

One Asia Foundation International Lectures, Fall 2019 Semester

“Humanities General Education: The Asian Community:

The Construction and Transformation of East Asiaology” Lecture Series (8)

Title: Japan and Taiwan from Foreign Viewpoints: From the Aspect of Russia

For our 8th lecture, we invite Associate Professor Tsukamoto Zenya from the Department of Japanese Language and Literature at Chinese Culture University as our speaker. Professor Tsukamoto’s specialty is comparative culture between Japan and Russia and Japanese-Taiwan exchange history. The topic of this speech focuses on how other countries studied Japan and why studied Japan from the perspectives of exchange history in Taiwan, Japan, and Russia. The summary of speech is as following.

Professor Tsukamoto first mentioned that because of historical factor, Taiwan has developed a particular Japanese Studies and Taiwanese have its own unique Japanese view. Japanese studies in Korea, in United States, or in Europe all have their own characteristics. Thus, Japanese studies in Taiwan should take into accounts of the results of Japanese studies in Korea, in United States, or in Europe. Through reviewing research results from other countries, we can reexamine and revise our research methods or correct our mistakes or bias. This helps us intensified our understanding of Japan. From this prospect, Professor Tsukamoto introduced Japanese studies and Japanese view in Russia and explained the relations between Taiwan and Russia.

Three elements constructed the formation of Oriental studies in Russia. First, for the need to develop Siberia region, it is essential for Russia to understand the culture and customs of minorities and indigenous people in Siberia region. Second, geographical proximity of Russia and other East Asian countries, like China, Mongolia, Korea, and Japan, led to the countless linkage between Russia and East Asian countries in territory acquisition and border demarcation, Territorial dispute over Sakhalin in particular. The third element is the relevance to Islamic peoples. Peter the Great constructed the basis of Oriental studies in Russia. He collected various precious cultural relics and established museum “Kunstkamera,” in which exhibited cultural relics related to global ethnology and anthropology.

Regarding the relations between Taiwan and Russia, Russia started to pay attention to Taiwan again since the rapid development of Taiwanese economy in 1980s. Both sides established “Representative Office in Moscow for the Taipei-Moscow Economic and Cultural Coordination Commission” in 1992 and began various exchanges and cooperation relations. In the academic history in Russia, 1990s was an era of mutual academic exchanges and it was called “Discover Taiwan Era.”

Moreover, for the purpose of understanding the relations between Japanese studies and Taiwanese studies in Russia, Professor Tsukamoto introduced several Russian scholars related to Taiwan. The first scholar is Nikolai Aleksandrovich Nevsky (1892-1937). Nevsky visited the Tsou Tribe in Alishan in Taiwan and spent one month to collect Tsou legends and

studied Tsou language. The most amazing part is that Nevsky compiled “Taiwan Tsou Language Dictionary” in one month. Another scholar is Serge Elisséeff (1889-1975) who lived in Tokyo from 1908 to 1914 and studied Japanese classical literature and arts at Tokyo Imperial University. Then Elisséeff was invited by Harvard University in the United States. As the first director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, he cultivated many Japanese specialists and thus he was called the pioneer of Japanologist in the United States. Elisséeff had visited Taiwan from the late 1912 to early 1913. He traveled from Keelung to Kaohsiung and observed Taiwanese society. His manuscript on the trip of Taiwan had not published until 2014 in which Elisséeff criticized the ways of handling anti-Japanese incidents by the Government-General of Taiwan. Elisséeff was famous for his Pro-Japan position and thus his criticism on Japanese government in the manuscript caught people’s attentions. At last, Professor Tsukamoto introduced Valentin *Golovachev* (*Chinese name*: 劉宇衛), whom is not a Japanese specialist but a Taiwanese specialist. Because Russia’s Taiwanese studies has begun since 1990s and Russian scholars started to adopt the approaches of visiting and observing Taiwan instead of the approaches through investigation documents. *Golovachev* is one of the representative and he is main Taiwanese specialist in Taiwan Research Center, Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences.

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