

**An Historical Account to the process of changing Türk-Tatar  
Diaspora Consciousness in North East Asia  
between 1898 and the 1950s**  
**(1898年から1950年代における  
北東アジアのテュルク・タタール・ディアスポラの意識変容過程についての  
歴史的な考察)**

Abstract  
of Ph.D. thesis in Sociology  
Usmanova Larisa R.  
(Academic supervisors: Pr.Toshihiko Kishi, Pr.Osamu Inoue)

The University of Shimane (Japan)  
The Institution for North East Asia  
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**The importance of the research.** From the end of the Cold War, alongside the Globalization process, the Migration theory as well as Community and Diaspora Studies have been rapidly developing. However, the theoretical frameworks of these works are still indeterminate and require further historical and sociological research. In addition to the significance of the historical study of the Türk-Tatar emigration into North East Asia, and its relations with the host countries for Russian-Japanese relations, the sociological research of the transformation of its identity and consciousness would prove useful in our understanding of the current changes in world social structures that are characterized now by multinational diversity and by intensive migration processes. Moreover, the research into the Türk-Tatar communities, as a minority with a national Islamic religious identity, would give a historical example of how to resolve the problems surrounding the “clash of civilizations” and creating a tolerant society, that have become especially relevant following the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. Since the end of the Cold War, a study of the Russian migration movement into the North East Asian region has been developing steadily, thanks to the liberation of ideological approaches and access to new materials. However, researchers have not paid attention to the national structure of “the regional Russian Diaspora”, to a division based on the national-ethnic features.

**The basic purposes of the research:** 1) to show the historical transformation of the transnational consciousness of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora in North East Asia between 1898 and the 1950s divided into five periods that would be specified in each Türk-Tatar community; 2) to analyze the ideologies of the three main leaders, and the influence of their ideologies on changes in the Türk-Tatar Diaspora’s behavior and consciousness; 3) to analyze the organizational structure and institutions of the Diaspora, and its relations with the homeland and the Russian Emigration, as well as with the host countries, particularly, involving Japanese Islamic policy; 4) to offer the *Milli Bairaq* newspaper as a main source for Türk-Tatar Diaspora research; 5) to present unknown historical facts, names and figures based on analysis; 6) to compile a catalog of the articles of the newspaper, and a list of immigrants’ names.

**The research methods:** Two main approaches, historical and sociological, are used in the research. For ease, the historical research of Türk-Tatar Diasporic development was divided into five periods, according to the history of the Russian Diaspora development. To explain the adaptability of the Diaspora and its acceptance by the host country we used the cultural concept of Constructivism theories in the International Politics Study that treats the Diaspora and Diasporic communities as transnational actors in International Relations. We used the following research techniques: questionnaire

(personal-life-history interviews of living immigrants); document study: analysis of *primary documents* (organizational records, memoirs); analysis of the print mass media.

**The First Chapter “The theoretical approaches to researching the Türk-Tatar Diaspora in North East Asia”** presents analysis of the Türk-Tatar emigration’s bibliography, the historical and sociological substantiation for using the term “Türk-Tatar Diaspora, or Türk-Tatar Emigration” and of the theoretical basis. The primary object of and sources for the research is the newspaper of the Türk-Tatar emigrants in North East Asia, *Milli Bairağ*. As additional materials, we use the Tatar émigré periodicals: the magazines *Yeraq Şärerq*, *Yaqa Yapon Mənbiri*, *Milli Yul-Yaqa Milli Yul*. Other additional sources include: 1) the reports kept in the archives of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Shanghai Municipal Police and the Russian Federal Security Service, 2) the materials of the State Archive of the Republic of Tatarstan, and especially, the private archive of Gayaz Ishaki, 3) Russian periodicals containing information relating to Türk-Tatar immigrants, 4) interviews, private documents and photographs of immigrants.

We understand “Diaspora” as **a culturally outstanding group, members of which share common ideas about homeland, characterised by the collective ties, group solidarity and a demonstrative attitude to the homeland that has a common base but not a demographic or ethnical phenomenon.** The Constructivism concept of International Politics, (the “cultural theory” of Wendt), on which we based construction of the research hypothesis, let us explain not only the change in diplomatic relations between the home and host countries, but also the actions of the host country to reconstruct the international system in order to change the Diaspora status-quo. According to this theory, Diaspora and the host country construct **a collective (common) identity**, which makes its impact on the latter’s foreign and internal politics and encourages it to reform the system of international relations. Construction of a common identity follows an evolutionary process of social communications between representatives of the host country and the Diaspora. Since the end of the nineteenth century, when Russian national policy had become more oppressive towards the Türk-Tatar Muslim nations inside the Empire, (in other words, to destroy the common identity with the homeland), immigrating Türk-Tatar intellectuals started to look to an outside power for support. So, during the pre-revolutionary period the discussions of Gabdurashid Ibragim with Japanese intellectuals on modernization, helped to create a collective identity on a **“common fate”** base – an aspiration to unite the East (Asia) against the colonial policy of the West. In the middle of the 1920s, international

accommodationism, as part of Japanese ideology was displaced by regionalism and culminated in the Declaration of the New Order in East Asia in 1938, Türk-Tatars offered, besides the Islamic argument of a “common fate”, the “Altaic brotherhood” argument for constructing the regional identity: M.G.Kurbangali’s argument based on constructivism, the **“homogeneity”** factor which met Japanese expectations. After establishing Manchu quo in 1932, Japan made an appeal for support of its foreign policy to Muslims all over the world, by promoting an image of “Muslim Japan”. By the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s, all previous transnational activities of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora and Japanese intellectuals, politicians and special agents played a part in the Japanese war strategy. The Japanese government utilized the state “Islamic policy”, (*kaikyo seisaku*), to mobilize the Muslims of East Asia and the Near East to change the whole system of international relations. In the 1930s, a leader of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora Gayaz Ishaki in the West was aiming to create the nation-state using Islamic and Anticommunist bases of collective identity with Japan in the coming system of international relations. But at the outbreak of WWII, he refused to collaborate because he was disappointed in the policy methods. It was clear that the collective identity and common interests were not enough to gain the desired results, and the lack of mutually acceptable foreign policy practices of both the host country and the homeland caused rejection of the Diaspora collaborationism and re-emigration.

Our choice to apply the term **“Türk-Tatar Diaspora”** is based on the historical facts. The first is the use of the Tatar language as a language of communication inside communities, as well as the language of the immigrants’ printed material. The second argument was based on the historical resolution of the National Assembly of the All-Russia Muslim Nations (*Millet Mejlise*) that took place in November 1917 in Ufa at which it was decided to re-name all the Turkic population in the Volga-Ural (*Idel-Ural*) region as “Türk-Tatars”. The third argument was an acceptance of this name by the host country of the given historical periods. We argue that “Türk-Tatar Diaspora” is the most preferable definition compared to the others available. This is a community of immigrants from Russia which shared a collective identity with the following characteristics: 1) acceptance of the Tatar language (or one of the Türk-Tatar group languages) as the native one, 2) personal identification with the labels “Russian Muslims”, “Russian Turks” and later “Türk-Tatars of Idel-Ural”, 3) acceptance of Islam as the crucial religious component of identity, 4) sharing the myth about the history of the Türk-Tatar nation’s conception and development in Eurasia.

In contrast to Turkish researchers who divide the migration into periods correlating to Turkish and Japanese history, we correlate it with a system of historical periods of

the Russian migration into Harbin. It is possible to divide the Türk-Tatar presence in North-East Asia **into five historical periods** and show how their identity shifts provoked the community evolution from a Muslim mahallyah into a national community with a distinct political goal, the latter being recovery of national statehood, together with the retention of the Islamic origins of spiritual life.

Chapter 2 **“The Türk-Tatar Diaspora leaders: their views and differences”** is an overview of the ideologies of the Diaspora leaders. The ideological goal of the three Türk-Tatar Muslim leaders was found to be the same by Japanese at that time, and called for the “establishment of the nation-state”. However, the differences in the methods to achieve this were said to be so extreme, that the three men were not able to come to any kind of consensus between themselves. All leaders were involved in the Japanese Islamic policy that was, partly, based on the Islamist activities of G.Ibragim in Southern Asia, the national activity of G.Ishaki’s movement in Manchuria, and M.-G.Kirbangali’s idea of the establishment of a second Manchu-quo in Turkistan.

Chapter 3 **“The Organizational Structure of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora in North East Asia and Relations with the Host Country”** provides historical details and a presentation of the organizational structure of the Diaspora (three Congresses and activity of the Central Board of the Idel-Ural Türk-Tatars in the Far East) and its periodicals (the newspaper *Milli Bairağ*), as well as its relations with the Russian Diaspora and host countries (involvement in Japanese Islamic policy). The analyses and a detailed history of the newspaper “Milli Bairağ” are given as part of the Chapter.

In the Fourth Chapter **“The Changing Diasporic Identity between 1898 and the 1950s: Construction of the Collective Identity with the Host Country”**, the historical and sociological analysis of the changes in the Diaspora’s identity in each historical period is given.

During **the first period (1898-1917)** Turkic nations in Russia identified themselves as “Russian Muslims” in searching for a common identity with the homeland state. **The second period (1923-1933)** is characterized by a massive flow of Turk immigrants from Russia into Europe and East Asia and by their attempts to construct the common identity with the host countries on an anticommunist and anti-Soviet basis. The concept of “Altaic brotherhood” presented to Japan by immigrant Kurbangali proposed a construction of collective identity with the Diaspora in 1920s based on the constructivist factor of “homogeneity” and to fit with the formation of a Japanese

regional identity. During **the third period (1933-1939)**, the national identity of the Türk-Tatar emigrants in Northeast Asia was becoming stronger: a leader G.Ishaki recognized by almost all immigrants had appeared, as well as the idea to return to the homeland and to revive the independent nation-state, "Idel-Ural". As a consequence, the national part of "the Cultural Committees of the Idel-Ural Türk-Tatars" which submitted to the Central Committee (Merkez) was allocated according to the *mahallyah*. The Diaspora managed to achieve wide recognition from the Japanese authorities. Tatar leaders tried to use the temporary situation in international affairs to attain their national political goals, and to create the nation-state in the frame of a new world system in the event of the defeat of the Soviet Union in a war with Germany and Japan. During **the fourth period (1939-1945)**, after the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, the Türk-Tatar leader G.Ishaki became disappointed in German national policy methods, and refused to collaborate with them. However, the Diaspora could not refuse to cooperate with Japan because of their relations based on the common identity. But the Diaspora, during this period, became passive. After the end of the war, the Diaspora entered **the fifth period**. The leaders were arrested by the Soviets. The main bulk of the immigrants was able to move to Turkey and was granted citizenship in 1953. Others went on to Australia and the USA where they established the modern Tatar Diasporas.

Chapter 5 "**The Türk-Tatar Communities in the North East Asia: Historical and Sociological Features**" comprises the historical-sociological novels of each Türk-Tatar community, with details, names, pictures and statistics. In the part "**The difference between the Türk-Tatar Diaspora and other communities in the region**" we try to describe the features of the Diaspora comparing it with other Diasporas in the region. Last part of the Chapter contents a description of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora features and makes "the difference between the Türk-Tatar Diaspora and other Diaspora communities in the region".

In **the appendix**, there are four lists: a catalog of newspaper articles, names of immigrants (1195 names), list of Türk-Tatar communities and list of pictures (237 photopictures), which also became the primary sources for the research. The thesis ends with a **conclusion** illustrating its originality, a glossary and a bibliography.

It is possible to consider the thesis as a contribution to the study of Russian Turk Nationalism. The Türk-Tatar Diaspora in North East Asia was a step in the development of the Russian Turks Nationalism, but not the Diaspora Nationalism of the Turks of Turkey. The Türk-Tatar Diaspora in North East Asia passed through five

historical steps. From the sociological point of view, the dynamics of Türk-Tatar Diaspora development in North East Asia do not meet the general schema: from labor migration to immigrant community and, then, to regional consolidation above countries. The specific of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora was a Muslim-type community that was a form of the self-organization used by the Russian Muslims for 400 years after the loss of their independence. Thanks to this same style of community, Russian Muslim immigrants were able to adapt faster abroad than Russians who had to create a new form of the immigrant existence. Moreover, the Muslim community of Türk-Tatar immigrants was able to transform into a national community and not integrate with the Asian nations.

The analysis of the ideologies of the three main leaders, and the influence of their ideologies on changes in the Türk-Tatar Diaspora's behavior and consciousness gives rise to an important conclusion that the leaders played a significant role in establishing strong ties with the host country: Ibragim created a positive image for the acceptance of the Russian Muslims; Kurbangali added the kinship argument; Ishaki centralized the Diaspora to better utilize it for Japanese policy goals.

The detailed analysis of the available facts on organizational structure and institutions of the Diaspora, and its relations with the homeland and the Russian Emigration, as well as with the host countries, particularly involving Japanese Islamic policy, shows that 1) Diaspora had a network type of its structure, especially in third national step of its historical development; 2) Diaspora had a strong intention of self-determination and, hence, sometimes demonstrated the same anti-Russian position in attitude to those who lived in homeland as well as in the Diaspora; 3) Diaspora demonstrated its friendliness to Japanese during almost all periods of its presence in the region and treated Turkey as a "second homeland".

There are two sides (internal and external) of the Türk-Tatar Diaspora's significance: the Russian Turk Nationalism itself and the host countries. On the one hand, the Diaspora was able to transform its internal structure and developed a form of independent exterritorial nation (it had a financial base and national taxation; a national school system, a publishing house and newspaper; a religious system including mosques and imams; a national ideology and practical goals to gain its nation-state; it had no military force but, due to the significant number of former White Army personnel, would certainly have had the capability). We propose that the Türk-Tatars, like the Jews, were able to create a "nation without territory". The external significance, in our opinion, is its influence on the regions: introducing the Turk and Islamic cultures (from promoting languages in schools to publishing periodicals) and becoming a mediator between the Japanese and Turk-Islamic cultures, supporting the penetration

of Western culture by trade of Western goods, an intellectual contribution to the Pan-Asiatic concept of the Japanese strategy, and being one of its partners in the anticolonial alliance against Russia (USSR) and Britain. We define the Türk-Tatar Diaspora as a **“victim” type of diaspora community** and believe that it only among other Diasporic communities historically and ethnically met all requirements to be treated as partners by the Japanese at that time. Being “victim”, it was still powerful enough to be an independent political actor and tried to play its own game.

### **Originality**

1. The thesis presents the historical development of the transnational consciousness and identity of the Turk-Tatar Diaspora in North East Asia between 1898 and 1950s, specifying five periods and each community, from a sociological point of view. Based on previously untapped documents, the thesis reconstructs the specification of the relations with Japan, as the host country with the Russian emigration, historical details of internal life including statistics and immigrants’ names. A list of immigrants’ names is included as a primary resource for future research.

2. The term “Türk-Tatar Diaspora” is explained from both a historical and sociological point of view.

2. An attempt is made to explain the ideology of the main leaders in their attitudes to the Diaspora.

3. The internal structure of the Diaspora and their activities are analyzed.

4. The main research source for the “Türk-Tatar” Diaspora Study, the Diaspora periodical (the newspaper *Milli Bairağ*), is catalogued for future research.