



Title	<BOOK REVIEW>KAIKOKU-NICHIRO KOKKYO KOSHO [Opening the Country : Russo-Japanese Boundary Negotiations], By Haruki Wada, Tokyo, Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1991,219pp., 780
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KAIKOKU – NICHIRO KOKKYO KOSHO [Opening the Country: Russo-Japanese Boundary Negotiations]. By Haruki Wada. Tokyo, Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1991. 219pp. ¥780.

The so-called 'Northern Territories Problem' has long hindered the normal development of Japanese-Soviet relations since World War II. It has also unfavorably influenced the historiography of Russo-Japanese relations in the Soviet Union as well as in Japan. Postwar Soviet historians, filled more with patriotic passion than socialist ideology, eagerly supported their government's position regarding the territorial issue. Some of them even tried earnestly to find evidence that Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands (including the Northern Territories) had been Russia's inherent territories (*iskonnye territorii*), in many cases falsely citing historical sources or arguing from a self-centered angle. On the other hand, the history of Russo-Japanese relations has not been a popular theme in postwar Japanese historiography. There are several reasons for that, but one of them may be the general reluctance of Japanese historians to get involved in the non-academic territorial dispute. Prewar Japanese historiography has been severely criticized by postwar historians for its nationalistic tendencies.

Owing to Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost, however, new trends began to appear in Russian and Japanese public opinions concerning the territorial issue. Intellectuals in both countries came to recognize the urgent necessity for improvement of Japanese-Soviet relations for the benefit of the world, and various possible solutions of the problem have been presented by them. The author of the book reviewed here, Prof. H. Wada of the University of Tokyo, is one of the opinion leaders in Japan. In his book entitled *Considering the Northern Territories Problem* (Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1990, 459pp. in Japanese), Prof. Wada proposed demilitarization, joint development and free intercourse by both countries in the disputed territories. He is a well-known historian in Japan, and specializes in Russian and Soviet history. In his conclusion to the above-mentioned book, he maintained that in order to solve the problem, Japanese and Soviet historians need to find historical truths about Russo-Japanese and Soviet-Japanese relations which can be recognized as common factual knowledge. *Opening the country: Russo-Japanese Boundary Negotiations* is his own attempt in this direction.

This book focuses on the Russian envoy E. V. Putiatin's expedition in 1852-55 and his efforts to establish commercial relations with Japan which had been in national seclusion for more than two hundred years. Russia had repeatedly tried to open Japan by peaceful means since the late 18th century. Putiatin, like his predecessor N. P. Rezanov, entered Nagasaki, the only port restrictively open to Dutch and Chinese vessels, instead of harbors near the capital which the U. S. plenipotentiary M. C. Perry dared to enter. Putiatin behaved in a polite and friendly manner toward the Japanese and negotiated with them patiently, in contrast to Commodore Perry. This created favorable

impressions of the Russians among the Japanese. As a result, he succeeded in concluding the first Russo-Japanese treaty at Shimoda in 1855, though nearly a year later than Perry on account of the Crimean War. The Russo-Japanese boundary was also demarcated by this treaty, which determined the southern Kurils to be Japanese territory, leaving the island of Sakhalin unpartitioned between the two countries. In describing Putiatin's boundary negotiations, Prof. Wada mainly focuses his attention on the island of Etorofu (Iturup) in the southern Kurils, on which Putiatin demanded certain rights for Russia. This may be done by the author, considering that Iturup is the largest and northernmost island of the so-called 'Northern territories.' We must not, however, exaggerate Putiatin's allusion to Iturup, as it was one of his tactics calculated to achieve a more advantageous position in the Sakhalin issue. Russia had regarded the island of Iturup as a Japanese territory since long before, as is known by the second charter to the Russian-American Company in 1821. Although the author writes that Iturup was once under the control of the Russian Cossack I. Chernyi in 1768 (p. 34), this is possibly influenced by the assertions of some Soviet historians, and is doubtful. Chernyi's companions were too small in number (three Russians and some twenty Ainus of northern islands) and their stay on the island was too short for them to conquer the aborigines (about one thousand Ainus) of Iturup; in addition, he had an obvious reason to overstate his own services.

Comparing the Japanese text with the Dutch, Russian and Chinese texts of the Shimoda treaty of 1855, the author perceives a distinct difference among them in Article II, which delineates the boundary between Japan and Russia. And he indicates that the Japanese and Chinese texts seem to define the Kurils to be the islands north of Urup. According to him, however, this happened to arise from a simple mistake in copying from the original translation, which matches the Dutch and the Russian texts. He emphasizes this fact in his previous book *Considering the Northern territories problem* as well, because Article II of this treaty has become one of the bases for the Japanese government's assertion that in past treaties Kunashir and Iturup had not been included in the Kuril islands which Japan was forced to abandon in the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951. In addition, the author enumerates several examples of the usual definition of the Kuril Islands from historical literature and maps.

With regard to the difference of the Japanese text of the 1855 treaty from the Dutch and the Russian texts, this reviewer would like to point out another example in Article II concerning the island of Sakhalin. It reads in English translation as follows: "it (the island of Sakhalin) remains unpartitioned between Russia and Japan, as has been the case up to this time." The underlined part in the Japanese text could be interpreted as an independent clause such as "The situation in Sakhalin should be as it has been up to this time." By citing this clause, Japanese officials on the spot always claimed to be maintaining the status quo in Sakhalin and thus tried to repel the Russian penetration into southern Sakhalin before the conclusion of 'The temporary

regulations relative to the Island of Sakhalin' of 1867, which regulated the joint possession of Sakhalin by Japan and Russia. It is strange that the author of *Russo-Japanese Boundary Negotiations* pays so little attention to the Sakhalin issue, for one of Putiatin's most important duties was to delimit the frontier in Sakhalin. Ambiguous settlement of the Sakhalin issue by the Shimoda Treaty caused the first Russo-Japanese territorial problem over Sakhalin. This problem continued for twenty-two years until the conclusion of 'Sakhalin-Kuril exchange treaty' of 1875, by which Japan received the northern Kuril Islands in exchange for all Japanese rights to Sakhalin.

In evaluating Putiatin's mission the author stresses its role in opening Japan as equal to that of Commodore Perry. We must additionally recognize that Putiatin inculcated strong pro-Russian feelings among the Japanese. Summarizing early Russo-Japanese relations, the author points out three views toward Russia formed in Tokugawa-era Japan, namely : Russia as an enemy, as a good neighbor, and as a teacher. Putiatin strengthened the last two to such an extent that some Japanese advocated entrance into an alliance with Russia against the European powers. However, it was also the Sakhalin problem caused by Putiatin that made the Japanese conscious of Russia as a most formidable adversary, especially in the early Meiji period.

In his preface, the author writes that a detailed study of the whole progress of negotiations for the Shimoda treaty and of the treaty texts serves as important work toward solving the 'Northern territories problem.' This reviewer fears, however, that a politically oriented standpoint would lead to a narrow understanding of history, and thinks that Putiatin's negotiations must be studied from broader perspectives with due regard to the historical background, including the history of Sakhalin and the Kurils.

Although this book was written not for specialists but for the general public, the author used many Russian original materials, as did the late G. A. Lensen's book *Russia's Japan Expedition of 1852 to 1855* (University of Florida Press, 1955). Most of the materials have been rarely used in Japan until recently. In this respect this book is a great contribution to the historiography of Russo-Japanese relations in Japan. Furthermore, this reviewer hopefully expects that glasnost in the USSR will open the doors of the archives of the Russian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of the Navy to both domestic and foreign researchers in the near future.

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