

# Wine Tasting and Discussion about Japan



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Member of the House of  
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Mr. Yoshitami  
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Charge d' Affaires of the  
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Mr. Jiban  
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Ambassador  
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Embassy for Romania  
Mr. Radu Serban



A Wine Tasting and Discussion about Japan Meeting was held on January 6, 2016 as always at the representative's home. The guests included Mr. Radu Serban, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Embassy for Romania – a country which has been experiencing remarkable economic growth in recent years; Mr. Jiban Mahumder, the Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy for Bangladesh – a country where ties to Japan date back to the eighth century; Mr. Yoshitami Kameoka, a Member of the House of Representatives who was a member in baseball teams from Sakushin Gakuin to Waseda University; Mr. Yoichiro Ikeda of the Ministry of Finance who is known as a unique bureaucrat, for example by presiding over a network that traverses the public and private sectors; Mr. Fumiya Sako, the President of the Romania Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Japan who graduated first in his class at Matsushita School and who has had a multi-faceted career as an interpreter and monk among other professions; and Mr. Shigeyuki Kobayashi, a man who used to work in the television industry and who now lives in Bali. They discussed Japan, Romania and Bangladesh.

## ***Romania – Originally Rumania – a Country Derived from Ancient Rome***

APA means “water” in Romanian. The word *sato* means *furusato* (hometown in Japanese) as another example of Romanian that is similar to Japanese. Japan and Romania have established a close economic relationship. Koyo Seiko (now: JTEKT) was the first company in Japan to expand into Romania. The automotive manufacturing industry, including Koyo Romania, has become a driving force behind the Romanian economy. The French car maker Renault also has a research center in Romania. Now is the time to invest in Romania. Oil and natural gas have been discovered in the Black Sea. This means that investment in

the energy industry is particularly sought after. A subway from the city to the airport is scheduled to be completed by ODA from Japan in 2019. One of the stations on this line will be named “Tokyo” to express gratitude toward Japan for this. There are hopes in Romania that Prime Minister Abe will visit the country when this is completed.

The population of Romania is approximately 20 million. The area of the country is around half that of Honshu plus Shikoku in Japan. Bucharest is the capital. Romania is being called the “tiger” of Europe because the nation's 4% rate of economic growth is at the highest level in the EU. Furthermore, the country has been able to procure capital totaling well over five trillion yen until 2020 from the EU as a fund for economic prosperity. This capital is expected to



primarily come from Germany. However, it is only natural in a certain sense for Romania to receive this money from Germany where they have profited from an increase in exports due to the cheap euro as a result of the strong German mark being integrated into the basket currency of the euro.

President Iohannis, who was elected in 2014, is still young at 55 years of age. The presidency lasts for five years and it is possible to serve for two terms. President Iohannis maintains a close relationship with Japan. This is because he abruptly assumed the presidency after serving as the Mayor of Sibiu with its sister city of Takayama. This is something that is possible with a president chosen by direct election unlike with a prime minister in the parliamentary system of government. Romanians make up more than 80% of the ethnic composition of Romania, but President Iohannis is from the minority German population. The official language of Romania is Romanian. This language is close to the Latin spoken in ancient Rome and is completely different to Slavic. Romanian is also similar to Italian and the people of these two nations are able to understand each other to a certain extent in the sense of it being like a Tohoku dialect speaker and a Kyushu Dialect speaker talking together. Romania was originally called Rumania. It has inherited various aspects from ancient Rome in addition to their language. Constanța, which faces the Black Sea, is a major harbor in Europe – second only to Amsterdam. This town was named after Emperor Constantine. After the Second World War, the country came under the influence of the Soviet Union and people in the nation were forced to learn Russian at one point. However, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian is no longer used; instead English is the second language after Romanian.

### ***Flag of Bangladesh Uses the Flag of Japan as a Reference***

The national flag of Bangladesh is the outline of a red

sun on a green background. This is exactly the same as the national flag of Japan but with a different color scheme. When Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan in 1971, lawmakers came to together decide what the new national flag of their country should be. At that time, they used the national flag of the country they were most friendly with as reference. Accordingly, they referred to the national flag of Japan – the country that had fought the British for Independence along with the Bengali Chandra Bose at the time of the Second World War – and made the background green to represent the richness of the earth. The Bangladeshi war of independence with Pakistan that took place prior to this was a harsh battle that cost the lives of three million people in nine months. Chandra Bose received the cooperation of Japan in establishing the Indian National Army (INA). Moreover, he participated as an observer at the Greater East Asia Conference in 1943. He was involved in an accident when he attempted to head to Manchuria in a Japanese military aircraft from Taiwan on August 18, 1945 and then passed away despite the best efforts to save him by Japanese soldiers. His remains have been interred in Renko Temple in Suginami City.

Prime Minister Hasina of Bangladesh visited Japan in May 2014 and Prime Minister Abe then visited Bangladesh directly after this in September of the same year. On this occasion, the two countries came to an agreement that Bangladesh would withdraw their candidacy to be a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and would instead support Japan in their bid for the same position. As a result, Japan was elected to be a non-permanent member of the Security Council and assumed this position this year. Bangladesh is a country in which approximately 160 million people – greater than the population of Japan – live in territory about 40% the size of Japan. The country's rate of economic growth is also remarkable and the annual rate has continued to exceed 6% over the last seven years. Japan has given significant





assistance to Bangladesh in the past. This has led to Bangladesh having a deep sense of gratitude toward Japan as their number one donor nation.

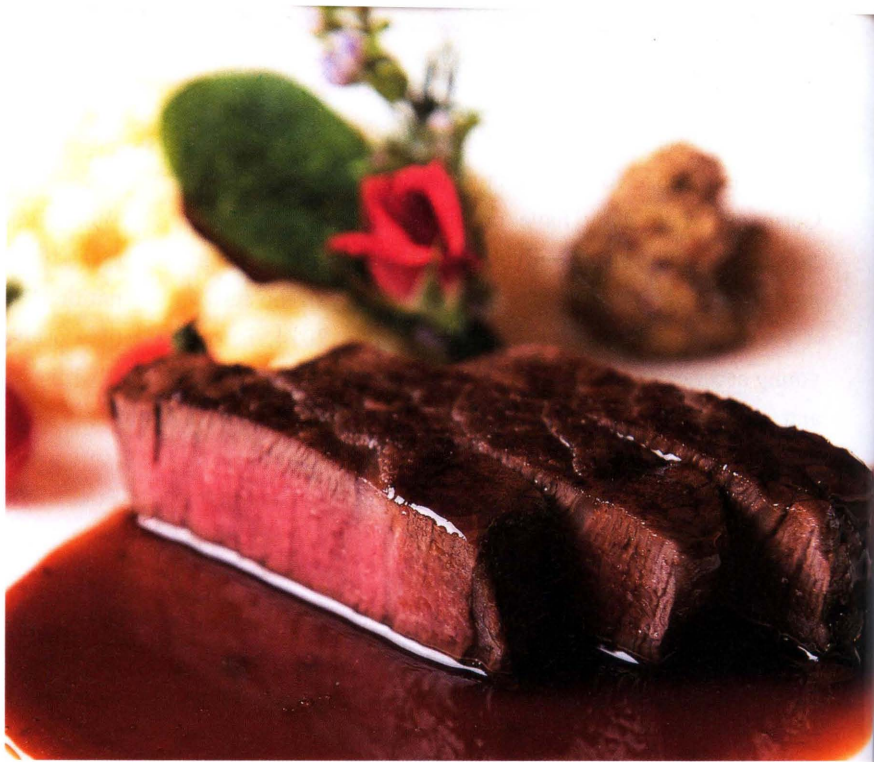
### ***United States Planned War with Japan a Decade Prior to the US-Japan War***

Eleven judges presided over the International Military Tribunal for the Far East – commonly referred to as the Tokyo Trials. Judge Pal, the representative from India, was born in a place close to the Indian border called Kushtia in Bangladesh. Pakistan is an Islamic country, but there are both Hindus and Muslims in Bangladesh.

Judge Pal was a Hindu. The judges other than Judge Pal determined that the defendants were guilty of crimes against peace and humanity in the Tokyo Trials. Against this, Judge Pal was the only one to assert their innocence saying that it was strange to have a trial by ex-post facto law. Judge Pal was the only specialist in international law among the judges. Eventually, the trial was concluded in an extremely unfair manner with even gossip being used as evidence. In fact, Judge Pal had evidence that showed the United States had been planning a war against Japan a decade prior to the US-Japan War as a top secret document of the Government of the United Kingdom. This no doubt led him to assert the innocence of the defendants. Japanese people respect Judge Pal and built a monument honoring him in Yasukuni Shrine. In addition, Prime Minister Abe held informal talks with the son of Judge Pal when he visited India in 2007.

More than 200 companies have expanded into Bangladesh. Opseed is the Bangladesh subsidiary of Koha Corporation. This company employs nearly 1,000 people to manufacture the buttons built into vending machines. In addition to this company, Honda, Mitsubishi, Marubeni, YKK and Sony can also be found in Bangladesh. UNIQLO also has two factories in the country. The reason Japanese companies have expanded into Bangladesh is that there is abundant labor force in addition to the fact that wages are low and the quality of workers is high. The fact the average age of the population is 25 years old has also become an attraction.

If you say that Japanese people did terrible things in Indonesia during the last great war, people in Bali will



get very angry with you and say that is not the case. At that time, there was no country called Indonesia; this land was a colony referred to as the Dutch East Indies. It was Japanese people who provided education to the Indonesians who had had that opportunity taken from them before that and who gave them the wisdom and physical strength just to take on the Dutch. All the people in Bali who know this are grateful to Japanese people. Moreover, they respect Jo Miura – a man who worked ceaselessly for Indonesian independence and who then committed suicide because he felt responsibility at not being able to deliver on this promise to free their country due to Japan losing the war. Ribbons that can be clearly seen from a great distance with the motif of the colors of the national flag of Indonesia adorn the gravestones of the Japanese soldiers who cooperated in the independence movement in Bali. It is important for Japanese people to know these facts and we should also put this in textbooks and teach it to children in school. Hinduism in Bali and Shingon esoteric Buddhism teachings in Japan fit together perfectly. Japan and Bali have also been linked religiously since ancient times.

### ***Japanese Language Broadcasts Have Disappeared from Hotels: The Presence of Japan Is Fading***

Mr. Yoshitami Kameoka, who was born in Minami-Soma, was in his hometown when the Great East Japan Earthquake struck and he experienced the whole disaster. He says he was moved by the splendor of the actions of



the bureaucracy and people in comparison to the unreliable Prime Minister's Office. Lawson provided 3,500 boxed meals in place of school lunches per day over three days to Soma City and delivered rice balls and bread as relief supplies to each prefecture. There were many hotels at this time that stopped operating due to power and water outages. Under such circumstances, APA Hotel continued to operate by welcoming guests after informing them that it was not business as usual in order to meet the needs of those who needed a place to get out of the rain and dew.

Seventy percent of companies do not pay corporation tax. Companies should take on their fair share of the burden because they receive various incentives and use a lot of social infrastructure in their corporate activities. Furthermore, there are companies that try to avoid tax by moving their headquarters overseas. Tax reduction is good, but tax evasion is bad.

The presence of Japan is continuing to fade around the world. The representative went to see in the New Year in Las Vegas as usual. He watches NHK's *Kohaku Utagassen* (Red and White Singing Contest) on television in his hotel every year. However, when he turned on the television on New Year's Eve last year, there were no longer any Japanese channels. Instead, there has been an increase in Chinese and Korean language channels. Even though the yen is weak, the number of Japanese people traveling and studying overseas has been significantly decreasing. Is there no longer a hunger spirit among Japanese people?

It is the education system in Japan that is raising adults who don't doubt what they are told. There is always only one answer in this system and teachers who pose questions with two possible answers are criticized. As a result, Japanese

people have acquired the sense that it is best to answer questions exactly as they have been taught. However, there are in fact a countless number of correct answers in the world. The education system was built by the United States in order to indirectly dominate Japan. Japan must free itself from the influence of the United States and

become a country capable of independent self-defense now 25 years after the end of the Cold War. First, Japan needs to revise its constitution. To this end, it is essential that the Liberal Democratic Party win in this year's House of Councilors election. Will the House of Representatives be dissolved and an election held in a time lag around one month before or after the House of Councilors with consideration for the LDP's allies the New Komeito rather than a double election for both houses of the Diet? However, even if a proposal to amend the constitution is somehow successful with two thirds of parliamentarians in favor, the next big challenge will be the referendum. Those older than 18 years of age will be eligible to vote in this election. We should build a structure to thoroughly teach the truth to young people.

