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**KATERINA
TODORVIĆ
(1877–1974):
A Central European Pianist
and the Japanese Reception of
Western Music in the Early 20th
Century**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to follow the traces of Katerina Todorović (1877–1974), a pianist and piano teacher who spent over 30 years in Japan before the Second World War. Katerina came to Japan in April 1909, accompanying her husband, Dušan Nikolaević Todorović (1875–1963), who accepted an invitation to teach the Russian language at the Military Academy School and the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages (today Tokyo University of Foreign Studies). She left Japan for the United States in July 1940, when war between the two countries

was becoming increasingly likely. In this article, the first decade of her stay in Japan will be dealt with.¹

Both of the Todorovićs raised many excellent talents in each field during their stay in Japan. However, their life and achievements are largely forgotten today. As for Katerina, only the aspect of her life as a piano teacher has been fragmentarily referred to – mainly in the literature on other foreign musicians teaching and performing in Japan.²

Regarding the origin or nationality of Katerina, she has been considered to be a so-called “White Russian.” It is possible that Katerina also described herself in such way for the sake of convenience. However, the term “White Russian” originally refers to Russians who chose exile and life abroad, refusing to accept the Soviet regime established after the Russian Revolution in 1917. Katerina, who left Russia and came to Japan eight years prior to the Revolution, did not fit this category. She was no different from any wife accompanying her husband who had moved to another land because of relocation or a change in his job. It is obvious that she had no intention of going into exile anywhere. However, while in Japan, the Russian Empire collapsed and after the establishment of the Soviet regime, regardless of her own intentions, she lost her nationality. In the United States, which came to be the final destination of the Todorović family, she obtained American citizenship and spent almost 30 years as an American called “Catherine Todorović”. Katerina’s national identity seems in no way simple, because she spent the three eras of Meiji, Taishō and Shōwa in Japan, and her life spanned the three continents of Europe, Asia and North America.

Many people have helped me in uncovering the secrets of her life, especially with the research. My heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Michael Tripp and Mr. Dana Todorovic, descendants of the Todorovićs. I could not have described the couple’s early life without their help. My thanks also go to the staff of the Archives of Modern Japanese Music, Meiji Gakuin University Library, for their help in using their materials.

1 This paper is based on the following article written by the author in Japanese: 柴理子「『白系ロシア人』音楽家カテリーナ・トドロヴィチの日本滞在(1)——1910年代までの足跡」(Shiba, Riko. The Stay in Japan of a ‘White Russian’ Pianist Catherine Todorovic: Her Career until the 1910s (1)). *Eジャーナル『中欧研究』(The Electronic Journal of Central European Studies in Japan)*. Tokyo: Josai Institute for Central European Studies), 2, 2016.

2 山本尚志『日本を愛したユダヤ人ピアニスト レオ・シロタ』(Yamamoto, Hisashi. *Leo Sirota: A Jewish Pianist who loved Japan*). Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbun Publishing Inc., 2004; 山本尚志『レオニード・クロイツァー——その生涯と芸術』(Yamamoto, Hisashi. *Leonid Kreutzer: His Life and Art*). Tokyo: Ongaku No Tomo Sha Cor., 2006; 萩谷由紀子『クロイツァーの肖像——日本の音楽界を育てたピアニスト』(Hagiya, Yukiko. *A Portrait of Leonid Kreutzer*). Tokyo: Yamaha Music Media Corporation, 2016. As for Katerina, the following article has been the only achievement: 柴宜弘「ドゥシャン・トドロヴィチ——ロシア語を教えたセルビア人」(Shiba, Nobuhiro. Dušan Todorović: A Serb Teaching Russian Language in Japan). In: 柴宜弘・山崎信一編『セルビアを知るための60章』(Shiba, Nobuhiro, Yamazaki, Shinichi (eds.). *60 Chapters to Understand Serbia*). Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2015, pp. 323–327.

FROM RUSSIA TO JAPAN

Early Life

It is hard to know much of Katerina's early life in detail, partly because she does not seem to have kept a diary – or, at least, there is no trace of such records. According to the search result on an American genealogy website “Ancestry.com”, Katerina was born in September 14, 1875 to the Schlesinger family in Kiliya, a small town in the Ukraine. The birth year listed on the website is probably inaccurate. According to the inscription on Katerina's tombstone in the Serbian cemetery in California, 1877 should be the correct date of birth.³ The passenger list of the Japanese liner “*Asama-maru*” which she took for the United States in July 1930 shows that she was 52 years old at that time.

According to Mr. Tripp, both Katherina's father Jacob and her mother Rivka were of Jewish origin.⁴ In December 1916, Katerina said the following in an interview with a Japanese newspaper:

My mother was from Romania, where many relatives lived as well, but I was there for only one year after my birth, because my father was from Russia and we moved there. After that, I was educated in Russia mostly, so I don't have much to say about Romania. However, I often visited that beautiful country, situated not so far from Russia, where I stayed at my aunt's house during the summer holidays and delighted to be in touch with the natural scenery with its beautiful mountains.⁵

This interview says “Mrs. Todorović, a Romanian Lady Tells” in the headline. In spite of its declaration of neutrality, just after the outbreak of the First World War in August of 1916, Romania entered the war on the side of the Allies. By the end of the year however, the capital Bucharest fell into the hands of the Central Powers. It seems that the interview was done with the aim of listening to Romanian live voices. It is interesting that Katerina was known as a Romanian among the Japanese public.

Katerina's birth place, Kiliya, is a part of the Ukraine today, but historically, it was a part of Bessarabia over which Turkey, Romania and Russia had been in conflict with each other. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the territorial jurisdiction of Bessarabia has changed several times. At the beginning of

3 See the photographic image on the following site: <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=todorovic&GSfn=catherine&GSbyrel=all&GSdyrel=all&GSob=n&GRid=69975584&df=all&>

4 Tripp, Michael. *Jewish Connections* (unpublished).

5 *Tokyo Asahi*, December 8, 1916.

the century Kiliya was under Russian rule, and then was transferred to Romania in 1856 as a result of the Russian defeat in the Crimean War. In the *Asama-maru's* passenger list in 1930, Katerina declared her birth place as "Kiliya in Bessarabia", but in fact, under the circumstances, there was little else she could write.

By the decision of the Berlin Conference in 1878, Kiliya was again ceded to Russia, but in September 1877 when Katerina was born, it should have been under Romania, as she stated in the above article. Considering that her "mother is from Romania," it is possible that Kiliya is her mother's hometown, but there is no material available to make this conclusion definite. On July 31, 1940 – the day when the Todorovičs left Japan forever, Katerina was entered as "Romanian" under the heading of "Race, people" in the passenger list of the Japanese liner "*Nitta-maru*." Katerina lived in Romania just for one year and spent most of her life abroad, but Kiliya would be her homeland throughout her life.

Katerina was the eldest daughter of her family and had four siblings: two younger brothers and two younger sisters. The birthplace of her oldest sister Clara is unknown, but her oldest brother Boris was born in 1881 in Odessa, which was supposed to be the place the family was to move to from Kiliya. It is situated in the coastal area of the Black Sea and as Katerina said, it would have been possible for them to go often to Romania during the summer vacation. However, her youngest sister Elisabeth was born in 1887 in Kiliya, and given this datum, it is possible that the family returned to Kiliya any time between 1878 and 1887. Or, her mother may have returned to her parents' alone in order to give birth. Either way, there is no material for a definitive conclusion. In addition, the birthplace of the youngest brother Anisim, who was born in 1890, is Odessa. There are many uncertainties regarding the family's whereabouts after leaving Kiliya in 1878, but it is obvious that they had a base in Odessa.

It is not known why the family moved to Odessa, but one reason might be that the town was the largest center for Russian Jews. According to communications between Katerina and her son Jacob at a later date, her musical career also started in Odessa. After learning the fundamentals of the piano with some local teachers, she went on to the Vienna Conservatory of Music. Her father decided to take her to Vienna, not to St. Petersburg or Moscow on the advice of her teachers in Odessa.

At the Vienna Conservatory, she studied piano with Prof. Robert Fischhof (1856–1918). In 1900 she graduated from the conservatory with excellent results also in Music History, Chamber Music and other subjects. Fischhof himself was a graduate from the same conservatory. He studied piano with Anton Door (1833–1919), who was a student of Carl Czerny (1791–1857), famous for his books

of studies for the piano. After graduation, Fischhof continued his piano studies with the virtuoso Franz Liszt (1811–1886) and Teodor Leszetycki (1830–1915), a famous Polish piano teacher. It might be interesting to note that both Liszt and Leszetycki were Czerny’s pupils and Czerny was Beethoven’s disciple. From the viewpoint of this musical genealogy, it can be said that Katerina inherited an orthodox musical tradition and excellent performance techniques in European classical music.

Going back to Katerina’s family history, her younger brother Anisim also engaged in music and seems to have been a renowned conductor and composer in Russia, while her sister Clara was a teacher in Chisinau, the biggest city of Bessarabia at that time.⁶ Her father’s occupation is not certain, but he was probably wealthy, as his children received a good education and could even study abroad.

A History of the Marriage of the Todorovičs and Their Arrival in Japan

Branko Vukelić (1904–1945), who came to Japan in 1933 as a correspondent of the “Politika” which was a daily newspaper circulated in Belgrade, reported on Katerina’s husband in his own paper dated July 2, 1934. The following is a quote from the aforementioned discourse:

I left Serbia when I was 19 years old, after finishing the first year of a course at the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Belgrade. I graduated from a university in Russia, in St. Petersburg, and obtained doctoral degrees in physics and mathematics. At that time, I became acquainted with my wife. She was a young musician and was going to graduate from the Vienna Conservatory. We lived in Russia for about ten years, but in 1909 I was invited by the Japanese government and became an instructor of the Russian language at the military academy in Tokyo. Shortly after that I was appointed a professor of Slavic studies at a national university of foreign languages in Tokyo. Last summer I had been working for just 20 years. And last April it was 25 years since I had first landed in Japan.⁷

This passage is worth notice not only because it was told by Dušan himself, but also because it includes several important items of information about the

6 The Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names of the World Holocaust Remembrance Center “Yad Vashem” contains a document about Clara. She was killed together with her husband in Chisinau in 1942. http://yvng.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&advancedSearch=true&sln_value=Roz_Gorenstein&sln_type=synonyms&sfm_value=Ecaterina&sfm_type=synonyms

7 山崎洋編訳『ブランコ・ヴケリッチ 日本からの手紙——ポリティカ紙掲載記事(1933–1940)』未知谷 (Yamasaki Vukerić, Hiroshi (ed.). *Branko Vukerić, Letters from Japan: His Articles Published in “Politika” (1933–1940)*. Tokyo: Michitani, 2007, p. 120.

history of the first encounter between the Todorovićs and their arrival in Japan, but unfortunately the dates are not visible. While it matches with the other information we have, the chronology still needs to be accurately determined. Dušan was a Serbian born on the 22nd of February, 1875 in Belgrade, the capital city of Serbia.⁸ He went to Russia to study in 1894. It was probably the turn of the century when he graduated from a University in St. Petersburg. According to Dušan's words, at about the same time, he came to know Katerina, who decided to graduate from the Vienna Conservatory. As mentioned above, Katerina graduated from the conservatory in 1900.

However, there is a fact which is not told in Dušan's story. Namely, this was the second marriage for both Katerina and him. Before her marriage with Dušan, Katerina had married a Jew whose name was Joseph Kogan and in September 1902, she had a son, Jacob, with Joseph.⁹ According to Mr. Tripp, the couple got divorced in Jacob's infancy. Meanwhile, Dušan had probably got married as well and had his first son, Valerian, in October 1902 and then in May 1904 his second son, Dragutin¹⁰. There is no information about Dušan's first marriage. Even the spouse is unknown.

According to the "Ancestry.com" website, the birthplace of Jacob was Ismail in the Ukraine, while Dušan's two sons were born in Niš in Serbia. Judging from the above quote by Dušan, the place where Katerina and Dušan met could have been St. Petersburg, although their first place of contact is not mentioned anywhere explicitly. There is a possibility that they met for the first time around 1900, as Dušan mentioned in the interview, but they could not have "lived together in Russia for ten years" before moving to Japan in 1909, based on the fact that a photograph of Katerina with her little son taken in Ismail in 1905 shows that Katerina was still in Bessarabia around this time. Considering that Dušan's younger son was born in May 1904, and in December 1907 Victor, the only son between Dušan and Katerina was born, the couple must have got acquainted with each other around 1905 at the earliest. Whatever the case may have been, the two probably felt sympathy for each other because both were non-Russians.

Dušan came to Japan by "invitation of the Japanese government"; specifically, through the mediation of Sadatoshi Yasugi (1876–1966), a professor of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.¹¹ Yasugi recognized Dušan as a suitable person for the post, considering he had the skill of a native speaker. However, if

8 Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), Ref.A10113356400. <http://www.digital.archives.go.jp/das/image/M0000000000000052025>

9 Dr. Michael Tripp is a grandson of Jacob.

10 Mr. Dana Todorovic, another relative whom the author became acquainted with and who is Dragutin's son.

11 柴宜弘 (Shiba, N.), Dušan Todorović, p. 325.

Yasugi hadn't had the unusual idea of inviting a Serb to Japan to teach Russian, the fate of the Todorovičs would have been completely different.

Yet, things being as they were, Katerina and Dušan stepped on Japanese soil with their four sons in April 1909.

KATERINA'S MUSIC PERFORMANCES IN JAPAN UNTIL THE EARLY 1910S

Debut as a concert pianist in Japan

To the Japanese public, Katerina is known as “a good piano teacher” who mainly taught children of high-class families in prewar Japan. Among her pupils were outstanding pianists and educators such as Sonoko Inoue (1926–1986), Toyoko Oriomoto (Toyoko Kreutzer, 1916–1990), and Akiko Teranishi (1928–).¹² However, it is not commonly known that Katerina herself started her musical career in Japan not as a teacher, but as a concert pianist.

Katerina's first performance for the Japanese public was at a welcome party for the “Russian Tourism Organization” held on July 3, 1909.¹³ Surprisingly enough, she became active as early as three months after her arrival in Japan, despite having to take care of four little children in an unfamiliar land. In the same year, she made a full debut. She performed Chopin's Ballade in G Minor and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12 at the 52nd concert organized by *Meiji Ongakukai* (the Meiji Music Society) on December 16. The *Meiji Ongakukai* was established in January 1898 under the leadership of the president of the Tokyo Academy of Music, Rokushirō Uehara (1848–1913), and held concerts once a month at the Academy's own concert hall *Sōgakudō*. The Meiji Music Society was an organization comprised of motivated intellectuals, while the *Dai Nihon Ongakukai* (Great Japan Music Society), whose functions took place mainly at the *Rokumeikan* (Deer-cry Hall), was the favored society of the members of the upper class.¹⁴

The 52nd *Meiji Ongakukai* concert was not a solo recital, but a joint concert including orchestral music and Japanese traditional music. Katerina performed with two violinists, Wilhelm Dubravčić and George Vignetti. According to a

12 Ms. Akiko Teranishi was one of Katerina's pupils in Japan. Two interviews with her (February 11 and August 5, 2016) provided me with valuable information relating to Katerina's personality and her way of teaching piano etc. Heartfelt thanks to her for help.

13 *Tokyo Nichinichi*, July 4, 1909.

14 増井敬二『日本のオペラ——明治から大正へ』(Masui, Keiji. *Operas in Japan: From the Meiji to Taishō Period*. Tokyo: Minon Ongaku Shiryōkan, 1984, pp. 77–79).

Japanese newspaper, the *Yomiuri*, on February 19, 1910, only three months after the *Meiji Ongakukai* concert, Katerina held a charity concert with the assistance of the Russian ambassador and cooperated again with the same two violinists to raise funds for the families of naval officers killed in action. The article says that over 160 Japanese and foreign ladies and gentlemen attended the concert.¹⁵ Katerina performed nine pieces for the piano composed by Bach, Chopin, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff and other composers, in addition to playing the accompaniment of Beethoven's Violin Sonata No. 9 "Kreutzer." In the "*Ongakukai* (Music World)", Katerina's performances in "Rhapsody" "Tocatta and Fugue" and Vignetti's performances in the "Kreutzer Sonata" and Tartini's sonata garnered the applause of the whole hall.¹⁶

It can be said that Katerina's debut as a pianist in Japan went very well, while the most important thing for her was to have been able to make the acquaintance of the above mentioned two violinists. The subsequent close professional relationship she had with them would be helpful later not only for her career as a musician in Japan, but also in her other projects such as charity activities.

Wilhelm Dubravčić (1868–1925) came to Japan with his wife Anna in May 1901. He was appointed by the Imperial Court as director of the *Gagaku* (ceremonial music) orchestra and remained in this appointment until his death. According to documents from the Imperial Household Archives, Dubravčić was born in Fiume in Austria-Hungary on December 23, 1868, and had studied at the Vienna Conservatory between 1881 and 1887. From 1890 to 1892, he had worked as a violinist at the Warsaw Imperial Theater.¹⁷ In Japan he actively performed, in addition to his daily routine of directing and educating the orchestra. By agreeing to renew his contract with the Imperial Court every two years, he continued to support the development of Western music in Japan.

Although Dubravčić came to Japan as "an Austrian", his birthplace of Fiume (nowadays Rijeka in Croatia) is a Dalmatian port city on the Adriatic coast. Judging from his family name, we can be certain that ethnically he was not German, but of Slavic origin, probably Croatian¹⁸. This is backed up by an interview Vukelić gave together with the Czech architect Antonin Raymond (1888–1976) written on March 3, 1935 by the correspondent of the "Politika" in Tokyo,

15 *Yomiuri*, February 20, 1910.

16 *Ongakukai*, vol. 3, no. 3, March 1910.

17 『欧州音楽教師雇入録二』(*Documents on Employment of European music teachers*, vol. 2), Imperial Household Archives (宮内公文書館), 11564.

18 Dubravčić was possibly the first Croat who came to Japan. He was supposed to be an Italian, because he also used an Italian name "Gulielmo". Zenzō Matsumoto wrote in his book that Dubravčić was "an Austrian of Italian origin". See: 松本善三『提琴有情——日本のヴァイオリン音楽史』(Matsumoto, Zenzō. *Violin Is a Sentient Being: A History of Violin Music in Japan*). Tokyo: Lesson-no-tomo-sha, 1995.

wherein Vukelić refers to “the late Dubravčić who was a conductor of the Tokyo Imperial Court Orchestra “ and “Mr. Todorović, Professor of Slavic studies” as “my fellow countrymen”.¹⁹

In Katerina’s eyes, Japan, which is situated in a corner of the Far East, must have been an undeveloped country from the viewpoint of classical music. Yet as soon as she arrived in Japan, she found that Dubravčić, a graduate from the same conservatory she had attended, was actively involved in the very heart of the Japanese music world! Also, he was from Croatia, and what’s more, a place close to her home town! It is easy to imagine that she felt confident that she would do well in Japan.

As is well known, the Meiji government tried to introduce Western music mainly via Germany and Austria, and invited experts from both countries as “*oyatoi gaikokujin* (hired foreigners)”. However, when we look in greater detail at the backgrounds of the musicians who were known as “Germans” or “Austrians”, we find that not a few were actually from the peripheral area of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. For example, Franz Eckert (1852–1916), known for establishing the foundations of music education in Meiji Japan, and who mainly focused on the training of Navy military bands, was a German from Prussia. His birthplace of Neurode is now Nowa Ruda, a small city in the southwestern part of Poland, quite close to the Czech border. According to Rihei Nakamura’s research, it is very likely that he was a Catholic of Polish origin²⁰. After Eckert left Japan in 1899, it was Dubravčić who took over the work of guiding the Imperial Ceremonial Orchestra. Rudolf Dittrich (1861–1919) was also known as an Austrian professor, but his birthplace is Biała (nowadays a part of Bielsko-Biała in Poland) in Galicia, located on the periphery of Austria-Hungary. Dittrich trained pioneering Japanese musicians at the Tokyo Academy of Music.

Going back to Katerina’s performance activities from 1909 to 1910, we find that another costar, a French violinist called George Vignetti, played a significant role as well, although his career as a performer can hardly be traced today and even his birth and death dates are unknown. An article in a Japanese popular newspaper *Yorozu Chōhō* dated February 14, 1909, wrote that he was 26 years old, so possibly he was born in 1883. However, as the same paper presented in a sympathetic way that “the virtuosity in his performance had already been appreciated by musicians not only in France, but all over the world, and he had been well known as a genius musician”, it seems that his tour of Japan in 1909 evoked a huge response from the Japanese public. Before the joint concert with Katerina,

19 山崎 (Yamasaki), *Branko Vukerić*, pp. 196–197.

20 中村理平『洋楽導入者の軌跡——日本近代洋学史序説』(Nakamura, Rihei. *The pioneers of Introduction of European Music to Japan: An Introduction to a History of European Music in Modern Japan*). Tokyo: Tosui Shobo, Publishers & Co. Ltd., 1993, p. 350.

Vignetti had already performed on February 19 and March 14 at Yūrakuza Hall in Tokyo, on April 27 in the Imperial Hotel, and on May 12 in the Yokohama Grand Hotel.²¹

After his long stay of over two years, Vignetti finally decided to leave Japan for the United States. On April 4, a farewell concert was held at the *Kazoku Kaikan* (the Peers Club) with about 150 Japanese and foreign nobles and amateurs attending from the Tokyo-Yokohama region on invitation. Katerina gave the first public performance of Anatoly Lyadov's *Barcarolle* in F-sharp major Op. 44, as well as Beethoven's *Violin Sonata No. 7* with Vignetti on the violin.²²

According to the "*Ongaku-kai*" published in March 1911, the concert was organized by Baron and Baroness Itō. Interestingly, Baroness Itō was Vignetti's elder sister. "Baron Itō" is supposed to be Yoshigorō Ito (1858–1919), a Japanese naval officer who was married to the Frenchwoman Marie Louise Frappaz (1871–1945). At the end of the concert, Mrs. Itō herself performed an ensemble piece for the violin and piano together with her brother. This farewell concert may have been a good opportunity for Katerina to become acquainted with people from Japan's upper class, and in fact, when the Todorovičs later launched an organization in support of Serbia during the First World War, Mrs. Itō added her name to the promoters.

Encounters with Japanese Musicians

Katerina performed together with Dubravčić at all the three concerts she appeared in 1912.²³ It seems that Dubravčić tried to provide her with playing opportunities. The first one, the 56th concert organized by the Meiji Music Society, was held at the Kanda Youth Hall on March 21. The program was a mixture of Western music and Japanese traditional music, including solos on the piano and the violin, orchestral music, string music and traditional Japanese songs (*Nagauta*). Katerina performed two pieces by Liszt.

The first three decades of the 20th century Katerina spent in Japan were a very interesting period in the history of the reception of Western music in Japan. Japanese musicians of the first generation who had studied at the dawn of the introduction of Western music were still active, while the younger generation that would continue to be active until the end of the Showa period after the

21 増井 (Masui), *Operas in Japan*, p. 40.

22 大嶋かず路「明治期日本におけるロシア音楽受容——正教会と音楽学校の功績およびその影響関係について」(Ōshima, Kazumi. *The Reception of Russian Music in Meiji-Era Japan: The Role of the Orthodox Church and Its Interrelation with Educational Facilities*). 『上智ヨーロッパ研究』 (*Sophia: Journal of European Studies*), 6, 2014, pp. 165–189.

23 *Ongakukai*, vol. 5, no. 4, March; vol. 5, no. 5, May, 1912.

Second World War had just started their careers. It is noteworthy that Katerina performed and socialized with not only foreign musicians but also Japanese musicians, both of the older and younger generation.

On March 28, 1912, Katerina appeared with Dubravčić at the “Vocal Music Concert”, which was held at the Imperial Hotel “under the auspices of an accomplished vocalist Sarcoli”.²⁴ Adolfo Sarcoli (1867–1936) is an Italian tenor. He toured Shanghai in the autumn of 1911, but was forced to move to Japan because his contract was cancelled owing to the outbreak of the Chinese Revolution.²⁵ He settled in Japan and taught many pupils who aimed to be professional vocalists at the dawn of the Japanese reception of Western music, having distinguished achievements in introducing the art of bel canto to Japan. For this he is called “the father of bel canto in Japan”.²⁶

It is also noteworthy that the world-famous Japanese soprano singer Tamaki Miura (1884–1946) performed at the “Vocal Music Concert” together with Katerina. In December of the previous year she had sung duets from Mascagni’s opera “Cavalleria Rusticana” together with Sarcoli at the “Teikoku Gekijō (Imperial Theater)”, which was established in that year as the first Western-style theater in Japan. Although only a part of the opera was performed, it was the very first performance of an Italian opera in Japan.²⁷ After her marriage in 1913, she accompanied her husband who was travelling to Europe to do research. In 1915 she succeeded to debut in London, and the following year in America.

Katerina had also performed with Sarcoli at the “Japanese and Western Music concert” held at the Yūrokuza in November 1915. It might be owing to Sarcoli that her playing opportunities with Japanese vocalists increased remarkably after that date.

Regarding her relationship with Japanese musicians, it is also worth noting that Katerina collaborated with Kōsaku Yamada (1886–1965), a composer and conductor known as the organizer of the first professional orchestra in Japan. On March 29, 1916, Katerina appeared at the 17th concert organized by the “Tokyo Philharmonie Society.” The program consisted of two solo pieces for the piano performed by Katerina, two songs by an alto named Waterhouse, and four pieces for a chamber orchestra. It was the orchestra of “the Society for the Study of Chamber Music” that performed the chamber music conducted by Yamada.²⁸

24 *Ongakukai*, vol. 5, no. 5, May 1912.

25 増井 (Masui), *Operas in Japan*, p. 176.

26 直江学美「日本におけるベル・カントの父、アドルフォ・サルコリの生涯」(Naoe, Manami. Adolfo Sarcoli, the Father of “Bel canto” in Japan). 『金沢星稜大学人間科学研究』(*Kanazawa Seiryō University of Human Sciences*), 4, 2, 2011, pp. 41–44.

27 増井 (Masui), *Operas in Japan*, pp. 175–176.

28 The program of the 17th concert by “the Tokyo Philharmonie Society” (provided by Mr. Dana Todorović).

The “Tokyo Philharmonie Society”, an organization for popularizing Western music, was established in March 1910 following the initiative by a Japanese entrepreneur Koyata Iwasaki (1879–1945), and held concerts based at the Imperial Theater. One month before this, sponsored by Iwasaki, Yamada had left for Germany to study and returned to Japan in 1914 after studying abroad for 4 years. On December 6, Yamada conducted the extraordinary orchestra of more than 80 members at the 14th concert organized by the Tokyo Philharmonie Society, performing his own works, including the first Japanese symphony “Kachidoki to Heiwa (Triumphant Shout and Peace)” composed in 1912. Because this concert was a great success, Iwasaki gave the green light to Yamada to organize and manage a permanent orchestra of the “Tokyo Philharmonie Orchestra”. In 1915 the orchestra held six subscription concerts, starting with a preliminary concert in May. However, at the beginning of 1916, because of a personal scandal caused by Yamada, Iwasaki suddenly cut off his financial support for the orchestra, and the Tokyo Philharmonic Society, which had been burdened by a deficit, was forced to dissolve.²⁹ March 1916, when Katerina performed at the 17th concert, also marked the end of the Tokyo Philharmonie Society.

Although Yamada’s first orchestra was short-lived, he continued to take a leading role in developing Japanese symphony orchestras. His activities would bear fruit with the establishment of Japan’s first professional orchestra the “New Symphony Orchestra”. Katerina not only witnessed the history of the development of Japanese orchestras from the dawn of the introduction of classical music in Japan, but was also to perform later with the New Symphony Orchestra. No other musician, whether Japanese or foreign, would ever gain such unique experiences.

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES IN THE LATE 1910S

During the First World War

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Katerina achieved a considerable degree of success as a concert pianist in only a short span of years after her arrival in Japan. Keiji Masui, a Japanese music critic, describing the Japanese music scene in the latter half of the Taishō period, wrote that the three musicians Dubravčić, Sarcoli and Katerina played a significant role not only in performing, but also in training leading musicians of the next generation as teachers in the field of classical music.³⁰

²⁹ 増井 (Masui), *Operas in Japan*, pp. 258–259.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

Just after the new era of Taishō had begun in Japan, war clouds began to gather over the European continent, and in 1914 (the third year of Taishō), the First World War finally broke out. All of Serbia, Romania and Russia where the relatives of the Todorovićs lived were drawn into the war. Serbia entered the war in July 1914, Russia in August of the same year, and Romania in August 1916, after having remained neutral for a while. There are few materials which show how Katerina and her family spent their days during the war. All we can do here is to attempt to trace their footsteps by means of articles from Japanese newspapers and periodicals.

While the reason is uncertain, Katerina gave no concerts until March 1914, after having performed at four concerts in 1912. The first item of information to refer to the Todorovićs after the outbreak of the war is a short article in the *Ongakukai* published in December 1915. According to the article, at a concert organized by the “Nijusseiki-sha (20th Century Company)” and held at the Kanda Youth Hall in October 29 of the same year, “Mr. Todorović from Serbia delivered an enthusiastic speech with resentment for his home country.”³¹ In this period, the war was rapidly getting worse for Serbia, following Bulgaria’s entry into the war on the side of the Central Powers in September 1915. The Serbian government with its military forces had already been forced to retreat from the capital Belgrade in the autumn of 1914. In 1915–1916, they had to establish their base outside the country, moving through Albania to the Greek island of Corfu.

In the interview in December 1916 quoted in Chapter 1, Katerina criticized the behavior of the Romanian government, which had abruptly entered the war without sufficient preparations aiming “to fish in troubled waters.”

To think that this beautiful country is being left at the mercy of the invading army really makes me feel so indignant, but if I may comment on the situation, I must say without doubt the Romanian government erred by having entered the war without preparations. They could have prepared during the two years after the outbreak of the war. In addition, the people do not know the facts. I think good result will be brought only after everything goes well. I truly believe that there are many lessons to be learned in this world, but I really feel sad that the price paid in the learning is far too high.³²

Furthermore, in March 1917 (February according to the Julian calendar) the Russian Revolution broke out. How did Katerina take the turbulence in the

31 Shinpei Higuchi, Yoshiko Nagasaka, Vasiliy Eroshenko, and the Mitsukoshi string orchestra were present at the concert. Higuchi was a baritone(?) and Nagasaka a Soprano singer. Eroshenko, a famous Esperantist, had been in Japan since the previous year.

32 *Tokyo Asahi*, December 8, 1916.

country where her family lived? Contrary to what the above-mentioned article in March 1916 had stated, Katerina was described as a Russian in this interview by the same newspaper. Katerina as “a Russian” seemed to have maintained a good relationship with the representatives of Imperial Russia in Japan, giving concerts sponsored by the Russian Embassy. However, regarding the collapse of the government of Imperial Russia, she interrupted the interviewer who said that “it is an unfortunate event for Russia”, and said “It’s a matter for congratulations.” She also added that Russia should have done this earlier, with her face beaming with joy from the bottom of her heart. In the following excerpt from this interview, she talks about the future of the government, the people and the future of Russia.

(...) The officers and soldiers sent to the war are not professionals but members of the military reserve force. Everyone has their own profession and can work freely as a citizen. Therefore they have the right to assert the freedom of the people’s will against the government. The government should be the people’s government. What good is a despotic government that does not respect the will of the people? In this war the government has adopted means by which it should never have won the war against Germany. To call it a shortage of food is fallacious. It is not a shortage but poor government. The same goes for the supply of munitions. I have been extremely worrying that the war could be ended, because the government has been conducting the war in a wrong way by which it would never gain a victory. I am really delighted to imagine the new future of Russia in which the government will respect the people’s will.³³

How did Katerina respond to the October Revolution, having been filled with hope for the future of Russia after the collapse of Tsarist Russia? How does the Revolution affect her life and activities? Unfortunately, we have no means of answering these questions. However, it is a fact that Katerina organized or attended various charity concerts in the late 1910s.

On March 4, 1916, Katerina appeared at a charity concert for the “Kumamoto Kaishun Hospital (known in English as the Kumamoto Hospital of the Resurrection of Hope)”, held in the Aoyama Gakuin auditorium, performing “Awakening of the Lion”, Op.115 composed by the Polish pianist and composer Antoni Kątski (1817–1899) and some other pieces for the piano. The “Kumamoto Kaishun Hospital” was a leper hospital which was established in the city of Kumamoto by a British female missionary Hannah Riddell (1855–1932). At first the hospital was run through donations – mainly from the United Kingdom and the United States – but remittances stopped coming after Japan’s victory in the

33 Ibid.

Russo-Japanese War. Consequently, the funds for running the hospital became dependent on donations within Japan.³⁴ The charity concert is interesting owing to its performers. In addition to Shinpei Higuchi and Yoshiko Nagasaka – vocalists who performed at the above-mentioned concert by the “20th Century Company” – we can find the name of “Haydn Quartet”, the first Japanese string quartet, and a Russian writer and esperantist Vasili Yakovlevich Eroshenko (1890–1952).³⁵

After the Russian revolution broke out, no small number of Russian refugees fled to Japan. On June 12, 1917, Katerina appeared at the “YMCA Charity Concert” organized by the Young Women’s Christian Association (YMCA), with Japanese soprano Nobuko Suzuki and others, and played her favorite pieces, Lyadov’s Barcarolle and Chopin’s Ballade. According to the “*Ongakukai*” published in July 1917, the concert was given “to aid Russian children facing starvation caused by the war”.³⁶

On March 16, 1918, a charity concert was held at the Kanda Youth Hall in support of Serbia, which had suffered great damage in the war. Two articles in *Ongakukai* and *Gekkan gakufu* reported on this concert, but they are slightly different from each other. According to *Ongakukai*, this charity concert was sponsored by “the Association for the Relief of Serbia’ representing the Serbian Red Cross Society.”³⁷ In October 1914, just after the outbreak of the war, Dušan had privately donated 150 yen to the Serbian Red Cross through the Japanese Red Cross Society. It was at the request for emergency aid from the Serbian Red Cross that he came to initiate the establishment of the Association³⁸. Katerina attended meetings of the Association as an originator, together with five ladies of the peers, including the Marquis Nagako Nabeshima as a leader and the above-mentioned Baroness Mariko Ito (Marie Louise Frappaz).³⁹ The Association for the Relief of Serbia collected donations from Japanese citizens, as well as relief supplies such as medical goods, drugs and clothing and sent them to Serbia. The concert on March 16 was clearly held as a part of the Association’s activities. According to a small report in the March issue of *Gekkan Gakufu*, it was Mrs. Todorović who as “a compatriot” had organized the concert for “the Serbian people who had suffered the most disastrous damages in their history.” Although it is a misunderstanding that Katerina was a Serb, it was probably true that she took the initiative in planning and organizing the concert.

34 Many officials and prominent persons such as Shigenobu Ōkuma (1838–1922), Eiichi Shibusawa (1840–1931), Gentarō Kodama (1852–1906) made donations and supported the hospital.

35 *Gekkan Gakufu*, the April issue, 1916, p. 25; *Ongakukai*, no. 174, April 1916.

36 *Ongakukai*, vol. 18, no. 189, July 1917.

37 *Ongakukai*, no. 198, April 1918.

38 柴宜弘 (Shiba, N.), Dušan Todorović, pp. 325–326.

39 Crveni krst Srbije 11–1tif, Arhiv Srbije.

Joint Performances with the Polish Pianist Jadwiga Zaleska

Katerina performed constantly – not only with Japanese, but also with foreign performers who lived in Japan and overseas, even after the outbreak of the First World War. In 1918 she was particularly active, performing at six concerts within the year – the most in her career as a pianist.

From the mid-1910s to the end of the decade, the arrival of foreign musicians declined drastically due to the war, but in turn, a number of Russian musicians came to Japan, directly or indirectly influenced by the revolution and forced to earn a livelihood elsewhere, some of whom Katerina also performed together with.

Jadwiga Zaleska (nee Iwanowska, 1879–1944) might deserve greater attention here, because she was not a Russian but a Pole, although she did come to Japan from Russia in this period. An article in the April 1918 issue of *Gekkan gakufu* described her as the most brilliant pianist among those who had come from Russia. She had studied the piano with the Russian pianist and composer Anton Rubinstein (1829–1894), known as the founder of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Apparently, another world-famous Polish pianist, Josef Hofmann (1876–1957) had been her fellow student. She got married at the age of 18 and was appointed as the director of an imperial school of music in Tomsk only one year later. As a pianist, it seems she performed in Siberia, mainly in Tomsk.⁴⁰ Judging from the fact that before coming to Japan she had been “a professor at the Petrograd Imperial Music School”, she was probably highly valued in Russia.

Zaleska’s first public performance in Japan was at the “Ballet and Music Concert” held in *Gēte-za* (the Gaiety Theater) in Yokohama on January 11, 1918.⁴¹ According to the article titled “The movement of a foreign music star” in the July issue of *Ongakukai*, Zaleska traveled across Japan from Hakodate to Fukuoka, performing about 40 times in total. It was at her first concert in Tokyo on February 23, that she played with Katerina. In the second part of the concert the two pianists played Anton Allensky’s composition “Suite no. 2 for two pianos.” Perhaps Katerina was favorably impressed by this collaboration, as on March 16, Zaleska played several solo and ensemble pieces at the above-mentioned charity concert for Serbia.⁴²

40 According to Marta Sajdek, Zaleska had already performed at a concert in Poland in February 1894. See: Sajdek, Marta. Akcje koncertowe krakowskiego Towarzystwa Muzycznego w ostatnich latach XIX wieku. *Młoda Muzykologia*, Rocznik 2009, Instytut Muzykologii Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, p. 124.

41 升本匡彦『横浜ゲーテ座——明治・大正の西洋劇場』(Masumoto, Kunihiko. *The Gaiety Theater in Yokohama: A Western-style Theater in Japan in the Meiji and Taishō Period*). Tokyo: Iwasaki Museum, 1986, p. 230.

42 *Tokyo Asahi*, February 26, 1918.

From the viewpoint of a history of Western music in Japan, we also must not ignore the “Mrs. Zaleska’s Piano Concert” held on 7th, 9th and 11th May 1918. Zaleska gave a solo recital on the second evening, while on the first and third day she played together with other musicians including Katerina. It is worth noting the Japanese musicians who performed at the concerts, because all of them had played a pioneering role in the history of Western music in Japan. On the first day, the sisters Nobu Kōda (1870–1946) and Kō Andō (nee Kōda, 1878–1963) appeared on stage. Nobu had studied both the piano and the violin in Japan and abroad, excelling at composition as well, while Kō was a pioneering and excellent violinist and instructor of the instrument. On May 11, Sueko Ogura (1891–1944), the first Japanese pianist who was active internationally, played Rachmaninoff’s “Suite” no. 1 or no. 2 together with Zaleska. On the third day, Katerina also played with Zaleska: Tchaikovsky’s “Concerto” and two pieces by Rubinstein, “Concerto” and “Trepak”.⁴³ These concerts provided a rare opportunity for Katerina to perform together with the professors of Tokyo Music School, because Katerina never taught at Japanese music schools, always teaching privately until her departure to the United States in 1940.

An article in the December 1918 issue of *Gekkan gakufu* reported on Katerina’s charity concert with the Russian musicians on November 2, introducing her as a pianist who “had been enjoying fame in Tokyo since that spring”. Her achievements as a pianist would bring her opportunities to teach a number of pupils – mainly from upper class society – in the 1920s.

CONCLUSION

From the late 19th century to the early 20th century, no small number of European musicians came to Japan. A part of them were from Central Europe, but this fact has long been unnoticed among the Japanese public. As their homelands were under foreign rule at that time, these musicians were often regarded as Germans, Austrians or Russians. To help find a clue as to their motives or reasons for coming to “a developing country” in the field of Western music far from Europe, it would be indispensable to know their origins or backgrounds. For those who were forced to emigrate from their homeland due to wars or revolutions, Japan provided a place where they could earn a livelihood as well as meet each other.

43 “Zaresuka-fujin-piyano-ensōkai” (program of the concert), Archives of Modern Japanese Music, Meiji Gakuin University Library.

As mentioned above, the first three decades of the 20th century Katerina Todorović spent in Japan were a very interesting period in the history of the reception of Western music in Japan. And although chance may have led Katerina to Japan, she became not only a witness, but also a contributor to the development of Western classical music in this country, performing together with both Japanese and foreign musicians. It would be interesting to further follow her traces in Japan in the next decades.