

# Japan's Public Diplomacy in Practice: The case of Bulgaria

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## Abstract

Through actors such as the Public Diplomacy Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japan Foundation and other agencies, Japan exercises various public diplomacy strategies to increase its cultural presence and partnership with European countries. Despite the variety of public diplomacy initiatives, an audit conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) indicated “scarceness of Japanese soft power in Europe” (Duchâtel, 2015).

The aim of this study is to examine Japan's public diplomacy initiatives for cultural promotion in Bulgaria and observe to what extent it has been successful in achieving stable cultural presence.

My previous study on the Bulgarian - Japanese intercultural relations as evidence of the efficiency of Nye's theory of soft power for strengthening the international partnership included certain Japanese public diplomacy initiatives. This article observes the history of Japanese public diplomacy in general and focuses not only on the Japanese public diplomacy in Bulgaria, but also on the basis of two surveys on the image of Japan in Bulgaria, it evaluates the perceptions of Japanese culture in the country. It analyses whether Japan has achieved a high soft power presence in Bulgaria and if enhanced public diplomacy strategies should be applied. The article also provides certain recommendations for Japan's further public diplomacy initiatives.

Keywords: Japanese public diplomacy, soft power, cultural promotion, cultural perception

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## **1. Introduction**

The establishment and projection of a positive and desired national image of a country requires a lot of effort and time. Especially for distant countries, having much differences in their political and historical backgrounds, decades or even centuries might be necessary to understand and appreciate each other's cultures. In addition, "although generations may invest in a shared vision for the future, there is never any guarantee for successful cultural exchange" (Petkova, 2012, p. 1)<sup>1)</sup>. It cannot be predicted how a particular exchange experience will influence an individual. However, as Scott-Smith (2009, p. 52)<sup>2)</sup> emphasizes, exchange "cannot be easily fine-tuned into a political instrument, and if this is attempted, it is highly likely that the resulting limitations and sense of propaganda that this will project will rebound and undermine the overall impact". Although the use-value of the exchange for both organizer and participant might be different, the outcomes might be positive, despite the fact that they are unpredictable.

In the international society, a key instrument for projecting a positive national image is public diplomacy. It is an essential tool for wielding soft power which receives a lot of attention in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Public diplomacy is exercised for building long-term relationships among states and mutual trust that establish an enabling environment for government policies. It is practiced by mixed coalitions of governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental actors.

In the information age, international society and the nature of power have changed and the role of soft power or public diplomacy has been growing. Communication strategies have become more significant and "outcomes are shaped not merely by whose army wins but also by whose story wins" (Nye, 2011, p.19)<sup>3)</sup>. Public diplomacy has become an important instrument for increasing a country's cultural presence and establishing a basis for prosperous and peaceful relations between states.

Through actors such as the Public Diplomacy Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japan Foundation and other agencies, Japan exercises various public diplomacy strategies to increase its cultural presence and partnership with Europe. Despite the variety of public diplomacy initiatives, the perception is that Japan's presence in Europe has not yet reached its full potential. An audit conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) indicated "scarceness of Japanese soft power in Europe" (Duchâtel, 2015)<sup>4)</sup>. The audit targeted government officials and experts of Japan in academia, media and think-tanks and aimed to study the image of Japan as a partner in nine European

countries- Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the UK. Rethinking and enhancing Japan's public diplomacy strategies is essential for achieving a higher cultural presence in Europe. In addition, in order to provide a more profound analysis and recommendations for Japan's further public diplomacy initiatives on the continent, it is necessary to compare and examine Japan's soft power also in East European countries.

The aim of this study is to examine Japan's public diplomacy initiatives for cultural promotion in Eastern Europe through the case of Bulgaria. The article also investigates how Japanese culture is perceived in Bulgaria and what further public diplomacy actions for increasing Japan's cultural presence in the country should be undertaken.

Starting with an introduction, the article is divided into five sections. To effectively construct and present its arguments, the paper begins with a general and brief overview of the basic concepts. It provides definitions for the notion of public diplomacy, its aspects, and differences from traditional diplomacy. Particular subsets and tools of public diplomacy (cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange) are also emphasized. The essay continues with a focus on the history of Japanese public diplomacy from the 1860s to present and its significance. The next section investigates Japan's soft power in Eastern Europe through the case of Japan's public diplomacy in Bulgaria. Starting from 1906, Japan's initial steps and the evolution of its cultural promotion in the country are observed. On the basis of two surveys, conducted so far on the image of Japan in Bulgaria by Petkova (2012), perceptions of Japanese culture in Bulgaria are also evaluated. Finally, the paper concludes with an analysis on whether Japan has achieved a stable cultural presence in Bulgaria and if enhanced public diplomacy strategies should be exercised.

The research methods applied in this study are both qualitative and quantitative. As part of the qualitative ones, to observe the concept of public diplomacy and its forms-cultural diplomacy and exchange, as well as the history of Japan's public diplomacy and its actors, various academic sources such as books, scholarly articles, journals, and media publications were reviewed. Ms. Vera Vutova-Stefanova, former Bulgarian diplomat in Japan and Japanese language translator was also interviewed. The results of two surveys by Petkova (2012), on the Japanese culture perception in Bulgaria, were also emphasized.

## **2. The Concept of “Public Diplomacy”**

### **2.1 Definitions**

In the past, mostly popular among the governments was the classical diplomacy, also called “cabinet diplomacy”, which included the practice of sending messages between rulers, usually in confidential communications. However, apart from this direct type of communication, governments found an indirect one, which gave them the opportunity to communicate with the publics of other states in an effort to influence other governments. This indirect form of diplomacy was recognized as public diplomacy (Nye, 2011, pp.101-102).

The term “public diplomacy” was coined for the first time in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and founder of the Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy. One of the early brochures of the Murrow Center published a summary of Gullion's definition of the concept of public diplomacy sta-

ting that:

“Public diplomacy... deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications” (Cull, 2006, p.1)<sup>5)</sup>.

Another definition of public diplomacy, and probably the most succinct one, is provided by Paul Sharp, who considers it as “the process by which direct relations with people in a country are pursued to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented” (Melissen, 2005, p. 8)<sup>6)</sup>. Here, the focus is on the ordinary people, and the feedback from the public is considered essential for determining further steps for the achievement of desired outcomes.

According to the USC Center on Public Diplomacy (n.d.)<sup>7)</sup>, public diplomacy can be considered as “the public, interactive dimension of diplomacy which is not only global in nature, but also involves a multitude of actors and networks” and it is “a key mechanism through which nations foster mutual trust and productive relationships and has become crucial to building a secure global environment”. In other words, a wide range of actors and networks are involved in the public diplomacy and their role for the establishment of prosperous and peaceful relationships between states is of utmost importance.

As it is demonstrated above, there are various descriptions of public diplomacy provided by practitioners, academics, research institutes, or governments and not a single agreed-upon definition. While the rich palette of definitions provides the opportunity to examine public diplomacy from various perspectives, it might also lead to some difficulties in fully understanding the concept. For example, many skeptics consider the term “public diplomacy” as a synonym for propaganda. As Welch (Melissen, 2005, p. 20) describes it, propaganda is “the deliberate attempts to influence the opinions of an audience through the transmission of ideas and values for the specific purpose, consciously designed to serve the interests of the propagandists and their political masters, either directly or indirectly”. Such definitions can lead to certain confusion or difficulties in finding the difference between public diplomacy and propaganda. However, it is essential to distinguish between the two concepts. They differ in terms of the pattern of communication. According to Melissen (2005, p.22), “public diplomacy is similar to propaganda in that it tries to persuade people what to think, but it is fundamentally different from it in the sense that public diplomacy also listens to what people have to say”. In addition, as McCellan (2004)<sup>8)</sup> points out, when propaganda is applied “a particular message is “injected” into the target country over and over”, while public diplomacy is based on “the active, planned use of cultural, educational and informational programming to effect a desired result that is directly related to a government’s foreign policy objectives”.

## 2.2 Traditional Diplomacy vs. Public Diplomacy

The basic mechanism for implementing a country’s foreign politics is diplomacy. The

traditional idea for diplomatic service has been long associated with notions such as “elitism, strict confidentiality, expertise, lofty professionalism and, last but not least, meticulous diplomatic protocol involving representative functions” (Simova & Katrandjiev, 2014, p.134)<sup>9</sup>. As a main reason for this type of understanding could be considered the diplomatic communication which “had been the result of relations established between career diplomats during their stay in embassies and foreign offices, as well as at official events organized by the diplomatic corps” (Simova & Katrandjiev, 2014, p.134).

The vast recent changes in the international society and the growing influence of the globalization require a new approach to understanding diplomacy as well as modifications in the methods of communication and the actors involved in it. The adaptation of traditional diplomacy to the changes and dynamic processes happening all around the world is gradually progressing. In addition, necessary for this adaptation are various resources, time, commitment as well as political leaders' mutual confidence. As Genov (2014, p.2)<sup>10</sup> points out, the new understanding of diplomacy considers the notion as a “business, which does not involve only foreign ministries, their diplomats, embassies and consulates”. Genov (2014, p.2) also emphasizes that “traditional diplomacy has adapted to the changes in the society such as the higher level of democratization, empowerment of the society and greater attention to morality and values. In this way diplomacy now focuses on the public expectations and preferences, human rights, cultural differences, international law, transparency and accountability”. This makes diplomacy a suitable and preferred tool in the international relations between state and non-state actors. The opening of the diplomatic offices to “the needs of civil society and turning these offices into a function of social and political relations in the broadest sense of the world” leads to a new public attitude towards the diplomatic profession and practice (Simova & Katrandjiev, 2014, p.134). In addition, a growing number of diplomats and political leaders consider public diplomacy as means for enhancing the positive image of their state as well as for attracting the foreign audiences' attitude to their country's values.

It is essential to distinguish the public diplomacy from the traditional one. There have been various definitions by scholars who emphasize the difference between these two diplomacy types. For instance, as Edward Murrow mentioned in his speech in 1963 (Leonard et al., 2002, p.1)<sup>11</sup>, “public diplomacy differs from traditional diplomacy not only with governments but primarily with non-governmental individuals and organizations”. According to Cull (2009, p.12)<sup>12</sup> traditional diplomacy is “international actor's attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with another international actor”, while public diplomacy is “an international actor's attempts to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public”. Figure 1 highlights some of the differences between the public and traditional diplomacy.

**Figure 1: Public Diplomacy vs. Traditional Diplomacy**

Public Diplomacy	VS	Traditional Diplomacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•unofficial</li> <li>•active public</li> <li>•mutual understanding</li> <li>•dialogic, exchange</li> <li>•two-way symmetric</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•official</li> <li>•passive public or audience</li> <li>•comprehension</li> <li>•one-way informational</li> <li>•two-way asymmetric</li> </ul>

There could be many positive aspects of the public diplomacy which does not exist in the traditional one. These aspects are sometimes not completely recognized by certain diplomats around the world, and therefore they consider public diplomacy to be of peripheral interest for their diplomatic services. However, it is essential to appreciate the importance of public diplomacy in the international relations. As Riordan (2014)<sup>13)</sup> points out “the main advantage of the public diplomacy is that by participating in particular political and social debates in a foreign country, it can create intellectual and political climate, beneficial to the nation that it represents”.

### 2.3 The New Public Diplomacy

In recent years, scholars speak of the so called *New Public Diplomacy*, which demonstrates certain shifts in the practice of public diplomacy. As Melissen (2005, p.22)<sup>14)</sup> defines it, the new public diplomacy is “no longer confined to messaging, promotion campaigns, or even direct governmental contacts with foreign publics serving foreign policy purposes. It is also about building relationships with civil society actors in other countries and about facilitating networks between non-governmental parties at home and abroad”. Table 2 (Cull, 2009, p. 14) illustrates some differences between the old and the new public diplomacy:

**Table 2: The Old Public Diplomacy and the New**

Dominant Characteristics	Old Public Diplomacy	New Public Diplomacy
1) Identity of international actor	State	State and non-state
2) Technical environment	Short wave radio Print newspapers Land-line telephones	Satellite, Internet, real-time news Mobile telephones
3) Media environment	Clear line between domestic and international news sphere	Blurring of domestic and international news sphere
4) Source of approach	Outgrowth of political advocacy & propaganda theory	Outgrowth of corporate branding & network theory
5) Terminology	“International image“ “Prestige“	“Soft power“ “Nation Brand“
6) Structure of role	Top down, actor to foreign peoples	Horizontal, facilitated by actor
7) Nature of role	Targeted messaging	Relationship-building
8) Overall aim	<b>The management of the international environment</b>	<b>The managements of the international environment</b>

As Cull (2009, pp. 12-13) emphasizes, from the table above it could be observed that: “1) the international actors are increasingly non-traditional and NGOs are especially prominent; 2) the mechanisms used by these actors to communicate with world publics have moved into new, real-time and global technologies (especially the Internet); 3) these new technologies have blurred the formerly rigid lines between the domestic and international news spheres; 4) in place of old concepts of propaganda Public Diplomacy makes increasing use of concepts on one hand explicitly derived from marketing-especially place and nation branding- and on the other hand concepts growing from network communication theory; hence, there is 5) a new terminology of Public Diplomacy as the language of prestige and international image has given way to talk of ‘soft power’ and ‘branding’”. In addition, while the old public diplomacy focuses on the actor-to people communication model, typical to the new public diplomacy is the people-to-people contact for mutual enlightenment, in which the international actor is the major facilitator. Highly essential for the new public diplomacy is also the ‘relationship building’, while the old one concentrates on the top down messaging (Cull, 2009, p.13).

For practicing effective new public diplomacy, government policy should promote and take part in networks abroad, instead of controlling them. In case that governments exercise too much control, the credibility engendered by the networks might be undercut. According to Nye (2011, p.108) “for governments to succeed in the networked world of the new public diplomacy, they are going to have to learn to relinquish a good deal of their control, and this runs the risk that nongovernmental civil society actors are often not aligned in their goals with government policies or even objectives”.

#### **2.4 Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange as Instruments of Public Diplomacy**

Together with the cultural diplomacy, listening, advocacy and international broadcasting, exchanges could be considered as forms of public diplomacy (Cull, 2009, p.10). According to Scott-Smith (2009, pp.51-52), “exchanges are (ideally) the most two-way form of public diplomacy, opening up spaces for dialogue and the interchange of alternative viewpoints”. Scott-Smith (2009, p. 50) also emphasizes that “whereas most forms of public diplomacy work involve the presentation of image and information, exchanges directly involve the “human factor”, where an engagement with the personality and psychology of the participants is central”.

Another subset of public diplomacy is cultural diplomacy. According to Leonard (Mark, 2009, p.6)<sup>15)</sup>, cultural diplomacy is “that part of public diplomacy that is concerned with the building of long-term relationships”. As the U.S. Department of State (2005, p.4)<sup>16)</sup> highlights, cultural diplomacy is “the linchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in cultural activities that a nation’s idea of itself is best represented”. Although the terms public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy might look similar as they are both elements of the soft power, they should not be equated. Public diplomacy consist of a wider set of activities than cultural diplomacy, “primarily those government media and public relations activities aimed at a foreign public in order to explain a course of action, or present a case” (Mark, 2009, p. 15). According to Ogoura (2009, p.45)<sup>17)</sup> the difference between public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy is that “the former is always closely associated with a well-defined political

objective and aimed at certain pre-determined targets while the latter is not necessarily linked to a specific political objective”.

### **3. Japan's Public Diplomacy: a Historical Overview**

#### **3.1 Public Diplomacy Initiatives before World War II**

According to Ogawa (2009, p. 272)<sup>18</sup>, some of the first public diplomacy initiatives of Japan can be recognized in the 1860s, when the country started its process of modernization. Such examples are the participation in World Expositions as well as certain public relations activities conducted during the Russo-Japanese War. In addition, the establishment of Rokumeikan in 1883 in Tokyo for welcoming foreign guests and holding Westernized balls was also a case in point.

After the World War I, Japan increased its commitment to external public relations and cultural diplomacy. In 1920, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA) created the Department of Information and also began new programs for cultural exchange with China. These programs aimed to mitigate the growing from 1910s anti-Japanese sentiment among Chinese intellectuals (Ogawa, 2009, p. 273).

In the 1920s and 1930s, various structures for public diplomacy were established in the West. Such include cultural exchange organizations like Germany's Goethe Institute in 1932 and the U.K's British Council in 1934. In addition, as Ogawa (2009, p. 273) highlights, in 1934, Japan “became the first and only non-Western nation to establish a modern international cultural exchange organization”. The Society for International Cultural Relations (Kokusai Bunka Shinko-kai, or KBS) was founded through certain financial support from the government and the private sector. One of the reasons for the establishment of KBS could be considered Japan's diplomatic isolation in the 1930s after it walked out of the League of Nations (Ogawa, 2009, p. 273).

KBS conducted a variety of initiatives such as “dialogues among prominent cultural leaders, dispatch of cultural missions, and publications on Japan” (Ogawa, 2009, p. 273). In 1930s, its main focus was on the United States and Europe. However, when World War II started, KBS aimed to “win the hearts and minds of” the local residents in the places which were under Japanese occupation (Ogawa, 2009, p. 273). Therefore, the organization's priority became China and Southeast Asia.

#### **3.2 Public Diplomacy Initiatives after World War II**

After World War II, Japan's external public relations and cultural exchange initiatives were interrupted. In December 1945, the Cabinet Bureau of Information stopped to function. Although the Department of Information was reestablished by MOFA in 1946, it lacked enough budget and staff to carry out its pre-war cultural exchange activities.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, Japan began to exercise cultural diplomacy, a subset of its public diplomacy, with the aim to alter the “prewar image of Japan as a militaristic country into a new image of Japan as a peace-loving democracy” (Ogoura, 2009, p.46). As Ogawa (2009, p. 274) mentions, Prime Minister Tetsu Katayama highlighted in a policy speech that it was necessary for Japan to construct a “culture state in order to restore national pride and



international credibility". According to Kaneko (2007, p. 187)<sup>19)</sup>, Japanese government developed a new strategy which focused on the establishment and promotion of harmonious and cultural image of the country. Japan joined UNESCO in 1951 in order to restore its status in international organizations. For Japan, the process of creating a peace-loving and democratic state was closely linked to the dissemination of cultural activities, which provided the country with a new national identity (Ogoura, 2009, p.46).

The promotion of Japanese cultural activities abroad highlighted practices like tea ceremony and ikebana as they would demonstrate Japan's serene and peaceful nature to the world. In addition, most of the pamphlets and brochures on Japan available at the time consisted of cherry blossoms and Mount Fuji pictures which symbolized tranquility and serenity (Ogoura, 2009, p.46). On the other hand, elements of Japanese culture connected to samurai spirit or feudal traditions were not promoted abroad.

In the 1960s, Japan reached a high level of economic development. The new goal of its cultural diplomacy during the late 1960s and early 1970s was to project an image of a technologically and economically advanced nation. Examples of such activities include the hosting of the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 and the 1970 EXPO in Osaka. In addition, through creating the Economic Cooperation Bureau and becoming a member of the OECD, Japan's status in the international community was growing. In 1968, the Agency for Cultural Affairs was also founded (Ogawa, 2009, p. 274). Japan enhanced its overseas cultural activities by establishing cultural and information centers attached to embassies, the Japanese Language Society for Foreigners in 1962, and by accomplishing certain cultural exchange agreements with eight socialist countries between 1969 and 1979 (Ogoura, 2009, p.47).

At the same time, Japan's economic growth led to certain anti-Japanese sentiments and misunderstandings about Japanese culture around the world. It was essential for the Japanese government to strengthen its public diplomacy strategies. As Ogawa (2009, p. 275) points out, "suffering from a series of Japan-U.S. frictions over trade imbalances and the Nixon Shocks, the Japanese diplomatic community began to recognize combating misunderstanding about Japanese culture and behavior as an urgent diplomatic agenda".

In 1972, there was major step in the history of Japanese public diplomacy. The Japan Foundation- a large international organization for cultural exchange was established. Supervised under the Cultural Division of MOFA, the foundation began a variety of programs such as "exchange among prominent academic and cultural leaders, promotion of Japanese language education and Japanese studies overseas, concerts, exhibitions, Japanese film and television showings, and publications" (Ogawa, 2009, p. 275).

In the late 1980s, with the development of its economy, Japan occupied a greater position in international society. The country was expected to "make more contributions as a responsible partner in the international community" and thus its cultural diplomacy began to be considered as "one of the "three pillars" of Japan's foreign policy- the first being the country's contributions to peacekeeping operations or similar activities and the second being its official developmental assistance or economic aid policies" (Ogoura, 2009, p.48).

At the time, there has been a demand from various countries all over the world for Japan to become more "internationalized" by "opening up culturally and intellectually to the international community" (Ogoura, 2009, p.49). As a result, in 1984 the Department of Cultural

Exchange was established by MOFA. In addition, in 1987, the JET program, thanks to which many foreign language teachers and international exchange coordinators are being invited to Japan every year, also began to exist. According to Ogawa (2009, p. 276), its purposes were “internationalizing Japan’s local communities by helping to improve foreign language education” as well as the establishment of “grassroots channels between Japan and the rest of the world,” and the development of “the next generation of supporters of Japan”.

In the 1980s, for the first time in Japan’s diplomatic history, cultural exchange was considered as main priority for the country (Ogawa, 2009, p. 276). In 1988, a report by the Advisory Group on International Cultural Exchange demonstrated a high necessity for Japan to increase its international cultural exchange and proposed certain policies such as the enhancing of the budgets for the Japan Foundation and direct support from the government. As a result, the government increased its funding to the Japan Foundation and the Conference for the Promotion of International Cultural Exchange was established in 1989. MOFA also created a new post of press secretary which unified and coordinated the controls in public relations.

In the mid-1990s, Japan’s public diplomacy turned into a new dimension. Considered as a responsible partner in the community of the developed nations, Japan had to redefine its own cultural identity and to show an image of itself “not as a newcomer to the developed nation’s club but as a truly responsible and mature partner” (Ogoura, 2009, p.50). Therefore, the country began focusing on promotion of postmodern culture such as anime, manga, fashion, pop music and others. These activities also made Japan’s public diplomacy linked to its trade policy. In addition, the combination of Japanese electronic technology with traditional culture was gaining popularity too.

In recent years, Japan is not the only highly economically developed country in Asia. Therefore, in order to distinguish itself from China, South Korea or other Asian countries, Japan changed the dimension of its cultural diplomacy by putting emphasis on “a hybrid vision of Japan, a combination of the old and the new” (Ogoura, 2009, p.50). This tendency of mixing the old and the new can be illustrated by the Great Edo Exhibition which opened in London in 1995.

In August 2004, the Public Diplomacy Department was established due to a structural reform which divided the labor between MOFA and the Japan Foundation. The Public Diplomacy Department has a variety of functions such as “implementing international agreements to promote cultural exchange, cooperating with international cultural organizations, and introducing Japanese culture abroad and promoting cultural exchange with foreign countries, as well as supervising the Japan Foundation” (Ogawa, 2009, p. 278). MOFA is in charge of outlining and planning strategies and long-term policies, while the Japan Foundation implements MOFA’s policies at the operational level.

In December 2004, the Council on the Promotion of Cultural Diplomacy was launched by the Japanese Prime Minister Jun’ichiro Koizumi. As Ogawa (2009, p. 278) emphasizes, the council stated that “understanding Japan by the public of a country may be the most influential factor for the government of that country in deciding policies and actions toward Japan”. In addition, the council made some recommendations on the challenges and tactics

of the Japanese cultural diplomacy. It highlighted that “Japan should try to actively cultivate a ‘Japanese animation generation’ across the globe, seizing interest in the Japanese language and pop culture as an opportunity to encourage further interest in other aspects of diverse Japanese culture” (Ogawa, 2009, pp. 278-279).

Today, within the globalized international society, Japanese cultural diplomacy is applying a policy of considering “Japanese cultural traditions not as Japan’s property but as the precious heritage of all humankind” and thus contributing to the preservation of world’s cultural diversity (Ogoura, 2009, p.52). Building peace is also one of its current directions.

### **3.3 Significance of Japan’s Public Diplomacy in Europe**

As it was observed in the historical overview above, public diplomacy has been an essential instrument for Japan and this trend will continue in the future. It has been contributing to the projection of particular image of Japan and to the achievement of various government policies.

Through many public diplomacy initiatives conducted by Japanese public and private actors, Japan increases its cultural presence, mutual understanding and partnership with various European countries. In the following years, Japanese public diplomacy will continue to play an important role in the extending of Japan’s relations with Europe. The finalized in December, 2017 Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Japan and the European Union is a case in point. The agreement is one of the biggest and most comprehensive agreements concluded so far for both sides. It is expected to establish a large economic zone with 600 million people and approximately 30 percent of the world GDP, to strongly increase the trade and investment opportunities, and strengthen the societies and economies of Japan and the European Union (European Commission, 2017)<sup>20</sup>. However, to make the economic cooperation highly beneficial for Japan, it would be necessary to increase the country’s soft power and positive image in Europe and attract a wider number of people from all generations. Crucial tool for achieving such goals would be Japanese public diplomacy strategies exercised through various actors. As it was emphasized during the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s visit in Europe in January 12-17, 2017, it is essential for Japan to further enhance its people-to-people exchanges with Europe (MOFA, 2018)<sup>21</sup>.

## **4. Japan’s Public Diplomacy in Bulgaria**

As it was observed in the previous section, since the 1860s, Japan has been applying a variety of public diplomacy strategies overseas. However, to what extent Japanese public diplomacy has succeeded to achieve a stable cultural presence in Bulgaria? Through the observation of various initiatives for Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria, as well as Bulgarian people’s perceptions of Japanese culture, this section attempts to address this issue.

### **4.1 Promotion of Japanese culture in Bulgaria**

It is considered that the Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria had begun with the first book on Japan by Anton Bozukov in 1906, a travel diary in which he describes his experience

in Japan and impressions regarding Japanese culture and people. With this work he also started a tendency of Bulgarians writing travel diaries after visiting Japan (Petkova, 2012, p.2).

The first official partnership between Bulgaria and Japan was created in 1939 when both countries have established their diplomatic missions on each other's territories (Embassy of Japan in Bulgaria, 2016)<sup>22</sup>. In addition, in 1930 the first literary translations were also created, and thus "political and cultural interaction went hand in hand" (Petkova, 2012, p.2). Such translations included Japanese poetry like *Yamato-no Uta* (Pesni ot Yamato) and *Hana-no Eda* (Tsufnala veika) by Nikola Jerov. The first book introducing Japanese literature called *Japanese Literature: Beginnings, Development, Authors* (Yaponska literatura: nachalo-razvitie-predstaviteli) by Svetoslav Minkov was also published in 1941 (Petkova, 2012, p.2). Later, in the 1950s and 60s translated works from other European languages of Tokunaga Sunao, Matsumoto Seichi, Abe Kobo, Kawabata Yasunari and others also became popular in Bulgaria.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February, 1943, the first official document regarding the bilateral cultural relations - Agreement on Friendship and Cultural Cooperation, was signed in Tokyo by the Bulgarian Plenipotentiary Minister Yanko Peev and the Japanese Foreign Minister Masayuki Tani (Vutova-Stefanova, 2012)<sup>23</sup>. Then, although Bulgarian- Japanese diplomatic relations were interrupted from 1944 to 1959, as a result of the impact of the Second World War, the countries continued their intercultural interactions.

From the 1970s, the cultural, economic, technological, and scientific exchange between Bulgaria and Japan gradually increased, providing a basis for prosperous further cooperation. The 1970 World Exposition in Japan, in which Bulgaria participated, was considered as a crucial turning point in the Bulgarian-Japanese bilateral relations (Petkova, 2012, p.2). During the 1970s, there has been rich cultural exchange between the two countries with the great contribution of Lyudmila Zhivkova, the director of the Committee for Art and Culture in Bulgaria at that time (Petkova, 2012, pp. 2-3).

In the following years, the interest between the countries continued to increase and in 1975, for the first time in the history of the Bulgarian-Japanese bilateral relations, the ministers of the foreign affairs exchanged letters serving as an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in science, art and culture. Under the contract, both governments agreed to collaborate on the exchange of experts, scientists, students, athletes and others engaged in cultural activities, on the provision of scholarship for education and research at the respective universities and educational institutions, as well as on sharing informational materials, books, magazines, and others (Kandilarov, 2012, p. 2)<sup>24</sup>.

From 1972 to 1994, seven books on Japan were published by Bulgarian writers, journalists, diplomats and Japanese studies specialists<sup>25</sup> (Petkova, 2012, p.3). Similarly to Anton Bozukov, the authors shared their experiences and impressions after visiting Japan to the Bulgarian society. As Petkova (2012, p.3) points out, "because of their power to raise public awareness of Japan's culture and achievements, these books collectively functioned to increase reception of Japanese culture during this period". In addition to the works, in 1977 the first two literary masterpieces translated directly from Japanese - *Yuki Guni* and *Senba-Zuru* by Kawabata Yasunari became available for the Bulgarian readers.

In the following 25 years various works of Akutagawa Ryunosuke, Oe Kenzaburo, Tanizaki Junichiro, Tsuboi Sakae, Ibuse Masuji, Mishima Yukio, Shiga Naoya, Arishima Takeo, Sei Shonagon, Gofukakusa-no-Nijo, Zeami, and others were translated by Japanese studies specialists such as Tsigova, Silvia Popova, Neli Chalakova, Dora Barova, Tsvetana Krasteva, Todor Dichev and others, providing the Bulgarian society with deeper insight into Japanese culture, philosophy, aesthetics, and social issues (Petkova, 2012, p.3).

At the time, the intercultural cooperation between Bulgaria and Japan continued to increase and as a result a variety of Japanese cultural activities were held on Bulgarian territory. For instance, in 1979 there have been many Japanese concerts organized in Bulgaria. Another significant event which aimed to broaden to a bigger extent Bulgarian society's knowledge on Japanese history and culture, was an exhibition dedicated to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings (Kandilarov, 2012, p.6).

In 1981, there has been another big exhibition called "Japanese Calligraphy and Ink Painting" held in the National Library "St. Cyril and Methodius" in Sofia, Bulgaria. To take part in the event, a delegation from the Japan Calligraphy Museum led by the president of the Japan Art Academy- Prof. Jiro Arimitsu and the director of the museum- Tenshu Koyama arrived in Bulgaria. A movie about the history of calligraphy, lectures on the Japanese literature and writing, and demonstrations of calligraphy by Japanese calligraphers were also presented during the exhibition (Kandilarov, 2012, pp.11-12). The event is considered as very contributive to the deepening of the Bulgarian people's interest in the Japanese culture.

From 1989, the Bulgarian transition from state socialism to a multi-party democracy provided more opportunities for Bulgarian-Japanese bilateral relations. Since that time, Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria continued to increase to even greater extent than before. Essential factors were the "Japanese government's policy for presenting Japanese culture abroad, as well as the financial and organizational support of the Japan Foundation, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program" (V. Vutova-Stefanova, personal communication, March, 2017).

From 1991, the governments of the two countries began exchanging letters in which they emphasized the mutual cooperation on culture, science, education, and sport. Important public diplomacy initiative for strengthening this collaboration was the establishment of program for student and scholar exchange between the Ministry of Education in Bulgaria and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) as well as between the two countries' institutions- Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and Soka University. In order to increase its cultural presence in Bulgaria, in 1991 the Japanese Embassy started organizing "Days of Japanese Culture", which aimed to demonstrate various aspects of Japan's older and modern customs. Since then, the "Days of Japanese Culture" continue to be held every year attracting more and more Bulgarian visitors.

At the same time, according to Kandilarov (2009, p.346)<sup>26</sup>, Japan provided great support to Bulgaria for cultural, educational and scientific development. For instance, from 1993 to 2007 the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) sent to Bulgaria 245 Japanese volunteers specialized in various spheres. In addition, the Japan Foundation and the Japanese government enhanced the promotion of Japanese language studies in Bulgaria.

Many scholarships for study abroad in Japan were being provided each year to Bulgarian bachelor, master and PhD students and still continue to be offered.

After the 1990s, Japanese language studies and literature achieved greater development and popularity on Bulgarian territory. Many state and private institutions began to offer opportunities to the Bulgarian society for learning about Japan and its language and culture. Such institution was the Sofia University “St Kliment Ohridski” which in 1990 initiated a MA program in Japanese studies. It was a five-year course during which students acquired skills in both Japanese language and Japanese studies. Following this, with the introduction of the European framework for the development of higher education (also called the Bologna system), Sofia University was obliged to change the program into a 4-year bachelor course which could be continued with a MA course in Asian Studies. As a result, new subjects such as sociology, international relations, ethnography, economy and management, and issues of contemporary Japan also became part of the curriculum (Petkova, 2012, p.5). After graduation, students not only obtain excellent skills in Japanese language and a wide knowledge on Japan and its culture, but they also become a bridge between Japan and the Bulgarian society with their contribution to the further Japanese cultural promotion.

Apart from the BA and MA programs, Sofia University plays other two essential roles in the promotion of Japanese culture in Bulgaria. First, it began offering a two-year open non-degree course held in the evenings which continues even today. The course consists of lessons on Japan and the Japanese language. Every year around 10-15 people enroll, varying from “young specialists in various fields who wish to learn from the Japanese experience, middle-aged people who have a strong interest in Japan due to the intensive cultural exchange between the two countries, and fellows planning to go to Japan to study, work or do research or who have come back and wish to deepen their understanding and competency in Japanese language and culture” (Petkova, 2012, pp.5-6).

Another great contribution to the Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria by Sofia University is the research conducted by its six-member full-time staff specialized in Japanese studies and language.<sup>27)</sup> The faculty publishes the results of the research, takes part in various academic activities, events and international cooperation as well as conducts certain projects with other specialists and students. For instance, in 2010 to commemorate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Japanese Studies Section held an international symposium, where “specialists from all around Bulgaria gathered to share their achievements in regard to the study and promotion of Japanese language and culture” (Petkova, 2012, p.6).

During more than 20 years of existing, the Japanese Studies Section of Sofia University “St Kliment Ohridski” successfully created rich and stable basis for research and promotion of Japan and its culture in Bulgaria. This achievement was also to a great extent due to the support provided by the Japanese government which each year sends Japanese language specialists through the Japan Foundation and a variety of literature to the Sofia University’s library. For instance, now there are more than 5,000 volumes on Japan in the library room at the Centre for Eastern Languages and Cultures of Sofia University (Petkova, 2012, p.6).

Apart from Sofia University, there have been other institutions promoting Japanese culture in Bulgaria. Such institution is Veliko Tarnovo University which offers a regular BA course in Applied Linguistics in Japanese from many years and since 1994 there is a Centre

for Japanese Language and Culture with a library section. Despite the fact that the course is concentrated mostly on language studies, “students there organize cultural festivals to introduce Japanese culture to Bulgarians living in the north-east part of the country” and with each year “the effectiveness of such events seems to grow..., and attract more and more attention” (Petkova, 2012, p.7).

Highly essential institution for the promotion of Japanese culture in Bulgaria is the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, where various specialists on Japan carry out research and publish their achievements. In addition, other independent scholars such as friends of the Japanese government, who have visited Japan to carry out research projects, also take part. They could be specialized in different areas like architecture, international relations and politics, economics, medicine, engineering, and others. Most of them had been to Japan thanks to the variety of programs provided by the Japanese government, the Ministry of Education, the Japan Foundation, JICA, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and bilateral cooperation between institutions and universities (Petkova, 2012, p.7).

Another institution with great contribution to the Japanese cultural presence and promotion in Bulgaria is the 18<sup>th</sup> “William Gladstone” High School in Sofia, which in 1992 became the first school in Europe to introduce Japanese language as compulsory subject in its secondary education program (Kandilarov, 2009, p.347). Because of the increasing interest in the language, in 2005 the school also began to offer Japanese language courses from elementary education. In addition, the school established a Centre for Japanese Culture on its premises where students are able to learn tea-ceremony, origami, and games as well as to attend Japanese culture classes. However, as the number of students who were willing to enhance their knowledge about Japan continued to grow rapidly, many other institutions in various cities introduced programs for Japanese language and studies.<sup>28)</sup>

The Japanese Studies students from various university or school institutions in Bulgaria each year organize many events to promote Japanese culture among the Bulgarian people. Such event is the annual Japanese Culture Day (*Nihon Bunka-sai*) which provides the general public with opportunities to observe different Japanese traditions and arts, to taste Japanese cuisine, and to take part in workshops like origami, calligraphy, games, and others. The growing number of visitors each year demonstrates the increasing interest in Japan of the Bulgarian people as well as the successful cultural promotion initiated by the students.

Apart from the schools and universities in Bulgaria offering Japanese studies, in June, 2003 a non-governmental organization called “Association of Japanese language Teachers in Bulgaria” was established. It aimed not only to encourage the Japanese language education in Bulgaria, but also to contribute to the mutual understanding between the two countries (Kandilarov, 2009, p.348).

A key actor of Japan's public diplomacy- the Japan Foundation also contributes much to the promotion of Japanese culture in Bulgaria and to the projection of the intended image of Japan. It not only sends various Japanese specialists to teach Japanese language and studies in Bulgaria, but also offers financial assistance and programs such as the Japanese Studies Fellowship program to Bulgarian scholars and researchers “to conduct research in Japan with the aim of supporting them and promoting Japanese Studies overseas” (The

Japan Foundation, 2015)<sup>29</sup>). According to a statistics from 2001 to 2015, a variety of projects have been carried out in Japan through the program such as: “Functional and Aesthetical Consideration in the Design of the Urban Environment” in 2002 by Nadya Stamatova, “Japanese Ethnography Textbook: Introductory Texts on Japanese Culture, Folklore, Philosophy and Way of Life for Students” in 2007 and “Digging out the Embedded Cultural Realities: Fairy Tales of Japan” in 2011 by Gergana Petkova, “Japanese Phonetics in Bulgarian” in 2012 by Anton Andreev, and others. There is also another program offered by the Japan Foundation in Bulgaria- Performing Arts Japan for Europe, which provides funding for “performances or co-productions in European countries that aim to introduce Japanese performing arts to local audiences” (the Japan Foundation, 2015)<sup>30</sup>). According to a statistics from 2013 to 2015, Bulgarian project financially assisted by the program was entitled “Multimedia Live Performance-Merging Japanese Tradition and Contemporary Meaning” by Our World Association in 2015.

Japanese culture has been promoted in Bulgaria also through the activities of various clubs and associations related to Japan. Such include the Chado Urasenke club focusing on tea ceremony, the Soga *ikebana* club, the Centre Ikuo Hirayama as well as sports associations offering activities like *go* and *shogi*, *karate*, *sumo*, *aikido*, and *judo*. In addition, the publishing houses print more and more works on Japan including research results from within the country and translations from Japanese and other languages (Petkova, 2012, pp.7-8).

The Mass media’s role for Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria is also very essential. For instance, Bulgarian National Television (BNT) and the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR) present a variety of programs on Japan such as the *Multi-cultural dialogues* on BNR. These programs contribute to the mutual understanding between the two countries as well as provide Bulgarian society with the opportunity to enhance its knowledge regarding the Japanese scientific achievements, economic growth, nature, sports, and others (Petkova, 2012, p.8).

In general, thanks to the variety of public diplomacy initiatives for cultural and language promotion in Bulgaria during the years, the mutual understanding and the Bulgarians interest in Japan increased, providing opportunities for cooperation in various spheres. For instance, the economic relations were strengthened and the number of Japanese technical products such as automobiles and electronic goods was growing in the country. While in the 70s and the 80s very few people in Bulgaria possessed such inventions, since 1989 more and more products were introduced in Bulgaria and gained much popularity (Kandilarov, 2009, pp.362-363).

#### **4.2 Perception of Japanese Culture in Bulgaria**

There has not been much written on the perception of the Japanese culture in Bulgaria. Gergana Petkova has so far been the first to explore the issue and to provide the basis for further research. Therefore, this paper will continue with a focus on two surveys conducted in 2010 by Petkova in collaboration with Japanese studies students which are considered as “the first of their kind in Bulgaria” as well as “the first attempt to evaluate the process of promotion and reception of Japanese culture in quantitative terms” (Petkova, 2012, p.8).



The surveys highlighted will be “The image of Japan in Bulgaria” and “Knowledge about Japanese traditional culture”.

### Survey 1

The first survey – “The image of Japan in Bulgaria” was distributed to 145 participants who answered ten questions in a free listing answer option. The results demonstrated that “for more than half of the participants the first impression of Japan is associated with traditional culture” (Petkova, 2012, p.8). They indicated elements of the traditional Japanese culture such as *yakuza* and *geisha*. Another one-fifth of the participants perceived Japan's culture through the advanced Japanese technologies and development resulting from the media and market promotion of technology.

The survey also demonstrated that 45% of the participants had read a book on Japan and 65% watched Japanese movies. The Japanese Movie Week, presenting both masterpieces of Japanese cinematography and contemporary movies, held by the Japanese embassy and sponsored mainly by the Japanese government was a case in point. In terms of Japanese food, since many Japanese cuisine restaurants have been established in Bulgaria, more than a half of the participants stated that they eat and like Japanese dishes. They could even prepare *sushi* at home as *wasabi*, *nori*, *mirin*, and *shoga* are offered in the stores.

Another interesting tendency to be mentioned is that Bulgarian people demonstrated that they possess a wide knowledge regarding major Japanese companies as well as about some small-scale companies producing goods of their interests such as IT and automotive business (Petkova, 2012, p.9).

The last part of the survey concerned the general image of Japan and the Japanese people. The answers on Japan “fell into categories of exotic, gorgeous, harmonious and traditional” (Petkova, 2012, p.10). Among all the participants, there have been only one slightly negative answer stating that “Bulgarians hold Japan in high regard” (Petkova, 2012, p.10). In terms of the image of the Japanese people the answers were also divided into four categories- “disciplined, dutiful, hardworking, and polite” (Petkova, 2012, p.10).

In general, the survey demonstrated that Bulgarians are very much familiar with various aspects on Japan and its development. Japanese public diplomacy has been effective in projecting the desired image of a harmonious and peace-loving state in Bulgaria. Japan's another public diplomacy goal, starting from the late 1960s and early 1970s, to be perceived as technologically and economically advanced nation has also been achieved. In addition, although Bulgarian people's perceptions on Japan appeared to focus more on the traditional culture, the contemporary one is also gaining interest (Petkova, 2012, p.10).

### Survey 2

The second survey- “Knowledge about Japanese traditional culture” was distributed to 87 participants and consisted of two parts: in the first, participants had to point out which out of 15 elements of the Japanese culture they are familiar with, and in the second- to choose from two options the one that they consider being found in Japan.

The results demonstrated that almost all of the participants knew about *sushi*, *sake*, *ki-mono*, and *sumo*. This is not surprising due to the great promotion of Japanese cuisine in

Bulgaria, as well as the sumo performances of Kaloyan Mahlianov in Japan who contributes to the promotion of Bulgarian culture in Japan, as well as of Japanese culture in Bulgaria (Petkova, 2012, p.10).

The survey also showed that Bulgarians are very acquainted with the spiritual and philosophical backgrounds of Japan, Zen Buddhism and Shinto (Petkova, 2012, pp.10-11). In addition, thanks to the literary translations and club activities in Bulgaria, arts like *ikebana* and *haiku* are also well-known. However, less than a fifth of the participants were familiar with *futon*, *geta*, *onsen*, *makura*, and *irori* which demonstrated the further aspects on which Japan should work in order to achieve greater cultural perception in Bulgaria (Petkova, 2012, p.11).

The second part of the survey focused on Bulgarian's knowledge on the Japanese traditional culture rather than the contemporary one. It observed which one out of two options participants related to Japan. The survey put emphasis on Bulgarian people's familiarity in terms of Japanese traditions in comparison to Bulgarian traditions. In the results almost all of the answers stated that "in Japan rice not wheat was considered the staple starch, raw fish was preferred to fried, people rather sat on the floor rather than on chairs, nature was the main theme in art, wooden footwear was more typical than leather, chopsticks and not forks were used, green tea was preferred to black, paper walls were more common than brick walls, New Year was celebrated by more people than Christmas (all of these being opposite according to Bulgarian traditions), the father was the center of the family table, and the sons inherited their parents, not the daughters (which was the case in Bulgaria as well)" (Petkova, 2012, p.11). However, Bulgarians were not much familiar with "the prevalence of straw roofs of the traditional houses over stone roofs, the hearth over floor heating, and the group valued over the individual" (Petkova, 2012, p.11).

In general, the survey demonstrated great knowledge on Japan by the Bulgarian society thanks to the variety of initiatives for Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria. However, as Petkova (2012, p.11) emphasizes, there are still various "aspects of Japan and its people that need to be brought closer to Bulgarians" in order to increase Bulgarian people's knowledge about Japanese culture.

## 5. Conclusion

An effective public diplomacy is that public diplomacy that increases a country's cultural presence in another country, manages to project the intended image of a nation, and achieves high mutual trust and understanding among states, thus contributing to prosperous bilateral relations. Such example is the Japanese public diplomacy in Bulgaria.

In comparison with the nine Western and Central European countries where a scarceness of Japanese soft power was indicated by the European Council on Foreign Relations, in Bulgaria, the situation appeared the opposite. After examining the case of the Japanese public diplomacy in Bulgaria, it can be concluded that Japan has achieved a high cultural presence in the country.

On the other hand, it was also demonstrated that in certain aspects of the Japanese traditional culture Bulgarian people still lack enough knowledge. In order to compensate for

the missing competency in such areas, Japanese public diplomacy should focus more on activities aimed at introducing the country's customs and lifestyle. For instance, Japan should provide more exchange programs for Bulgarian high school and college students, scholars as well as for employees of Bulgarian companies and government officials. At the same time, the number of Japanese people living in Bulgaria should be increased. In this way, through the human exchange, Japanese public diplomacy could extend Bulgarians knowledge on the Japanese traditional culture.

In conclusion, despite the areas requiring improvement emphasized above, in Bulgaria, Japanese public diplomacy has been much productive. It not only achieved a rich cultural presence, but also strengthened the mutual understanding and established a basis for cooperation in various spheres. In addition, Japanese public diplomacy was also efficient in projecting many aspects of its intended image in Bulgaria. As it was observed in the surveys conducted by Petkova, for most of the people in the Bulgarian society, Japan is considered as technologically advanced, exotic, and peaceful country with polite and hardworking people. In addition, Japan is associated mainly with its traditional culture although the contemporary one is gaining interest too.

There could be various reasons for Japan's successful public diplomacy in Bulgaria. For instance, Japanese public diplomacy has been consisting of a rich palette of activities which led to the increase of the Bulgarians familiarity and interest in the Japanese culture and language. The number of state and private institutions offering Japanese language, clubs and associations, as well as the books and publications on Japan in Bulgaria were gradually rising and various events such as the "Days of Japanese Culture" have been organized to present many aspects of the Japanese culture. The contributions of the Japan Foundation and the mass media have also been significant. Through its strategies Japanese public diplomacy has managed to establish a strong two-way relationship with the Bulgarian society. At the same time, by focusing mostly on features of the Japanese traditional culture, the public diplomacy initiatives succeeded to project the intended image of Japan in Bulgaria.

Another reason for the effective public diplomacy might be the fact that the two countries have always maintained their intercultural collaboration even in the period between 1944 and 1956 when the diplomatic relations had been interrupted. The friendship and mutual respect provided a favorable environment for the Japanese cultural promotion in Bulgaria.

In contrast with the case of Bulgaria, where Japanese cultural presence has been relatively high, Japan needs to rethink and rebuild its public diplomacy strategies in the Western and Central European countries, where an insufficient soft power had been indicated by the ECFR audit. In addition, a detailed research on Japan's public diplomacy in those countries is necessary in order to discover why it has not been efficient enough. The missing points in the Japanese soft power also should be investigated. In the meantime, this study could serve as an example of Japan's public diplomacy initiatives in Europe and a framework for further systematic strategies.

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## 日本のパブリック・ディプロマシーの実践： ブルガリアにおける事例をもとに

日本はヨーロッパ諸国における文化面でのプレゼンスの向上やヨーロッパ諸国とのパートナーシップの強化のために、外務省や国際交流基金などを通じて多様なパブリック・ディプロマシー戦略を行っている。しかし、様々なパブリック・ディプロマシーの試みにもかかわらず、欧州外交評議会（European Council on Foreign Relations）の調査では、「ヨーロッパにおける日本のソフトパワーは十分ではない」と指摘されている。

そこで本稿では、ブルガリアを事例に、ヨーロッパでの日本の文化促進のためのパブリック・ディプロマシー政策を分析し、どれほど日本が文化面でのプレゼンスの向上に成功しているかについて明らかにする。

これまで著者は、パブリック・ディプロマシーを含む国際的なパートナーシップ構築のための、ナイ（Nye）のソフトパワー理論の効果を検証するため、ブルガリアと日本の文化交流について研究してきた。本稿では、日本のパブリック・ディプロマシーの歴史を概説した上で、日本が行ってきたブルガリアでのパブリック・ディプロマシー政策だけではなく、ペトコヴァ（Petkova）によるブルガリアでの日本のイメージについての調査を基に、ブルガリアにおける日本文化の受容の評価に焦点をあてる。日本がブルガリアにおいてどれほどソフトパワーを実現できているか、あるいは、より良い戦略が必要かどうかについて分析する。最後に、ブルガリアでの日本の今後のパブリック・ディプロマシー政策のための提案を行う。

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