan’s success – the ability of the Japanese to convert native energies into the trappings of a Western-style nation-state. Japanese strength of character, their “resolute determination and zeal,”\(^{49}\) their patriotic dedication and self-sacrifice for the sake of the nation’s welfare, were

---


\(^{47}\) If Japan became Muslim, the author of “al-Islām wa’l-Yābān,” al-'Alam al-Islāmī (6 July 1906), 2 explained, it would erode barriers between Arabs, Turks, Persians, and Indians.

\(^{48}\) This line of discussion was relatively absent from the Ottoman Arab press: Sultan Abdülhamid II’s regime censored speculation about Japanese conversion based on his private concern that the Japanese Emperor might become a more effective Caliph. The rumor also floated around Bukhara; see Siamak Adhami, “The Conversion of the Japanese Emperor to Islam; a Study of Central Asian Eschatology,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 43(1999), 1-9.

believed to have changed European policy toward the Far East and were behind the establishment of Japan’s modern institutions. A combination of knowledge and invention with ancestral reverence, loyalty to the Emperor as the personification of the homeland, and samurai morality motivated Japanese soldiers to fight using the most modern military equipment and techniques, and to die honorably and bravely for their country in the war against Russia. Japan was Asia’s teacher both in the tangible skills of successful military technology, commerce and agriculture, and in the abstract lessons of proper education and patriotism.

The two ethical foundations of the modern nation-state that made military victories possible in the first place were that of unity of the nation’s will, and the duty to pursue scientific knowledge for the public good. The call for unity on a par with the Japanese example was reiterated in Cairo, where the rift between Muslims and Copts was of concern to nationalists defining the Egyptian nation in the pages of the press. The Coptic Christians in Egypt, anxious about their integration into a future Egyptian nation-state, tried to connect themselves to the larger Muslim population through a shared sense of Eastern and Egyptian national culture and an overarching unity that disregarded religious differences. Al-Liwa’ cleverly weighed Japanese homogeneity against the Ottoman Empire’s problematic multiplicity of ethnicities, religions, and languages, rather than highlighting divisions within Egyptian society so clearly. Pointing to Japanese unity with one another and with the Emperor as a source of

50 Kāmil, al-Shams al-Mushriqa, 117.
52 “LUHMAY BAYNA AL-SHARQĪYYIN,” al-Liwa’ (8 October 1904), 1. The author hoped Japan’s progress would reach the Near East and that an amicable relationship would ensue among the Japanese Emperor, the Ottoman Sultan, and all peoples of Asia. See “al-Qūwwa al-Bahrīyya al-Uthmāniyya,” al-Liwa’ (18 April 1904), 1 and “al-Bahrīyya al-Uthmāniyya,” al-Liwa’ (22 November 1904), 1 on Japan’s highly trained, technologically proficient naval and land forces.
strength for the nation, Mustafa Kāmil appealed to “Ottoman Christians” to unite under the Ottoman standard as a patriotic act to reclaim the Empire’s former grandeur.\(^55\) The Ottoman Empire’s problems were twofold: first, Ottoman heterogeneity caused religious sectarianism that Japan did not experience, wrote Kāmil; second, Japanese unity was oriented around the throne of the Mikadō in an exchange of trust with the nation. The Emperor possessed a love for Japan and enlightenment; he did not act in his own self-interest, nor for foreign states, so that the people dedicated themselves to his service.\(^56\) Just as the Japanese fulfilled their patriotic duty to the homeland through progress, victory in war, and unity centered around the Emperor, the Egyptian nation, Muslim and Copt, would begin theirs by a united, unwavering struggle against the British, because this self-help, “...to do what Japan did, relying upon its own energy, demanding life and dominion from its efforts.....,” was incumbent upon Egyptian compatriots if they were ever to gain independence.\(^57\)

Mustafa Kāmil was fond of making vivid comparisons between Egypt and Japan in support of the premise that Egyptians were ready for modernity and that a British withdrawal must ensue in order to realize that aspiration. Kāmil was inspired as much by the resplendence of ancient Egypt and former Ottoman glories as he was by Ottoman governor Mehmet Ali’s dramatic modernization of the country. In a speech made in 1902 on the occasion of commemorating the former Khedive’s birthday, Kāmil reminded his audience that the Japanese were still in the shadows of Tokugawan isolationism when Mehmet Ali was challenging the West in a naval confrontation at Navarino Bay (in 1827, during the Greek rebellion), and claimed that Japan had actually looked to Egypt as a model for reform


\(^56\) In return, this enlightened monarch initiated the scientific and literary awakening in Japan. See Ş., “al-Thawra al-Yābāniyya” (Part IV), in al-Balāgh al-Misri (La dépêche Egyptienne) 1:101(18 October 1910), 1.

\(^57\) Mustafa Kāmil, speech entitled “Raghā’ib al-Hizb al-Watanī” given in Alexandria on 22 October 1907. From Awrāq Mustafa Kāmil: al-Khutub (Cairo, 1982), 28. Kāmil wrote to Juliette Adam that “...I am infatuated with patriots and I find in this [Japanese] nation the most beautiful example of patriotism!! How could I not like the Japanese people, as it is this unequalled Eastern race who presses Europe at its borders” (letter dated 9 June 1905, in Awrāq...Murāsalāt, 224).
soon after the Meiji Restoration. Indeed members of the 1873 Japanese Iwakura Mission that journeyed to Europe and the United States to “seek out knowledge from throughout the world” were dispatched to Cairo and Istanbul. The Japanese viewed the adoption of a Mixed Court system which dealt with juridical issues involving foreign nationals or consular officials like that in use in Egypt as an initial step toward revising the Unequal Treaties. Kāmil implored Egyptians in his speeches to regain their rightful place as a nation to lead the East, referring to Egypt’s former stature as a tutor to what was now the most advanced of the Eastern nations, Japan. In the preface of The Rising Sun, Kāmil compared Egyptians and Japanese, from whom Egyptians must learn or else continue to suffer under the colonial yoke. He extolled Japanese traits of noble-minded energy and self-confidence, courage, perseverance, self-sacrifice and self-dignity, virtues that foreign domination and tyrannical leadership had suppressed in Egypt. Thus Japanese students were industrious while Egyptians were lazy and indolent; comparing Japan to Egypt was in his words a comparison of England’s ally to the “prey between its teeth (...) the advanced to the backward; the ruling and the ruled; the hunter and the hunted (...) the rising sun and the sun which has set”!

58 Speech delivered 21 May 1902. Kāmil asked rhetorically (regarding Navarino) “Where was Japan? Where was this active country and grand state? It was - and it was as if it did not exist - in the throes of oppression and the darkness of ignorance.” From Awrāq Mustafa Kāmil: al-Khutub (Cairo, 1982), 247. The Tokugawa Shogunate sent its first students overseas circa 1862. Just as Britain had tried to rid itself of Mehmet Ali, Kāmil exhorted (245), Britain left Japan’s ports “surprised by its dazzling glory, victorious determination, true patriotism and defined zeal.” Ahmad Hilmi emphasized Mehmet Ali’s progressive vision as “that rare example of Egyptian cleverness” that was said to have surpassed even Japan. See “al-Jihād fi Sabil al-Watan,” al-Liwā’ (17 November 1903), 1. ‘Abd al-Qādir Hamza reminisced to this effect in 1910 “[Ina fi dhalika li-‘Ibra: Misr wa al-Yābān,” al-Garīda (28 August 1910), 1]: “Japan was nothing when Egypt was the only Eastern nation with zeal and perseverance.” Egypt, he argued, collapsed after allowing foreigners to prevail first over government, then over Egyptians’ souls with their Western knowledge and money, whereas Japan’s students borrowed only what was necessary from Europe and returned home to deliver this knowledge to their countrymen.


61 Awrāq Mustafa Kāmil: al-Khutub (Cairo, 1982), 267.

Kāmil rarely let an opportunity pass to demand non-cooperation with the British administration and solidarity with the Ottoman state as the first step toward Egyptian self-determination. By contrast, al-Sayyid’s rival political organization, the Umma Party, supported a level of accommodation with the British authorities in order to facilitate secular, constitutional Egyptian statehood, the ideological foundation for the later Egyptian Wafdist Party of the 1920s. But whereas Kāmil’s Watanī Party had contrived an amorphous anti-colonial conception of the Egyptian nation, the ideas disseminated by the Umma Party reflected a more specific nation-state orientation. Authors were no less persistent in using images of Japan, the nation that had “awakened from its ancient slumber,” in the pages of their al-Garīda newspaper. Its contributors understood Japanese patriotism as an expression of the unified national will to absorb and adopt science. Pondering why it was that “when Japan adopts Western civilization it progresses; Egypt tries and falls apart,” the Umma Party linked the true patriotism of the Japanese and their love of homeland to the transformation of science into action. Like Kāmil, they understood Japanese patriotism as a consequence of the people’s relationship to the governing house of the imperial family: devotion to the Emperor generated national unity and subordinated personal interest to the welfare of the nation as a natural duty, allowing Japan to prevail over foreign enemies. Japanese integrity, moderation, and good conduct tempered with a reverence for ancestors stimulated the acquisition of science and technology among all members of society because “a nation is only that because of science,” otherwise its destiny is ignorance and colonization.

According to al-Garīda, the pursuit of universal science combined the “spirit of Japan” with the “knowledge of the West” in an assimilative process whereby Japan merely adopted what suited them from European countries and then adapted these attributes to their own deeply-rooted, indigenous civilization. Assimilation and eugenics – that is, carefully

64 “Intiqād wa Iqtirāh,” al-Garīda 1:5(13 March 1907), 1.
combining Egyptian cultural character with modern Western learning as Japan had done – was a national responsibility that would lead to a higher level of civilization in Egypt. Japan had accomplished in forty years what it took Europe four centuries to achieve, not by blind imitation of Western culture and civilization, but by a thorough understanding of reform and modern progress. Consequently, Japan now represented morally, culturally, and technologically, a nation superior in the East and in the world. Egypt should follow Japan’s lead in borrowing the proper knowledge from the West because Egypt was geographically close enough to Europe and its native identity had been solidly established. In this discourse, local Egyptian consciousness had become synonymous with Japanese ancestral heritage, as two corresponding foundations for national identity, each of which reinforced the ability of the collective soul to achieve its potential. In other words, Egypt could prove its capabilities once again by following in the footsteps of the Japanese and harnessing the inherent Egyptian spirit.

**Egypt the State: Japanese Education, Elites, and Institutions**

Egyptian nationalist writers identified several fundamental tools of nation-state necessary for Egypt to reach modernity: an elite class of intellectuals and officials, a progressive, compulsory education system, and representative, constitutional government. Japan had cultivated the former to develop and institutionalize the latter. These “tools” were interdependent upon one another: for Egyptians adhering to Samuel Smiles’ philosophy, the nation was equal to the aggregate character of its men; the new elite coming out of a reformed educational system, Le Bon’s “true incarnation of the race,” would guide the nation toward progress, and initiate and

---

68 “Mā Na’khudhuhu min Ūrūbā wa mā Yanfa’u Mūr,” *al-Garīda* 4:?(1 March 1910), 1. Assimilation was exhibited in the way Japanese wore Western clothing outside the home but maintained traditional fashions at home, “in the spirit of patriotism” [“Hadīth ‘an al-Sharq al-Aqsa,” *al-Mu’ayyad* (23 February 1904), 1]. See also “al-Dawla al-Sharqiyya al-Jadida,” *al-Mu’ayyad* (27 March 1904), 1.

69 “Al-Islāh Hunna wa Hunnaka,” *al-Liwā’* (20 December 1904), 1. The author of “al-Sharq wa’l-Gharb,” *al-Garīda* 1:4(12 March 1907), 1 declared that Japanese assimilation disproved the maxim of “East is East, West is West, and never the ‘twain shall meet.”

manage the constitutional, parliamentary processes that guaranteed the social order and national interest. Reform had to be implemented from above, to shape and direct peasant energies. Meiji Japan showed what was possible when competent, educated people ran the government and made the correct decisions, epitomizing the relationships between individuals’ active, disciplined mentalities and the nation’s strength and progress. The greatest dangers to a polity, it was argued, were a disloyal, traitorous official or a biased administration which leads the country down a false path toward modernity.

Education organized and renewed the mind of the citizen just as the countryside was being technologically modernized because the moral order was no less important than the material order. Sending missions to Europe to study government organization and scientific advances every year had led to a reformed education system in Japan that turned out great statesmen who, after casting aside impractical ancient traditions and embracing knowledge of the West, comprehended modernization strategies as much as they understood the needs of the people. In his famous 1899 treatise on the liberation of women, Qāsim Amīn concurred. Egyptian nationalists perceived Japan’s universal education system as the key to its strength because it inculcated powerful national morals resulting in a religious sense of unity of purpose to sacrifice for the nation. The Japanese Imperial Rescript on Education was propagated in all secondary schools and public events as the ethical premise defining patriotic subjects’ unity

71 Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, 122, explains that this model of progress - disciplining society through education - centralized power among elites, thus inevitably increasing social inequality.
72 Kāmil, al-Shams al-Mushriqa, 62. Also “al-Nahda al-Sharqīyya,” al-Liwā’ (16 October 1904), 1. Japan was still Confucian in its understanding of state functions and societal obligations.
73 “al- Islāh Hunna wa Hunnaka,” al-Liwā’ (20 December 1904), 1.
74 Durkheim’s lectures on regenerating collective morality through education, Smiles’ Self-Help, with Illusions of Character, Conduct and Perseverance (trans. by Yaqūb Sarrūf), and Le Bon’s Psychologie des Foules (trans. by Fathi Zaghlūl) contributed to these views (Mitchell, Colonising Egypt, 108-110, 121-122). Prime Minister of Egypt Nūbār Pasha viewed modernity within moral and material parameters; he desired a guarantee of the moral order through modern European law consolidating private property (Mitchell, 100).
76 See Qāsim Amin, Tahrīr al-Mar’a (Cairo: 1970), 183. English translation in Worringer, Ottomans Imagining Japan..., 228.
77 “al-Ma’arif fi al-Yābān,” al-Liwā’ (10 August 1905), 1; “Tarbiyya qabla al-‘Ilm,” al-Liwā’ (25 September 1905), 1. The Japanese were said to have achieved a 72% literacy rate.
with their forefathers and their responsibility to serve homeland and ancestors courageously. The Japanese Ministry of Public Instruction reportedly reintroduced the teaching of moral, Confucian values and ancestral reverence (including devotion to the Emperor) after these principles had been prohibited previously; ethical upbringing had recreated a new spirit in Japan, in the mold of the old, yet modernized for today’s nation-state. The government, in turn, was determined to carry out the education of its people by founding scientific, industrial, and agricultural educational facilities, even though Japanese people’s natural intelligence already inclined them towards commerce and agriculture. The outward signs of progress in Japan were the increased number of colleges, a flourishing press, and technological advances like railroads and electricity in the countryside. Loyal devotion to ancestors also created a foundation for Japan’s modern political authority: it perpetuated the ancient throne; citizens behaved with integrity toward one another while striving for perfection in all scientific endeavors; they respected the constitution and obeyed the law.

Kāmil reminded readers in The Rising Sun that the Japanese had long been concerned with the upbringing of their citizenry and that Japan was experienced in the art of assimilation – it had done so with Chinese learning in earlier centuries. Education in Japan improved upon the moral character and assisted the state in assimilating Western sciences, in implementing constitutional government, and in guaranteeing freedom, equality, and the nation’s sovereignty. Unlike Japan, argued al-Garīda, Egypt did not possess a patriotic, compulsory education system that was unified in purpose at the elementary, secondary, and higher levels; its schools did not aim to cultivate an interest in arts and sciences as a way for students to serve sovereign and nation. Egyptians merely learned the general sciences in foreign schools without the proper sense of patriotism to guide

81 “al-Irtiqā’ al-Sahīḥ: Dars”
82 Kāmil, al-Shams al-Mushriqa, 117.
83 al-Bustāni, “Bayna al-Qāhirah wa Tōkīo: Tarīqat al-Ta’alīm al-‘Amm” (Part II), 1.
their use of this knowledge. All Egyptians had to benefit where they could from European teachers: as members of a larger national body, each was to do his or her duty to help that body develop and grow through the active pursuit of education.\textsuperscript{84} The most modern training was to be extended to women as well, as a contributing sector of the population.\textsuperscript{85} The discipline derived from education prepared Egyptians to perform their civil functions with speed and precision; this was the difference between European progress and Egyptian backwardness.\textsuperscript{86} The lack of national schools in Egypt (compared to the large number of Japanese educational institutions) directly corresponded to Egypt’s impotence in trying to bring about a British evacuation.\textsuperscript{87}

Egyptian nationalists demanded the reestablishment of a full constitutional system in Egypt.\textsuperscript{88} They deployed the Japanese example, a constitutional power since 1889, to inveigh against the British, whom they argued, had derailed the political process.\textsuperscript{89} Russia was defeated in 1905 in what \textit{al-Liwā‘} called the “war of the constitution” because Japan was a free country where no one feared government oppression or tyranny at the hands of the Mikadō.\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Al-Garīda} referred to the 1905 Russian revolution as having been a result of Japan kindling the flames of constitutionalism; the

\textsuperscript{84} al-Bustāni, “Bayna al-Qāhirah wa Tōkīo: Tariqat al-Ta‘alīm al-‘Amm” (Part II), 1.


\textsuperscript{86} View expounded by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Jāwish, co-founder of the Watanī Party and Inspector-General in the Ministry of Education, in a definition of \textit{tarbīyya} from a 1903 government textbook on education. Husayn al-Marsāfi, a senior professor at a teacher training college, believed there were three institutions that would inculcate this new discipline in individuals: the school, the political assembly, and the press (Mitchell, 89-90).


\textsuperscript{88} See “al-Wataniyya wa al-Harb,” \textit{al-Liwā‘} (15 March 1904). 1. Egypt’s brief encounter with parliamentarism commenced in 1866. Two decrees instituted a Chamber of Deputies; another decree in 1878 provided for a Cabinet. The Chamber was suspended in 1879, but in late 1881 it was resuscitated as an elected legislative body, the National Constituent Assembly, and a constitutional charter was proclaimed. See J.N.D. Anderson, “Law Reform in Egypt: 1850-1950,” in P.M. Holt (ed.), \textit{Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt} (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 212.


\textsuperscript{90} “Harb al-Dustūr,” \textit{al-Liwā‘} (17 December 1904), 1.
Japanese extended this social philosophy across Asia, to Chinese, Indians, Filipinos, Persians, Afghans and Ottomans (a constitutional revolution took place in Persia in 1906). There was hope that “Japan would spread the light of freedom to Egypt.”

The Meiji Emperor and his statesmen had seemingly modernized country and society through the processes of education and parliamentary administration. Kāmil propagated the notion that the Japanese political model was superior to any European one, for “the Mikadō did not violate the wishes of his people a single time; constitutional monarchs in Europe scarcely follow the will of the nation like this.” Egyptian newspapers al-Sha’b and al-Balāgh al-Misri talked of Japanese political development as a cooperative effort between the people themselves who had restored the Emperor to his exalted position, and the just, enlightened Emperor, the Mikadō, who had benevolently granted the Japanese people a constitution and allowed them to participate in government through political parties and the electoral process. This system was based on the German model, the newspaper argued, and created a government that served the people’s needs. It was the only means to guarantee the eradication of oppression and the facilitation of progress.

Al-Garīda provided an in-depth analysis of the Japanese political system and what Egypt could learn from it in a series published in 1908 called “Between Cairo and Tokyo,” an elaborate schema that connected patriotism, the emergence of political parties, constitutional monarchy, and education together. The author claimed to possess the true secrets behind Japan’s dramatic success in the world: first and foremost, “the nation’s interest

94 Kāmil, al-Shams al-Mushriqa, 127. Quoting the Mikadō’s first speech, Kāmil described the Japanese Emperor as encouraging his people to “abandon harmful delusions and customs,” and to “borrow new ideas from the entire world to increase the honor of the kingdom” (79-80).
above all others” dictated the actions of every individual and party; general education was geared toward obtaining this objective. When Japan’s political parties adopted ideas from European parties, they maintained the principle that individuals did not seek political power but served out of devotion to the Emperor. Political parties addressed vital issues and abstained from the personal goals of their leaders. Japan’s political parties debated the issues to determine the nation’s best interest and how to carry out procedures for this purpose, demonstrating a true understanding of constitutionalism; once decided, they acted in unison for the nation’s well-being. By contrast, Egypt’s political parties were still in a fledgling state, having been influenced by political domination, international treaties, and occupation that created a particular foreign policy not resembling that of a country in and of itself. Egyptian political parties were only concerned with special interests and not with the general welfare. As long as parties were unwilling to sacrifice their needs for those of the nation, the patrie would be endangered. For Egypt, support for the Khedival throne, recognition of Egypt’s sovereignty, preservation of current treaties, and administrative independence were of utmost importance.

Education was to provide Egyptians with the skills necessary to discern the most important concerns of the state, fashioning responsible officials from among the most capable citizens to carry out the task. In Japan the patriotic spirit of education was transferred to political party behavior; students in school first learned their rights and responsibilities and then exercised them through political parties and the parliamentary process. “Patriotic spirit” was “a natural result of the relationship between ruler and ruled in this country”: the nation felt the right and the political power granted by the Mikadō (without riot or war) because of the people’s love for the Emperor. All citizens felt in their souls that sovereignty lay with the Emperor, as the embodiment of defense of the nation and all that was possible for it to achieve militarily, economically, commercially,

100 al-Bustāni, “Bayna al-Qāhira wa Tōkio...,” (Part I), 1.
101 al-Bustāni, “Bayna al-Qāhira wa Tōkio: Tarīqat al-Ta’ālīm al-‘Amm” (Part II), 1.
agriculturally, and diplomatically. Education and political parties were merely outward manifestations of this sentiment. Japanese political parties made service in the Emperor’s name their primary focus, and since the Japanese possessed a constitutional spirit, the Emperor was able to relinquish political power in favor of the exercise of rights of the nation. “What is constitutionalism except the nation enjoying its natural rights?” the author pondered before reminding his audience that there was “no political power without the nation; without the exercise of power and rights, there is no nation.” Whoever demanded a constitution for the nation must teach its citizenry that this was the source of sovereignty. Egypt had not yet fully developed a constitutional spirit that permeated society, imparting a sense of the nation’s rights, and ultimately causing material growth and progress.

Some Egyptian nationalists pointed out that constitutional law was necessary for the East if it wanted to eradicate European exploitation (such as the capitulatory privileges forced upon the Ottoman Empire). Japan, it was noted, had been able to rid itself of its unequal arrangements with European powers in the 1890s because there was no place for capitulations in a nation with European-style laws; Egyptian cabinet minister Nūbār Pasha had attempted to follow Japan’s example with his reform platform in Egypt. The Watanī Party paper al-‘Alam also reminded readers that Japanese private property was now legally protected against foreign appropriation. Japan’s “constitutional revolution” was reported as a blow to the absolutist government and a concerted effort on the part of Japanese citizens to overthrow a weak Shogunate that could not oust foreigners from its borders and preserve the integrity of the country.

102 From al-Bustāni, “Bayna al-Qāhira wa Tōkio: al-Rūh al-Dustūrīyya Hunna wa Hunnaka” (Part III), al-Garīda 1:278 (8 February 1908), 1, attributed originally to Alfred Stead.
103 The “spirit of constitutionalism” was defined by Yūsuf al- Bustāni, “Bayna al-Qāhira wa Tōkio: fi al-Qārya wa fi al-Sijn” (Part IV), al-Garīda 1:285(16 February 1908), 1 as “parties in parliament,” “teachers in schools,” and most importantly, the peasantry who left their land and families to fight wars for the homeland.
Egyptian National Resistance: Anti-Colonialism and Modernity

In an effort to articulate a viable form of Egyptian self-governance in the early decades of the 20th century, Egypt’s nationalists produced a discourse on Japanese nationhood while conveniently setting aside the imperialist implications of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. Mustafa Kāmil and many of his associates vehemently opposed the British, and members of al-Sayyid’s Umma Party who contributed to al-Garida were ambivalent toward the occupation and its consequences for Egypt. At the same time, these nationalists wrote enthusiastically of Japan achieving Great Power status as represented by the very treaty itself.\footnote{See “Misr wa Kūriyā,” al-Garida 1:7(2 June 1907), 2 and others portraying Japan as an equal nation-state defending political and economic interests; see “Khulāsa Siyāsiyya,” al-Garida 1:99(4 July 1907), 1; Sayyid ‘Ali, “Quwwād al-Yābān al-Kubār,” Misr al-Fatāt (1 January 1909), 1; “Malā’īb al-Yābān,” Misr al-Fatāt (9 May 1909), 1; “al-Yābān wa’l-Ajānib,” al-‘Alam (26 May 1910), 3 for views of Japan as a Great Power.}

Russia was seen as the imperial aggressor and Japan the defender of the colonized East in the Russo-Japanese War, despite this being a clash over colonial possessions in East Asia. Control of Manchuria and what was labeled the “guarantee of Korea’s independence” were not imperialist goals of the Japanese, argued the writers of Kāmil’s Watanī Party newspaper, but a means of protecting Japan’s sovereignty against foreign invasion and domination by Russia.\footnote{See “Khutba al-Mikadō,” al-Liwā’ (30 March 1904), 1.}

Very few Egyptian voices dissented against the prevalent view of the Japanese as principled defenders of the East to point out Japan’s expansionist motives in Asia.\footnote{See Alexandrian Jew Ya’qūb Sānū’ (James Sanua)’s satirical paper Abū Nazzāra (Paris, 1878-1910); he notes the Russo-Japanese war was not fought in defense of the patrie.}

The Egyptian nationalist movement linked itself to the Japanese, the allies of their British occupiers, rather than to Korea, a fellow Eastern country colonized by Japan and annexed officially in 1910. Korea was seen by the nationalists as unable to modernize by itself and in need of Japanese “assistance” to drag it into modernity. Egyptian nationalists, many of whom were Western-educated and anti-colonialist, were receptive to the message of Japan and the potential power that emulating its pattern might generate for Egypt. Korea was a colonized loser and not worthy of much Egyptian attention or sympathy. Egyptian nationalist elites who envisioned an independent country with themselves at the helm identified
very readily with the Japanese statesmen whom they idealized. This was at the expense of reality, for they typically ignored Japanese imperialism in Asia altogether or at least viewed Japan as conducting as a noble *mission civilisatrice* for Asia. In any case, Egyptian nationalists, seeing Egypt confidently, as ready for nationhood, would more closely identify with a fellow independent and empowered Eastern brother, Japan, than with Korea, an East Asian replica of Egypt’s weaker self. Nationalists, in Egypt and elsewhere, had to make ideological choices that were not always consistent with the realities in order to make the point.

The perception endured in the minds of prominent Egyptian nationalists that Japan was not a colonial power; rather, Japan was merely performing a noble task in delivering modernity to China or Korea by “reforming” their indigenous Chinese or Korean traditions. It was still the assessment among many Egyptian nationalists as late as 1910, when it was argued for example that Meiji Japan was “a trusted ally of Korea,” or that Japan had influenced constitutional reforms in the Chinese government. On the rare occasion when the similarities between Egypt and Korea as fellow colonized peoples were noted in the press, this resemblance was overshadowed by an apologetic tone towards Japan’s imperialist actions because of its character as an awakened Eastern nation on a civilizing mission, followed immediately by more vitriolic condemnations of British and French policies in North Africa. After the 1910 Korean annexation, the Egyptian press continued to refer to modern Japan as a nation to emulate; Egyptian military personnel, journalists, and members of the Khedive’s family personally journeyed to East Asia to decipher the “Secret of Japan’s Progress” (the title of one of the subsequent monographs published).

---

114 I found only two such references: “Inkiltāra wa Misr wa’l-Yābān wa Küriyā,” *al-Garīda* (27 August 1910), 1; “Li Hafz al-Nizām wa’l-Amn al-’Amm,” *al-Garīda* (10 September 1910), 4.
116 Yüzbaşı Ahmad al-Fadli, *Kitāb Sirr Tāqaddum al-Yābān* (Cairo: 1911). The brother of the Khedive, Prince Muhammad Ali went to Japan on several occasions and published his travel account, *al-Rihla al-Ŷabānīyya*, in 1912. Ali Ahmad al-Girgāwi, owner and editor of the Egyptian newspaper *al-Irshād*, published his own *al-Rihla al-Ŷabānīyya* [The Japanese Journey] in Cairo in 1907/8 after a brief trip to Japan. Three Egyptian youths were reportedly sent to Japan to study...
Were Egyptians unaware of, or did they conveniently ignore the fact that the Japanese, interested in finding utilitarian methods of managing their own colonial acquisitions in East Asia after 1905, actually looked to the British occupation in Egypt as a model for imperial administration of their own newly-acquired colonies? Japan had studied the British occupation of Egypt as a guide to administering Korea. The Japanese admired former British civil administrator of Egypt Lord Cromer (Sir Evelyn Baring); they had his 2-volume treatise, *Modern Egypt* (1908), translated into Japanese in 1911.\(^{117}\) Known for his rigid and absolutist administrative style during his years as governor-general of Egypt (from 1883 until 1907, when he was forced to resign over the Dinshaway affair), this manual was looked upon favorably by prominent Japanese officials such as Ōkuma Shibenobu as a useful guide for managing their Korean possession.\(^{118}\) The *Japan Weekly Mail* outlined Japanese views very clearly in 1907:

The leading Japanese journals speak in enthusiastic terms of Lord Cromer and the great work he has done in Egypt. They recall the immense difficulties he had to encounter at the outset of his administration and the extraordinary perseverance and patience shown by him in never flinching or allowing himself to be discouraged by the attacks directed against him and his administration at the outset. It is easy to see that these papers have Marquis Itō in their thoughts when they write thus. They appreciate that his task in Korea closely resembles that which fell to Lord Cromer in Egypt.\(^{119}\)

---


118 For Ōkuma’s comments, see *Saikin Ejiputo*, Volume 1, 12-13 in the Preface. I am indebted to Cemil Aydın for this Japanese reference.

119 *Japan Weekly Mail* (20 April 1907), 423. I am indebted to Michael Penn for this reference. Itō was Resident-General of Korea until his assassination in Harbin by a Korean anti-colonial rebel. See Hane, *Modern Japan*, 180.
The Egyptian press was in fact aware of Marquis Itō’s unflattering comparison when he publicly stated Japan’s intention “to strive to make Korea a second Egypt.”

In the early 20th century the Egyptian nationalist leadership repeatedly contended that Egypt must be allowed self-determination in order to reach its full potential as a fellow participant in the world of nation-states. They chose to identify themselves with an imperialist power, Meiji Japan, its institutions and behavior, over and above any connections to the peoples Japan had occupied, Egypt’s colonized ‘brothers’ in East Asia, the Koreans, the Taiwanese, or the Chinese. Egyptians identified with the victors, the Japanese ‘civilization-bearer’, rather than the colonized losers of East Asia, whose political circumstances more closely resembled those of Egypt under British authority. Not only did Egyptian anti-colonial ideology minimize the implications of Meiji Japan’s formal alliance with Britain. Egyptians downplayed or avoided altogether acknowledging Japanese actions in Asia as imperialist, in the name of embracing what were at the time considered to be the true principles of modernity and the only viable path to national liberation for Eastern peoples: the foundations of Western statehood, which Japan had successfully adopted and came to represent in the Orient. Japan’s achievements signified the innate potential within all Asians to become modern, overriding any desire to draw conclusions about Japanese colonialism.

Such anti-colonial nationalist movements among non-European peoples, a new feature of the world at the turn of the 20th century, tended to resemble one another. They espoused anti-colonial ideologies which placed Japan at the helm of ‘the East’ in an effort to realize self-determination. To Egyptian nationalists around the turn of the 20th century, Meiji Japan could only be a symbol of Oriental potential to achieve Western modernity, and not an imperialist. A brutal colonizer could only be Western, and not a fellow Easterner. Egypt’s nationalist assessments of modern Japan that ignored the less attractive aspects of Japanese policy in Asia make sense if we consider that the most recent Egyptian experience of colonialism (and indeed the typical experiences of many others as well at this time) was an entanglement with a European power, reinforcing the impression

120 “Misr wa Küriyā,” Misr al-Fatāt, 1.
that colonial activities were always undertaken by the imperialist West. Like in Egypt, the Chinese Ch’ing-i [national renovation movement] in the last quarter of the 19th century that extended into the 1898 Chinese Reform Movement, and also Phan Bội Châu’s Vietnamese Đông-du [Go East] movement in the early 20th century, typified the tendency among elites of other non-Western societies seeking modernity to look selectively to Japan for guidance. The Indian nationalist struggle against the British Raj was one which idealized Meiji Japan, and to complement the intellectual discourse on Japan, Indian nationalists made direct contacts with the Japanese to assist in their demands for economic self-sufficiency and political self-governance. But proximity to and direct experience of the Japanese ascent to power determined the rate and intensity with which a colonized nation became disillusioned with the Japanese model, the Koreans and Chinese being the first to resist Japan as an occupying power. A distant Egypt, on the other hand, continued to imagine the ideal of modern Japan in any way its nationalists chose to portray it.

At this moment, Egyptian nationalists (and other non-Westerners) whose political or cultural affairs were administered by a colonial overlord, denying them a substantial voice in governing, often adhered to the hegemonic, West-centric understanding of modern progress circulating in the world. The relationship between colonialism and modernity in this context essentially precluded the articulation of a coherent, effective ideology of international solidarity and universal anti-colonial resistance among peoples similarly experiencing physical occupation by an imperial power. This follows because peoples not yet believed to have ‘become modern’ (i.e. Korea) were deemed by both Eastern and Western elites to be in need


122 See Dua’s discussion of Indian political exiles in Japan; the Indian Swadeshi boycott and Japanese goods flowing into India, and Japanese machines used in Indian textile factories.
of assistance according to standards dictated by the West. A ‘more advanced’ power’s colonial intrusion (i.e. Japan in Korea) was thus justifiable, up to the point at which the fledgling nation was ready for independence. In the case of Egypt, convinced of Egypt’s fulfillment of modern criteria, the nationalists engaged in anti-colonial resistance to eradicate the British presence from the Nile Valley in the early 20th century. Egyptian ideology centered fervently around contesting specifically British imperialism, rather than publicly objecting to all colonialist actions in the world without distinction; it did not extend to opposing Japanese imperial exploits.

The distillation of anti-colonial attitudes through the filter of West-centric, Japanese progress explains the lack of Egyptian solidarity with the Koreans’ plight just as it goes far in accounting for the high degree of Egyptian sympathy and support for the Indian nationalists against their British overlords or for the Javanese resistance against the Dutch. In those cases, not only could the pan-Asian, anti-colonial rhetoric incorporate a pan-Islamic tone, but the occupier was clearly European, an ontological opposite, a Western ‘Other’, behaving according to what were assumed to be its inherently negative and inhumane predispositions. The East, in contrast, was able to preserve its superior morality. Some historians view this pattern as a pan-Asian identity, or an Easternism, that is reactive in nature, a purely fictive modality generated as a response to the West:

The widest basis of an Eastern orientation in Egypt in the 1920s was an external and largely artificial one: the difference between all the lands and peoples of the East, on the one hand, and the well-defined, apparently homogenous, and then dominant West, on the other. Easternism in this sense was derivative, a function not of intrinsic similarities or bonds among the individual units constituting the East but rather of their all being something other than the West.\(^{123}\)

As a derivative anti-colonial discourse, and derivative in my view refers also to the way Partha Chatterjee understands it – that is, anti-Western discourse produced by the non-West but informed by European intellectual

thought so that the West ultimately retained its position in setting the standards for measuring ‘true progress’ – perhaps the Egyptian idealization of Japan as a model nation-state representative of Eastern modernity could not help but be rife with contradictions. A universalist, “non-derivative” anti-colonial resistance not based purely upon pan-Asian or pan-Eastern identity but upon generic resistance to any imperialist action committed by another nation would take decades longer to develop.

The start of the First World War and the British declaration of Egypt’s status as a protectorate interrupted the nationalists’ focus for a time. In the aftermath of the war, those sympathetic to the Umma Party’s Western-oriented, secular ideas continued to pursue an accommodationist policy that involved forming a delegation, the Wafd, as a vehicle for officially representing and peacefully, legally achieving Egyptian national interests, the most crucial of which were to repeal Egypt’s status as a protectorate and to grant Egypt independence. In 1918 the Wafdistes anticipated traveling to London to present their demands directly at the Paris Peace Conference. Britain refused to allow this, arrested prominent members of the delegation and exiled them to Malta, an action which was immediately followed by public demonstrations, violent riots, strikes, and further arrests in Egypt in 1919 that forced the British to acquiesce. The Wafdist exiles returned and traveled to Versailles, where the Japanese sat at the table as victors with their fellow Allied Powers. Attempts by Japan to insert a racial equality amendment into the League of Nations Covenant at the Paris Peace conference perpetuated Japan’s image as a crusader for non-European peoples (including African-American activists) as the Japanese strived to effect on paper a recognizable change in the racial hierarchy; they were unsuccessful in this endeavor. Japan’s motives pertained to erasing the final obstacle obfuscating its unconditional equality with Western powers in determining global affairs. Certainly, this had an impact upon the Egyptian Wafdistes present, and Egyptians continued to regard Japan as an exemplary nation-state throughout the 1920s, during Egypt’s Easternism

125 Vatikiotis, Modern Egypt, 264.
movement. Japan mediated a Westernized modernization program with Eastern identity. When Egyptian nationalists needed to draw a distinction between Eastern capabilities and Western colonial dominance to plead their case for independence in the post-World War One era, Japan served as the definitive example of Asian possibility, without alienating Egyptians who despised reforms resembling Western imitation. Egypt could follow suit, reforming and modernizing education, government, industries, and the minds of its people in order to compete in the 20th century nation-state system.

The decoupling of colonialism and modernity from ‘the West’ occurred in the early to mid-20th century when Asians, Africans and Middle Easterners began to more substantially question Western strategies and goals for becoming a modern society, and their suitability altogether for ‘Eastern’ peoples. Although colonialism was still often assumed to be an aggression carried out by the West (i.e. Europe and America), recognition of the viability of alternative paths to modernity was fueled by rapid decolonization in many areas of the non-Western world. Finally made obsolete was the notion that the foundations of modernity were merely the preserve of the West. This was a realization shared by many anti-colonial nationalists that there could be more than one legitimate path to modernity, that in fact “modern progress” did not need to be understood as a possession of the West, and that it could more successfully be achieved by genuine reliance upon indigenous cultural foundations instead. Previous attempts by mainly Western-oriented nationalist elites in non-Western societies to balance Eastern essence and Western learning were believed to have been superficial; moreover, tradition and innovation now need not be mutually exclusive, but were to be successfully reconciled as a true sign of a nation’s modernity, and could be achieved without Western intervention. For Egypt, this was exemplified by

---

128 "Japan...is the Eastern nation which lifted the head of the East and made sure that Easterners accepted modern civilization. It had been the pretext of the colonizers from England, France, and Holland, their feet firmly planted in the Eastern countries and skimping on expenditures to educate the peoples, that the Easterner differs from the West in his intellectual ability and his character, and that he does not benefit from European civilization. Then came Japan’s progress, disproving these allegations.” “Al-Yābān: Dawla Sharqīyya Nakabatuhā al-Tabī‘a,” *al-Hilāl* (1 November 1923), 10-11.
the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in the late 1920s. The charismatic Indian activist, Mohandas Gandhi and his nationalist movement emphasizing Indian self-reliance and non-violent civil disobedience against the British Raj resulted in Indian independence, which began to inspire a more universal anti-colonial solidarity in the world. Colonial powers could now be non-European (e.g. China’s invasion of Tibet in 1959).

Views of both colonialism and modernity among non-Europeans became more nuanced in later decades of the 20th century. Imperial Japan’s violent colonial actions in Asia in the first half of the century and up through World War II were finally and definitively revealed as having been contrary to the very principles Japan had come to represent for much of the non-Western world in the pre-war era. Nonetheless, in many regions not directly affected by Japanese occupation during the war (such as the Middle East), post-war Japan was rather quickly forgiven for its wartime sins and soon recovered its image as a role model for Eastern modernity. In the aftermath of the Second World War, unlocking the secrets of the “Japanese economic miracle” became the desire of many leaders and citizens of the newly established states of the Middle East. An abundant number of Arabic publications in the post-war period revisited Japan, this time as a nation that arose from the ashes of war and American occupation to become a global economic power.129

The final act in the story of a colonial triangle in Egypt is not the fact that a seemingly “non-aligned” universal anti-colonialist ideology did eventually materialize. It is that it emerged in its most globally assertive form in the aftermath of the Second World War, in Egypt, with the ascent of Egyptian revolutionary Gamāl ʻAbd al-Nasser to the forefront of Egyptian politics after the Free Officers coup in 1952 and the departure of the last British forces from Egypt four years later. His international status as political head of the non-alignment movement, the anti-imperialist “leader of the third world,” highlighted the era of global decolonization in Asia and Africa in which formerly occupied peoples identified with one another and often established direct contacts.

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

Ulrich Brandenburg
Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies, University of Zurich

Abstract

In the historiography of Japan’s Interaction with the Turkish and the Muslim World, Ahmed Münir İbrahim (1887-1941) has been overshadowed by his father, Abdürreşid İbrahim (1857-1944). Abdürreşid, a Russian Tatar scholar and journalist, spent five months in Japan in the first half of 1909. After his journey, he published a two-volume travelogue entitled *Alem-i İslam ve Japonya’daki İntişar-ı İslamiyet* in Istanbul in 1910. This travelogue has remained one of the most important sources for the history of early Turkish-Japanese relations and has predominantly been regarded as an expression of pan-Islamist and pan-Asianist thinking. Similar to his father, Münir too traveled to Japan in December 1910 as a member of the first Ottoman student delegation. Münir and his two companions, Hasan Fehmi and Mehmed Tevfik, were sent to Japan at the request of the pan-Asianist society Ajia Gikai to take up their studies in Tokyo. After his arrival in Japan, Münir published a brief, serialized travelogue in the Kazan newspaper *Beyanülhak*, which relates the students’ journey from Harbin to Tokyo, alongside other articles on Harbin and Japan. While Münir’s articles in the Ottoman journal *Sebilürreşad* and the Japanese journal *Daitō* have recently been scrutinized by historians, his travelogue in *Beyanülhak* has to date remained completely obscure. This article will, first, provide a concise discussion of the Ottoman student delegation to Japan and, second, examine key aspects of Münir’s travelogue, which may provide historians with important insights into the more mundane aspects of Turkish-Japanese exchanges behind the idealizing visions of pan-Islamism and pan-Asianism.
Keywords: Japan, Russian Tatars, Ottoman Empire, Manchuria, pan-Asianism, pan-Islamism

Introduction: Two İbrahims in Japan

A towering figure in the history of Japanese-Ottoman and Japanese-Tatar relations is without a doubt Abdürreşid İbrahim (1857-1944), who visited Japan in the first half of 1909 and established relations with high-ranking politicians and pan-Asianist circles. İbrahim was an influential intellectual among Russia’s Muslims and a prominent figure in the ittifak movement following the Russian revolution of 1905. Abdürreşid left his country in late 1908 after his popular reformist journal Ülfet (published in St. Petersburg 1905-1907) had been suppressed by the authorities. Having completed his journey, which led him from Japan via Korea, China, India, and the Arabian Peninsula to Istanbul, he published his Ottoman Turkish travelogue Alem-i İslam ve Japonya’daki İntişar-ı İslamiyet (The World of Islam and the Spread of Islam in Japan) in two volumes in 1910-1913. This impressive work has served as an important source in historical writing, particularly with regard to “Japan’s Interaction with the Turkish and the Muslim World”.

In contrast to his father, Abdürreşid’s son Ahmed Münir İbrahim (1887-1941) has been largely neglected in historiography. During his father’s journey to Japan, Münir worked as a journalist for the Kazan newspaper Beyantılıhak, where he was involved in the publication of Abdürreşid’s writing in Tatar Turkish (cf. Türkoğlu 1997, 67). After first migrating from Russia to the Ottoman Empire, Münir became part of the first Ottoman student delegation to Japan and traveled to Tokyo in December 1910. Together with his two companions, he stayed in Japan for several years and enrolled at Waseda University in Tokyo. There are still many gaps regarding Münir’s life in general and the length of his stay in Japan in particular.²

---

1 For Münir’s year of death, I follow Gündoğdu 2007. With regard to his date of birth, I refer to Cwiklinski 2012, 77, 82 n. 179. Cwiklinski mentions two different likely dates: archival documents indicate 1887, but Abdürreşid’s personal notebook gives 1886. I have opted for the first, official version.

2 According to Gündoğdu (2012, 138-41), Münir basically stayed in Japan until returning to Turkey in 1924. Türkoğlu (1997, 13-14 n. 18), on the other hand, has claimed that Münir first returned to Kazan after completing his studies in Japan, went to Berlin after the Russian Revolution.
He seems to have remained in East Asia for a few years after the end of World War I, at least, working for a Japanese bank in Vladivostok. In 1924, he moved back to the newly established Republic of Turkey, where he briefly worked for the Japanese embassy and then became the director of a high school in Ankara (Gündoğdu 2012, 139-40).

The neglect of Münir’s role in the historiography of Japan’s interactions with the Turkish and the Muslim World is partly attributable to the fact that he did not publish a travelogue in the form of a book. Not being as prolific a writer as his father, Münir limited himself to shorter newspaper articles (including printed lectures and letters), which were published in Ottoman, Tatar, and Japanese journals. Only part of his Ottoman Turkish and Japanese writing has been discussed by scholars so far, in the context of Japanese-Ottoman relations and pan-Asianism (Gündoğdu 2012, 2007; Misawa 2013, 507–9, 2001). In this article, I add to the few existing studies by, first, providing a brief discussion of the Ottoman student delegation to Japan and, second, introducing a serialized travelogue that Münir published in Beyanülhak. I argue that Münir’s travelogue, which relates the students’ journey from Harbin to Tokyo, provides historians with important insights into the more mundane aspects of Turkish-Japanese exchanges behind the idealizing visions of pan-Islamism and pan-Asianism.

Münir’s travelogue and other Japan-related articles in Beyanülhak have been completely ignored by scholarship. A similar neglect of Beyanülhak as a source even exists with regard to Abdürreşid İbrahim, whose extensive travel notes in this journal have been largely overlooked by historians (although both Abdürreşid’s and Münir’s connections to Beyanülhak are well known). Besides revealing a scholarly bias towards monographic sources, which are usually in better condition and easier accessible, this situation shows a second bias that favors Ottoman Turkish sources over

and went to Turkey in 1920. Archival documents corroborate that Münir entered Turkey in 1924, but his activities during the years of World War I and its aftermath still remain obscure.

3 Komatsu Hisao and Komatsu Kaori, in the introduction to their annotated Japanese translation of Abdürreşid İbrahim’s travelogue, have made use of Beyanülhak, though. Cf. H. Komatsu and K. Komatsu 2013. Sebastian Cwiklinski, in his yet unpublished PhD thesis on Abdürreşid, also consulted the articles in Beyanülhak as well as Abdürreşid’s Tatar travelogue Devr-i Alem (1909), which compiled a part of these articles. I am grateful to Komatsu Hisao’s research group for kindly giving me access to scanned images of Beyanülhak covering the years 1909-1911.
those published in Russia. The problem is, however, that Münir and Abdürreşid, similar to many other Russian Muslim intellectuals in the late Ottoman Empire, frequently moved between the Ottoman and Russian domains and intervened in both public spheres (cf. Meyer 2015; Shissler 2003). Abdürreşid’s articles in Beyanülhak provide additional detail, a clearer chronology, and sometimes even a different framing of events than the two volumes of Alem-i İslam (cf. Brandenburg 2018b). Regarding Münir, the contrast between his writing in different languages is particularly striking: for Japanese audiences, he served by and large as an expert on the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East, commenting predominantly on political developments. In his articles for the Istanbul-based Islamist journal Sebilürreşad (up to 1912: Sırat-ı Müstakim), he variegated pan-Asianist messages with observations on Japanese modernity and a call for closer relations between Japan and the Ottoman Empire. In Beyanülhak, however, Münir largely abstained from political messages and focused on social reform, trade and industry, as well as general travel impressions. We may interpret these differences as an adjustment to the distinct preferences of Münir’s audiences in Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Japan.

Abdullah Gündoğdu (2007, 250) has correctly pointed out that Münir often followed in the footsteps of his dominant father and “always felt his father’s influence on his personal life and interests.” This observation holds true when we look at the overlapping networks in which father and son were involved: in Istanbul, both published in the pan-Islamist journals Sebilürreşad and Tearüf-i Müslimin; in Kazan their writings appeared in Beyanülhak, and in Japan they both frequented the pan-Asianist society Ajia Gikai and wrote for its journal Daitō. These parallels between father and son should not lead us to underestimate the historical value of Münir’s writing, however. In historical sources, father and son come across as distinct personalities: while Abdürreşid was blessed with the gift of oral and written communication, Münnir seems to have been a

---

4 The surviving issues of Daitō have been made available on CD-rom by Tōyō University under the direction of Misawa Nobuo, see (Tōyō Daigaku Aija Bunka Kenkyūjo Ajia Chiiki Kenkyū Sentā 2008).

5 The scale of Abdürreşid İbrahim’s writings and activities is nothing less but impressive. During his stay in Japan from late January to mid-June 1909, he published more than forty articles in Beyanülhak. At the same time, he explored Japan, met with a considerable number of influ-
more intellectually minded character. The Czech Orientalist Alois Nykl, who made his acquaintance in Tokyo in late 1911, described him as “the most enlightened Turk I have ever met.” In Münir’s articles, the reader is confronted with a density of detailed information and often statistical data. Nonetheless, historians have commonly focused on commonalities between father and son, presenting Münir as continuing his father’s activities in the service of pan-Islamism and pan-Asianism (Gündoğdu 2012, 141). In the following discussion, I show that Münir in his Tatar travelogue was hardly interested in advocating grand political visions of Muslim or Asian unity. Instead, Münir’s writing is particularly insightful regarding the daily practices and challenges in the development of Japanese-Turkish and Japanese-Tatar exchanges.

**The Ottoman Student Delegation to Tokyo**

Münir arrived in Tokyo on December 29, 1910, as part of the first Ottoman student delegation to Japan and was welcomed by representatives of the pan-Asianist society Ajia Gikai (“Asian Society”) (Ajia Gikai 1911). The other members of the group were two recent graduates of the Mekteb-i mülkiye: Hasan Fehmi, who also frequently published articles on Japan in the Ottoman press, and Mehmed Tevfik (cf. Şahin 2001, 165-166 n. 475). Originally, another graduate of the Mekteb-i mülkiye, İbrahim Edhem, was supposed to be the third member of the group. When he fell sick before the journey, however, he was replaced by Münir (Türkoğlu 2015, 112).

Although the circumstances of the student’s dispatch to Japan have not yet been completely illuminated, Abdürreşid played a major role in the preparations. During his stay in Japan in 1909, Abdürreşid had helped found the Ajia Gikai, which one year later invited Ottoman students to Tokyo. The invitation was published in the Istanbul-based journal Tearüf-i Müslimin (1910a), which was edited by Abdürreşid, and the dispatch of the delegation was likewise announced in Tearüf-i Müslimin (1910b). It is uncertain how much financial backing the Ajia Gikai eventually gave to the delegation (Misawa 2013, 507). According to Ottoman sources (İctihad ential personalities, gave several public speeches and communicated with Sırat-ı Müstakim. Japanese interlocutors repeatedly mentioned his tendency to talk a lot.

1911; Tearüf-i Müslümanin 1910b) an Ottoman sponsor (Mısırlı Abbas Halim Paşa?) provided the financial means. Hasan Fehmi pointed out after his return to Istanbul that the Ajia Gikai falsely claimed to have supported the Ottoman students, while this was done in fact by a sponsor at home (Türköğlu 2015, 126 and 130). As we read in Tearüf-i Müslümanin (1910c), the Ottoman şeyhülislam was also supportive of the delegation. Documents of the Ottoman embassy in London, through which the Ottoman foreign ministry communicated with Japan, further indicate a degree of involvement by the Ottoman bureaucracy. Official backing was not strong enough, however, to enable the students to enroll at Tokyo Imperial University as was initially planned; instead they enrolled at Ōkuma Shigenobu’s Waseda University (Misawa 2013, 508).

The three students were in close contact with the Ajia Gikai at least until 1912, when the society reportedly moved its activities to China (Misawa 2013, 509–10). The Ajia Gikai publicly celebrated its success in bringing the first students from the Middle East to Japan as the first step in its endeavor “to make the relations of Asiatic people closer and to promote political, commercial and educational interests in Asia” (The Japan Times 1911). It made use of the three students as experts for the Middle East and teachers of the Turkish language (Nakano 1911). The students were also charged with the translation of articles from the Ottoman Turkish press (Ahmed Münir İbrahim 1911a). All three were named honorary members of the Ajia Gikai and thereby served as symbols of the society’s outreach towards the Middle East and the world of Islam (cf. Misawa 2013, 508).

We often encounter the three students in the vicinity of the Indian revolutionary and pan-Islamist Muhammad Barakatullah, who had moved to Tokyo from the USA in 1909 to start a position at the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages (Brandenburg 2019). Soon after his arrival, Barakatullah made the acquaintance of Abdürreşid İbrahim, became involved with the Ajia Gikai, and began publication of the journal Islamic Fraternity. After the three students arrived from the Ottoman Empire, Barakatullah published an article in the Islamic Fraternity (reprinted in Japanese translation in Daitō), in which he praised the emerging cooperation between Muslims

7 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, HR.SFR.3 611.11, Nov. 5, 1910.
and the Ajia Gikai in bringing Asians together and making Islam known in Japan (Barakatullah 1911a). He invited the three students to the widely publicized conversion ceremony of Hatano Uhō and Hatano’s wife and father-in-law on December 3, 1911 (Barakatullah 1911b). Hatano, celebrated by Barakatullah as the first Japanese Muslim, was a writer and journalist who frequently translated Barakatullah’s ideas into Japanese and assisted in the latter’s publishing activities (Kubota 2005, 172–73). Münir’s articles in *Strat-ı Müstakim/Sebilürreşad* occasionally mentioned Hatano and presented him as a pioneering Japanese Muslim who tried to spread Islam in Japan (Ahmed Münir İbrahim 1912). Münir also sent Hatano’s pan-Asianist book *Ajia gōdō ron* (On Asian Unity) to İstanbul (Sebilürreşad 1913b). It was subsequently translated into Ottoman Turkish by Abdürreşid İbrahim and Nakao Hideo and published under the title *Asya Tehlikede* (Asia in Danger) (Sebilürreşad 1913a; Dündar 2015).

İsmail Türkoğlu (2015) has drawn our attention to an important report on Japan that Hasan Fehmi compiled for the Ottoman government in 1915. Fehmi’s report illustrates that interpersonal relations within the small Muslim community in Japan and among the three Ottoman students were not as harmonic as they may at first glance seem. Written shortly after Fehmi’s return to the Ottoman Empire, his report aggressively accused all major figures of pre-World War I Japanese-Muslim relations – Abdürreşid İbrahim, Barakatullah, Hatano, as well as Münir – of being liars and impostsers, who habitually inflated their own importance for personal gain. While some of the accusations may be attributed to personal grudges, it is true that Abdürreşid, for example, adapted his stories to changing circumstances and often exaggerated his achievements (cf. Brandenburg 2018b). Barakatullah also combined different political positions and public profiles; and Barakatullah and Abdürreşid, together with Hatano and members of the Ajia Gikai, projected a grossly misleading picture of the success of Islam in Japan to Ottoman and Middle Eastern audiences (cf. Brandenburg 2018a). With regard to Münir, Hasan Fehmi bitterly pointed out that Münir frequently mislead Japanese interlocutors to appear more important, that he had taken money from the two other students to travel to İstanbul, and that he did not hesitate to support Russia against the Ottoman
Empire after the outbreak of World War I (Türkoğlu 2015, 127–28). At this point, it is difficult to corroborate these claims with other sources. They should remind us, however, that Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire (as well as other transnational Muslim activists) embraced different and sometimes contradictory identities and frequently adapted their messages and political positions to changing contexts (cf. Meyer 2015; Shissler 2003).

Among the three students, Münir has probably left the biggest public imprint. *Sebilürreşad* alone published sixteen of his articles (cf. Gündoğdu 2012, 2007). The Ajia Gikai selected him to deliver a public lecture on the Caucasus and Persia, which was reprinted in *Daitō* and partly reproduced also in the daily press (Ahmed Münir İbrahim 1911b; Tōkyō Asahi Shinbun 1911). *Daitō* also published several other articles by Münir, which advocated Asian unity or explained developments in the Middle East (cf. Misawa 2001, 66). In an eight-part interview with *Yomiuri Shinbun* (1912), we see Ahmed Münir explain Turkish culture and history. *Beyanülhak*, finally, published his (usually serialized) articles on Manchuria and Japan in at least 35 of its issues in 1910-1911.

**The Students’ Journey through Manchuria**

Münir did not specify details of his journey to Japan in the Ottoman or the Japanese press. In *Beyanülhak*, however, he published a sixteen-part series of travel impressions from East Asia under the headline “The Journey from Harbin to Port Arthur and from there to Tokyo.” This serialized travelogue appeared in the feuilleton of the newspaper between January 29 and April 9, 1911. It was preceded by two separate articles, which dealt with the Muslim community in Harbin. Taken together, Münir’s texts allow us to reconstruct the East Asian part of the students’ itinerary.

---

8 Two of these articles are signed “Ibrahim,” without giving the full name. While I agree with Misawa Nobuo that they should be attributed to Münir, there is a certain ambiguity here.

9 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [1-16], *Beyanülhak*, Nos. 713 (Jan. 29), 716 (Jan. 31), 718 (Feb. 9), 719 (Feb. 12), 721 (Feb. 16), 722 (Feb. 19), 723 (Feb. 21), 724 (Feb. 23), 726 (Feb. 28), 728 (Mar. 7), 729 (Mar. 9), 732 (Mar. 16), 733 (Mar. 19), 736 (Mar. 26), 738 (Mar. 30), 742 (Apr. 9). All dates are given according to the Gregorian calendar.

10 Abdürreşid İbrahim’s articles “Devr-i Alem” (Around the World) were likewise published in the feuilleton of *Beyanülhak* during Abdürreşid’s journey 1909-10.

11 “Harbin’de İslamlar” and “Harbin’de Bayram,” *Beyanülhak*, Nos. 699 (Dec. 27, 1910) and 702 (Jan. 3, 1911).
They took the Trans-Siberian Railway to Irkutsk and continued to Harbin via Zabaykalsk, where they changed into trains of the Russian-owned Chinese Eastern Railway. The travelers arrived in Harbin on the morning of December 12, 1910. On December 22, Münir, who held Russian nationality, received his travel documents from the Russian authorities in Harbin. One day later, on December 23, the group traveled to Changchun on the Chinese Eastern Railway and there changed into an express train of the Japanese-owned South Manchurian Railway to Dalian (Dalny/Dairen), a Chinese port that Russia had leased in 1897 and ceded to Japan after the Russo Japanese War 1904-05. On December 24, they went on a day trip to neighboring Port Arthur, and on December 25, the group left Dalian for Japan in the early morning. Traveling on the Japanese ship Amakusa Maru for two days, the students arrived in Shimonoseki on December 27. From Shimonoseki, they took a train to Tokyo and were welcomed at Shinbashi station by representatives of the Ajia Gikai on December 29.

In several respects, the students’ journey is comparable to Abdürreşid’s, who had also spent two weeks in Harbin in January 1909 to apply for Russian travel documents (Abdürreşid İbrahim 1910, 160). While Abdürreşid continued his journey to Japan via Vladivostok and Tsuruga, Münir and his companions, on the other hand, chose the route through the Japanese-dominated southern part of Manchuria, which Abdürreşid had only visited after his departure from Japan. In Harbin, Abdürreşid had been particularly impressed by the imam of the local Tatar mosque, Inayetullah (Ginietulla Selikhmetov), a young man of 24 years. During his stay in Harbin, Abdürreşid was a guest at the house of the local merchant

12 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [1]. The text gives the Julian date December 29, 1911, but on this day the travelers were already in Tokyo. It is most likely that they arrived in Harbin on November 29, i.e., December 12, 1910, according to the Gregorian calendar.
13 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [3].
14 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [5].
15 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [7].
16 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [10].
18 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [13]. Although Münir alluded to a stopover in Kobe in in the first part of the series, he does not mention it in this article. The report by the Ajia Gikai in Daitō states that a member of the society was sent to Kobe on December 28 and transmitted the students’ time of arrival in Tokyo by telegram. Cf. Ajia Gikai 1911.
Hüseyin Efendi Agişev (Agishev), whose family maintained a profitable clothing business in Harbin (ibid., 146–47; cf. Miller 1904, 12). As both Abdürrüşid and Münir point out, Harbin was a young city that developed after 1898 as headquarters of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company, i.e., as a result of Russia’s economic penetration into Manchuria (cf. Bakich 1986, 131–39). Harbin grew rapidly into a multi-ethnic or “international” city (beynemilel bir şehir, in Münir’s expression) and housed sizeable Russian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese communities. The city was a particularly attractive destination for Russian liberals and ethnic minorities such as Jews, who could enjoy the privileges of Russian nationality in what was de facto a Russian colony on Chinese territory without being exposed to the same discrimination as at home (Goldstein 2015, 103–28; Wolff 1999). From early on, Harbin was home to a Tatar community of around 200 people, which constructed a first wooden mosque already in 1901 and a stone mosque in 1906-07 (Chernolutskaya 2000, 83–84; Dündar 2008, 21–25).

Münir and his companions arrived in Harbin at the beginning of Eid al-Adha/Kurban Bayrami. They also arrived in the midst of a plague epidemic that hit Harbin and Manchuria in autumn 1910, but this apparently did not give too much concern to Münir. In Münir’s article “Bayram in Harbin,” we learn that the three travelers spent the third day of the bayram with Inayetullah, who continued to be imam of Harbin mosque (and would remain so until his death in 1926, cf. Chernolutskaya 2000, 83). In a long exchange with the imam, Mehmet Tevfik spoke about the brotherhood between Ottoman Turks and Tatars, and the respect that Tatars received from people in the Ottoman Empire. Inayetullah was particularly delighted to be informed about the recent political situation in the Ottoman Empire (Türkiye) and the empire’s future development, which both Tevfik and Hasan Fehmi regarded with optimism.

Harbin, Münir met with both Inayetullah and Hüseyin Agişev and again followed in the footsteps of his father, although he did not admit

---

19 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [1].
20 “Harbin’de İslamlar.” The Chinese suburb Fujiadian was much more heavily hit than the Russian-dominated parts of Harbin that Münir frequented. Most of the casualties were Chinese subjects.
21 “Harbin’de Bayram.”
doing so. Instead, the meeting with Agișev is narrated as an unexpected event. When the travelers arrived in Harbin and ordered tea at the train station, a stranger approached them and asked in Russian: “Excuse me, you have just arrived from Istanbul, haven’t you?” The man presented himself as Hüseyin Agișev and revealed that the imam had sent him to guide the three travelers to the mosque for the prayer on the first day of bayram.22 The travelers rejoiced at this encounter and followed Agișev to the mosque, coincidentally passing by the store that the Agișevs owned in Harbin’s quarter Pristan and that Abdürreşid had visited in 1909.23

Münir relates how the three travelers were received with great respect by the local Muslims while the imam introduced the visitors to the congregation and in his sermon (in Turkish and Arabic) underscored the meaning of Muslim encounters. For Münir, the meeting with the Muslims of Harbin provided an occasion to provide detailed information on the Muslim community in Harbin. According to Agișev, Harbin housed 270-300 Muslims. The mosque had been constructed in the course of three to four years and could accommodate around 250 people. The mosque, together with a library and the house of the imam, was maintained by a committee of the local community (mahalle) and cost around 2500 rubles per year. For Münir this was an impressive achievement by a small community based on effort (ictihad) and fervor (gayret). Münir consequently admonishes Tatars in Kazan to pursue a path towards national unity by following the example of the Harbin Tatars.24

The encounter with Inayetullah does not play out in a solely religious framing, however, but leads over to a topic which connects much of Münir’s writing in Beyanılıhak: a fascination with trade and industry. In the second part of his travelogue, it is imam Inayetullah who first explains to Münir the economic importance of Harbin and provides information on different banks in the city.25 Agișev later follows up by outlining the important role of the Tatars in the fur trade and the international activities of his company.

22 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [1].
23 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [2].
24 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [2].
25 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [2].
from Europe to the USA. After arriving in Tokyo and making his first observations in Japan, Münir concludes his travelogue by lamenting that the Tatars in Kazan had neglected trade and industry and had thus fallen behind other nations. By presenting first the Harbin Tatars and second the Japanese as role models, Münir tries to encourage readers in Kazan to improve themselves and dedicate themselves to business and learning.

Münir’s exhortations to his Tatar readers in Kazan indicate that he consistently inserted his observations into a Russian perspective. Not only did he frequently move from depictions of Japan towards identifying a need for reform in Tatar society, but also habitually used Russian references, favorably comparing for example the express train of the South Manchurian Railway to the “Nord Express” which circulated between Moscow and St. Petersburg. In Shimonoseki, he compared the best hotel in the city with hotels in St. Petersburg, finding the Japanese hotel to be of the same quality but more affordable. In his drawn-out narration of the students’ visit to Port Arthur, Münir describes Russian military cemeteries, inquires about the interment of Muslim soldiers, critically examines the costs that the fortification of Port Arthur had brought to Russia, and mentions how Russian tourists shed tears after visiting the war museum. Moreover, while in Manchuria Münir and his companions seem to have communicated primarily in Russian, and one wonders to what degree this might have made Münir into the de facto leader of the group. Münir’s journey through Manchuria overall takes place within a decidedly Tatar and Russian framework, where Islam is addressed only in its relation to the Tatar nation. One exceptional event, which brings ideas of pan-Islamic unity to the foreground, is the students’ emotional departure from Harbin when

---

26 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [3].
27 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [5].
28 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [13].
29 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [3].
31 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [7-10]. Hasan Fehmi’s article in Tearif-i Müslüman provides a more concise narration of the visit, cf. (Fehmi 1911).
32 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [11]. After their departure from Manchuria, the students mainly tried to communicate in French although they struggled to find interlocutors. İsmail Türkoğlu (2015, 113) has pointed out that Hasan Fehmi too spoke fluent Russian. Münir does not mention this in his writing.
the local Tatars and the travelers assure each other that spatial separation would never break their spiritual connections (manavi rabitalar). Apart from this event, however, Münir’s travelogue keeps by and large quiet on pan-Islamism and thus stands in stark contrast to Abdürreşid’s Alem-i İslam, where transnational Muslim unity is one of the most prominent ideas.

Arriving in Japan

In the introduction to his travelogue, Münir explains that he chose to relate his journey from Harbin to Tokyo because this part of his journey would have been most unfamiliar to the readers of Beyanülhak. He adds the caveat, however, that the journey’s “most important part” from Dalian to Tokyo may contain factual errors since the author had faced severe difficulties in communication with the people he met. From Dalian onwards, Münir admits, he could hardly find anybody who spoke Russian or French. The Japanese-controlled part of East Asia was instead dominated by Japanese and English, languages which he did not understand. In this sense, his journey was split into two – a first half where he felt at ease and a second half where he felt insecure.

Münir is extremely attentive with regard to communication, and language is a recurring topic in his travelogue. We find traces of this interest in language also in an article in Sırat-ı Müstakim, where Münir describes that the Ajia Gikai had received issues of Sırat-ı Müstakim from Istanbul but that nobody was yet able to read them (Ahmed Münir İbrahim 1911a). In his articles for Beyanülhak, he relates various anecdotes about his and his companions’ difficulties in understanding their interlocutors or in making themselves understood. In Dalian, they stay at a Yamato Hotel (a chain of hotels owned by the South Manchurian Railway) but soon realize that they are unable to communicate with the Japanese personnel. They are relieved when they find a Japanese interpreter for Russian, who would also serve as their guide in Port Arthur. In Shimonoseki, too, the travelers are happy when they find someone who knows a little Russian and

33 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [3].
34 Although he wrote extensively on the Tatars of Harbin, Münir does not mention Turkish among his languages of conversation, neither in its Ottoman nor Tatar varieties.
35 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [6-7].
who inquires for them about the train schedules. During the transit from Dalian to Shimonoseki, the three students experience a certain isolation in an environment dominated by English and Japanese but enjoy speaking to the fifteen-year-old mate of the ship who knows French – although he understands only ten to twenty percent of what they say to him. In the reading room of their hotel in Shimonoseki, Münnir is impressed by the number of available journals and magazines. All three travelers are, however, completely enthused when the hotel staff brings them an older issue of the French magazine *La Revue Illustrée*, which they avidly start reading like something “written in our mother tongue.” Difficulties continue in Tokyo, where Münnir remarks that the leader of the Ajia Gikai, Ōhara Bukei, spoke very little French and that all communication had to go through the interpreter Nikki Jirō.

From the viewpoint of pan-Asianism, Münnir’s description of the Ajia Gikai is especially interesting. It largely confirms the Ajia Gikai’s own report in *Daitō* but provides some additional detail. We read, for example, that two Japanese members of parliament, Kōno Hironaka and Sasaki Yasugorō, who had made the acquaintance of Abdürreşid İbrahim in 1909, sent representatives to Shinbashi station to present the students with their calling cards. After driving the students to their hotel, the Ajia Gikai (which Münnir correctly translates as “Azyalılar Cemiyeti”) invites the students to a welcome dinner at which Ōhara and Aoyagi Masao give speeches on Asian unity and the awakening of the East. Ōhara outlines the Ajia Gikai’s goal of assisting Japan’s Asian brothers and sisters (*kardeşlerimiz Asyalalar*) to reach the same degree of progress (*terakki*) as the Europeans. He thanks the Turks and in particular the Ajia Gikai’s members in Istanbul for having responded first to this ambition by sending students

36 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’ya ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [12].
38 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’ya ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [12].
39 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’ya ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [14].
40 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’ya ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [13].
41 Münnir gives the name of the hotel as “Sabani” while the Ajia Gikai (1911) gives it as “Ouékya.”
43 Apart from Abdürreşid İbrahim, the Ajia Gikai included the Ottoman şeyhülislam in the list of its members. We may assume that they did so after the şeyhülislam had requested members-
to Tokyo. Still on their first day in Tokyo, the students visit the British embassy where Hasan Fehmi and Mehmet Tevfik expected to receive mail from the Ottoman Empire (which had not yet arrived).  

While Münir embraced pan-Asianist messages in several of his articles in Sebilürreşad and Daitö, he leaves the Ajia Gikai’s call for Asian cooperation uncommented, and his reaction thus remains ambivalent. He even abstains from further discussions of the Ajia Gikai or his own position within the society and rather concludes his travelogue by addressing characteristics of the Japanese language, which he discovers to be similar to Turkish, and by pointing out the importance of trade and industry for the future of the Tatars. His subsequent articles for Beyanülhak take up various issues that would have been of interest to reformist Tatar intellectuals in Russia: institutions for the public good (menafi-i umumiye) such as parks and museums, hospitals and schools (discussing both boys’ and girls’ education), international trade and business administration, national holidays, travel, as well as the role of women in society. None of the articles further address the activities of the Ajia Gikai, and Münir instead introduces the Japan Welcome Society, which assists the students in arranging visits to hospitals and other places. Whenever Münir alludes to the idea of Asian unity, he presents it not as an expression of his own

44 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [14].
45 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [15].
46 “Harbin’den Port Arthur’a ve andan Tokyo’ya seyahat” [16].
47 “Japonya’dan” [1-3], Beyanülhak, Nos. 748 (Apr. 18, 1911), 751 (Apr. 21, 1911), and 753 (Apr. 24, 1911).
48 “Japonya mektupları: Hastahaneler ve mektepler” [1-2], Beyanülhak, Nos. 765 (May 9, 1911) and 766 (May 10, 1911); “Japonya’da mektepler” [1-3], Beyanülhak, Nos. 769 (May 14, 1911), 772 (May 17, 1911), and 777 (May 23, 1911).
49 “Japonya mektupları: Tokyo’dan Yokohama’ya seyahat” [1-2], Beyanülhak, Nos. 820 (July 14, 1911) and 821 (July 15, 1911).
50 “Japonya mektupları: Japonlarda milli bayramlar” [1-2], Beyanülhak, Nos. 825 (July 20, 1911) and 827 (July 23, 1911).
51 “Japonya mektupları: Seyyahlar,” Beyanülhak, No. 844 (August 14, 1911).
52 “Japonya mektupları: Muharrir Isamura Hanım ve Japon hatunları” and “Japonya mektupları: Japon hatunları,” Beyanülhak, Nos. 845 (August 15, 1911) and 846 (August 16, 1911).
53 “Japonya mektupları: Hastahaneler ve mektepler” [1]. Membership was open to all tourists to Japan for a modest fee; Abdürreşid İbrahim too had joined it and made use of its services in 1909 (Abdürr eşid İbrahim 1910 [1328], 245-247). See also “Devr-i alem,” Beyanülhak, No. 438 (Mar. 16, 1909).
political or cultural vision but as an attitude of strong sympathy towards Tatars and other Asians that he encountered among the Japanese.⁵⁴

It is likely that Münnir’s writing in Beyanülhak contains a degree of self-censorship with regard to pan-Islamism and pan-Asianism, given the curtailment of public expression in Russia. On the other hand, he readily reveals his ties to the Ajia Gikai, points out the society’s connection to military and political circles in Japan, and even quotes its leaders’ speeches on Asian unity. To a certain degree at least, we may thus regard Münnir’s abstention from a grand political vision as a confirmation of James H. Meyer’s (2015, 92) observation that “politically active Muslims in central Russia were concerned primarily with issues that were practical and administrative, rather than theoretical or identity-laden.” By mentioning Japanese sympathy for the Tatars, Münnir does not advocate a pan-Asianist alliance but tries to encourage other Tatars to travel to Japan for trade and learning where they will be received with open arms.⁵⁵ In their indifference to foreign politics, Münnir’s articles in the Tatar press differ markedly not only from his articles in Daitō but also from those in Sebiliüreşad. In future studies, it might thus be revealing to further examine differences between Ottoman and Tatar perspectives on Japan.

**Conclusion**

The dispatch of the first Ottoman student delegation to Japan was a remarkable achievement that has unfortunately drawn little scholarly attention. For the first time, Ottoman journals could benefit from the insights of Turkish-speaking correspondents in Tokyo who, after initial difficulties, became more and more familiar with their Japanese environment. When we examine Münnir’s articles in Sebiliüreşad, we immediately perceive the positive effects of this local expertise. Münnir reports, for example, on the 1912 “Three Religions Conference” (sankyō kaidō) in Tokyo at which representatives of state and religious communities (Shintō, Buddhism, and Christianity) discussed the role of religion in Japan’s educational system. When misunderstandings of the conference’s purpose caused rumors that

---

⁵⁴ “Japonya mektupları: Hastahaneler ve mektepler” [1]; “Japonya mektupları: Seyyahlar.”
⁵⁵ “Japonya mektupları: Seyyahlar.”
Japan would adopt Christianity as its state religion, Münir was able to expose this as false news based on an interview with a Japanese politician (Ahmed Münir İbrahim 1912).

While many of Münir’s articles in *Sebilürreşad* are unequivocally pan-Asianist and pan-Islamist, his writing in *Beyanülhak* largely abstains from political messages, instead combining the personal experience of travel with a fact-based exhortation to social reform and engagement in trade. Differences between Münir’s messages in Ottoman and Tatar Turkish as a result of his continued involvement in both Ottoman and Russian contexts provide the background to Hasan Fehmi’s later criticism of Münir and his father Abdürreşid for not being completely loyal to the Ottoman Empire. Münir’s Manchurian travelogue already exposes possible tensions between Russian and Ottoman identities. While Münir clearly identifies with his Tatar readers in Kazan, his companions Hasan Fehmi and Mehmed Tevfik are consistently depicted as Ottoman Turks. It is they who explain the present and future of the Ottoman Empire to Harbin’s imam İnayetullah while Münir remains silent on this topic. From the very beginning, Münir thus distinguishes himself from his companions through his Tatar identity – at least towards the readers of *Beyanülhak*.

In researching and writing this article, I have had access to the years 1909–1911 of *Beyanülhak*. My findings are thus limited to Münir’s journey to East Asia and his first year in Japan. It is likely that Münir continued to write for *Beyanülhak* or other Tatar journals, and later articles might contain information regarding the development of his viewpoints on Japan, pan-Asianism, and Turkish-Japanese relations. In the years 1910–1911, it is astonishing to see that Turkish-Japanese exchanges were hampered not only by the mutual ignorance of each other’s language but also by diverging preferences for a second language – English or French. When Münir returned to Turkey in 1924, he had mastered both Japanese and English and was fluent in at least six languages (Gündoğdu 2012, 139–40). This makes it all the more mysterious, however, why he would hardly play a role in the Japanese-Turkish exchanges of the interwar years. Two brief

---

56 İsmail Türkoğlu (Türkoğlu 2015, 112–13) has pointed out that Hasan Fehmi, too, was of Tatar descent and even born in Kazan. Münir, however, seems to have regarded him simply as an Ottoman Turk.
encounters with Yamaoka Mitsutarō and Ōtani Kōzui in Ankara in the 1920s might suggest that Münir, contradistinction to his father Abdürreşid, had become disillusioned with Japan and distanced himself from pan-Asianist circles (Misawa 2013, 509; cf. Küçükyalçın 2010, 53). Future research will hopefully provide clarity on this point.

**List of References**


Küçükyalçın, Erdal. 2010. Kont Otani Kozui ve Türkiye. İstanbul: DEIK.


Sempozyumu: Kazan, 14-16 Haziran 2012, edited by Halit Eren, 111–33. İstanbul: IRCICA.


Abstract

This study introduces the military reports written by the Meiji era Japanese officers who observed the Ottoman Army between Russo-Turkish War to the Young Turk Revolution (1878-1908) and explores the Ottoman military organization based on Ottoman archival materials. Furthermore, it aims to reveal the contemporary images of the Ottoman Army with an in-depth analysis of its organization. Komatsu no Miya Akihito, Fukushima Yasumasa and Morioka Morishige; the three Japanese military officers who had observed the Ottoman Army, criticize it heavily, since they thought while its soldiers were competent for military services, its organization and command & control system was not operated efficiently. From the Russo-Turkish War to the Young Turk Revolution, the Ottoman Army had mainly served in the Unconventional War in Macedonia. Macedonia was the strategic destination for the Bulgarian Army, hypothetically the main enemy of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the Ottoman Army constantly increased the numbers of the divisions of the Third Army which was defending Macedonia. In return, the overcrowded Third Army started causing the entire formation of the Ottoman Army to lose its balance as well as coordination among its units. Excessive personnel numbers, complexity in organizational structure combined with a lack of a commander-general who could take independent decisions and coordinate effort was becoming the main threat for the Ottoman military affairs.
本論文は露土戦争から青年トルコ人革命まで（1878-1908）オスマン陸軍を観察した明治期の日本陸軍将校の報告を提示し、加えてオスマン語史料に基づいてオスマン陸軍組織の実態について分析する。これによりオスマン陸軍の同時代的評価を整理しつつ、その組織について基礎的な情報を提供することも本論文の目的とする。日本陸軍将校としてオスマン陸軍を観察した小松宮彰仁、福島安正、森岡守成の三人はいずれも、兵卒は良質であるものの編制と統帥が効率よく機能していないとの否定的な感想を述べていた。当時のオスマン陸軍の主要任務は主にマケドニアでの不正規戦争であったが、同地は仮想敵であるブルガリア陸軍の侵略目標でもあった。そのためマケドニアを管轄する第三軍は断続的な師団増設をうけて肥大化し、オスマン陸軍全体の編制も不均衡なものとなっていた。またオスマン陸軍には軍部統監府、参謀総局、軍部総監査高等委員会、帷幄参謀部の四つの軍令・軍政機関が併存していた。しかも陸軍の意思決定は有力将官による臨時の軍部委員会が行っており、全体を統括する責任者に欠く組織となっていた。

Keywords: Military History, Ottoman Army, Japanese Army, Military Organization, Formation, Command

１

ムスタファ・ケマル（アタテュルク）は1918年に出版した小冊子で、日本陸軍が日露戦争時に示した「攻撃精神」の軍事的重要性について論じている。おおくのオスマン陸軍将校が日本陸軍を高く評価している一方で、日本陸軍将校のオスマン陸軍への評価は否定的なものであった。近代オスマンは常にオリエンタリズム的な言説の標的となっていたが、日本陸軍将校の厳しい意見もオリエンタリズムを内面化した意見だったのであろうか？本論文では、明治期のオスマン陸軍を観察した日本陸軍将校の感想を提示し、加えてオスマン語史料に基づいてオスマン陸軍組織の実態について分析する。これにより日本陸軍将校の評価の妥当性を明らかにしたい。また、露土戦争から青年トルコ人革命まで（1878-1908）のオスマン陸軍の組織について基礎的な情報を提供することも本論文の目的とする。
まず本章では近代オスマン陸軍について概説し、ときに本論文が扱う1878年から1908年までのオスマン陸軍を検討するための史料状況や先行研究について述べる。

オスマンでは1826年、旧来の常備軍であったイェニチェリが廃止され、近代的な常備軍が設立された。近代オスマン陸軍はフランス陸軍を手本とし、ロシアとオーストリアを仮想敵としていた。この体制が大きく変わるのが露土戦争での敗戦（1878年）である。オスマンはこの露土戦争で、イスタンブール城壁近くまでロシア陸軍の侵略を許すこととなった。1878年以降のオスマン陸軍はドイツ陸軍を手本とし、ブルガリア陸軍を仮想敵とする新たな体制への転換することとなった。しかし露土戦争以前と以降で近代オスマンの軍事戦略目標に変わりはなく、国土の一体性の維持、地域大国としての地位の維持、そして国内治安の維持が軍事戦略目標であった[Yıldız:2017]。本論文で検討する時代は、アブデュルハミト二世時代（1876-1909）にあたる。

この時代のオスマン陸軍は、二つの軍事書で特徴づけることができる。1883年、ドイツ陸軍将校のコルマール・フォン＝デア＝ゴルツは『武装せる国民Das Volk in Waffen』を記した。ゴルツは『武装せる国民』の中で、国民国家の全てを軍隊に投入すべきと主張した[中島2019:113-134]。この時代のドイツ陸軍は「模範陸軍」であり、日本陸軍と同様、オスマン陸軍もドイツ陸軍を参考としていた[Yıldız2017:56]。『武装せる国民』はオスマン陸軍青年将校に強い影響を与え、例えばM・ケマル（アタチュルク）の陸軍学校学生時代の手帳にも同書を読んだ形跡がある[ATAZB.45-8]。

『武装せる国民』で想定されていたのは、主権国家の軍隊同士が戦う「正規戦争」であった。しかし1878年から1908年の間、オスマンは対ギリシア戦争（1897年）以外に正規戦争を戦っていない。この時代のオスマン陸軍の主要任務は、暴力的な非国家主体との戦いである「不正規戦争」であった。先行研究はこの時代のオスマン陸軍が、不正規戦争の経験が最も豊富な陸軍であったと指摘している[Uyar2014:439; Yıldız2017:52-55, 84-85]。

1 アブデュルハミト二世は学校・鉄道の建築を進めた一方、憲法を停止して検閲と密告を奨励し、権力を宮廷府に集中させて権威主義体制を敷いた皇帝であった。この体制が変わったのが1908年、主に青年将校が起こした青年トルコ人革命であった。
2 彼は1883年から1895年の長期間にわたってオスマンの陸軍学校・参謀総局で勤務し、オスマン陸軍の制度改革を行うほか、「武装せる国民」を導く将校の育成に携わった[Griffiths:158-160; Yıldız:95-98]。
1896年、イギリス軍将校のチャールズ・コールウェルは世界初の不正規戦争についての戦術書である『小戦争Small War』を記した3。この戦術書を参考にしていたのが、オスマン・ヨーロッパで不正規戦争を指揮していたオスマン青年将校であった[Varoğlu2008]。露土戦争後、史上初の「テロ組織」と言われる内部マケドニア革命組織がヨーロッパ領で活動しており4、オスマン陸軍はこの「テロ組織」の討伐に注力していた[Uyar2014: 426-440]。アタテュルクのノートから、陸軍学校でも「ゲリラ戦争」について議論が行われていたことがわかる[ATAZB.45-8]。この時代のオスマン陸軍青年将校の多くは不正規戦争に取り組んでいたため、不正規戦争の任務も青年将校の思想や行動に決定的な影響を与えたであろう。

しかし「正規戦争」のほとんどなかったアブデュルハミト二世時代の軍事史研究は少なく、オスマン陸軍の行った「小戦争」に焦点を当てた研究はほとんどない5。オスマン陸軍組織は不正規戦争を通じて組織的に変化していたが、この点をオスマン語史料に基づいて検討する研究は少ないに等しい6。トルコ大統領府オスマン文書館（Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi; COA）の、とくに宮廷府Mabeyn-i Hümayunの文書群である「ユルドゥズ分類Yıldız Tasnifi」には、宮廷府と軍部のやりとりがおさめられている。アブデュルハミト二世時代はユルドゥズ宮殿にあった宮廷府に行政機能が集中した時代であり、陸軍の研究もこの文書に依拠して行える[Griffiths1966: 165]。したがって本研究では多くをオスマン文書館のユルドゥズ分類の文書に依って行う

3 イギリス陸軍は1889年から1902年に南アフリカでボーア人と近代初の本格的なゲリラ戦である「小戦争」を戦った[岡倉2003:130-155]。その教訓からできた戦術書が『小戦争』である[青井2013:5-7]。
4 内部マケドニア革命組織はブルガリア民族主義者の武裝組織である。同組織は殺人・暗殺・収奪・誘拐・虐殺によってヨーロッパ領を恐怖に陥れた[Uyar2014:431-433]。
5 軍事史研究者のマーチン・ヴァン＝クレフェルトによれば、今日まで戦争や軍隊についての「パラダイム」を形成していたクラウゼヴィッツの『戦争論』は、不正規戦争のみを想定して書かれている[クレフェルト2011: 73]。したがって不正規戦争は軍事史研究の盲点となってしまう傾向にある。
こととする7。また補助史料として、オスマン陸軍が発行していた『軍部年鑑』Salname-i Askerîや陸軍学校印刷所Matbaa-yı Mekteb-i Harbiye発行の陸軍学校用の教科書を使用する。

3

日本陸軍将校としてオスマン陸軍を観察した者として小松宮彰仁、福島安正、森岡守成の三人が挙げられる。本章ではこの三人の報告書から、日本陸軍将校のオスマン陸軍を見た感想を抽出したい。その前に、まずは日本陸軍の組織について概観する。

日本陸軍は西南戦争（1877）、日清戦争（1894-95）、日露戦争（1904-05）を契機として拡大していった。また1885年から1888年まで陸軍大学校に勤めたクレメンス・W・J・メルケルの影響で、日本陸軍は仏独混合の編制からドイツ陸軍の編制に近いシステムに変わっていった。1871年に鎮台が、1888年にはより機能性の高い師団が設置された。1896年には十三個師団、1907年には十九個師団となり、近衛師団が東京に、第一から第十九までの師団が東京、仙台、名古屋、大阪、広島、熊本、旭川、弘前、金沢、福知山、善通寺、小倉、宇都宮、高田、京都、豊橋、岡山、久留米に置かれた。師団の下には二個歩兵旅団、歩兵旅団の下には二個歩兵連隊が置かれていた[上法1987:5-48; 森松1991:1-57]。この陸軍を運営する組織であるが、ドイツ陸軍を参考に軍政（軍隊の行政）と軍令（軍隊の命令）の分離が行われた。軍政機関としては内閣に属する陸軍省が1872年に設立され、軍令機関として内閣に属さずに天皇に直属する参謀本部が陸軍省の外に設置されたのは1878年であった[竹山1997:495-510]。初期の日本陸軍では長州閥に代表される「藩閥」が陸軍権要を占めていたものの[北岡2012:22-34]、徐々に能力主義に基づく官僚制的な陸軍人事が行われるようになっていった[大江2018]。

1886年から1887年にかけて、陸軍中将・小松宮彰仁親王は欧米各国の陸軍制度と皇族の関係について研究すべく外遊し、途中でイスタンブールにも立ち寄った[小松宮1888:1-13]。彼の書いた報告書はドイツ陸軍にかんする分析が主で、オスマン陸軍についてはわずかなページを割いているに過ぎない。小松宮のオスマン陸軍への印象は、兵隊は「身体強壮」であるものの将官には「相

7 トルコ参謀総局戦史戦略研究所文書館（Gen.Kur.ATASE Arşivi）にはオスマン陸軍の行政文書があるものの、戦時の方針書などだけが公開されている。したがって平時のオスマン陸軍について研究するためには、ATASE文書館はあまり有効ではない。トルコ国防省文書館（MSB Arşivi）にはオスマン陸軍将兵の人事録が蔵されているが、そもそも利用が難しい。
帯み相容れざる弊風」があるとの、否定的なものであった[小松宮1888:715]。また、オスマン陸軍にほとんど関心を寄せていないことから、小松宮がオスマン陸軍を日本陸軍が見習うべき手本とは考えていなかったこともわかる。

1896年、シベリアを単騎で横断したことで有名な陸軍大佐・福島安正は情報収集目的としてエジプト、オスマン、インド、ミャンマー、そしてイランを視察し、その成果を『亜欧日記』としてまとめた。内容は多くがイスタンブールに駐在する各国武官から聞いた情報であるが、福島自身の分析もまとめられている[三沢2018：35-44]。福島はオスマン生存の鍵が、トルコ人がいかにキリスト教徒の分離主義を抑えるかにかかっていると見抜いていた[福島1895:266]。したがって福島は分離主義運動の盛んであったマケドニアへの他地域からの兵力転出について正確にまとめている。一方で、こうした兵力転出の結果、とくにシリアを防衛する「第五軍団の如きは既に歩兵16大隊砲兵12中隊を分遣して余る所僅かに歩兵18大隊騎兵30中隊砲兵27中隊にして兵力大いに単薄なり[福島1895:277]」と分析し、編制上の観点からオスマン陸軍に危険があると指摘していた。福島はオスマン陸軍が地域ごとの連携をとれない構造的問題を抱えている点についても指摘している。

一方、オスマン陸軍を率いる将校についても、福島は厳しい見方をしている。オスマン陸軍ではドイツ陸軍将校により改革が進められ、陸軍学校から有能な青年将校が卒業するようになった。しかし昇進は「請託」によっており、学校を出ても「大官の子弟に非れば」「陸軍枢要を占める」「奸才卑劣の徒輩」の命令に従わざるを得なかった。そのためオスマン陸軍将校は「互いに嫉視嫌悪し」、平時であっても軍紀を欠く有様であった[福島1895:331]。したがってオスマン陸軍では兵士がいかに「良兵」で、後備軍軍制がいかに「良制」であったとしても、「平時部下を統御するの威望なく戦時彼等を指揮するの才能なき」と指摘官が存在する限り、オスマン陸軍は「纸上談兵」に過ぎないのであった。福島はこの統帥部の欠陥を「遺憾」としている[福島1895:332-333]。そもそもオスマン陸軍では些細な問題でも皇帝の許可を要するという、組織上の不効率があると福島は指摘している。「一士官に休暇を与えるも陸軍大臣之を許すこと能わず、必ず陛下の裁可を仰ぐ」必要がある一方で、皇帝の怒りに触れることを恐れて大官といえばども「直言忠諫する者」はオスマンにはいなかった。したがってオスマン陸軍では「一小瑣末の事と雖ども容易に捗ら」ない状況にあった[福島1895:343]。
アブデュルハミト二世時代末期の1907年から1909年にかけては陸軍中佐・森岡守成がイスタンブルに派遣されている[三沢2015:24]。森岡の報告書は主にオスマン財政について扱うものであるが、一部が陸軍に割かれている。「トルコの軍隊は人口二千四百万を有する帝国の軍隊としては其の進歩発達の度甚だ幼稚なり[森岡1910:379]」と述べる森岡のオスマン陸軍への評価も実に厳しい。

オスマン陸軍組織はドイツからのお雇い外国人によって改革が行われていたものの、森岡によれば「トルコ官吏の旧習及悪弊」で成果が上がっていなかった[森岡1910:380-381]。森岡の分析では、失敗の原因はオスマン陸軍における「秘密」の横行とそれにによる「譴責、罷免、放逐」と規律の乱れにあった[森岡1910:328]。オスマン陸軍軍制そのものについて、森岡は砲兵と予備軍については高く評価している[森岡1910:384]。しかし砲兵が軍部統監府とは別組織の造砲本廠に管轄されている点は「軍の統一を害する」と低く評価しているほか、「歩兵師団の数、砲兵単位、騎兵単位の数は軍団に応じ大に異なれり[森岡1910:384]」と組織の根本に不統一が見られると指摘している。


小松宮、福島、森岡の三人が共通してオスマン陸軍に抱いていた感想は、その兵卒は良質であるが編制と統帥部が機能していないというものであった。三人の分析によれば、この問題の原因は密告を背景とする将校間の嫉妬、皇帝親裁による不効率にある。福島のみがマケドニア問題への対処を原因とするオスマン陸軍編制の不均衡について分析しているが、福島もオスマン陸軍が実行していた不正規戦争そのものには興味を持っていなかったようである。いずれにせよ、日本陸軍将校のオスマン陸軍への見方は非常に否定的で
あったと言えそうである。それでは、オスマン陸軍の実態は彼らが考えたように不効率で否定的なものだったのだろうか。編制と統帥に的を絞って、オスマン陸軍の実態についてオスマン側の史料に基づいて検討していきたい。

4

青年トルコ人革命前夜、オスマン陸軍の常備軍は6個軍ordu、1個軍団kolordu、2個独立師団mûstakîl firkaşıで構成されていた（表1参照）[Hakki1909:157-158；HRT.136/1；Karapak2010: 430-431]。1878年の露土戦争での敗戦で、ヨーロッパではブルガリア公国と東ルメリア自治州が成立し、アジアではロシア領カルス州・バトゥミ州が成立することとなった。これらはオスマンにとって、ロシアとの自然障壁をなしていたドナウ川と小カフカス山脈の喪失を意味した。ドナウ川の守備を担当していた第二軍司令部はブルガリア国内となったシュムヌからエディルネへ移転し、第四軍司令部はロシア国境に近いエルズルムからエルズィンジャーへ移転した。オスマン陸軍で最大の兵員数、最良の装備を持っていたのがヨーロッパ領西部のサロニカに司令部を置く第三軍であった[Uyar2014:408]。この第三軍には青年トルコ人革命を起こした青年将校たちが所属していた。こうした軍の守備管区は軍により一定ではなかった。例えば第三軍は国土の5.7%、人口の12.1%を管轄していた一方で、隣の第二軍は国土の1.9%、人口の3.1%を管轄していたにすぎなかった。さらに森岡が指摘するように、オスマン陸軍は各軍に所属する師団数も一定ではなかった[Sakata1910:384]。

| 表1——常備軍管区の面積・人口（含、推計） |
|-------------|---|-------------------|
|             | 司令部 | km²  | 人口       |
| 第一軍      | イスタンブール | 6.528 | 1.181.594   |
| 第二軍      | エディルネ   | 64.356 | 986.446     |
| 第三軍      | サロニカ   | 187.376 | 3.911.232   |

8 露土戦争敗戦によって引き直された国境の大部分は自然障壁によるものではなく、内外の敵に対する防衛は極めて難しかった[Uyar2014:408]。第二軍・第三軍の主要な任務は境警備と治安維持、第四軍は境警備、第七軍団・第十五師団・第十六師団はオスマンのプレゼンス維持であった。これらの地域では戦闘状態を維持せざるを得なかったが、戦闘状態を維持するための財源がなく、該当地域の放棄もできない以上、問題解決は不可能であった[Griffiths1966:155-156]。

9 1893年、ピトラにある第三軍司令部は事実上、サロニカへ移転した[Y.PRK.ASK.102/31, Y.MTV.102/30]。
このオスマン陸軍を運営する組織が軍部統監府Bab-ı Seraskerîである（図1参照）[Kara2013: 44-75]。オスマン軍は軍部統監府が管轄する陸軍、海軍省Bahriye Nezaretiが管轄する海軍、造砲本廠Tophane-yi Amireが管轄する要塞軍、軍部統監府内にあるものの独立している警務局Jandarma Dairesiが管轄する警務軍から構成されている。日本陸軍と異なり参謀総局は軍部統監府に属している。そのうえ、総司令官である皇帝がいる宮廷府には軍部総監査高等委員会Teftiş-i Umumî-yi Askerî Komisyon-ı Alisiと帷幄参謀部Maiyet-i Seniye Erkân-ı Harbiye Dairesiという諮問機関が存在していた。しかしこの情報はあくまでオスマン陸軍組織の理想に過ぎず、現実は異なるものであった。

図1——青年トルコ人革命直前のオスマン軍
まず本章ではオスマン陸軍の編制について情報を整理していきたい。本論文では歩兵科に絞って検討していく。オスマン陸軍は日本陸軍と異なり、師団よりも部の組織として軍と軍団が存在する。しかし軍団は実質的には設置されていないため、軍司令部に二個歩兵師団が直属している。その他、日本陸軍とオスマン陸軍の編制に大きな違いはない（図2、図3参照）。平時の歩兵大隊は400人、戦時の歩兵大隊は800人で構成されていた。したがって平時の歩兵師団は6400人、戦時の歩兵師団は12800人で構成されていた。部隊司令官は小隊が少尉mülazım-ı sañî、中隊が大尉yüzbaşı、大隊が少佐binbaşı、連隊が大佐mirañ、旅団が准将mirliva、師団が少将ferik、軍が元帥müşirであった【M.Rüşdü1893:102-215】。

図2——オスマン陸軍における軍、軍団、師団組織

10 対テロ戦争を専門とする「特殊部隊」である猟兵大隊は、第二軍と第三軍にのみ設置されている。
図3——オスマン陸軍における歩兵組織

オスマン軍の兵員数はどれほどだったのであろうか？参謀総局が宮廷府に提出していたオスマン軍兵力台帳をもとに作成した表2を参照にされたい。オスマン軍全体の中で最も兵員の変動が大きいのが陸軍である。陸軍は1885年には東ルメリア州を併合したブルガリアに対する動員、1897年には対ギリシア戦争における動員を契機として兵員数が増えている。しかしそれでは1903年や1906年に兵員数が減っていなかったことを説明することは出来ない。

表2——オスマン軍の兵員

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>陸軍</th>
<th>海軍</th>
<th>要塞軍</th>
<th>警務軍</th>
<th>軍官学校</th>
<th>合計</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1882年</td>
<td>131295</td>
<td>21709</td>
<td>9845</td>
<td>38998</td>
<td>2298</td>
<td>195145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886年</td>
<td>337957</td>
<td>17324</td>
<td>13144</td>
<td>45092</td>
<td>2218</td>
<td>415735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890年</td>
<td>154315</td>
<td>16504</td>
<td>13599</td>
<td>40887</td>
<td>3611</td>
<td>228916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894年</td>
<td>181284</td>
<td>15386</td>
<td>13048</td>
<td>42202</td>
<td>5160</td>
<td>257080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898年</td>
<td>394117</td>
<td>16647</td>
<td>13611</td>
<td>44548</td>
<td>7806</td>
<td>476729</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 本表の作成には1882年：Y.EE.d.578、1886年：Y.EE.d.603、1890年：Y.EE.d.631、1894年：Y.EE.d.660、1898年：Y.EE.d.674、1903年：Y.EE.d.676（1902年の表は確認できず）、1906年：Y.EE.d.677を参照した。以降の数値も同様である。なお、常備軍と動員中の予備兵のみを兵員数として計上した。未補充の兵員数は除外している。グラフ1も同じ史料から作成した。
12 オスマン陸軍は第二軍と第三軍を東ルメリア自治州との境である特権線Hatt-i İmtiyazへ派兵し、さらに約一年間の予備兵召集を行った。ゴルツはこの動員を軍事演習として考え、有能な若手将校が昇進できない陸軍人事の不透明性、予備軍の軍事教練不足、動員を維持するための財政能力の不足を確認した[Griffiths1966:64-66]。
13 この戦争ではドイツからの武器購入、鉄道敷設、教育拡充の成功が明らかになった一方で、宮廷府による軍の統制、演習の無実施による将校の経験不足と戦略的思考の欠如といった短所も明らかになった。しかしオスマン陸軍は兵力と装備で上回ったため大勝し、短所は見直されなかった[Griffiths1966:143-146; Uyar2014:420-426]。
露土戦争後のオスマン陸軍は、断続的に常備歩兵師団の増設を行っていた。まず1881年にはリビアに設置されていた守備隊が第15師団に、1887年にはヒジャーズの守備隊が第16師団に昇格した。これらはいずれも軍や軍団に属さない独立師団である[Y.EE.d.578/1299; Y.EE.d.616/1305; Y.MTV.32/35]。1896年には第三軍に二個師団、第四軍に一個師団が増設された[Y.EE.d.692/1313; Y.MTV.136/22]。第三軍の師団はその後も増え続け、1900年には第五軍所属の第9師団が第三軍管区に移転し[Y.PRK.ASK.156/26, 158/43, 158/52]、1907年にはさらに二個師団が増設された[Y.PRK.ASK.245/32; AS1908: 86, 406-437]。その他、第二軍も1904年と1907年にそれぞれ一個師団ずつ増設されている[Y.MVT.269/138; Y.PRK.ASK.246/87]。さらに1904年には第二軍と第三軍に計四個の猟兵大隊も設置されている[BEO.2377/178265]。オスマン陸軍の断続的な兵員数増加の理由は、ヨーロッパを防衛する第二軍と第三軍における師団増設に求められるであろう。では師団増設の理由は何だったのであろうか？

まず理由として、対ブルガリア作戦の構築が挙げられる。1893年、オスマン陸軍参謀次長であったゴルツ元帥のもとで対ブルガリア作戦計画が策定された[Y.MVT.87/126]。作戦そのものは不明であるが、いかなる計画だったかはATASEの史料から推量できる。第二軍に勤務していた参謀少佐であるメフメト・サーティMehmed Saidが1899年に提出した報告書によれば、オスマン陸軍はサロニカを目標に侵略するブルガリア陸軍を、サロニカで足止めすると同時に第二軍と第三軍の兵力をもってエディルネとスコピエから包囲する作戦であった[OYH.40/144]。したがって第二軍と第三軍の戦力強化は仮想敵であったブルガリア陸軍の侵略阻止のために必要な措置であったと言えよう。

ヨーロッパでの戦力強化の理由として「匪賊追跡」も挙げられる。1882年、閣議が10万人への陸軍兵力削減を提案した際、参謀総長代行Erkân-i Harbiye-yi Umumiye Reisi Vekiliのイブラヒーム・エトヘムIbrahim Edhem元帥は兵力削減が「国土における治安維持といった、警察の職掌であるにもかかわらず現在は陸軍が行っている様々な任務を取りやめ、軍事教練だけに集

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>年</th>
<th>増設数</th>
<th>増設数</th>
<th>増設数</th>
<th>増設数</th>
<th>増設数</th>
<th>増設数</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903年</td>
<td>259630</td>
<td>17018</td>
<td>15444</td>
<td>42548</td>
<td>9977</td>
<td>344617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906年</td>
<td>292757</td>
<td>15256</td>
<td>13155</td>
<td>40244</td>
<td>8482</td>
<td>369894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

141907年の師団増設にふれる先行研究はないが、青年トルコ人革命の旗手となったアフメト・ニヤーズィAhmed Niyaziはこの1907年に増設された師団に属する部隊で勤務していた。
中するという条件下でのみ可能」と述べている。つまり陸軍としては、治安維持任務が陸軍に要求され続ける以上は兵力削減ばかりではない必要であるとの認識をしていた。すでに1879年、第二軍と第三軍は大隊兵員数を戦時編制である800人に増強しているばかりでなく[Y.PRK.ASK.4/24]、治安維持任務に従事するあまり通常の軍事教練すらままならない状況に陥っていた[Y.MTV.53/96]。そのため軍部統監府はヨーロッパ領へ兵を供給し続けるほかなく[Zortul2015:194-223]、1902年には第二軍と第三軍に編入されている予備兵をもとに常備師団を設置して、第二軍を3個師団、第三軍を8個師団とする提案を行っている[Y.MTV.230/15]。以上のように、治安維持はヨーロッパ領への戦力増強の重要な理由となっていた。

対ブルガリア作戦とヨーロッパ領での匪賊討伐を理由として、オスマン陸軍は師団増設を繰り返していた。青年トルコ人革命直前には第一軍に2個師団、第二軍に4個師団、第三軍に7個師団、第四軍に3個師団、第五軍に1個師団、第六軍に2個師団、第七軍に2個師団、第十五師団に1個師団、第十六師団に1個師団が設置され、合計で23個師団編制となっていた。各軍の師団数は一定ではなく、特に第三軍は全体の三割の師団が集中していた。

第一軍から第十六師団までの各軍の兵員数の推移をみると、第三軍が一貫して突出していることがわかる。しかし第二軍も第三軍と同様に大隊兵員数は戦時編制の800人であるものの、第三軍のように群を抜いて多いということはない。これは第三軍への兵員増が師団増設のみならず、予備兵の派遣によるものでもあったからである（グラフ1参照）。第三軍に勤める将校の数は兵員と同様に多くなかったものの、軍司令部の人員は第一軍など他の軍と比べて多いとは言えない。1908年における軍司令官と軍参謀、軍兵站将校の人数を見てみると、第一軍は32人、第二軍は36人、第三軍は21人、第四軍は23人、第五軍は21人、第六軍は14人となっている[SA1908]。第三軍司令官は通常の軍司令官よりはるかに多い、7個歩兵師団、1個騎兵師団、1個砲兵師団の計9個師団を指揮する必要があった。しかも師団増設時に、例えば第三軍を二つに分けるというような議論はなされなかった。したがって編制上の申し立ては軍司令官に仕組みになっていたのであった。軍隊は規模が大きくなるほど指揮が難しくなるのは定説であるが[Kreft 2018:102-103; Goltz1889:42-46]、第三軍司令官ともなければ各部隊の様子を把握することは困難であったと想定できる。

15 オスマン陸軍は常備軍Nizamiye、予備軍Redif、後衛軍Müstahfizに分かれていた。常に軍務についているのが常備軍、戦争時にだけ軍務につくのが予備軍、後衛軍である。
グラフ1——全オスマン陸軍における各軍兵員数の割合

オスマン陸軍では露土戦争敗戦直後の1879年、ガザイ・アフメト・ムフタールGazi Ahmed Muhtar元帥を中心に「新軍制Tensikat-i Cedide-yi Askeriye」と題する軍制改革が開始された[Kara2013: 32-38]。この新軍制はやがてゴルツをはじめとするドイツ将校による改革へとつながっていくが、軍制改革の方向性が決まったのはドイツ将校着任以前であった[Ölmez2007:120]。新軍制では予備軍の整備、徴兵制度の改革、陸軍学校カリキュラムの変更などが行われたが、陸軍組織の再構築も行われた。前章の図2にあるように、オスマン軍の総司令官は皇帝である。1876年制定のオスマン憲法第7条によれば、「陸上及び海上兵力の統帥kumandaと軍事行動」の大権は皇帝にあった。陸軍の軍政と軍令について、皇帝に対して直接に責任を有するのは軍部統監Seraskerである。しかし通常は陸上戦力に含まれる砲兵、工兵、軍需物資については、造砲本廠元帥Tophane-yi Amire Müşiriが監督していた[M. Rüşdü:12-13]。

16 軍部統監は大宰相Sadr-ı Azam、シェイヒュル＝イスラームŞeyhü'l-İslamと同格で、武官seyfiyeの長とされた[Unal:63]。
17 海峡防衛と要塞兵力、砲兵教育を担当する造砲本廠は統帥上、軍部統監府には属さず、造砲本廠元帥は閣僚Heyet-i Vükelaの一員であった。アブデュルハミト二世時代のほとんどは、A・サーヤイブ（1879.1.31-1891.8.29、軍部統監と兼任[Y.EE.5/112]）とM・ゼキMustafa Zeki（1891.8.29-1908.7.30、軍部学校長官と兼任[İ.DH.1239, İ.DUI.T.7/53]）が造砲本廠元帥を務めた。とくにA・サーヤイブの時代には各軍と砲兵
軍部統監府は日本の陸軍省とは異なり、軍政機関だけではなく軍令機関である参謀総局Erkân-ı Harbiye-yi Umuiye Dairesiも傘下に収めた組織であった。歩兵局Piyade Dairesiや騎兵局Süvari Dairesiといった各兵科の事務を行う部局や会計局Muhasebe Dairesiのほか、軍部統監府には兵站を担当する兵站総局Levazım-ı Umumiye Dairesi、軍部学校を監督する軍部学校庁Mekâtib-i Askeriye Nezaretiも所属していた[M. Rüşdü:23-41; SA1908]。軍部統監府は1880年から1882年まで陸軍省と名称が変更されており、さらに青年トルコ人革命で陸軍省Harbiye Nezaretiと名称が変更された。露土戦争終結から青年トルコ人革命発生までの軍部統監、陸軍大臣Harbiye Nazırıのリストは以下のとおりである。大まかに言って陸軍のトップは1885年まではガーズィ・オスマンGazi Osman、1891年まではアリ・サーブAli Saib、1908年まではメフメト・ルザMehmed Rızaが勤めていた。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>軍部統監</th>
<th>Mehmed İzzet</th>
<th>1877.4.18-1878.5.16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mahmud Celaleddin</td>
<td>1878.5.26-1878.6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mustafa Sıdkı</td>
<td>1878.6.5-1878.12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gazi Osman</td>
<td>1878.12.5-1880.1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>陸軍大臣</th>
<th>Gazi Osman</th>
<th>1880.1.1-1880.7.11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hüseyin Hüsnü</td>
<td>1880.7.11-1881.1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gazi Osman</td>
<td>1881.1.11-1882.11.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hüseyin Hüsnü</td>
<td>1882.11.30-1882.12.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

の統合が進んだ[Y.MTV.54/26]。1909.8.7、造砲本廠元帥府は陸軍製造局İmalat-ı Harbiye Müdürüyetiと名称を変更したうえで陸軍省の一局となった[İ.AS.81/57, İ.AS.102/11]。

18 アブデュルハミト二世時代のほとんどの、イ・エトヘム（1878.5.19-1882.11.5、参謀総長次長・代行と兼任[MB.İ.44/53])とM・ゼキ（1882.11.5-1908.7.30、砲兵本廠元帥と兼任[İ.DH.867/69380, İ.DÜİT.7/53])が軍部学校長官を務めた。

19 MB.İ.42/10
20 İ.DH.12951/101793, İ.DÜİT.190/47
21 Y.EE.75/24
22 1880.1.1の軍制改革にかんする上奏により、陸軍の長として陸軍大臣Harbiye Nazırıの名称が用いられることとなった[MB.İ.58/59]。
23 H・ヒュスニは陸軍学校参謀科第五期[İskora1966::146]、陸軍大臣への任免について左記史料参照[MB.İ.62/118; MB.İ.69/161]。
24 Y.EE.75/45
軍令機関である参謀総局は5個の課に分かれていた。第一課は戦時・平時における軍事編制の検討、第二課は軍事情報の収集、出版、第三課は作戦・操典の策定と戦史研究、第四課は鉄道・船舶などによる兵員・物資輸送の計画、第五課は地形図・地図の作成と文書・図書の保管を行っていた[M. الإسلامي: 16-23; イスカラ1944:20-23; SA1908]。参謀総局のトップを誰が勤めていたのかは非常に難しい問題である。1880年に軍部統監府の名称が陸軍省に変わるとともに、参謀局Erkân-ı Harbiye Dairesiも参謀総局と名称が変わり、その長官も参謀総長となった。しかし二代目の参謀総長であったアリ・ニザーミAli Nizamiはヨーロッパに派遣されて参謀総長は空席になり、あらたな参謀総長が任命されないまま参謀次長Erkân-ı Harbiye-yi Umumiye Reisiィ Sanisiであったイブラーヒーム・エトヘムが参謀総長代行を務めることがとなった。さらに1898年、対ギリシア戦争で功績のあったオメル・リシュテュÖmer Rüşdüが参謀総長代行補佐Erkân-ı Harbiye-yi Umumiye Reisiィ Muaviniに任命され、1905年にエトヘムが亡くなった後もリシュテュはその地位にとどまって参謀総局のトップを務め続けていた。この複雑な状況は、青年トルコ人革命でようやく解消される。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>参謀長</th>
<th>Akif Gazi Ahmed Muhtar</th>
<th>1877.8.1-1878.7.25^{27}</th>
<th>1878.7.25-1880.1.1^{28}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>参謀総長</td>
<td>İbrahim Derviş Ali Nizami</td>
<td>1880.1.1-1880.7.11^{29}</td>
<td>1880.7.11-1881.1.11^{30}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

露土戦争以前、軍部統監府の下には軍部会議Dar-ı Şura-yı Askeriが設置されており、この組織が編制、給与厚生、会計、兵站、高等人事、軍規を担当していた。軍部会議はのちに軍部統監府と参謀総局で分担することになる職務を一挙に担っていた[Ünal2016:69-73]。この軍部会議の組織的弊害が明らかになったのが露土戦争であった。新軍制にかんする上奏文によれば、軍部会議はおおむね業務が多く処理も遅いため、適切に各局が業務を分担すべきであると提案されていた[Y.PRK.KOM.2/23]。この弊害の解決策が参謀総局の設立であった。

露土戦争以前のオスマン陸軍には参謀総局は設置されておらず、軍部統監に直属する参謀係Erkân-ı Harbiye Kısmıという小さな組織のみが存在していた[Ünal2016:73-76]。参謀総局の業務は作戦立案のほか、将校の人事や軍事情報の収集分析である。しかし参謀総局がなかったため、「将軍が軍事情報を得られず、行軍、軍務idare、軍事行動の状況を把握できなかった」。そして人事の不適切により頻繁に部隊の司令官が変えられたため、「司令官は兵卒の状況や規律を知ることができない」まま部隊を率い、「壊滅」を招いていた[Y.PRK.MYD1/42]。作戦行動や将校人事を合理的かつ迅速に行うために参謀総局設置が要求された。

しかし参謀総局の地位には紆余曲折があった。1879年に準備された「参謀総長並びに参謀局内務規定」によれば、参謀総局は「直接に総司令官の命令下」にあり、参謀総長は「統帥にかんする事項については総司令官へ上奏し、参謀総局の業務、支出については陸軍大臣に上申する」はずであった[İskora1944:13-31]。したがって参謀総局は日本陸軍でそうであったように軍部統監府とは独立した皇帝直属の軍令機関となるはずであった。陸軍組

| 参謀総長代行 | İbrahim Edhem | 1881.1.11-1905.10.3 |
| 参謀総長代行補佐 | Ömer Rüşdü | 1898.6.9-1908.7.22 |
| 参謀総長 | Şakir | 1908.7.22-1908.8.1 |

31 İ・エトヘムは陸軍学校参謀科第八期であり、パリに留学した経験がある[İskora1966::147]。彼の在任中にゴルツが参謀次長を務めた。

32 オ・リュシュテフは陸軍学校参謀科第十八期[İskora1966::155]は対希戦争中に総司令官であるガーズィ・エトヘムの参謀を務め、戦後に参謀総長代行補佐Erkân-ı Harbiye-i Umumiye Reis-i Vekili Muaviniに任命された[İ.AS.25/14; TFR.İ.UM.26/2506]。

オ・リュシュテフは参謀総長代行補佐任命時には少将であったが、1902年に元帥へ昇格した[Y.PRK.BŞK.75/81]。
織改革を目的とした軍部総監査高等委員会もオスマン陸軍における「統帥権独立」を支持していたものの、結局は皇帝の支持を得られずに立ち消えになった[Y.PRK.KOM.2/26]。

それでは、オスマン陸軍の意思決定は軍部統監が一括して行っていたのであろうか？アブデュルハミト二世時代は宮廷府に権力が集中した時代であった。陸軍も例外ではなく、宮廷府で軍事についての意思決定が行われていた[Yıldız2017:72；Uyar2014:416]。例えば参謀総監は対ギリシア戦争において軍令機関として活躍したものので、オスマン陸軍の司令官は宮廷府の意見を確認しながら戦争を遂行していた[Uyar2014:423-424]。したがって、軍部統監や参謀総長だけがオスマン陸軍の意思決定を行っていたと考えることはできない。そこで宮廷府に設置されていた軍部総監査高等委員会、帷幄参謀部、軍部委員会について検討することとする。


軍部総監査高等委員会の権限は新軍制の立案・実施、高級将校の人事であったため、これらの問題については軍部統監府や参謀総局も同委員会の指示を仰ぐ必要があった[Y.RES.5/1；Y.PRK.ASK.3/73；Y.PRK.KOM.2/15, 4/10；Kara:33-34, 51-52]。陸軍学校で用いられた教科書では同委員会は

33軍部総監査高等委員会についてはオルメズ[Ölmez2007]による専論がある。
34皇帝を委員長とする「軍部総監査高等委員会」の名称がはじめて『帝国年鑑』に掲載されるのは40号（1885年発行）である。37号（1882年発行）から39号（1884年発行）まで、A・ムフタールは軍部監査委員会委員長、İ・ハックは副委員長の肩書で掲載されている。A・ムフタールは1883年9月に特使としてドイツに派遣されて以降、とりわけ1885年12月にエジプト高等弁務官Mısır Fevkalade Komiseriに任命されてからはイスタンブールを不在にしていた[Uçarol1989:140-150]。したがって委員長代理は形式的な役職であり、実質的な委員長は副委員長が務めた[Örikağasizade2007:154]。
皇帝の軍事面における諮問委員会であると説明され[M. Rüşdü:11]、森岡は「陸軍中最大の勢力を有する」と報告していた[森岡1910:81]。同委員会は本来、新軍制にかんする問題のみを取り扱っていたものの、やがて軍事にかんする問題すべてに介入するようになった[Ölmez120-121; Örikağasızade2007:154-155]。委員は参謀総局のトップや帷幄参謀をはじめ陸軍高級将校が多かったが、軍部総監は含めていなかった。当初7人であった委員は、1908年には43人となった。元帥は軍部総監府に1人、参謀総局に1人しかいなかったにもかかわらず、元帥36人のうち7人がこの委員会に所属していた[SA1908]。同委員会のトップは以下のリストのとおりであるが、盛んに活動していたのは新軍制が活発に議論されていた1880年前後、盛んに活動していたのは新軍制が活発に議論されていた1880年前後、それとガーズィ・エトヘムGazi Edhemが副委員長となった時代であった。それ以外の時代はあまり文書に委員会としての活動が残っておらず、アブデュルハミト二世時代を通じて陸軍の意思決定機関であったと考えることは出来ないであろう。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>委員長</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>委員長→委員長代行</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İsmail Hakkı Gazi Ahmed Muhtar</td>
<td>1879.12.17-1880.11.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1880.11.27-1908.8.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>副委員長</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İsmail Hakkı Hüseyin Fevzi Gazi Edhem</td>
<td>1880.11.27-1897.2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1897.2.23-1898.5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1898.12.10-1908.8.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


36 陸軍学校参謀科第十二期[İskora1966::149]。
37 陸軍学校参謀科第十一期[İskora1966::149]。H・フェヴズィの軍監委副委員長任免については左記史料参照[İ.AS.19/30; Y.PRK.BŞK.51/145]。
38 ガーズィ・エトヘムの軍監委副委員長任命については左記史料参照[İ.AS.26/50]。
39 いつ帷幄参謀の肩書を得たかは定かではないが、同年7.7の時点では、すでに帷幄参謀少将となっている[Y.A.RES.34/5]。
1885年に對ブルガリア戦争危機が発生した直後、参謀総局はアナトリアからヨーロッパ領への兵員輸送計画について皇帝へ上奏した[Y.MTV.18/115; Y.PRK.ASK.28/2]。皇帝が上奏を承認する前に勅令を発行する前に参謀総局の上奏文を精査するよう命じたのがガーズィ・アフメット・ムフタール（軍部監査高等委員会）、デルヴィシュDerviş（侍従武官）そしてヴェリ・ルザであった。参謀総局は三人の提案を持ち帰り、三人の提案通りギリシアとセルビアの参戦可能性を含めた計画を作成した[Y.PRK.ASK.29/47]。また実際の陸軍部隊の作戦行動は参謀総長代行や参謀総局局員、そしてヴェリ・ルザを加えた「軍部特別委員会Heyet-i Mahsusa-yı Askeriye」が監督していた[Y.MTV.19/36]。以上の史料から、ヴェリ・ルザは帷幄参謀に任じられる以前から皇帝個人の参謀として陸軍の意思決定に関与していたことがわかる。ヴェリ・ルザは1891年に死去するが、帷幄参謀の肩書はメフメト・シャーキルMehmed Şakirに引き継がれた。メフメト・シャーキルは対ブルガリア戦争危機に際して作戦計画を上奏した際の参謀総局局員であり、作戦計画書の多くに印鑑が押されている。1891年に帷幄参謀に任命された直後、メフメト・シャーキルもブルガリアの軍制改革に合わせたオスマン陸軍の作戦計画について上奏を行った[Y.MTV.53/96]。

帷幄参謀は対ブルガリア作戦を提案する際、オスマン帝国在ブルガリア弁務公室Bulgaristan Komiserliğiに駐在している陸軍参謀将校からの情報提供を受けていた。最初の参謀将校の駐在武官任命は1888年であり[i.MTZ.(04)14/185]、以来、欠員となるたびに補充され続けた[i.MTZ.(04)18/1189, 20/1293, 20/1332, 26/1663]。人選には参謀総局だけでなく帷幄参謀もかかわることがあった[Y.MTV.79/73]。ブルガリア駐在の参謀将校からの報告は、帷幄参謀が受け取った後に整理して軍部統監や宮廷府に送られていた[Y.PRK.MYD.8/68; Y.MTV.39/97]。このシステムはメフメト・シャーキルにも受け継がれている[Y.MTV.53/96]。一方、メフメト・シャーキル死後に帷幄参謀となったアブドゥッラーAbdullahがブルガリアからの情報を分析している様子はない。

40侍従武官に固定人数はなく、1892年には119人であったが、1904年には269人に達した。侍従武官は陸軍高官のための名誉称号であったばかりでなく、皇帝の政策顧問としての役割も担っていたため教育水準の高いドイツ留学中の軍官学校学生の多くも任命された。全員が宮廷府にある副官室へ出仕していたのではなく、地方に勤務するものもいた。彼らは地方と皇帝を直接つなげる回路としての役割を担った。青年トルコ人革命後、侍従武官は君側の奸と見なされ、侍従武官の数と重要性は大きく減ることとなった[Karaca1999]。
対ブルガリア戦争危機の際の「軍部特別委員会」のように、軍部総監査高等委員会や帷幄参謀部、軍部統監府、参謀総局の合同で臨時に委員会が開催されることがあった。とくにガーズィ・エトヘムが軍部総監査高等委員会副委員長、オメル・リュシュテュが参謀総長代行補佐になった1898年以降、両者と軍部統監が参加する「軍部委員会Komisyon-ı Askerî」が頻繁に開かれるようになった。青年トルコ人革命前夜についていれば、この軍部委員会が陸軍の意思決定に大きく作用していたと考えられる。エディルネにおける事例からその点を明らかにしたい。

1904年11月、エディルネで第二軍元帥のアリフArifに対する暗殺未遂事件が発生した。この暗殺未遂事件は複数のルートで複数の機関へ伝えられた。エディルネに司令部を置く第二十歩兵師団司令官中将サドゥクSadıkから宮廷府に送られた電報は、末尾に複写一部が勅令にしたがってガーズィ・エトヘムへ転送された旨が書かれており、情報が軍部総監査高等委員会に転送されていたことがわかる。暗殺未遂事件の発生はエディルネ中央司令官Merkez Kumandanıのメフメト・シュクリュMehmed Şükrü中将、エディルネ州政府からも直接に宮廷府に報じられているほか、第二軍司令部からは軍部統監府を通じて宮廷府に報じられている[Y.PRK.ASK.223/70]。この事件を例とすれば、陸軍における情報伝達経路は1. 現地から宮廷府を通じて軍部総監査高等委員会、2. 現地から軍部統監府を通じて宮廷府という二通りがあった。

1903年8月、エディルネ州内でのブルガリア人戦闘集団を討伐すべく、機動師団Fırka-yı Seyyare（のちの第二十歩兵師団）が創設された。軍部総監査高等委員会はガーズィ・エトヘムとオメル・リュシュテュの署名で機動師団へ警戒を呼び掛けた[Y.PRK.KOM.11/87]。一方、機動師団を率いる少将サドゥクへの命令は軍部統監府から発給されてい

41 陸軍学校参謀科第十一期[İskora1966::149]。
42 陸軍学校参謀科第二十期、フランス留学、駐在武官、参謀総局第四課長を経て帷幄参謀となった[HH.İ.79/15；İ.DH.968/76509；İskora1966::157]。
43 帷幄参謀課長となった際には中将であったが[Y.PRK.MYD26/64]、1906年に元帥へ昇格した[Y.MTV.282/34]。陸軍学校参謀科第三十三期、バルカン戦争中は東部軍司令官[İskora1966::168]。
るものの、軍部統監府からの命令は宮廷府にも複写して提出されていた[Y.MTV.250/24]。討伐にかんする情報伝達経路は前に見た1.と2.の通りであった[Y.PRK.KOM.11/92]。サードゥクの兵力増強の要請は宮廷府に対して行われており、その是非はメフメト・ルザ、ガーズィ・エトヘム、オメル・リュシュテュの三者で開かれた軍部委員会で検討されたのちに勅令として許可された[Y.MTV250/26]。兵力補充の作業にかんする皇帝の下問への回答も、軍部委員会が行っていた。また討伐の進捗状況についてはガーズィ・エトヘムとオメル・リュシュテュが監査することとなっていた[Y.MTV.250/30]。この事件を例とすれば、陸軍の意思決定は軍部統監府だけが決していたのではなく、また軍部総監査高等委員会だけが決していたのでもなかった。宮廷府で開かれた委員会——軍部委員会が政策を決定し、それをうけて勅令が発行されるという流れであった。

クレフェルトによれば「どのような軍事組織でも、最初にしなければならないのは、権限や責任の系統を適切に配分すること」である[クレフェルト2018:102]。アブデュルハミト二世時代のオスマン陸軍では、時代により異なるとはいえ軍部統監府、参謀総局、軍部総監査高等委員会、帷幄参謀部の四つの機関が併存していた。これらの機関はそれぞれの権限を侵食しあっていった。どれか一つの機関が優位に立つということもなく、合同の委員会が陸軍の意思決定を担っていた。一方で皇帝も自身がすべての決断を下していたのでもなかった。つまり陸軍全体の責任者は明白ではなかった。

6

日本陸軍将校のオスマン陸軍への見方は、編制的な不均衡、組織的な不効率を根拠として否定的なものであった。オスマン語史料からオスマン陸軍の組織を再構成してみると、日本陸軍将校の感想が実態に即していったことがわかる。オスマン陸軍はヨーロッパ領、とくに第三軍に師団が次々と増設され、編制上の不均衡が生じていた。オスマン陸軍組織はもっと複雑で、宮廷府に開かれる委員会が意思決定機関となっていた。責任者が明白でないこの陸軍のありかたは、不効率なものであった。この不均衡と不効率に密接と不透明な昇進が重なっていたのがオスマン陸軍であった。
参考文献
ATASE（Genelkurmay Askerî Tarih ve Strateji Etüt Arşivi）
COA（Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi）
SA（Salname-i Askerî）
青井千由紀
2013.『英国の対反乱ドクトリン：古典的原則の起源と継続性』『軍事史学』49/2, 4-22
大江洋代, 2018.『明治期日本の陸軍：官僚制と国民軍の形成』東京：東京大学出版会
岡倉登志, 2003.『ポーア戦争』東京：山川出版社
北岡伸一, 2012.『官僚制としての日本陸軍』東京：筑摩書房
ファン＝クレフェルト、マーチン（監訳、石津朋之）
2018.『新時代「戦争論」』東京：原書房
小松宮彰仁, 1888.『欧国軍事見聞録』出版地不明
上法快男, 1987.『帝国陸軍編制総覧』東京：芙蓉書房
竹山護夫, 1997.『陸海軍中央機関の制度変遷』（編、原剛）『日本陸海軍事典』
（東京：新人物往来社）, 411-435.
中島浩貴, 2019.『国民皆兵とドイツ帝国：一般兵役義務と軍事言説1871~1914』東京：彩流社
福島安正, 1895.『亜欧日記』出版地不明（宮内庁書陵部文書館所蔵）
三沢伸生, 2015.『20世紀前半のイスタンブールにおける日本軍部の活動』『東洋大学社会学部紀要』 53/1, 21-34
2018.『19世紀末のイスタンブールにおける日本軍の情報活動：福島安正『亜欧日記』の史料的価値』『東洋大学社会学部紀要』55/2, 33-47
森岡守成, 1910.『土耳其事情：森岡中佐報告』東京：参謀本部
森松俊夫, 1991.『図説陸軍史』東京：建帛社
von der Goltz, Colmar (tr. Mehmed Tahir), 1889. Millet-i Müselleha, Kostantiniye: Matbaa-i Ebüazziya
Hakkı, 1909. Osmanlı Ordusu Ahval ve Tensikat-ı Askeriyesi, İstanbul: Mekteb Matbaası
İskora, Muharrem Mazlum, 1944. Türk Orduşu Kurmaylık (Erekânharbiye) Tarihiçesi, Ankara: Harp Akademisi Matbaası

Mehmed Rüşdü, 1890. *Devlet-i Aliye Ordu Teşkilatı*, İstanbul: Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Şahane Matbaası


Uyar, Mesut & Erickson, Edward J.

2014. *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür ve triturları


