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Representations of Japan and Russian-Japanese Relations in Russian Newspapers: 1906-1910[1]

Yulia Mikhailova

Introduction

Recently the problem of Russian-Japanese relations in the period between the Russo-Japanese War and World War I has attracted the attention of many scholars.[2] This period is unique in the sense that four conventions between the two countries were concluded and relations developed quite cordially. Some call this time "the Golden Age" of Russian-Japanese relations, while others claim that a specific "civilizational similarity and unity" appeared between them.[3] Such rapprochement may seem astonishing when compared with the previous and following history of mutual negative perceptions and attitudes.

From the last decade of the nineteenth century until the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Russian images of Japan presented paradoxical hybridity. Appraisals of Japan as a modernizing and developing country co-existed with a reluctance to treat it as an equal and with a fear of the "yellow peril."[4] Fascination with Japanese art and exotics blended with expressions of regret about the disappearance of "authentic" Japan.[5] Self-confident nationalistic manifesta-

1 I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science, the financial support from which enabled me to collect materials on the topic (Research no. 20530135, research topic "Comprehensive Research on Changes in Russian-Japanese Relations: from Confrontation to Cooperation," Basic research "C," Research representative Teramoto Yasutoshi). My thanks also go to two unknown reviewers and to Carol Rinnert whose comments helped me to improve the paper.

2 Teramoto Yasutoshi, *Nichiro senso igo no Nihon gaiko* [Japan's Diplomacy after the Russo-Japanese War] (Tokyo: Shinsansha shuppan, 1999); Ia. Shulatov, *Na puti k sotrudnichestvu: rossiisko-iaponskie otnosheniia v 1905–1914 gg*. (Moscow: Institut vostokovedeniia RAN, 2009); Baruishefu Edowarudo, *Nichiro domei-no jidai, 1914–1917: 'Reigaiteki na yuko' no shinso* [The Epoch of the Japanese-Russian Alliance, 1914–1917: The Truth about an "Exceptional Friendship"] (Fukuoka: Kashoin, 2007).

3 V. Molodiakov, *Rossiia i Iaponiia: Zolotoi vek (1905–1916)* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2008); Baruishefu, *Nichiro domei no jidai*, p. 327.

4 Albena Simeonova, *Japan through the Russian Eyes (1855–1905)* (Paradigm: Sofia, 2007); David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Towards the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan* (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001).

5 Rosamund Bartlett, "Japonisme and Japanophobia: The Russo-Japanese War in Russian Cultural Consciousness," *Russian Review* 67:1 (2008), pp. 8–33; Elena Diakonova, "Japonisme in Russia in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," Yulia Mikhailova and William M. Steele, eds., *Japan and Russia: Three Centuries of Mutual Images* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2008), pp. 32–46.

tions and scorn towards Japan during the first months of the war gave way to foreboding that Japan was a threat able to penetrate into the hearts of Russians, menacing the essence of their identity.[6] For Russia, the unfortunate outcome of the war and dissatisfaction with the Portsmouth Treaty gave birth to perceptions of Japan as a danger challenging the very survival of "Great Russia."

How could this fear and suspicion disappear? How was rapprochement in the diplomatic sphere translated into images and perceptions? What new images of Japan emerged in Russia? This paper aims to explore these questions through the examination of Russian newspaper debates on relations with Japan which took place in 1906 and 1907 and their subsequent impact on Russian views of this country. It argues that the 1906–07 press debate stimulated in the Russian public a new interest in Japan, and as a result this country began to lose its "exotic" or "hostile" features and came to be viewed as a state Russia had much in common with.

In answering these questions it is important to take into consideration changes that took place in Russian society in the wake of the 1905 Revolution, such as the establishment of the legislative assembly (the Duma) and promulgation of the freedoms of meetings and speech. Though the Russia of the time was by no means a liberal democracy, numerous political parties appeared; the press boomed and acquired political influence. According to the 1906 Fundamental Law of the Russian Empire, foreign policy lay outside the prerogatives of the legislative assembly: its main direction was decided by the Tsar together with members of the so-called Special Conference. However, alarmed by the bitter experience of the war's inception, when backstairs influences at the imperial court and high society resulted in adventurism in the Far East,[7] public opinion showed high sensitivity to relations with Japan, wishing to avoid further blows to Russian pride and prestige. It was newspapers that expressed those concerns and educated the public on matters of foreign policy. Before the Russo-Japanese War, information on Japan could mainly be found in the so-called "thick journals," published once a month, but after the war a growing number of newspapers began to provide information on current events. The news was now delivered quickly and to a broader reading audience.

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6 Yulia Mikhailova, "Images of Enemy and Self: Popular Prints of the Russo-Japanese War," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 16 (1998), pp. 30–53; Andrei Belyi, *Peterburg* (Izdatel'stvo "Sirin," 1913–14).

7 This refers to the activities of the so-called "Bezobrazov group," which aimed at strengthening Russia's military presence in Korea. Nikolai II was attracted, though temporarily, by the group's plans. Eventually, this brought the collapse of Russia's Far Eastern policy and war with Japan. See: I. Lukoianov, "The Bezobrazovtsy," in John H. Steinberg et al., eds., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden-Boston, 2005), pp. 65–86.

Soviet scholars have paid some attention to relations between the Russian press and foreign policy in this period,[8] but they usually discussed the problem in terms of class struggle and emphasized the manipulation of the press by the authorities. Some recent studies have suggested that relations between diplomacy and newspapers did not go one way only, that in fact newspapers presented events of international life rather objectively and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took this information and the views expressed by newspapers into consideration.[9] Following this approach, the choice of the newspapers for the present paper was determined primarily by the existence on their pages of information on the topics of Russian-Japanese relations and Japan. Among them the Petersburg daily *Novoe Vremia* stood out because unlike other newspapers, such as the even more popular *Russkoe Slovo* and *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, it devoted much attention to foreign policy and was considered important by foreign diplomats.[10] In the autumn of 1906 *Novoe Vremia* initiated a debate on negotiations with Japan, which took place in St. Petersburg. Another Petersburg newspaper *Rech'* joined the debate, criticizing *Novoe Vremia*'s viewpoint. Though other newspapers, both from St. Petersburg and Moscow, also expressed their views, the polemics between these two metropolitan newspapers set the tone. A third newspaper, *Rossiia,* was also selected, because it published many articles on Japan. Thus, the present paper is based on materials taken from *Novoe Vremia, Rech'* and *Rossiia*, gathered for the period from August 1906 until the summer of 1910. The first date marks the beginning of negotiations between Japan and Russia aiming at concretizing the Portsmouth Treaty. The latter date comes shortly before the conclusion of the second Russian-Japanese Convention in August 1910.

Newspapers and Journalists

Each of the three newspapers had its own ideational and other characteristic features, which were reflected in publications, especially in editorial articles. *Novoe Vremia* was a well-established newspaper, founded in 1874. Its publisher and editor-in-chief was the well-known journalist and public figure Aleksei Suvorin. He made the newspaper and himself famous at the time of the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–78 through reports from the battlefield in which the topic of Russia's liberating mission among the Slavs was highlighted. *Novoe Vremia* was often called a semi-official newspaper (*ofitsioz*) and was criticized for its aspirations to please the authorities. Indeed, it was conservative and

8 I. V. Bestuzhev, *Bor'ba v Rossii po voprosam vneshnei politiki 1906–1910* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1961).

9 E. G. Kostrikova, *Russkaia pressa i diplomatiia nakanune pervoi mirovoi voiny, 1907–1914* (Moscow: RAN, Institut istorii, 1997).

10 D. C. B. Lieven, *Russia and the Origins of the First World War* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press LTD., 1983), p. 131.

nationalist and had a wide following in high official and landowning circles. Suvorin was close to many of those in power, and the prime minister's younger brother, Alexander Stolypin, was a member of the newspaper's editorial board. However, the recent publication of the full text of A. S. Suvorin's diaries shows him as a man who had his own opinion, was sensitive to the trends of the time and even considered himself on a mission to shape public opinion.[11] During the Russo-Japanese War, *Novoe Vremia,* as always, took a nationalistic stance calling for a fight to the end, even when the Japanese army took over Sakhalin.[12] In the immediate post-war period the newspaper continued the policy of standing for Russian national interests in the Far East, presenting Japan as a threat and claiming that the Maritime Province was more important for Russia than Poland and Finland taken together.[13] Though the newspaper often appealed to "the firmness and strength of the Russian spirit," it was also pragmatic, claiming that for the proper defense of the Pacific coast the speedy construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway's second track and the Amur Railway was necessary.[14] Though it was an independent newspaper, *Novoe Vremia* was close in its political orientation to the Octobrists, a non-revolutionary centrist party founded in late October 1905.

Rech' is regarded as the newspaper of the Constitutional Democratic Party (the Kadets), a liberal party formed in October 1905. The Kadets shared some republican aspirations and were supported mainly by professionals (university professors, lawyers, etc.), members of the *zemstvo* (a form of local government), and industrialists. *Rech's* editors were two leaders of the Kadet Party: Pavel N. Miliukov and Iosif V. Gessen. Though both were intelligent and broad-minded people, as journalists they did not possess the same talents as Suvorin and his team. Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, a well-known feminist leader and a member of the Kadet Party central committee noted later that *Rech'* was "a dull newspaper lacking an entertaining character, so that readers' preferences often went to *Novoe Vremia*."[15] *Rech'* concentrated on the problems of constitutional development of Russia, party rivalry, and elections to the Duma, whereas matters of foreign policy were of secondary interest, and even the Kadet Party program made no reference to questions of foreign policy or defence. Though many Kadets were hopeful about the peaceful and legal resolution of international conflicts, in fact, they accepted the imperial government as the defender of Russia's interests in foreign affairs.

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11 A. S. Suvorin, *Dnevnik* (Moscow: Novosti, 1992).

12 The viewpoint of *Novoe Vremia* was discussed in "Inostrannoe obozrenie," *Vestnik Evropy*, 1905, No. 8, pp. 782–792.

13 N. Sl., "Novye nadezhdy i opaseniia na Dal'nem Vostoke," *Novoe Vremia,* July 28 (15), 1906, p. 3. Figures in parentheses show dates according to the Julian calendar used in Russia at that time.

14 A. M. Volkonskii, "Groza s Vostoka," *Novoe Vremia*, November 21 (8), 1906, pp. 3–4.

15 A. Tyrkova-Williams, *Na putiakh k svobode* (New York: Izdatel'stvo imeni Chekhova, 1962), pp. 406–407.

In the summer of 1906, *Rossiia* was changed from a second-rate tabloid into the official organ of the Ministry of Home Affairs. As announced in its subscription advertisement, the newspaper's "goal was to explain the position of the government on matters of current domestic policy and to promote the spiritual and economic development of the people."[16] Usually, *Rossiia* did not engage in debates on foreign policy, but limited itself to publishing official documents, telegrams, and extracts from foreign newspapers assessing Russia's relations with other countries. However, among its editorial board members was Sergei Syromiatnikov, a graduate of the Oriental Faculty of St. Petersburg University and a person well-known for his interest in the Far East. It is sufficient to mention that in 1891 he accompanied the future tsar Nikolai II on his famous tour to Eastern countries, including Japan. A conservative in matters of Russian policy in Asia, Syromiatnikov professed the idea of spiritual unity between Russia and Asia.[17] He often wrote on China and Japan and was obviously the moving force behind the publication of articles on Japan in *Rossiia* written by Dmitrii M. Pozdneev, Dmitrii Ianchevskii and other authors. Syromiatnikov was particularly interested in publishing articles on social and economic matters. Once he rejected Pozdneev's article about a trip to Hakone, asking him to write about industry and factories instead of tourism.[18]

The St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency in Japan

Newspaper materials in which Japan appeared may be classified into the following groups: foreign and Russian telegrams; official documents, such as treaties or proceedings of the Duma; editorials and articles by political observers; articles by special correspondents to Japan; political cartoons and various other information pieces.

As soon as Aleksandr P. Izvol'skii became the Russian Foreign Minister, he ordered the Press Section of his ministry to perform the duty of reviewing information published in foreign mass media. The St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency, which was subordinate to the Foreign Ministry, was also founded.[19] The Agency dispatched its special correspondents to foreign countries. In Japan this duty was taken up by Dmitrii Pozdneev, the former director of the Oriental Institute in Vladivostok, who stayed in Japan beginning in October 1905, allegedly for the purpose of mastering the Japanese language. His second telegram to Russia was sent on August 22 (9), 1906, around the time negotiations between Japan and Russia started. It said, "The conversation of the Russian Minister [in Japan, Iurii Bakhmet'ev] with a member of the Russian-Japanese

16 "Ob''iavlenie o podpiske," *Rossiia*, December 28 (15), 1909, p. 1.

17 B. D. Syromiatnikov, *"Strannye" puteshestviia i komandirovki "SIGMY" (1897–1916 gg.)* (St. Petersburg, 2004), p. 30.

18 Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka (RNB), Otdel rukopisei (OR), f. 590, op. 117, l. 282.

19 On details see: Kostrikova, *Russkaia pressa i diplomatiia*, pp. 69–102.

society Mochizuki Kotaro has been published. Bakhmet'ev expressed intentions to completely forget the past. The Russian government and people hope to establish with Japan the best relations ever possible. [He said that] [the Russian] Ministry of Foreign Affairs is sympathetic to the Japanese aspirations for peace. ...The Japanese press welcomes Bakhmet'ev's speech. *Jiji shinpo* writes that because of such peace-minded diplomats as Izvol'skii and Bakhmet'ev relations between Japan and Russia will definitely become friendly. Even the Russophobe *Daily Mail* regards Bakhmet'ev's speech as the expression of rapprochement."[20] Thus, at this important turning point of diplomatic relations, the Japanese public was duly informed about the general line of Russian diplomacy and the Russian public received information on Japan's reaction to it.

The main source of information for Pozdneev was Japanese and Western newspapers, published in Japan, but he also had some valuable networks. They included, for example, the above mentioned Mochizuki, the director of the *Jiyu Tsushinsha* news agency and a Diet member, and members of *Toa Dobunkai*, an organization active in promoting Japan's policy in Asia. According to D. Pozdneev, Mochizuki supported closer cooperation between the two countries and came up with the idea of mutual exchange of information that could "dispel rumours damaging rapprochement."[21] By May 1908, D. Pozdneev had sent about 280 telegrams to the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency, mainly on the subject of Japan's finances, relations between the political parties and the cabinet, and prospects for its military build-up.

Negotiations in Autumn of 1906

The Portsmouth Treaty, signed on September 5, 1905, by Sergei Iu. Witte and Komura Jutaro, successfully ended the war and prevented the seizure of Vladivostok and the Maritime Province. However, it provided only a general framework for subsequent relations. The details had to be determined by separate treaties on trade, navigation, fisheries, and the connection of railways in Manchuria. In July 1906, Japan proposed starting negotiations, and in August talks opened in St. Petersburg. It was decided to keep them secret from the public. However, on November 24 (11), *Novoe Vremia* came out with an editorial political review informing the public about the negotiations. By the end of December, this newspaper had printed twenty-seven editorials on the subject, while *Rech'* had issued seventeen. Using the protocols of the Portsmouth Conference, *Novoe Vremia* came up with ideas on how to turn the vague formula of the Peace Treaty to Russia's favor. As the protocols were written in French, the newspaper explained them to the public in Russian.

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20 Telegram by D. Pozdneev to St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency, RNB, OR, f. 590, op. 26, l. 31; published in *Novoe Vremia* on August 27 (14), 1906, p. 2.

21 RNB, OR, f. 590, op. 26, l. 58.

The first editorial on the subject raised the issue of "granting the Japanese subjects fishery rights along the Russian coast in the Japan, Okhotsk and Bering Seas," as was stipulated in Article 11 of the Portsmouth Treaty. The newspaper explained that the absence of any clear demarcation line between the Russian and Japanese zones created the impression that the Japanese obtained fishery rights in the whole region.[22] Another editorial called granting fishery rights to Japan "nothing more than a hidden indemnity."[23] Japan's renunciation of an indemnity was considered to be an important aspect of Russia's achievement at Portsmouth, more so because at the beginning of the twentieth century the indemnity issue was one criterion for evaluating the results of the war.[24] The comments by *Novoe Vremia* seemed to discredit the success of Witte's diplomacy.

In yet another editorial, Suvorin's newspaper warned against conflating the issue of granting fishery rights to Japan with the problem of compensation for damages incurred by Russian fishermen from Southern Karafuto after this territory was transferred to Japan. The editorial wittingly compared such a conflation with the "exchange of one million rubles of annual income for one million rubles of cash payment."[25] The newspaper persistently demanded that negotiations be made public and participation in them be allowed among "all interested parties," meaning here first and foremost Russian entrepreneurs from Southern Sakhalin.[26] On November 29 (16), under strong pressure from *Novoe Vremia* the government had to admit the fact of negotiations publicly through the services of the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency.

Novoe Vremia also expressed strong anxiety that as soon as the Japanese stepped ashore on Russian soil, this would result in problems with their administrative and police control.[27] Numerous articles demonstrated how the sparse Russian population in the Far Eastern regions had already allowed what was called "Japanese plundering in the area." It was noted, for example, that the Japanese forced the indigenous population to sell fishing areas at extraordinarily cheap prices; thus, only two bags of rice and thirty bottles of sake were paid for the use of all the river estuaries in the 15-kilometers-long Chaivinskii Bay.[28] This newspaper reported extensively on the anti-Japanese movement on the western coast of the United States, as if warning that the same could happen in Russia.

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22 "Stat'ia 11 Portsmutskogo dogovora," *Novoe Vremia,* November 24 (11), 1906, p. 2.

23 "Vsegda li molchanie zoloto," *Novoe Vremia,* November 25 (12), 1906, p. 2

24 Philip Towle, *Democracy and Peacemaking* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 59–79.

25 "Nashi peregovory s Iaponiei," *Novoe Vremia*, November 29 (16), 1906, p. 2.

26 "Nashi peregovory s Iaponiei," *Novoe Vremia*, December 5 (November 22), 1906, p. 2.

27 "O nashikh peregovorakh s Iaponiei," *Novoe Vremia*, November 30 (17), 1906, p. 2.

28 For example, see: I. Tulchinskii, "Khishchnichestvo iapontsev v nashikh vodakh," *Novoe Vremia,* January 14 (1), p. 3.

Rech' published its first editorial on the subject of the negotiations on December 7 (November 24), looking at them in the international context and suggesting that these negotiations became possible because of the improvement of Russia's relations with England, while the latter's support of Japan had weakened.[29] It criticized *Novoe Vremia* for its "unnecessarily strong patriotic ambitions and arrogant tone," disapproved of its attacks on the Japanese and advised Russian diplomats to keep a lower profile because of Russia's weakness in the Far East. *Rech'* also presented itself as a supporter of the "open door" policy in China.[30]

At the same time *Novoe Vremia* was perspicacious enough to notice that the Japanese demand to open navigation along the Sungari River might result in future political problems. Indeed, this issue continued to figure in relations between the two countries for the next several years.[31]

The definition of the term "fishery" also caused many discrepancies of interpretation. This problem originated from the fact that though the official language at Portsmouth was French, the Japanese were allowed to use English and the Peace Treaty itself was written in both languages. Russians followed the interpretation of the French term *droit de peche* which meant "fish *per se*," whereas the Japanese, in accordance with the English term "fishery rights," included into this notion everything – from shell fish to fur seals. *Rech'* supported the Japanese interpretation of the term, while *Novoe Vremia* advocated the Russian one, accusing its opponents of pro-Japanese agitation and betrayal of Russian interests.[32]

By the middle of December, it seemed to many that the negotiations had entered a stalemate and were about to break down. At this decisive moment the Russian government issued an official statement.[33] It summarized the process of negotiations over the last three months, noting that a consensus had been reached in some areas. In particular, both parties recognized the "reciprocal treatment in commerce on the basis of the most favored nation [status]" and agreed on granting to subjects of each nation rights for the acquisition of real estate and engagement in trade and business inside the territory of the other. At the same time the statement acknowledged the existence of big differences in interpretation of the French terms *anses et fleuves* (bays and rivers) and the English term "inlet" and informed the public that a special commission for defining the term "fishery" had been organized. Importantly, the statement admitted that changes in the situation in the Far East in Japan's favor after the war allowed it to make more and more new demands, such as the freedom of navi-

29 "Peregovory s Iaponiei," *Rech'*, December 7 (November 24), 1906, p. 2.

30 "K peregovoram s Iaponiei," *Rech'*, December 11 (November 28), 1906, p. 2.

31 "Sungari i iapontsy," *Novoe Vremia*, December 13 (November 30), 1906, p. 2.

32 "Rech' i iapontsy," *Novoe Vremia,* December 29 (16), 1906, p. 2.

33 "Offitsial'noe soobshchenie o peregovorakh mezhdu Rossiei i Iaponiei," *Novoe Vremia*, December 29 (16), 1906, p. 2; *Rech'*, December 30 (17), 1906, p. 2.

gation along the Sungari, the establishment of additional Japanese consulates in Russia and granting to the Japanese custom concessions on the Manchurian border. The resolution of these demands was qualified as a "difficult political task, the decision of which was subject to the correct interpretation of the Peace Treaty and Portsmouth Conference protocols." Thus, the Official Statement let the public know that the situation of the negotiations was complicated and indeed anxiety-ridden.

After the publication of the official statement, newspapers continued to discuss the perspectives of signing the new agreement on the basis of the Portsmouth Treaty, concentrating this time on Article 12, which dealt with the future treaty on commerce. Its wording also allowed the possibility of a variety of interpretations. On the one hand, it envisaged that the future treaty should be based on "the treaty which was in force previous to the present war." On the other hand, it foresaw "the system of reciprocal treatment on the grounds of the most favored nation [status] until the signing of a new treaty."[34] *Novoe Vremia* emphasized the importance of the first part of Article 12, because the treaty of 1895 was more advantageous for Russia, while *Rech'* called attention to the second part, claiming that it "reflected the strengthened position of Japan after the war."[35]

The debate between the newspapers was becoming more heated, which could have indicated to readers that tensions at the negotiations were growing fast. The public had every reason to wonder if the discrepancies of viewpoints between the countries could ever be settled peacefully or whether a new war was imminent. It was the nationalist position of *Novoe Vremia* that inflamed the situation, while *Rech'* abated its attacks, showing more respect towards Japan.[36]

The first signs of reconciliation appeared when Emile J. Dillon, the Petersburg correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph,* published in *Contemporary Review* two articles suggesting how Japan and Russia could come to terms.[37] In particular, he welcomed "the resolve of new Russian diplomats [Izvol'skii – Y. M.] to renounce the imperialist policy in the Far East" and pointed to England's support of Russia's intentions. Dillon also advised Japan to give up its plans for the seizure of Vladivostok and Northern Sakhalin, explaining that otherwise it would lose the respect of its European ally [England – Y. M.].

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34 "Nichiro kowa joyaku (Potsumasu kowa joyaku) [Portsmouth Peace Treaty]," *Nichiro (Soren) kihon bunsho, shiryoshu (kaiteiban)* [Collection of fundamental documents between Japan and Russia (the Soviet Union): Revised edition] (Kawasaki: RP purintingu, 2003), p. 31.

35 "Russko-iaponskie peregovory," *Novoe Vremia*, December 31 (18), 1906, p. 2; "Rossiia i Iaponia," *Novoe Vremia*, January 1 (December 19), 1906, p. 2; "Torgovyi dogovor mezhdu Rossiei i Iaponiei," *Rech',* January 3 (December 21) 1906, p. 2.

36 "'Novoe Vremia' i russko-iaponskii spor," *Rech',* January 1 (December 19), 1906, p. 2.

37 Teramoto, *Nichiro senso igo*, pp. 305–306.

Novoe Vremia immediately published a review of Dillon's articles.[38] Though the newspaper was quick to notice that Dillon's arguments only confirmed its own assertions, for a perspicacious reader the review signaled that some progress in the negotiations was taking place. Indeed, in January 1907, the Russian foreign minister, A. P. Izvol'skii, and Japan's minister in St. Petersburg, Motono Ichiro, exchanged, in private, opinions about the possibility of concluding a general political agreement able to secure the interests of each country.[39] Information on their talks was not reported in newspapers, but on January 26 (13), 1907, readers were informed that the Russian government had decided to withdraw troops from Manchuria 80 days earlier than intended.[40] On February 10 (January 28), the Japanese government's decision to decrease the number of troops guarding the South Manchurian Railway was also publicized.[41] This news seemed to confirm that Russo-Japanese negotiations were breaking out of a deadlock.

Obviously, foreign policy was one of the battlefields between political parties, even more so given that elections to the second Duma were scheduled for February 20 (7), 1907. The pro-Japanese card played by the liberals and the anti-Japanese stance of conservatives were not completely new. They existed already in the time of the Sino-Japanese War and continued during the Russo-Japanese War with the liberal critique of the official Russian policy in Manchuria. However, previously the liberal viewpoint was confined to "thick journals," whereas now it was expressed in the newspapers.

Even more innovative were the government's tactics. Twice it reacted to the attacks of the newspapers: first on November 29 (16) by confirming the fact of negotiations in St. Petersburg and then on December 29 (16) by publishing the official statement. The government obviously did not want to be blamed for secretly conniving, as had happened on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War.

The political convention between Japan and Russia was concluded on July 30 (17), 1907.[42] The main text was short, consisting of only 20 lines, but it was accompanied by three additional agreements: on Commerce and Navigation, on Fishery, and on Connection of Railways in China. Each of them was supplemented by detailed protocols. In particular, 34 inlets on the Russian Pacific Coast, where Japanese fishermen were not allowed to enter, were listed and the supplement to the Treaty on Commerce contained numerous exceptions to the rule of the "most favored nation."

Satisfied by provisions of the Fishery Treaty, *Novoe Vremia* approved the convention of 1907, writing, "The Russian-Japanese Convention ... was con-

38 "Rossiia, Iaponiia i Angliia," *Novoe Vremia*, January 10 (December 28), 1906, p. 2.

39 Shulatov, *Na puti k sotrudnichestvu*, p.127.

40 "Dosrochnaia evakuatsiia Manchurii," *Novoe Vremia*, January 26 (13), 1907, p. 2.

41 "Vecherniaia khronika," *Novoe Vremia*, February 10 (January 28), 1907, p. 4.

42 The text of the Russian-Japanese Convention was published in newspapers on August 15 (2), 1907.

cluded not under the influence of sentimental considerations, but after the comprehensive evaluation of mutual claims, specific interests and weight-to-power ratios on each side. The terms of this convention were determined not by wily diplomats in pursuit of some behavioral strategy, but by a real balance of power and interests."[43] *Rech'* called the convention a "normal agreement usually concluded on the basis of mutuality and the status of the most favored nation."[44]

The Kadet newspaper qualified the campaign waged by *Novoe Vremia* in autumn 1906 as "mere nit-picking," which influenced not the content of the convention, but only its form. It claimed that "the Japanese insisted on such a form out of apprehension that the Russians would ignore the details in the future and interpret the agreements subjectively."[45] However, in fact the structure of the new convention was the logical outcome of negotiations and its detailed text helped avoid many problems in years to come. It can also be noted that the different attitudes to detail lie in contrasts between the Japanese and Russian cultures in general. The same problem had appeared earlier in Portsmouth, which can be seen from the following example given by R. A. Esthus: "From the outset it was apparent that the Japanese were giving more dedication and skill to the difficult task [of spelling out the exact terms of the Portsmouth Treaty] than were the Russians. ... Pokotilov ... described the Japanese as very systematic and well prepared for their work. 'With us,' he lamented to Korostovets, 'it is done in a more lenient manner'."[46] It seems that by the year 1907 Russians did learn how to work with the Japanese efficiently.

The debate waged by the newspapers was not in vain in some other respects as well. It made explicit the uselessness of negotiations limited to interpretations of the Portsmouth formula and taught the Russian public to refrain from narrow nationalism. Actually, the newspapers presented a clear and correct picture of the negotiations. The protocols of the newspapers published in autumn 1907, though they showed many more details, in principle did not differ from the newspaper descriptions. Iurii Solov'ev, the head of the Press Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote later: "The history of negotiations with Japan from the end of the war until the final settlement in June 1907, confirms well the significance of close cooperation between diplomacy and the press."[47] Ironically, in spite of the attention given by the press to Russian-Japa-

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43 "Russko-iaponskoe soglashenie," *Novoe Vremia,* August 15 (2), 1907, p. 2.

44 "Konventsii s Iaponiei," *Rech'*, September 13 (August 31), 1907, p. 2.

45 "Otvet g. politicheskomu obozrevateliu 'Novogo vremeni,'" *Rech'*, September 17 (4), 1907, p. 2.

46 A telegram from Witte to Lamsdorf, telegram, September 2, 1905, *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dokumentov*, pp. 206–207, cited in Raymond A. Esthus, *Double Eagle and Rising Sun: The Russians and Japanese at Portsmouth in 1905* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), p. 175.

47 Iu. A. Solov'ev, *Vospominaniia diplomata, 1893–1922* (Moscow, 1959), p. 351.

nese negotiations, the part of the political convention where Japan and Russia divided their spheres of interest in China was kept secret, though rumors circulated in Russian society.[48]

It is also possible to look at the press debate beyond the scope of Russo-Japanese relations. For the reading public, the debate provided an exercise in foreign policy, which no longer remained secret, in understanding international treaties in general and treaties with Japan in particular. It gave good practice in rhetoric and eloquence, as well. Journalists and editors were well-educated people, knowledgeable in foreign languages, and in classical and contemporary Western literature. Though newspapers attacked each other, they did it in a sophisticated way, often resorting to irony and allegory. All this made their articles fascinating reading and worked for the invigoration of the public debate.

In 1907, Russia signed agreements not only with Japan, but also with England and France. However, only negotiations with Japan became the subject of public discussion. This demonstrates the extent to which the Russian society was sensitive to relations with Japan and, by implication, to Japan itself. On March 11 (February 27), 1908, issues related to the policy with Japan appeared in the Russian public space again. This time it was a speech made by the Russian Foreign Minister in the Duma. A. P. Izvol'skii explained the essence of Russia's policy toward Japan and suggested that the rank of Russian Minister in Japan should be raised to that of ambassador and his salary be increased to 65,000 rubles. He noted that the higher rank would demonstrate the respect Russia paid toward Japan and the importance of Japan's place in Russian foreign policy. Discussion followed again. In spite of differences in political orientations, the majority of the Duma approved Izvol'skii's suggestion, but the proposed salary amount was cut to 60,000 rubles. Though legally the Duma was denied much of a role in foreign policy, in practical terms the legislators could debate it and their power of the purse could influence its outcome.[49] The Duma also decided to publish the proceedings of all future debates on foreign policy. Newspapers welcomed this decision. *Stolichnaia pochta,* for example, wrote, "For the first time in history the government appealed to public opinion explaining its foreign policy and the principles it was based on. Definitely, this is an achievement of public opinion."[50] Though the Soviet author I. Bestuzhev referred to V. I. Lenin's characterization of this parliamentary session as "a patriotic demonstration arranged by the police," it seems remarkable that issues of foreign policy were put on the agenda of the session.[51] Even more remark-

48 No title, *Novoe Vremia*, August 28 (15), 1907, p. 4.

49 David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, "'To Build a Great Russia': Civil-Military Relations in the Third Duma, 1907–12," Eric Lohr, Marshall Poe, eds., *The Military and Society in Russia, 1450–1917* (Brill, 2002), pp. 293–322.

50 The article from *Stolichnaia pochta* was reprinted in *Rech'*, March 13 (February 29), 1908, p. 1.

51 Bestuzhev, *Bor'ba v Rossii*, p. 89.

able is the fact that this innovation happened on the occasion of a discussion of the policy towards Japan.

Russian Correspondents in Japan

While Russian-Japanese negotiations and the convention of 1907 were discussed in the press, journalists began to realize in earnest that Russians knew little about the real Japan: its politics, society and national character. At this point Japan emerged not as the enemy on the battlefield, but as an ingenious diplomat and a skillful bureaucrat. The Japanese negotiating strategy and tactics made Russians notice their perseverance and ability to work hard. These qualities engendered new interest in Japan, which was reflected in articles from leading Russian newspapers.

Rech' was the first to point out Japan's entrepreneurial skills, noting how Southern Sakhalin changed with the Japanese presence there: "A railway seventy kilometers long has been constructed, surveys have been conducted and wood milling factories have been opened. One can see Japanese settlements along the whole coast and even a port for the Japanese fleet is being built."[52] The comparison was not in Russia's favor: "Sakhalin has completely changed under Japanese rule: electricity, steam engines and other blessings of civilized cultural life appeared here as soon as the Japanese stepped ashore on this island. The nasty desolation which existed under Russian rule remains only in memory."[53]

Some Russians sought the explanation for Japan's success in the specific features of this people's national character. Thus, a review of the drama "Terakoya," which was performed on the Russian stage, remarked that this drama offered the "possibility to understand the enigma of success that these yellow-skinned and doll-like people have. At least, looking through the prism of their ideals of heroism, it becomes clear that loyalty to obligations forms the basis of their national character. ...There is no fame for the Japanese without responsibility,"[54] concluded the review.

After the convention of 1907 had been signed, delegations from Japan began to visit Russia. For example, in July 1908 a group of Japanese politicians visited the St. Petersburg City Council to become acquainted with the operation of the municipal streetcar, waterworks, system of tax collection and organization of charitable activities.[55] A store called "Tokyo" appeared on the central street of the Russian capital, Nevskii Prospect, selling Formosa tea imported from Japan. The advertisements of this Japanese product were regular-

52 "Sibir'," *Rech'*, November 18 (5), 1906, p. 5.

53 "Sibir'," *Rech'*, January 13, 1907 (December 31, 1906), p. 5.

54 N. Konradi, "Teatr i muzyka," *Novoe Vremia*, January 11, 1907 (December 29, 1906), p. 2.

55 "Poseshchenie iaponskoi delegatsiei Sanktpeterburgskoi Gorodskoi Dumy," *Rech'*, August 8 (July 26), 1908, p. 3.

ly published in newspapers, confirming the reactivation of Russian-Japanese commercial contacts.

More important was the visit to Russia of Goto Shinpei, the first director of the South Manchurian Railway Company, which took place in May, 1908. Its purpose was to finalize the process of connecting the East Chinese and the South Manchurian Railways and to order rails from Russian plants. In his interview to *Novoe Vremia,* Goto, remarking on the anti-Japanese stance of *Novoe Vremia*, suggested that it should send correspondents to Japan.[56] Goto's visit and interview with one of the leading Russian newspapers had significant consequences. An article titled "New Symptoms" was published in *Novoe Vremia* soon thereafter, noting that from that time on even nationalistic Japanese newspapers, such as *Hochi* or *Mainichi Dempo,* began to portray Russia in more positive terms, while Goto himself called Russian politicians "Japanophiles."[57]

Other visible signs of rapprochement noted by newspapers related to the peaceful settlement of disputes between the Japanese fishermen and Russian authorities in the Far East. When the crew of the vessel *Mie-maru* was arrested by the Russian customs service for the illegal fishing of fur seals, the Japanese authorities, in contrast to their previous practice, did not express any political protest, but only asked the Russians to lighten the punishment. On this occasion the newspapers of each country declared that relations between the countries were indeed becoming solid.[58]

The year 1908 saw the emergence of the first post-war Russian newspaper correspondents in Japan. One of them was Vassilii Krivenko. As a Central Staff officer, he audited a Japanese language course at the Oriental Institute in Vladivostok and in the summer of 1908 went to Japan to improve his language skills.[59] To save money, Krivenko stayed in provincial towns and villages, which allowed him to observe Japanese life from the inside. His correspondence was published in *Novoe Vremia* under the rubric "Foreign News: Letters from Japan." Some of his observations were insightful. He wrote, for example, "the Japanese live a very simple life style and are satisfied with a minimum of things. They seem to be quite happy about this... However, apart from this patriarchic life style, there is another aspect of the Japanese soul, too: this is their aspiration for a world-wide role, for rule and hegemony over the East. ...Though there are many divisions into classes in Japan, in their spiritual life all the Japanese are the same. This is where the might of this nation comes from."[60] In another letter, observing the well coordinated work of young fishermen, he remarked, "From their early years of life the Japanese know well their civic

56 "Beseda s Baronom Goto," *Novoe Vremia*, May 24 (11), 1908, p. 2.

57 "Novye simptomy," *Novoe Vremia*, August 8 (July 26), 1908, p. 2.

58 "Russko-iaponskie otnosheniia," *Novoe Vremia*, August 10 (July 28), 1908, p. 2.

59 RNB, OR, f. 590, op. 117, l. 279.

60 Kiriv-ko [Vassilii Krivenko], "Vneshnie izvestiia. Pis'ma iz Iaponii. Nagasaki," *Novoe Vremia*, July 10 (June 27), 1908, p. 2.

responsibilities. Even children are real citizens. Here school plays an important role."[61] V. Krivenko mentioned that he wanted to present Japan without "hostile prejudices" and to write about its "positive features as much as possible." In particular, he emphasized "the spirit of democracy," "conscious behavior of citizens," "Spartan-like abstinence," "respect for national ideals," "politeness and tolerance." Although it is arguable whether the Japan of the time was a democratic country, this enumeration is representative of values that were associated with Japan according to a Russian observer.

Mariia Goriachkovskaia came to Japan as a correspondent of *Novoe Vremia* and *Russkoe Slovo* in the autumn of 1908. She was a writer and a journalist of some repute, but did not know the Japanese language, so her articles covered a limited range of topics. As a Russian, she felt deep humiliation because of the loss of the war, and all her publications reflected this distress. For example, on the occasion of attending the welcome ceremony of the American fleet in Yokohama, she noticed how quickly the confrontation and hatred between Japan and the US changed into mutual affection.[62] She contrasted the flamboyance and gaiety of this ceremony to the disgrace and dishonor of Russians in Japan. In this particular case the cause was simple: in the Japanese flotilla she noticed former Russian military ships captured during the war.[63]

Goriachkovskaia also devoted two long articles to the description of Archbishop Nikolai's life and work in Japan. Though she emphasized that Nikolai was highly respected by all the people around him, the journalist presented this as an exceptional case; other Russians were treated differently. Thus, she wrote that Russian boys sent to study in Japanese schools were bullied and ill-treated by their teachers and schoolmates. Goriachkovskaia concluded that the Japanese did not want Russians to become fluent in Japanese for political or intelligence reasons, and contrasted the Japanese behavior with the generosity of Archbishop Nikolai, who taught the Russian language in Japan completely free of charge and to everyone who wanted to learn.[64] On the whole, articles written by this journalist produced the impression that political rapprochement between the countries was not yet visible in matters of everyday life.

At the same time, a keen interest in Japanese political and social life appeared in Russia, which was reflected in a number of articles published in *Novoe Vremia* and *Rossiia* in 1908–10. Some of them were signed with the pen-name "Japonicus." It is not yet clear who is hidden behind this pen-name. The

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61 V. Krivenko, "Vneshnie izvestiia. Pis'ma iz Iaponii. V derevenskoi glushi," *Novoe Vremia,* August 18 (5), 1908, p. 2.

62 By "confrontation" she meant here the anti-Japanese movement on the western coast of America mentioned above.

63 M. Goriachkovskaia, "Pribytie amerikanskoi eskadry v iaponskie vody," *Novoe Vremia*, November 10 (October 28), 1908, p. 2.

64 Mariia Goriachkovskaia, "Pravoslavnaia russkaia missiia v Tokio," *Novoe Vremia*, December 17 (4), 1908, pp. 2–3.

Russian identity of the author, usually quite obvious in other correspondence, is not apparent in this case. It is possible that "Japonicus" was an umbrella for the joint effort of *Novoe Vremia*'s editorial board and the Press Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose task it was to translate articles from Western languages, sometimes adding comments.

The article titled "The Manifesto of the Mikado" was written on the occasion of the promulgation of the Imperial Proclamation in October 1908, an event the author qualified as an extraordinary one. The article contained explanations on the position of the Emperor in the Japanese system of power, emphasizing his enormous symbolic role. The Imperial Proclamation of 1908 called people to abstain from luxury, to work in harmony with each other, and to abide by the law. Contemporary scholars regard it as an act aimed against the spread of liberalism, individualism, and socialism, but "Japonicus" commented that the Imperial Proclamation demonstrated to "the whole world and the neighboring countries in particular" the peaceful intentions of Japan and the priority of domestic politics over the policy of overseas expansion.[65] Such a conclusion could have a specific meaning for the Russian audience, which was previously accustomed to viewing Japan as a militant country. Also, though in fact they were quite different, the association between "the Mikado Manifesto" and the October Manifesto of 1905 proclaimed by the Russian Tsar could easily come to mind of the Russian readers.

Another article published under the same pen-name ridiculed Japanese Diet members by characterizing them as "mere cogs in a machine." "Lawyers without practices, physicians without patients, peasants without land and a mass of semi-intelligentsia eager to become members of the Diet in order to receive good money," wrote the author. A depiction of a scene from the Japanese Diet followed:

> A picture worthy of Caran d'Ache's pen.[66] Jostling and hustling are unimaginable. Cylinders are falling down, neck-ties are coming loose, and collars are getting unbuttoned. Shirts stick out from under the poorly sewed tail-coats. Everyone pushes each other, stretching hands toward the pay-box.[67]

The article presented Japanese lawmakers in such an unflattering manner that an involuntary comparison with the biting satire on the Russian Duma by the poet Sasha Chernyi or the journalist Vlas Doroshevich could come into the mind of Russian readers.[68] Many Russians might have been relieved to know about deficiencies in the work of the Japanese parliament.

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65 Japonicus, "Manifest Mikado," *Novoe Vremia*, November 9 (October 27), p. 2.

66 Caran d'Ache was a famous French cartoonist of the time.

67 "Iaponskie deputaty i novye veianiia," *Novoe Vremia*, February 12 (January 30), 1909, p. 2.

68 Sasha Chernyi, *Satira* (S. Peterburg: Izdanie M. G. Kornfel'da, 1910). Vlas Doroshevich was one of the most popular Russian journalists working for many daily newspapers; from 1902 to 1918 he was the editor of *Russkoe Slovo*.

The dissolution of the Japanese Socialist Party in February 1909, became the reason for publishing the article "Socialism in Japan."[69] At first, "Japonicus" questioned whether there were sufficient grounds for the emergence of socialism in a country like Japan, where the idea of "being Japanese" had priority over the idea of "being an individual" and where the authority of the emperor mattered more than individual freedom. To this end he jocularly answered, "because the Japanese were used to borrowing Western ideas in general, socialism was accepted there too." Then a more serious explanation followed: "The development of industry causes the increase of contradictions between 'capital' and 'labor,' so that lower-class workers exhibit interest in economic socialism." Several examples of the labor movement in Japan, such as strikes for the decrease of streetcar prices, the labor disputes of Ashio miners,[70] and the Red Flag incident,[71] were provided. This article was one of the first in Russia to touch on the problem of labor and socialist movements in Japan. Only three years had passed since the 1905 Russian Revolution; the socialist and labor movement continued to be an important issue of Russian life. There is no wonder that the topic of socialism in Japan seemed important enough to be raised by the editorial board of *Novoe Vremia*.

A newspaper correspondent in Shanghai, K. Tin (V. Brei), who visited Japan from time to time, covered another aspect of "capital" and "labor" relations, namely measures undertaken by business and government to prevent the "dangerous growth of the labor movement." Its simple suppression was one obvious way, but more interesting was the obligatory insurance system introduced in 1907 at all state-owned railways and plants. Tin explained that workers contributed three percent of their salary, while the government added two percent from the whole sum of their salary payments. The insurance could be used to cover medical treatment in case of injury or for family assistance in case of death of the bread-winner or his retirement. The lump sum amounted to 1000 rubles after 25 years of work at one place – something unimaginable for the Russia of the time. K. Tin also described how private industrialists opened elementary and training schools for children of workers or established funds for improving the conditions of workers' lives, such as hygiene, and even organizing summer resorts. These measures did not prevent labor strikes, but, as the author noted, Japanese workers were often successful in getting an increase

69 Japonicus, "Sotsialism v Iaponii," *Novoe Vremia*, April 11 (March 29), 1909, p. 2.

70 In February 1907 workers at the Ashio copper mine, dissatisfied with the difficult working conditions, joined together for three days of rioting against the Furukawa Company. The riot was suppressed by police.

71 The Red Flag incident refers to a political rally that took place in Tokyo on June 22, 1908. The release from prison of political activist and anarchist Yamaguchi Koken was met by a crowd waving red flags carrying anarchist communist slogans and singing communist songs. The police arrested ten prominent activists, including Osugi Sakae, Yamakawa Hitoshi and Arahata Kanson.

in their salary.[72] There is no doubt that such information was worth noting to both factory owners and workers of Russia.

The articles described above, though they provided interesting and useful information about Japan, did not aim to give any systematic or comprehensive explanation of contemporary Japanese society. The first attempt at such an explanation was undertaken by Dmitrii Pozdneev. In 1909 and 1910 he published in the newspaper *Rossiia* a series of sixteen articles on Japan under the pen-name A. Novyi. His articles dealt with a broad range of topics such as the Japanese political system and national character, finances and entrepreneurship, foreign policy and Russian-Japanese relations, new religions and even the development of aviation. Pozdneev held the opinion that ignorance about Japan had been one of the causes of Russia's defeat in the recent war. He also pointed to the difficulty of properly understanding Japan and to the confusion caused by superficial accounts of tourists and in popular literature.[73]

Pozdneev defined Japan as a country with a high level of civilization and culture. He saw as the main factors of Japan's successful development the homogeneity and national solidarity of this society and regarded them as a constituting force able to inspire the nation to do great deeds and make it strong at particular historical moments.[74] Pozdneev also emphasized the conscious efforts of the government aimed at the construction of nationalism. He was sure that these national traits helped Japan to win the war. Like many other Russian authors of the time, Pozdneev gave examples of the Japanese sense of responsibility, diligence, and discipline, and urged his countrymen to learn from the Japanese.[75]

In regard to Russo-Japanese relations, Pozdneev was convinced that the Japanese mistrust and hatred toward Russia dated back to the attacks on northern Japan made by Russian officers Nikolai Khvostov and Gavriil Davydov in 1806–07. From his viewpoint, aspirations to avenge those incidents were not the least significant reason for the recent war. However, as an attentive observer of Japanese society and a thoughtful reader of the Japanese press, Pozdneev concluded that after the 1907 Convention Japanese feelings towards Russia changed for the better and predicted that this positive attitude would continue as long as Russia did not infringe upon Japanese interests.

In December 1909, mainly under the initiative of Priamur Governor-General Pavel Unterberger, some Russian newspapers alleged that Japan was about to start a new war with Russia. Pozdneev conducted a review of eleven main Japanese newspapers and demonstrated that this country aimed not at war,

72 K. Tin, "Iaponiia i ee rabochii vopros," *Novoe Vremia*, April 18 (5), 1910, p. 2.

73 A. Novyi, "Iaponiia i Rossiia (Pis'ma iz Tokio)," *Rossiia*, April 27 (14), 1909, p. 3.

74 A. Novyi, "Iaponiia i Rossiia (Pi'sma iz Tokio)," *Rossiia*, May 7 (April 24), 1909, p. 3.

75 For a more detailed analysis of D. Pozdneev articles published in *Rossiia* see: Yulia Mikhailova, "'Poniat' Iaponiiu ochen' slozhno.' Dmitrii Pozdneev o Iaponii i russko-iaponskikh otnosheniiakh," *Izvestiia Vostochnogo Instituta DVGU* 16 (2010), pp. 26–41.

but at developing economic cooperation with Russia. He concluded his observations in the following way: "The Japanese are intoxicated with their military victory. Their aspirations for domination in the Pacific region have no limits. However, at this particular moment a new war will not start."[76] His prognosis appeared to be correct.

Dmitrii Pozdneev's articles in *Rossiia* were noticed by Russian Prime Minister Petr Stolypin, who asked him to write an overview about representations of Japan in foreign newspapers. His one hundred and fifty page essay was published in a collection entitled *Vostochnoe obozrenie* [*Eastern Review*].[77] Pozdneev supplemented facts and ideas published in his previous articles with many new materials demonstrating how Western countries viewed Japanese society and Japan's foreign policy. He paid particular attention to the Japanese government's policy aiming at the formation of Japan's image in the foreign press and identified the following channels of influence: financial assistance to English-language newspapers published in Japan, bribery of journalists, and strict censorship over the information provided to Western reporters. In this sense, D. Pozdneev may be called the first Russian scholar who recognized the importance of studying images in international relations. He also laid the foundation for the study of contemporary Japanese society and politics and the history of Russian-Japanese relations.

Conclusion

After the Russo-Japanese War relations with Japan continued to figure prominently in Russia's foreign policy, while Japan was perceived as a threat to Russia's interests on its Pacific coast. In order to normalize relations between the countries, negotiations were opened in the Russian capital in 1906. Alarmed by the possibility of secret deals, metropolitan newspapers demanded that the negotiations be made known to the public, and the government yielded to these demands. This resulted in a press debate about the content of a future agreement with Japan. The conservative and nationalistic newspaper *Novoe Vremia* refused to admit the new power balance structure that appeared in the Far East as the result of Japan's victory in war. It accused Japan of aggressiveness and condemned it from the position of Russian nationalism. However, the liberal *Rech'* took a more balanced viewpoint, acknowledging Japan's increased role in the region.

The press debate lifted the veil of secrecy from Russian foreign policy, and afforded the Russian public an opportunity to discover those features of Russia's adversary of which it was not previously aware. Consequently, an in-

76 A. Novyi, "Iaponskaia pechat' o russkoi trevoge (Pis'mo iz Tokio)," *Rossiia,* February 4 (January 22), 1910, pp. 3–4.

77 [D. M. Pozdneev], "Iaponiia," *Dal'nevostochnoe obozrenie,* Issue 1, compiled by V. Golmstrem (St. Petersburg, Tipografiia MVD, 1910), pp. 97–250.

terest in learning more about the "real" Japan and understanding the reasons behind its success and strength appeared among many Russians. To meet these needs, correspondents were dispatched to Japan and numerous articles written on the basis of first-hand observations were published in the newspapers. Russians were particularly impressed by the strong sense of national solidarity and unity of the Japanese, as well as by their discipline, attentiveness to civic duties, and industriousness in work, i.e. by those features Russians themselves lacked. The more Russians learned about Japan and its people, the more the reasons for Japan's victory in war became clear. At the same time, many newspapers pointed to those characteristics and developments of Japanese society that were all too familiar to Russians. It appeared that in each country the parliament was weaker than the bureaucracy, while the autocracies had common features and the socialist and labor movements posed challenges to both societies. In this way Japan began to lose its "exotic" and "hostile" features and came to be viewed as an "ordinary" or "normal" country, in other words, a partner Russia was ready to deal with. Above all, these changes in perceptions and attitudes became possible in the atmosphere of diplomatic rapprochement and the broadening of the public space through the efforts of newspapers and journalists.