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**CULTURE ON THE SILK ROAD**  
**EDUCATION ON THE SILK ROAD**

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**Abstract**

Educational and cultural links are more durable than trade and economic ones. At the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade within the University of Belgrade Japanese language is being studied since 1976. Thanks to our professors and students we got a textbook "Kandi" which is being used not only in Serbia, but also at many world universities. It has Serbian, English and Russian editions. The "Balkan Japan Bowl" contest has been going on for three years now and the Faculty of Philology has become the regional center for this contest. The RTS is informing its viewers about all these activities on a regular basis, in that way contributing to affirmation of educational values on the Silk Road.

**Keywords:** *Education, Culture, Faculty of Philology, University, Japanese Language, Textbook, RTS*

**The Role Of The Media**

"Media have not freedom to make nonexistent social values, although they can influence the way social values will express themselves", wrote Rowland Lorimer in his book MASS COMMUNICATIONS, page 312, published by Clio in 1998.

The Serbian Broadcasting Corporation (Radio-televizija Srbije, RTS) has task to inform, educate and entertain, but it is also institution with special role in social, cultural and political life of Serbia. During 6 decades, the RTS became a significant institution of the Serbian culture, testifying in a specific way how educational and cultural links are more durable than commercial and economic ones. We shall demonstrate on concrete examples how the RTS contributes to the affirmation of educational values on the Silk Road.

These days, the RTS viewers are in a position to watch broadcasts of different genres, produced by several Japanese distributors. The cooperation was established four years ago through the



Embassy of Japan in Serbia, in cooperation with the Japanese Foundation. At the moment, the broadcasts could be watched on RTS2 and RTS3, while broadcasting via internet is also planned. These broadcasts include "Harmony of life in Japan", "Traditional Japanese culture".

The serial "Harmony of life in Japan" takes the RTS viewers into the world of unique Japanese habits that are even today part of life style of Japanese, based on principle of harmony with nature. The serial has 5 episodes, 20 minutes duration of each, and it introduces us with 5 significant elements that are very important for harmony of life in Japan: space, tree, paper, flower and sound.

### **Education on the Silk Road**

International conferences are also important for good international status of faculties and universities. After the International congress of slavists in 2018, philologists organized another conference – the International scientific conference under the title "First 150 years of modern Japan – first modernizations on the Silk road."

Conference is supposed to contribute to the study of cultural, literary and scientific history of Japan on the Silk road, to getting to know influences of economic progress, scientific and cultural ideas on the Japanese way of living, science and technological development.

After 250 years of complete isolation, Japan has been experiencing flourishing. The early period began in 1868 and in that period Japan has been transformed from the feudal society into a modern state. The process of modernization in Japan hasn't been easy at all, but it was very efficient.

As far as it regards modernization of Japan, it is important to state that Japan didn't accept any influence from the west in its original form, but adapted it to its tradition.

It could be said nowadays that Japan in the process of modernization managed to keep its tradition and culture, organizers of the conference said.

In organizing the conference several educational institutions from Europe and Asia took part. The organizer was the Center for studies of Asia within the Language faculty of the Belgrade University, while co-organizers were IAFOR, the International Committee of slavists – the Commission for slavic world and culture on Silk road, the Osaka University, the Kobe University, Haji Bektash Veli University from Nevshehir and Vaseda University, which proves the high appreciation of Serbian japanology in the world. The Faculty of Philology is part of the University of Belgrade which is celebrated 210 years, with various programs. (September 6th, 2018).

The third Japan Bowl was also held. That was the competition that gained regional character since students from 5 regional universities attended it. 14 teams took part at this year's tournament and first three prizes went to the Belgrade University students, thus confirming dominance of the Belgrade japanology school in the region.



The " Senbonzakura " team got the first place, the second one went to " What is the time " team ( both teams comprised of japanology students of the Language faculty ) and the third place went to " Hinoshi " team ( comprised of the Mathematician faculty students ). - competition " Balkan Japan Bowl ", RTS internet site, March 17th, 2019. Teams from Zagreb, Pula, Banjaluka, Sarajevo and Macedonia also participated.

The knowledge from history, art and culture, pop culture, language and topical issues of modern Japan were tested.

The letter from Japanese princess Hisako Takamado, who was sponsor of the competition, was also read. The competition, established in the USA 1992, is aimed at motivating students to gain new knowledge and improve their communication skills.

Charge d'affair of the Embassy of Japan in Serbia, Mr. Cubota, said that he was happy since in that way knowledge about Japan is broadened, and that he was especially satisfied since the competition was held at the Belgrade university, that has the longest tradition of Japanese language studying in the region. Since Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe visited Serbia last year, Mr. Cubota noticed increasingly better relations between Japan and Serbia, Japan and the Balkans.

Professor Ljiljana Markovic, the Language faculty of the Belgrade University dean, said that students demonstrated better knowledge than previous years and that team comprised of natural sciences' students showed how Japanese language can be used for scientific patterns.

She also recalled that the teaching of Japanese language started at the Faculty in 1976 and that in 2019 30 years since the graduation of the first student of japanology, as a complete 4-year studies of main study group, will be marked.

At the end of competition, participants and viewers ( also students ) filled in questionnaire that will, according to organizers, with their suggestions help advancement of competition next year.

In march 2019 Japanese professors held a number of lectures. Preparing tea and teaching that the tea ceremony ( which is being studied even 10 years ) is also a unique philosophical system, presented by professor Hajashi Toshia from the Japanese foundation, the Center for Japanese culture in Budapest. The demonstration of Ikebana followed with recalling its history and its general characteristics, presented by Mr. Nishiura Kihadjira. The manager of the National Institute for the Japanese language and linguistics, professor Pradeshi Prashanta, spoke about " Online resources for researching the Japanese dictionary. " Unlike these lectures that were in Japanese language, with simultaneous translation in Serbian language, professor Mićitaka Suzuki held lecture in Serbian language. He was earlier professor at Okajama University, now he is teaching at Tohoku Gakuin University. He spoke about " Idols in Japanese culture. " Professor Suzuki teaches history of art and



Serbian language. His dedication to Serbian culture and language has been going on for more than 4 decades. Professor Suzuki took Orthodoxy at Hilandar monastery and priests gave him the name, Sava. He said that university, he is currently teaching at, has no contract with the Belgrade university and that besides lectures, goal of his stay in Belgrade this year is also establishing the institutional cooperation.

At the very end, it should be recalled that thanks to our japanologists, we got also the first textbook of the Japanese language and alphabet, KANDJI, which is the product of active interaction of professors and students of the Japanese language. It had 4 editions so far, and it is used in more than 50 universities worldwide. After the publication in the Serbian language, by using modern methods and technologies, editions in the Russian and English languages were also published. In that way, our professors cooperated with colleagues from universities: Moscow-based Lomonosov, Tjumen and Voronjez, on the russian edition and with colleagues from Kobe University where the English language edition was published, aimed at teaching the Japanese language to foreign students. It proves that our program for japanology is international in the true meaning of that word.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Natalija Sinanović was born on Decembar, 9 th, 1962. in Belgrade, where she finished elementary and secondary school of culture and information Dimitrije Tucovi ,XII Belgrade Gymnasium,journalists` stream . At the Faculty of Philology , University of Belgrade, she graduated at the Department of Yugoslav literature and Serbo - Croation language, literature-publicistics stream. She speaks English and could use Italian, Slovenian and Macedonian languages. During secondary education, she was an associate of the MLADOST magazine. She has been professional journalist since 1988, all the time in Television Belgrade or the Radio Television Serbia.She was editor and anchor in the Belgrade program and Cultural section of the RTS News program. As an editor and author of broadcasts BEOKULT and REALITY AND ART, she has been covering fields of literature and publishing. Since 2004, she has been covering education, special events at the University of Belgrade and Serbian Academy of Science and Art. As a member of state delegation, she attended the Ministerial conference on high education in 2007 in London, made a number of interviews with rectors with our universities, the ones from Europe, Asia and Australian and with EU representatives in charge of education.

For her professional reporting and cooperation she was awarded by GOLDEN CERTIFICATE OF THE INSITUTE FOR TEXTBOOK AND MANUALS, and PUPIN`S GOLDEN MEDAL. She gratitude master studies of journalism at the Faculty of political sciences, University of Belgrade. Currently, she is at PHD studies, cultural modulus, at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade.



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**EXTENDED SUMMARY**

Educational and cultural links are more durable than trade and economic ones. At the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade within the University of Belgrade Japanese language is being studied since 1976. Thanks to our professors and students we got a textbook "Kandī" which is being used not only in Serbia, but also at many world universities. It has Serbian, English and Russian editions. The "Balkan Japan Bowl" contest has been going on for three years now and the Faculty of Philology has become the regional center for this contest. The RTS is informing its viewers about all these activities on a regular basis, in that way contributing to affirmation of educational values on the Silk road.

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The Belgrade University, founded 210 years ago, has shared and is now sharing the destiny of society where it was set up. In the XXI century a system of values broke down while the new one hasn't been formed yet. In the century in which education is one of the principal resources, the question is raised: how to establish society based on knowledge. Engineering is the greatest resource we have and it has proved its quality in the strongest world competition. Therefore Serbia must invest in faculties that educate IT experts. Professors warn that we could keep those people in the country only if the conditions for education improve and if it is intensively invested in innovations and new, research centers.

It is of equal importance to keep ones own language and identity. The language should be taken care of on everyday basis since the language culture has been to a certain extent neglected, philologists warn. Therefore they suggest introducing Serbian language classes even on faculties. The problem of survival and opening of new lectorates for Serbian language abroad, which was for years been ignored, should be more seriously treated in the future. Ministers of culture and education, who believe that it is one of the basic issues of cultural policy, formed a commission that should set out criteria for selecting lectors of the Serbian language abroad.

If we start from the fact that the position of science in modern culture and its role in modern science are one of the top issues in this century, than it also applies on education. This century brings new technological knowledge and puts before us serious tasks, that is how to organize knowledge in the best possible way and how to promote it. The question is raised what kind of educational reforms are needed so that we can use our acquired knowledge in the best possible way. Will the technical sciences expand at the expense of social sciences and humanities?



In modern world managing information means knowledge management and is aimed at content and quality of information and their influence on the recipient. Therefore a high degree of knowledge about new scientific achievements is necessary among the population.

The responsibility that is put before us is even bigger having in mind that according to the World economic forum Serbia could become a new super star in education with 6 more countries: Argentina, Chile, Turkey, Iran and Colombia. This prognosis is based on the fact that although these are countries which have GDP less than 15 million dollars and have at least half of the young involved in high education, in the period from 2004 to 2010 the participation of that part of population in education in these countries increased for at least 5%, or more, the number of published scientific researches grew for more than 3 thousand annually. Also, all of these countries has at and the Language Faculty which is part of it, is ranked between positions 200 and 300 on Shanghai University list. Its position is also strengthening on other lists.

We are living in a digital environment, in an era in which through digital technologies the process of gaining knowledge and learning are significantly being changed. Managing information is at the same time also managing knowledge. Meeting needs of a modern society and new generation of viewers, the RTS has presented to its users the RTS PLANET. It deals with digitalization of the Program archive and creates contents, that are available to viewers in Serbia and abroad, at every moment. Through this new platform watching 11 TV and 4 radio channels is enabled, as well as delayed watching of programs.