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*E-Mail: v-alpatov@ivran.ru*  
*ORCID id:0000-0003-4323-2832*

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**Japanese linguistic tradition of the XIX-XX centuries as synthesis of the national tradition and the influence of the western science**

**Vladimir M. Alpatov**

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Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences,  
bld. 1, 1 B. Kislovskiy Ln., Moscow, 125009, Russia  
*E-Mail: v-alpatov@ivran.ru*  
*ORCID id:0000-0003-4323-2832*

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**Abstract**

Unlike other non-European countries that created their own linguistic traditions, Japan managed to achieve a synthesis of the original tradition and European (including American) science after Europeanization. The independent Japanese tradition developed in the period of the “closed Japan” in XVII-XIX centuries, when the Japanese scholars started looking into the national and cultural features including language. Special techniques for studying the literary works, bringing into focus their phonetics and writing, were developed, for the first time ever grammar was researched with the verb conjugation and speech categories in the first place. Since the mid-XIX century the Europeanization of all cultural areas in Japan has been under way, relating to the language science among others. European-style grammar descriptions emerged; European methods were gradually acquired. However, many traditional ways to describe grammar survived. In the late XIX century starting with Otsuki Fumikhiko’s works a synthesis of both traditions took place. It had reached its conclusion by the 1930s, primarily in the works by Hashimoto Shinkichi, which made an important difference to the formation of the Japanese language science. This kind of synthesis was reflected in Kieda Masuiti’s grammar translated into Russian.

Studying phonetics the Japanese kept *on* as the elementary unit. The word literally means sound, but this unit is closer to a syllable than a word as the European scientists see it; and even closer to a mora of the antiquity. The combinations Consonant + Vowel are considered to be a single *on*, while the syllables with long vowels, diphthongs, end-

of-syllable nasals are considered to be two *ons*. Nevertheless, the concept of the phoneme was also borrowed. In grammar the elementary unit *go* differs in its features from the word in the European sense of word, at least in predicates. Yet, The Japanese tradition independently from the European influence developed the idea of inflexion. In the course of Europeanization already the word as the basic unit of lexicon (*go*) was separated from the basic syntactical unit (*bunsetsu*), the latter being the content word *go* in combination with the auxiliary *go*. The classification of parts of speech basically remained traditional, with some minor additions such as adverbs, pronouns etc. The syntax in Japan before Europeanization had not been formed, therefore the effects of the Western language science here was particularly significant. The conventional Japanese language science reveals itself in lexicography.

**Key words:** Japanese linguistic tradition; western linguistics; Europeanization; synthesis; Hashimoto Shinkichi

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( 2011, 70-82).  
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(Kokugogaku 1961;  
1981; 2011, 82-96).

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**Conflicts of Interest: the author has no conflict of interest to declare.**

**Vladimir M. Alpatov**, DrSc. in Philology, Professor, Lead Researcher, Institute of Linguistics RAS